

# China: journey to the east

## Before your visit classroom activities

- Use the British Museum online object database *Explore* to look for Chinese objects in the Museum collection.  
[www.britishmuseum.org/explore/introduction.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/introduction.aspx)  
Print out a selection of objects and arrange them chronologically.  
Use this as a starting point to discuss chronology.
- Make a collection of everyday cooking utensils. What are the utensils used for? How do they help people perform cooking tasks? (E.g. food storage, preparation, cooking and serving.)
- Discuss different sources of evidence available to archaeologists and historians. What is the difference between primary and secondary evidence? What sources of evidence will be available in the exhibition?
- Locate China in an atlas. What are the key geographical features of China? Which modern countries neighbour it?
- Go to the Ancient China website [www.ancientchina.co.uk](http://www.ancientchina.co.uk) and explore the *Time* section, which offers a range of thematic timelines on Chinese objects.

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A BRITISH MUSEUM TOUR

**CHINA**  
JOURNEY TO THE EAST

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- Make a classroom collection of everyday objects and consider what materials they are made from. Is the source of the material mineral, plant or animal? Sort the objects into material groups. Use a Venn diagram to sort objects with more than one material. Discuss what materials the students think were used in Ancient China. Are there any materials they do not expect to find in the exhibition?
- Discuss the process of cultural influence. Think about modern examples of cultural influence, for example food such as pizza, curry, kebabs, noodles etc.
- Talk about the role of decoration on objects. What types of objects get decorated? Why? What images and patterns can be found decorating everyday classroom objects?
- Look for examples of modern symbols such as safety symbols, food label symbols, road sign symbols or religious symbols. Talk about what the symbols represent and where they are being used. Are there examples of symbols in use around the school environment? As well as the shape of the symbol, particular colours are often associated with particular symbols. What message does the colour convey? Ask the students to create their own symbols for a particular context and test them on other people to see how effective the symbol is at conveying information.

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