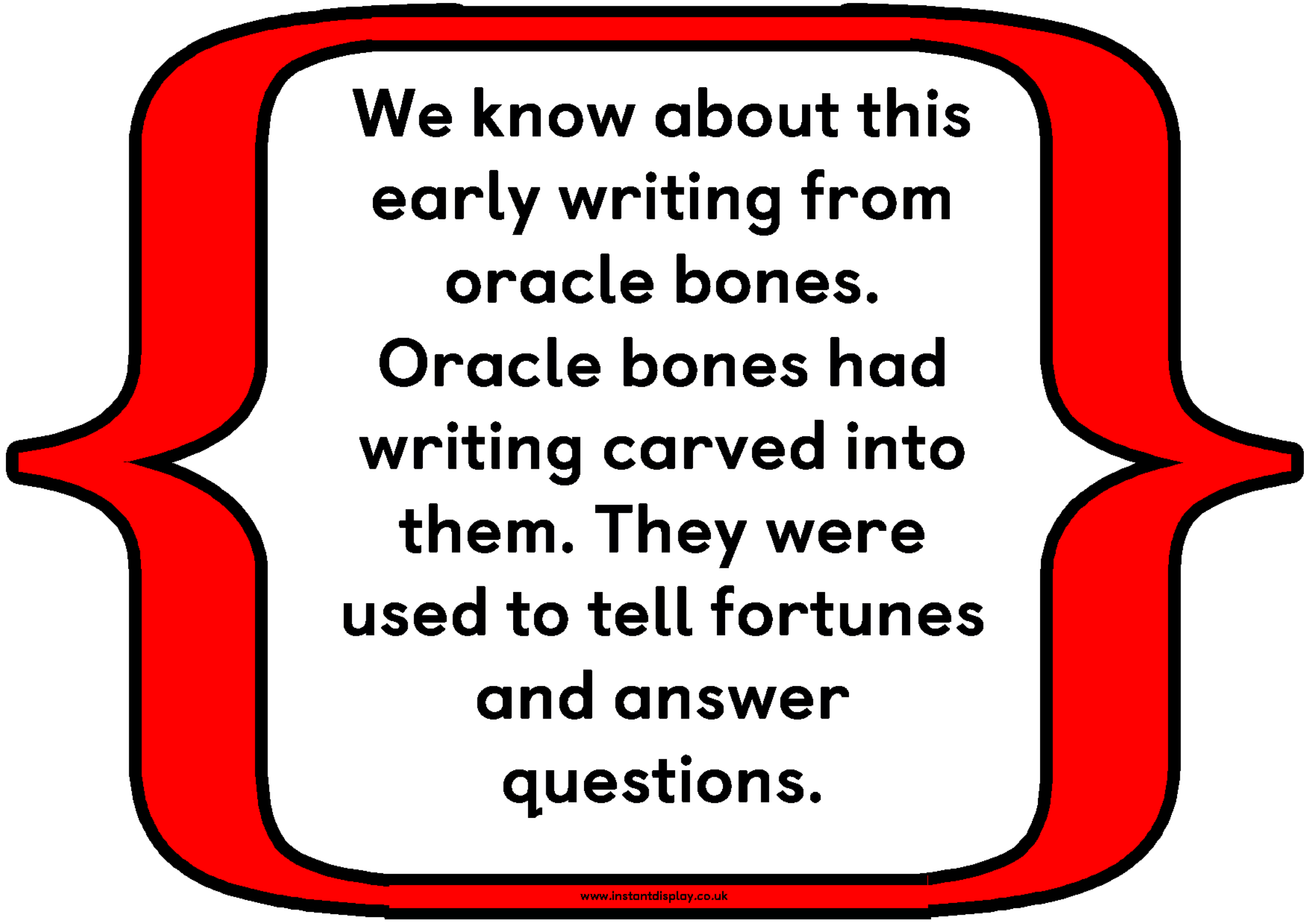




**Around 2000 BC,
people in China
learned how to make
bronze out of tin and
copper, so we call
this the Bronze Age.**

**During the Shang
Dynasty people
developed writing.
Like Sumerian and
Egyptian writing of
this time, their
writing was based on
pictures that stand
for ideas or sounds.**



**We know about this
early writing from
oracle bones.
Oracle bones had
writing carved into
them. They were
used to tell fortunes
and answer
questions.**

**By about 1800 BCE,
the Shang dynasty
became the first to
join a large area of
China under one king.**

**The king had his
capital in Anyang, in
northern China.**

During the Shang Dynasty people were divided into social groups. We know that some people were slaves under the Shang Dynasty. Many men were in the king's armies.

