

The Shang And Zhou Dynasties Worksheet Answers

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

THE SHANG AND ZHOU DYNASTIES

Shang Dynasty

About 1600 B.C.E., a group of Chinese called the Shang gained control of an area around the Huang He river. The vast land was ruled by the king and groups of relatives of the king's family called clans. The heads of these clans ruled areas similar to the city-states of Mesopotamia rather than by one centralized government.

Shang society consisted of a classes of nobles, artisans and merchants and finally peasants. Noble warriors owned land and governed Shang villages. Artisans and merchants produced and traded bronze weapons, jewelry, and silk robes. Most people of the Shang were peasants. They lived in the farming villages ruled by nobility. All family members worked in the fields planting and harvesting grain. When not farming, they repaired dikes and went to war along side their lords.

The Shang were polytheistic and prayed to spirits as well. Many of the spirits they prayed to were their ancestors. They did not believe their ancestors had power, however they did believe their ancestors could influence the gods. Thus they made sacrifices in their ancestors' honor. Their supreme god however was Shang Di or Shangdi. Shang kings would consult Shang Di as well as other gods by using oracle bones made of small animal bones or tortoise shells. Priests would scratch questions for the gods in the bones, apply heat causing them to crack and the priests would interpret the cracks to see how the gods answered.

The Shang also believed in the yin and yang. This is the belief that nature is divided between two opposing forces, the yin and the yang. These forces are important to each other because everything is connected and thus there should be a delicate balance of the two.

Describe the following terms

1. Mandate of Heaven _____
2. Dynastic Cycle _____
3. Oracle Bone _____

The Zhou Dynasty


In 1027 B.C.E., the Zhou overthrew the Shang. They set up the Zhou dynasty, which lasted over 700 years. Zhou leaders declared that the final Shang king had been such a poor ruler that the gods had taken away the Shang's authority to rule and had given it to the Zhou. The Zhou called this the Mandate of Heaven. The Mandate of Heaven gave Chinese rulers the right to rule until they became foolish or mean to their people. They would then lose their right. This became known as the Dynastic cycle, a pattern of rise, decline, and replacement of dynasties over thousands of years.

The Zhou government rewarded their supporters and family by giving them ruling power over different regions of China. This evolved into a feudal state. Feudalism was a system where local lords controlled a region of the king's land, and in turn gave the king military service and other forms of support. Lords profited from the peasants who worked on their land. Feudalism would later develop in Europe and Japan.

Under Zhou, China's economy grew. Iron tools like plows and axes replaced their stone and wood counterparts, aiding farmers to produce more food. This new technology(iron) also was used in developing iron weapons like daggers and swords. Feudal lords organized irrigation, new roads and canals, helping trade throughout the territories. The Zhou started using money for the first time. Coins made of copper also allowed for more easy trade and economic prosperity.

Toward the end, feudal lords began fighting among each other and could no longer be controlled by their ruling kings. They too would lose their Mandate of Heaven.

Under the Zhou, the first books were made. Characters were written on thin strips of bamboo bound together. They also discovered how to make silk from silk worms.



Shangdi or also written as Di is a supreme god and sky deity

The Shang and Zhou Dynasties worksheet answers are essential for students and educators alike when exploring one of the most influential periods in Chinese history. These two dynasties laid the foundation for much of what would follow in Chinese civilization, including advancements in technology, governance, and culture. In this article, we will delve into the significant aspects of the Shang and Zhou dynasties, their historical importance, and how to effectively utilize worksheets to enhance learning about this era.

Understanding the Shang Dynasty

The Shang Dynasty, which lasted from approximately 1600 to 1046 BCE, is recognized as one of the first historically verified Chinese dynasties. It is notable for its advanced bronze work, writing system, and the establishment of a social hierarchy.

Key Features of the Shang Dynasty

1. Writing System: The Shang Dynasty is credited with the creation of one of the earliest forms of Chinese writing, which was primarily used for divination and record-keeping.
2. Bronze Casting: The Shang were skilled craftsmen who produced intricate bronze vessels, weapons, and tools, showcasing their advanced metallurgical techniques.
3. Religion and Ancestor Worship: The Shang people practiced polytheism and ancestor worship, believing that their ancestors could influence the living.
4. Social Structure: The society was stratified, with a king at the top, followed by nobles, artisans, and farmers. This hierarchy was crucial in maintaining order and governance.

The Zhou Dynasty: A New Era

Following the Shang Dynasty, the Zhou Dynasty (1046 to 256 BCE) marked a new chapter in Chinese history. It is often divided into two periods: the Western Zhou (1046–771 BCE) and the Eastern Zhou (770–256 BCE).

