

LO: To find out about the Shang Dynasty and explore how we know about it.

History books about the Shang Dynasty were not written until long after the Shang Dynasty had ended. It wasn't until much later still that archaeologists discovered evidence of the Shang Dynasty. The evidence they found didn't always support the writings in the history books.

Work with your partner. Read the information sheet then use what you have found out to decide which of these statements is true.

When did the Shang Dynasty begin?	Tick
Liu Xin lived closer to the time of the Shang Dynasty so he must be right.	
It's better to use all the evidence to make a decision, including scientific dates, so the modern archaeologists must be right.	

Who began the Shang Dynasty?	Tick
At least we have a name from the history books so we should go with that.	
The story in the history books is a myth and can't be trusted.	
Archaeologists could use DNA to find out what someone's name was.	

Where did the Shang rulers live?	Tick
If the history books call the city Yin they must be right.	
The writing on the bones from the city itself must be right.	

What were the royal palaces like?	Tick
The history books tell you more about the royal palaces than the archaeology.	
The archaeology tells you more about the royal palaces than the history books.	

Who were the Shang rulers?	Tick
We should use the names of the kings set out in the history books.	
We should use the names of the kings written on the bones dug up from Dàyì Shāng.	
We should use both of the lists of kings' names because the ones at Dàyì Shāng are only the last of the Shang kings.	

Which is a more reliable source of evidence, archaeology or history books? Write a brief paragraph to explain your answer.