



Endpoints for History

Year 5 – Dynamic Dynasties



We will be learning about the history of ancient China, specifically the Shang Dynasty, exploring the lasting legacy of the first five dynasties.

What I know and can explain

The Shang Dynasty, c1600 BC until 1046 BC, is the earliest recorded ruling dynasty of China

The 20th century dig at Yinxu uncovered the first evidence that the Shang Dynasty had existed

Oracle bones are pieces of turtle shell, cow bone or sheep bone that were used by diviners in the Shang Dynasty

People of the Shang Dynasty had five important religious beliefs: the three realms, ancestor worship, the two souls of the human body, sacrifices and people who could communicate with spirits

The Shang Dynasty hierarchy had the king at the top followed by the aristocrats, the military, craftspeople, peasant farmers and slaves, some of whom were offered as human sacrifices

During the Shang Dynasty, men and women were not treated as equals. A woman was taught to obey her father and when she got married, she was expected to obey her husband

Fu Hao was a queen in the Shang Dynasty and one of the most important military leaders of her time

Useful Vocabulary

Afterlife - The life that is believed to begin after death

Civilisation - The most advanced form of society

Deity - A god or goddess

Dynasty - A succession of people from the same family who rule the country, and the period when the country is ruled by them

Oracle bones - Pieces of turtle shell or ox bone used to communicate with ancestors and gods

Shaman - A priest who is believed to communicate with spirits

Shang Dynasty - The earliest ruling dynasty in the recorded history of China (c1600–c1046 BC)

Taotie - A creature in Chinese mythology whose image appears on artefacts such as masks and ritual vessels