Significant Contributions of the Zhou Dynasty

1. Mandate of Heaven: The Zhou introduced the concept of the Mandate of Heaven, which justified their rule and established a moral basis for governance.
2. Feudal System: The Zhou implemented a feudal system where land was granted to nobles in exchange for loyalty and military service, leading to a decentralized form of governance.
3. Philosophical Developments: This period saw the emergence of major philosophical schools, including Confucianism and Daoism, which significantly influenced Chinese culture and thought.
4. Technological Advancements: The Zhou Dynasty was marked by agricultural innovations, such as iron plowing and crop rotation, which boosted food production.

Using Worksheets to Enhance Learning

Worksheets can be a powerful tool for educators and students studying the Shang and Zhou dynasties. They help reinforce key concepts, encourage critical thinking, and provide structured learning.

Components of Effective Worksheets

When creating or utilizing worksheets related to the Shang and Zhou dynasties, consider including the following elements:

1. **Timeline Activities:** Include a timeline section where students can place significant events of both dynasties in chronological order.
2. **Vocabulary Matching:** Create activities that require students to match key terms (like "Mandate of Heaven," "ancestor worship," etc.) with their definitions.
3. **Short Answer Questions:** Pose questions that encourage thoughtful responses, such as "How did the Shang writing system influence Chinese culture?"
4. **Map Exercises:** Incorporate maps for students to label important geographical locations relevant to the Shang and Zhou dynasties.
5. **Discussion Prompts:** Include prompts that encourage group discussion, such as "What were the similarities and differences between the Shang and Zhou dynasties?"

Sample Worksheet Questions and Answers

Here are some sample questions that could be included in a worksheet about the Shang and Zhou dynasties, along with their answers.

Sample Questions

1. What was the significance of the Shang Dynasty in Chinese history?
 - The Shang Dynasty is significant for being one of the first historically recognized dynasties in China, introducing advances in writing, bronze technology, and social structure.
2. Describe the concept of the Mandate of Heaven.
 - The Mandate of Heaven is a philosophical concept that asserts that the right to rule is granted by heaven. A ruler's legitimacy is based on their ability to govern wisely and justly; failure to do so can lead to their overthrow.
3. How did the social structure of the Shang Dynasty differ from that of the Zhou Dynasty?
 - The Shang Dynasty had a more centralized power structure with a king at the top, whereas the Zhou Dynasty adopted a feudal system that decentralized power among nobles.
4. List two major philosophical schools that emerged during the Zhou Dynasty and their key principles.
 - Confucianism: Emphasizes moral integrity, social relationships, and respect

for authority.

- Daoism: Focuses on living in harmony with the Dao (the Way), promoting naturalness, simplicity, and spontaneity.

Conclusion

In summary, **the Shang and Zhou Dynasties worksheet answers** can serve as a vital resource for enhancing understanding of this significant period in Chinese history. By focusing on key features, contributions, and effective learning strategies, students can gain a deeper appreciation for the cultural and historical context of these dynasties. Worksheets not only facilitate learning but also encourage engagement with the material, ensuring that the rich legacy of the Shang and Zhou continues to be explored and understood.

Frequently Asked Questions

What were the main characteristics of the Shang Dynasty?

The Shang Dynasty is characterized by its advanced bronze casting, development of writing systems, urbanization, and a strong centralized government.

How did the Zhou Dynasty differ from the Shang Dynasty in terms of governance?

The Zhou Dynasty introduced the concept of the Mandate of Heaven, which justified their rule and allowed for the overthrow of unjust rulers, contrasting with the Shang's more absolute monarchy.

What role did oracle bones play in the Shang Dynasty?

Oracle bones were used for divination and communication with ancestors, providing insights into the Shang's religious practices and their belief in the afterlife.

What were the key achievements of the Zhou Dynasty?

Key achievements of the Zhou Dynasty include the development of iron metallurgy, expansion of trade, and the establishment of Confucian and Daoist philosophies.

What led to the decline of the Shang Dynasty?

The decline of the Shang Dynasty was caused by internal strife, military defeats, and the rise of the Zhou, who capitalized on the Shang's weaknesses.

How did the social structure differ between the Shang and Zhou Dynasties?

The Shang Dynasty had a more rigid social structure with a clear hierarchy, while the Zhou Dynasty saw a more flexible social order that allowed for greater mobility among the classes.

What was the significance of the feudal system in the Zhou Dynasty?

The feudal system in the Zhou Dynasty allowed for the decentralization of power, where local lords governed their territories, leading to both increased loyalty to the Zhou and eventual fragmentation.

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