

Ancient China: Chronicles of the Dynasties

Learning objective: To investigate the achievements, social structures, and legacy of Ancient Chinese civilisations.

Use this fact-file to organise your research on Ancient China. Ellie the elephant has provided some key themes to explore. Use your library books or approved online resources to complete each section. Aim to use historical terminology accurately and provide evidence for your findings.

Word bank: Dynasty · Emperor · Mandate of Heaven · Silk Road · Terracotta Army · Agriculture · Philosophy · Innovation

1. The Dynastic Cycle: Explain the concept of the 'Mandate of Heaven' and how it influenced the way a new Emperor gained or lost power. (3 marks)

2. Technological Advancements: Identify two major inventions from Ancient China and justify why these were significant for the development of the civilisation. (4 marks)

3. Trade and Connection: Compare and contrast the impact of the Silk Road on both Ancient China and the distant regions it connected. (4 marks)

4. Social Hierarchy: Describe the roles of different groups within Ancient Chinese society. What might happen if a merchant gained more wealth than a landowner? (3 marks)

5. Legacy and Influence: Explain why historians consider the Qin Dynasty to be a turning point in the unification of China. (3 marks)

6. Critical Analysis: Evaluate the importance of the terracotta warriors. What do they reveal about the beliefs and resources of the Emperor who commissioned them? (4 marks)

Extension challenge: Imagine you are a merchant travelling the Silk Road. Write a diary entry detailing the goods you are transporting, the challenges you face in the desert, and the items you hope to trade for once you reach the capital city. Consider how the exchange of ideas—not just goods—changed the world.