

History Knowledge Organiser: Year 2/3 Shang Dynasty

Key Knowledge:

The Shang Dynasty were a successful Bronze Age civilization in China.

People in the Shang Dynasty believed in an afterlife and thought they could predict the future with Oracle Bones.

People in the Shang Dynasty recorded their ideas in writing.

Archaeologists use artefacts and ancient writing to find out about the past.

Sources and Artefacts



Oracle bones with writing



Bronze Axe



Bronze Ding (cauldron)



Jade xi (spear)

Key Dates

2,400 BC: The Bronze Age begins in China.

1,600 BC: King Tang overthrows the last Xia dynasty emperor. **The Shang Dynasty begins.**

1300 BC: the capital of the Shang Dynasty moves to Yin.

1250-1192 BC: emperor Wu Ding reigns over the Shang Dynasty. General Fu Hao leads lots of successful campaigns.

1250-1150 BC: the 'i-Ching' is written.

1046 BC: The Shang Dynasty is defeated.

Key Vocabulary

Archaeologist - someone who finds and studies buried objects to find out about the past.

Artefacts - an object made by a human.

Bronze - the first metal widely used by humans, created by mixing copper and tin.

Cowrie shells - small sea shells used by the Shang as a kind of money for trading.

Dynasty - a family of kings.

Jade - a type of mineral (rock). It is a semi-precious gemstone.

Oracle Bones - animal bones with writing, used to predict the future.

Yellow River - a major river running across North-East China.



Important People

Tang First Emperor of Shang. Very popular and successful.

Fu Hao a great military leader and warrior. Also, wife of Wu Ding.

Wu Ding A very successful emperor, who ruled for 58 years.

Zhou The last emperor of the Shang Dynasty. A tyrant.

Daji The cruel wife of Zhou, who made up awful punishments.