Ancient China: Dynasties and Discoveries

Learning objective: To understand the significance of the Shang Dynasty, the role of the Emperor, and key inventions of Ancient China.

Read each question carefully and use your knowledge of the Ancient Chinese civilisation to provide detailed answers. Remember to use full sentences.

Ellie the elephant has been busy digging through historical archives to learn about Ancient China. From the early bronze-working of the Shang Dynasty to the grand construction projects of the Qin Dynasty, there is so much to discover. Think about how these early societies were organised, how they traded with the world, and the inventions that changed history forever.

Word bank: Dynasty · Emperor · Oracle Bones · Silk Road · Terracotta Army · Great Wall · Ancestor Worship

1. Explain what a 'Dynasty' is in the context of Ancient Chinese history and why it was important for the leadership of the country. (2 marks)

2. Max the monkey is fascinated by the Silk Road. Describe what the Silk Road was and why it was so valuable for trade between China and other parts of the world. (2 marks)

3. Identify one major invention from Ancient China and explain how this invention might have helped the people living during that time. (2 marks)

4. Why did Emperor Qin Shi Huang commission the creation of the thousands of life-sized Terracotta soldiers to be buried with him? (2 marks)

5. Nova the owl wants to know about 'Oracle Bones'. Describe how they were used by the Shang people to seek guidance. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a map of the Silk Road showing how it connected China to other regions, or illustrate an invention from Ancient China (such as a kite, a compass, or paper) in action.

Extension challenge: Research the 'Great Wall of China'. Write a short paragraph explaining why it was built and whether you think it was a successful way to protect the empire.