

THE TERRACOTTA ARMY



You have probably heard of the so-called “terracotta army”, the amazing collection of Chinese figures made from clay. The statues are of soldiers, artists and other workers, and are the size of real people. Their chance discovery, over thirty years ago by a farmer digging a well in Xi’an in north-west China, has been described as one of the greatest historical discoveries of the twentieth century.

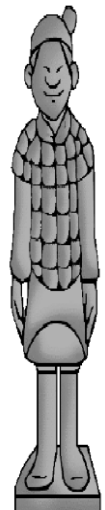
The terracotta army dates from the time of the First Emperor of China, over two thousand years ago. Emperor Zhen of Qin became the ruler when he was just thirteen. He was a remarkable man. He unified China, and gave the country common weights, measures and currency. He started the Great Wall of China as a defense against attack. He created the terracotta army, which included soldiers horses and chariots, as well as other clay people and animals, because he believed in life after death and he wanted to continue to be an emperor after he died. It is said that he re-created his whole empire under the ground, with rivers made of mercury and a roof filled with drawings of [stars](#).

The area where the terracotta army was found, outside the First Emperor’s tomb, is said to contain at least seven thousands of these clay statues, but so far, only about one thousand of these fragile figures have been [excavated](#). It still offers archeologists buried treasures such as two recently discovered clay musicians. Originally, all of the Emperor’s terracotta people were painted in bright colors, but over time most of the paint has gone from the soldiers. Today the figures are mainly gray.

The clay figures of the terracotta army are very popular. Last year, seventeen of the terracotta figures – the largest group ever to leave China – were sent to the British Museum in London. They were flown in four separate planes and were part of an exhibition called “The First Emperor”. Replicas of the terracotta soldiers can even be seen in the entrance to an office building in New York

1. When was the terracotta army first found?

- a. 10 years ago
- b. 30 years ago
- c. 50 years ago
- d. 100 years ago



2. In paragraph 2 the word "stars" means

- a. Famous people
- b. A filled roof
- c. Objects in the sky
- d. Acts in a film

3. Archeologists in Xi'an have found

- a. Some clay musicians
- b. The first emperor of china
- c. A whole empire
- d. A mercury river



4. The clay statues are

- a. Small
- b. Colorful
- c. Grey
- d. Musical

5. What is the topic of paragraph 3?

- a. Zhen of Qin
- b. The first Emperor's tomb
- c. The great wall of china
- d. The terracotta soldiers

6. The word "excavated" in paragraph 3 means

- a. Broken
- b. Sold
- c. Made
- d. Dug up

7. The Chinese government probably sent only a small number of clay figures to the British Museum because they

- a. Break easily
- b. Are not interesting
- c. Explain Chinese history
- d. Are all the same

8. According to the text, this is the first time the Chinese government has

- a. Given so many figures to a foreign museum

- b. Allowed foreign archeologists into China
- c. Used planes to transport the figures
- d. Advertised their findings in China