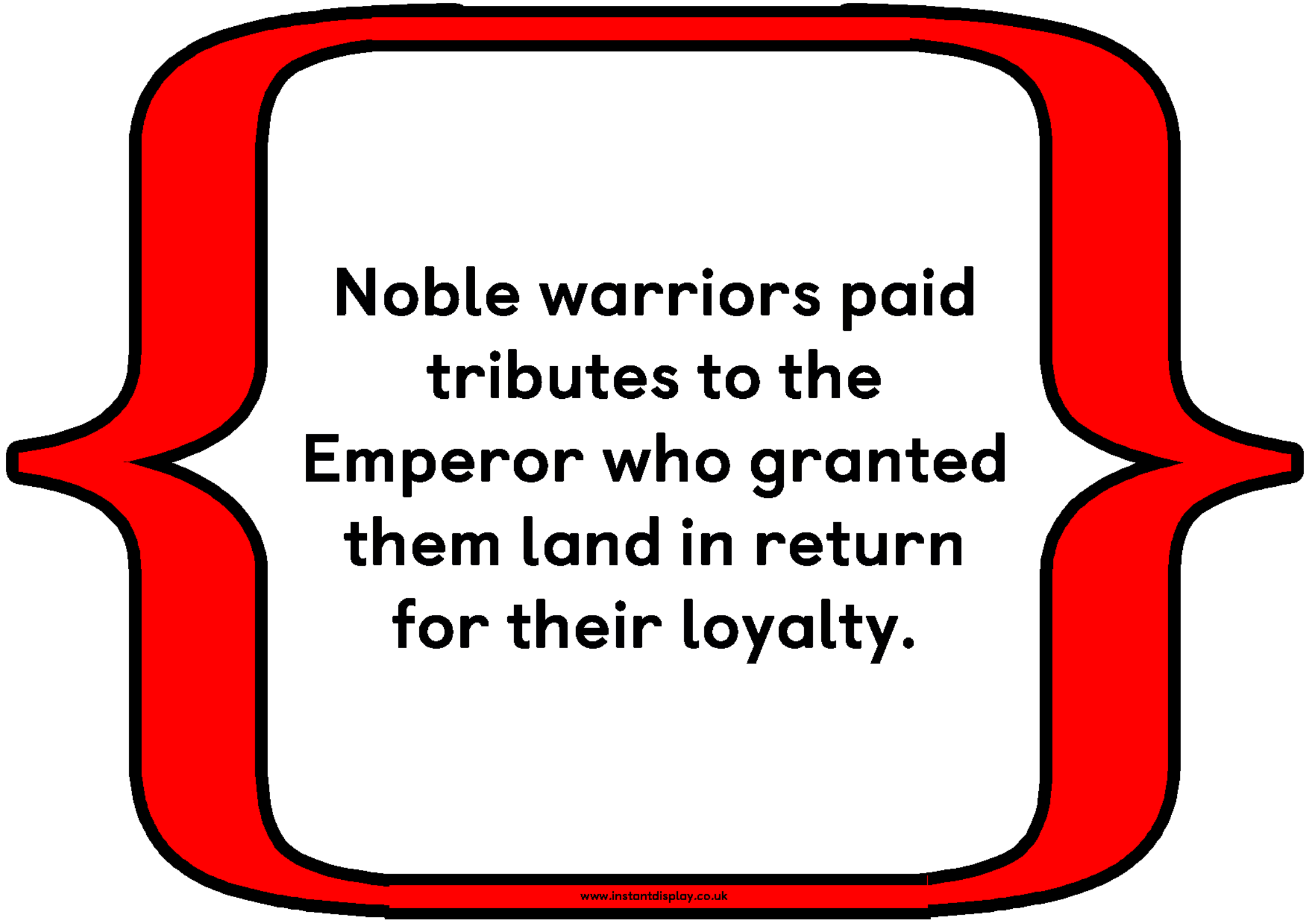
**During the Shang
Dynasty, people
began to use
horse-drawn
chariots. These were
invented in Central
Asia at about 2500
BCE.**

**The Shang Dynasty
lasted for about 700
years. But finally
they were
conquered by the
Chou (or Zhou),
about 1100 BC.**

**The first ruler of the
Shang was Tang
Shang, a military
leader. There were
thirty Shang
Emperors; a dynasty
is a succession of
rulers from the
same family or line.**

The Shang built their houses and public buildings out of wood and mud. They built mud banks to try and hold back flooding. Defensive walls and towers were also built of mud.

Shang society was divided into different classes. At the top were the ruling class under the royal family, then came priests, warriors, craftsmen, traders, farmers and slaves.



