Discovering Ancient China with Ellie

Learning objective: To understand key features of Ancient Chinese civilisation, including inventions and the importance of the Yellow River.

Read the passage below carefully. Use your best handwriting to answer the questions, ensuring you look back at the text for evidence.

Ellie the elephant loves to travel back in time to learn about Ancient China. This fascinating civilisation began thousands of years ago along the banks of the Yellow River. The fertile land near the water helped farmers grow crops like rice and millet, which provided plenty of food for the growing population. Ancient China was ruled by powerful emperors who lived in grand palaces. One of the most famous emperors, Qin Shi Huang, ordered the building of the Great Wall to protect his people. The Chinese people were brilliant inventors. They created paper, the magnetic compass, and a beautiful, strong fabric called silk, which was traded all over the world. They also developed a system of writing using characters. Ellie finds it amazing that many things we use today, like paper, were first created by people in Ancient China so long ago. The people held great respect for their ancestors, often holding festivals to remember them. By studying their history, we learn how their clever ideas helped shape the world we live in today.

Word bank: Civilisation · Dynasty · Emperor · Invention · Irrigation · Silk · Ancestors

1. Name two things that were invented by the people of Ancient China. (2 marks)

2. Why was the Yellow River important to the people of Ancient China? (2 marks)

3. Why do you think Emperor Qin Shi Huang wanted to build the Great Wall? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, how did the Ancient Chinese people show they were clever? (2 marks)

5. Which of the inventions mentioned in the text do you think is the most important to have in your classroom today? Explain why. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of a busy market in Ancient China. Include someone selling silk and a farmer working near the Yellow River.

Extension challenge: Research one other invention from Ancient China, such as gunpowder or fireworks, and write three sentences about how it changed the world.