

Exploring the Dynasties of Ancient China

Learning objective: To research and structure a formal report on the achievements and daily life of Ancient Chinese civilisations.

Use this scaffold to organise your historical report. Ensure you use formal language and include specific evidence to support your claims about the significance of the Shang or Han dynasties.

Ancient China was a sophisticated civilisation that developed along the fertile banks of the Yellow River, leaving behind a legacy that continues to influence the modern world.

Word bank: furthermore · consequently · archaeological evidence · civilisation · dynasty · significantly · in contrast · legacy · bureaucracy · innovation

1. Introduction: Define the historical period you are studying and state why this dynasty was a turning point for China. Start with: 'The [Dynasty Name] era is historically significant because...' (2 marks)

2. Technological Advancements: Explain one key invention (such as silk production, paper, or bronze casting) and its impact. Start with: 'One of the most remarkable innovations during this period was...' (3 marks)

3. Social Structure: Describe the hierarchy of Ancient Chinese society. Justify why the Emperor held such absolute power. Start with: 'At the pinnacle of the social hierarchy stood the Emperor, who was believed to...' (3 marks)

4. Daily Life and Beliefs: Compare and contrast the lives of the wealthy elite with those of the rural farmers. Start with: 'While the lives of the elite were defined by luxury and study, the daily experience of a farmer involved...' (3 marks)

5. The Legacy: Explain why the contributions of Ancient China remain important today. Start with: 'The influence of Ancient China persists in the modern day, particularly through...' (2 marks)

6. Reflection: Evaluate the limitations of relying on archaeological evidence. What might happen if historians only found one type of object from this dynasty? Start with: 'It is important to recognise that archaeological findings can be limited because...' (4 marks)

Extension challenge: Imagine you are an explorer like Finn the Dolphin mapping a new discovery. Write a 'Primary Source' diary entry from the perspective of an Ancient Chinese artisan describing the invention of paper. How would you justify the importance of this invention to the Emperor?