

Summer 2 Year 3 – Shang Dynasty

What are the different important aspects of the Shang Dynasty of Ancient China?



Key Vocabulary	
chronological	The arrangement of events or dates in the order of their occurrence.
social hierarchy	Social hierarchy refers to the arrangement of people in society, with some people having more power and others having less.
archaeology	Archaeology is the study of people and artefacts from ancient times.
artefacts	An object from the past that shows evidence of what life was like
dynasty	A sequence of powerful leaders in the same family .
civilisation	A group of people with their own languages and way of life.

Powerful knowledge

- The Shang Dynasty was a successful Bronze Age civilization in the North China Plain in Western China.
- Shang society was divided into different classes. At the top were the ruling class under the royal family, then came priests, an administrative class, warriors, craftsmen, traders, farmers and slaves. Most people were farmers.
- Oracle bones were bones from ox shoulder blades or turtle shells, upon which questions were carved using a sharp tool. It was believed that the gods were able to read these questions.
- Fu Hao (also known as Lady Hao) was a wife of King Wu Ding. She was also a military general and high priestess. Wu Ding actually had 64 wives, but Fu Hao became the second most powerful. She died around 1200 BC. Fu owned her own land. The oracle bones tell us that Fu was a general in command of Shang armies. The weapons in her tomb also suggest this. Fu Hao had up to 13,000 troops serving under her and won many battles.
- The Shang Dynasty is the earliest dynasty of Chinese history supported by archaeological evidence. The last Shang capital was at Yin (near modern-day Anyang) and thousands of bronze, jade, stone, bone and ceramic artefacts have been uncovered. The earliest known Chinese writing was also found there, tens of thousands of inscriptions on oracle bones, telling us a lot about life, politics and religion under the Shang Dynasty.
- Dragons in Chinese culture symbolise great power, good luck and strength. They represent power and authority, particularly control over typhoons, water, rainfall and floods. Emperors were assumed to have descended from the dragons.

What I should already know

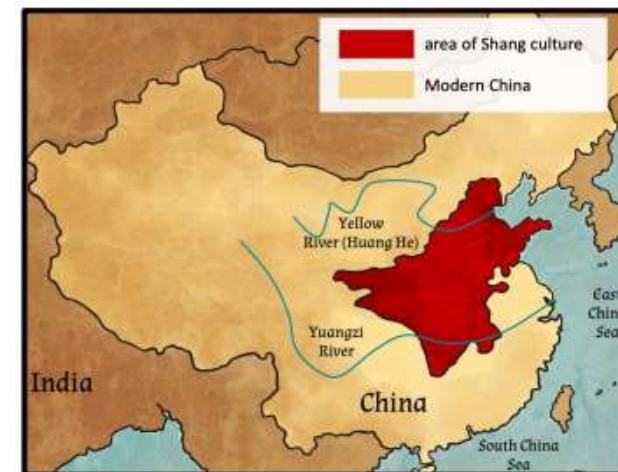
- An understanding of the Ancient Egyptian civilisation.
- An understanding of the Geography of China.
- An understanding of the Stone Age to Iron Age era of Britain.
- Beginning to understand chronology.

Learning Journey

- To find the location of the Shang Dynasty in China.
- To understand the Shang social hierarchy.
- To understand how oracle bones help us to understand the Shang Dynasty.
- To understand the importance of Lady Fu Hao in the Shang Dynasty.
- To investigate artefacts from the Shang Dynasty.
- To understand the importance of dragons in the Shang Dynasty

NC coverage

- In depth study of The Shang Dynasty of Ancient China



Skills: Research Skills