

Did you know the Shang loved the ocarina?

In this unit of work the children will learn all about the ancient world of the Shang Dynasty. This is a mysterious world that all started with one family in China in 1600 BC and lasted over 500 years! The children will explore how China has expanded since the Shang Dynasty but keeping some of the traditions today.

In this unit children will:

- Be able to pinpoint the location of the Shang on a map of China and describe and name some cities and physical features of the land.
- Describe the roles of different members of Shang society and know where they fitted in the Shang social hierarchy.
- Describe a range of artefacts and know what they were made of and what they were used for. As well as being able to explain where these were found and how we know about the Shang Dynasty because of these items.
- Explain what oracle bones were and how the Shang used them.
- Explain different ritual elements of the Shang religion and describe how ancestor worship worked.
- Describe the processes involved in making bronze, jade and pottery items.
- Say who Fu Hao was and why the discovery of her tomb was significant.
- Demonstrate a full understanding of the Shang dynasty by composing their own historically valid accounts about different aspects of the civilisation.
- Explain the significance and purpose of a range of Shang artefacts in detail and draw their own conclusions.
- Compare and contrast the Shang dynasty with other early civilisations.
- Recognise and describe why the Shang dynasty is historically significant.

Prior Learning

Year 1 People through History.

Year 2 Timelines through History.

Cross Curricular Links

Geography Dragons – read, write, perform piece

Key Vocabulary

bronze – A strong metal alloy made from copper

oracle bone – This was heated and cracked by holy men to seek advice from king's ancestors

nobles – Under the ruling family; the highest ranking social class

artisans – Talented group including potters, stonemasons and workers with bronze and jade – lower than nobles but higher than farmers

dynasty – A sequence of rulers from the same family

warlords – Often ruled areas of land but owed allegiance to the Emperor

Emperor – The ruler of a country

pagoda – A religious temple that is built as a tower with many tiers and roofs

slaves – someone who is legal property of another person and is forced to obey them (mainly in the past)

sacrifice – offering a person or animal in name of religion

enemy – someone who hates another person.

Key Knowledge

- The **Shang Dynasty** was a time of rule under the **Shang** family in **China** from around 1600 BCE to 1046 BCE. Their empire reached far into the East China Sea, beyond the Yellow River.
- The first **Shang King** was known as Tang, Tang Cheng or Tai Yi. He realised that Jie, the last king of the Xia Dynasty had been mistreating his own people and was able to gain and gather supporters from 40 different **kingdoms** as a result of this.
- After he came into power, the **Shang** maintained their place on the **throne** of ancient **China** for over 5 centuries.
- **Tai Wu**, the ninth Shang Emperor, reportedly ruled for 75 years.
- **Lady Fu Hao** was a **Shang dynasty Queen** and **military leader** who died c1200 BC. She led an **army** of 10,000 men. Her tomb contains the remains of 16 slaves and six dogs who were sacrificed when she died.
- The Shang enjoyed **music** and played ocarinas, pipes, drums, chimes, cymbals and bells.
- **Emperor Zhou**, the last **Shang Emperor**, was said to have been very cruel. He was overthrown by Wu who became founder of the **Zhou dynasty**.
- In 1300BC Emperor Pan Geng started his rule but because of many enemies, he moves the capital city to Yin.
- The rulers across the Shang Dynasty created a lot of enemies throughout their rule.
- Oracle bones are carved with characters to ask a question of the gods – China's earliest form of writing, this was in 1700BC.
- A Shang week lasted 10 days – 3 days longer than our weeks today.
- When the **Shang Dynasty** dissolved it was followed by the **Zhou Dynasty**.
- Over the 500 years of **Shang Dynasty** rule, it saw 30 different **Emperors**.



- Most of the written evidence we have about the Shang comes from **oracle bones**, although some bronze and pottery goods also have inscriptions.
- The Shang used **wheeled carts** for transport in times of peace and **chariots** for hunting and as a means of overseeing warfare. They also used **canoes** for local trade. **Cowrie shells** show they traded with coastal dwellers but they did not trade further afield. Roads enabled communication to be maintained between the city states.

Key Questions

- Who was in Shang family?
- How long did the Shang family rule?
- Are there any Shang traditions that are still followed today?
- Who ruled before the Shang?
- What evidence do we have to show what we know about the Shang Dynasty is true?