

Learning Organiser: How did a pile of dragon bones help to solve an ancient Chinese mystery?

Key Objective

Understand what recently discovered artefacts suggest about the life and beliefs of monarchs and noblemen during the Shang Dynasty.

Important things I will know, understand and do

That the Shang Dynasty was located in northern China between 1600 BC – 1046 BC

This was the same time as the Bronze Age in Britain and the Ancient Egyptian civilisation

Until 1899 there was no evidence that the Shang Dynasty had ever actually existed

What Wang Yirong discovered in 1899 and why this was of such significance to archaeologists

The likely purpose of carved oracle bones during the Shang Dynasty

What such artefacts suggest about the lives and beliefs of the monarchs and noblemen of the Shang Dynasty

Why there is no evidence of the lives of ordinary people of the Shang Dynasty

How and why the impacts of the reigns of King Cheng Tang and Di Xin were so different

The importance of the Shang burial chamber discovered at Yi An in 1976

What the artefacts and remains found in the tomb tell us about the person buried there

How life during the Shang Dynasty compares with life in Bronze Age Britain

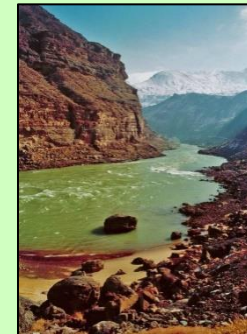
Important subject vocabulary I will learn

Reconstruct	to rebuild or make again
Artefact	an historic object made by or belonging to a human being
Legend	an old story based originally on some factual events often involving a heroic action
Myths	traditional story about some being, hero or event that is not true
Emperor/ Empress	the person (often a monarch) that rules an empire
Parchment	the skin of a sheep or goat prepared so that it can be written on
Oracle	a person through which a god is believed to speak
Intercede	to speak on behalf of someone else
Inscription	to write, print, carve or draw on a hard surface
Divining	someone who predicts things that will happen in the future
Conquest	gain control of a place or people by force
Ceremonial	an act or series of acts done in a set way to honour a special occasion
Restore	repair or bring something back to its original condition

Important places I will visit



Tomb of Fu Hao at Anyang



Valley of the Huang He River

Important historical sources I will use

- Maps
- Photographs
- Paintings
- Sketches
- Sculptures
- Hieroglyphics
- Statues
- Artefacts

Important maps I will refer to



Area of the Shang Dynasty in modern China



Course of the Huang He (Yellow) River

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Important historical concepts I will understand

Change	the process or actions by which something or someone becomes different
Causation	connections between events where one thing happens as a result of another
Significance	identifying events, sources, people, places or ideas which are most important
Sources	evidence that is used to gather information and reach judgements.
Chronology	arranging historical events in their correct time order
Empathy	placing yourself in another's position to better understand their actions
Civilisation	an advanced society with its own government, laws and written language
Dynasty	a long line of rulers over many years from the same family or group
Monarch	a king or queen that rules a country
Empire	a group of countries ruled by a single person, government or country
Society	a community of people who share a common way of life
War	conflict between different countries or people within a country (civil war)
Conflict	a struggle or clash between opposing forces, interests or ideas
Religion	a set of beliefs and convictions about life usually involving the worship of a god or gods

Important people I will learn more about



Wang Yirong



Fu Hao



Cheng Tang



Di Xin

Maps I will learn to interpret



Oracle bones



Li



Jade phoenix



Bronze 'owl' vessel

Disciplinary thinking skills I will use to understand what I learn

Synthesise	Bring together a range of ideas and facts from different sources to develop an argument or explanation.
Explain	Demonstrate understanding and comprehension of how or why something is the way it is as a result of synthesising information.
Empathise	The capacity to place oneself impartially in another's position to better understand their motives, decisions and actions (even if they are not shared values).
Informed conclusion	A knowledgeable summing up of the main points or issues about something.
Reasoned judgement	A personal view or opinion about something supported by facts.
Justify	Give reasons to show or prove what you feel to be right or reasonable.
Apply	The transfer of knowledge and/or skills learned in one context to help make sense of a different situation
Evaluate	Weigh up and judge the relative importance of something in relation to counter ideas and arguments.
Critique	Review and examine something critically particularly to gain an awareness of its limitations and reliability as evidence
Hypothesise	Come up with an idea, question or theory that can be investigated to see whether it has any validity or truth.