

3 PRIMARY SOURCES

THE POTTERY HOUSE

Ancient Chinese burial sites were filled with possessions for use in the next life. The rich had particularly beautiful tombs with many decorations and a wide array of belongings. Before the Qin dynasty, animals and servants were also buried with the king so he could be looked after in the next life. In later periods pottery models of people and animals were buried with the king instead of living things.

The pottery model of a farm house, shown below, was discovered by archaeologists in a tomb of the Han dynasty. Look at it carefully and answer the following questions.

1 How many entrances do there appear to be to the farmhouse?

2 Why do you think there is such a high wall surrounding the farm yard and house?

3 What material do the Chinese appear to have used for the roof? Why might they have used this material?



SOURCE 2 Pottery model of a farmhouse of the Han dynasty

4 How many stories high is the building? Given this, what can you conclude about the level of Chinese technology when it comes to building?

5 Why might such a pottery object have been buried in a tomb?

WRITTEN SOURCES ABOUT SHI HUANGDI

Emperor Shi Huangdi of the Qin dynasty changed Chinese society greatly in his short reign. The lives of ordinary people were affected by his government's reforms. There is varying opinion, however, about whether these changes were good or bad for China.

Read the following two extracts carefully. They present different opinions about Shi Huangdi's reign. Then answer the questions that follow.

Your majesty rules a unified Empire in which the difference between right and wrong is as clear as your own total authority. Yet there are people who unofficially spread teachings that are against official orders ... they openly criticise your comments ... The people are thus encouraged to be disrespectful. If this lying is not stopped the imperial authority will be weak ... all people owning books ... should destroy them. Those who have not destroyed them within thirty days ... are to be branded and sent to work as convicts.

SOURCE 3 The view of Li Ssu, the prime minister of Shi Huangdi

The Qin rulers employ their people harshly, terrorise them with authority, embitter them with hardship, bribe them with rewards, and destroy them with punishments.

SOURCE 4 The view of Hsun-tzu, a Confucian scholar

6 Does Li Ssu's document support or criticise the Qin dynasty? Provide three examples that support your answer.

7 Why do you think Li Ssu ordered books to be destroyed?

8 What types of books would Li Ssu find especially threatening? Why?

9 Does Hsun-tzu support or criticise Emperor Shi Huangdi? Give three examples that support your answer.

10 How do you think Li Ssu would have responded to Hsun-tzu's writing? Why?
