



**Oracle bones** -  
thought to be dragon  
bones and used in  
traditional Chinese  
medicine.

**Cowrie shells** -  
used as money



**Bronze vessels** -  
used for rituals

### How do historians know about the Shang Dynasty?

- Oracle bones → tell us about beliefs and writing.
- Artefacts → tell us about daily life.
- Tombs (e.g. Fu Hao) → tell us about important people.
- Archaeology → helps us piece everything together.

### Vocabulary

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| evidence        | Something that helps us find out about the past   |
| archaeologist   | Someone who studies the past through objects  |
| reliable source | A piece of evidence we trust as it is accurate and based on real information from the past. |
| artefact        | An object made or used by people in the past  |
| tomb            | A place where someone is buried   |



### Key Events

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 1600 BC      | The Shang dynasty was founded when King Cheng of the Xia Dynasty was overthrown.                |
| 1400-1200 BC | The earliest known examples of Chinese writing date to this period.                             |
| 1250 BC      | King Wu Ding begins his reign   |
| 1200 BC      | Fu Hao, one of the wives of King Wu Ding, dies. Her tomb is the only intact tomb found to date. |
| 1075 BC      | The last Shang king, Di Xin, begins his reign   |
| 1046 BC      | The Shang dynasty was overthrown and replaced by the Zhou dynasty.                              |

### Enquiry Question:

How can we know so much about the Shang Dynasty?

## The Shang Dynasty