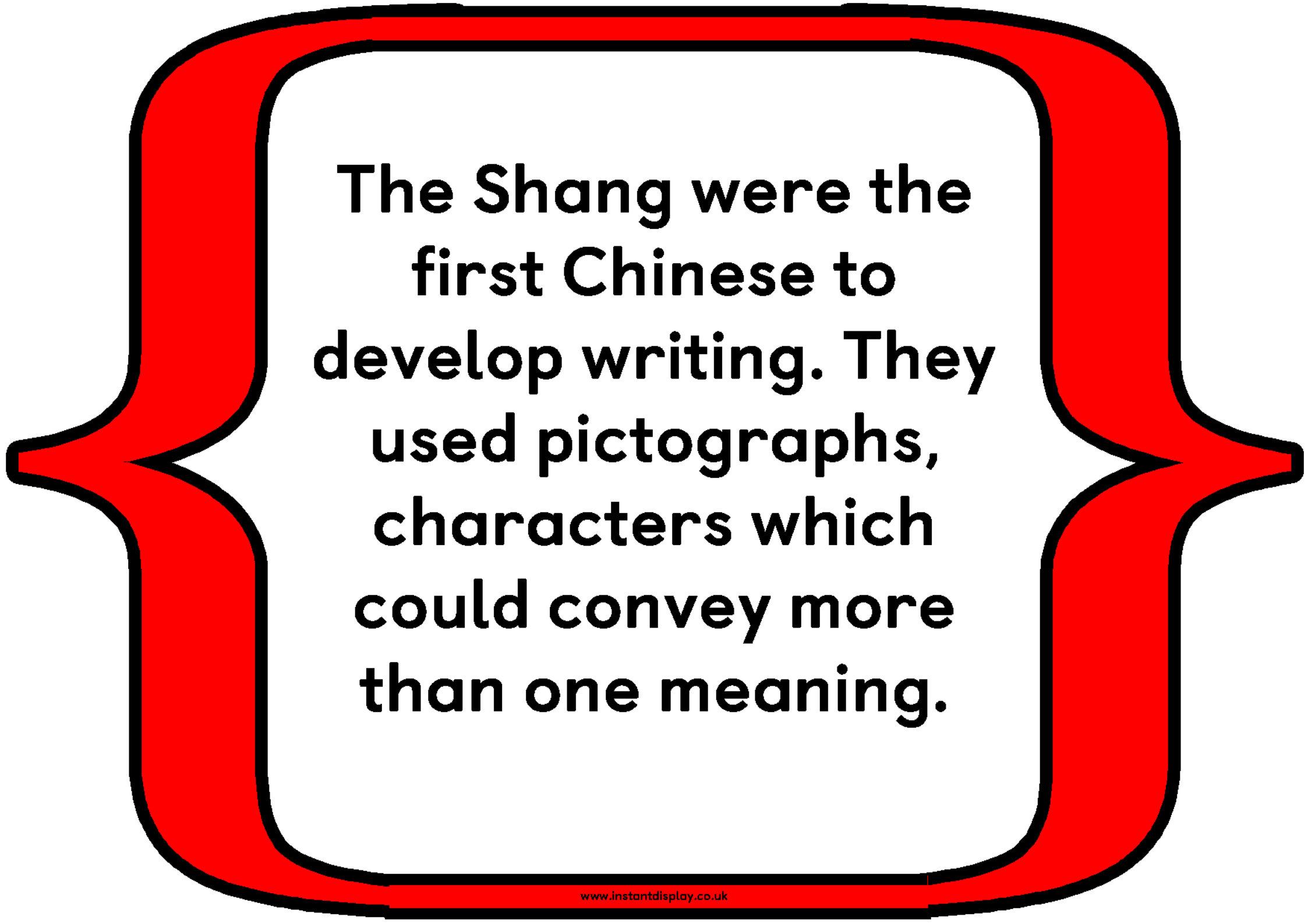
**Noble warriors paid
tributes to the
Emperor who granted
them land in return
for their loyalty.**

The Shang believed in a supreme God, Shang Di, as well as other lesser gods and spirits. Ancestor worship and the family were important parts of their religious practice.

The Shang believed in an afterlife and were buried with the goods, slaves and animals they believed would be useful to them. Royal tombs were filled with beautiful bronzes and other pieces of art.

The Shang year of 360 days was comprised of 12 months of 30 days.

It was based on the lunar month and the solar year. An additional month was added when necessary.



**The Shang were the
first Chinese to
develop writing. They
used pictographs,
characters which
could convey more
than one meaning.**

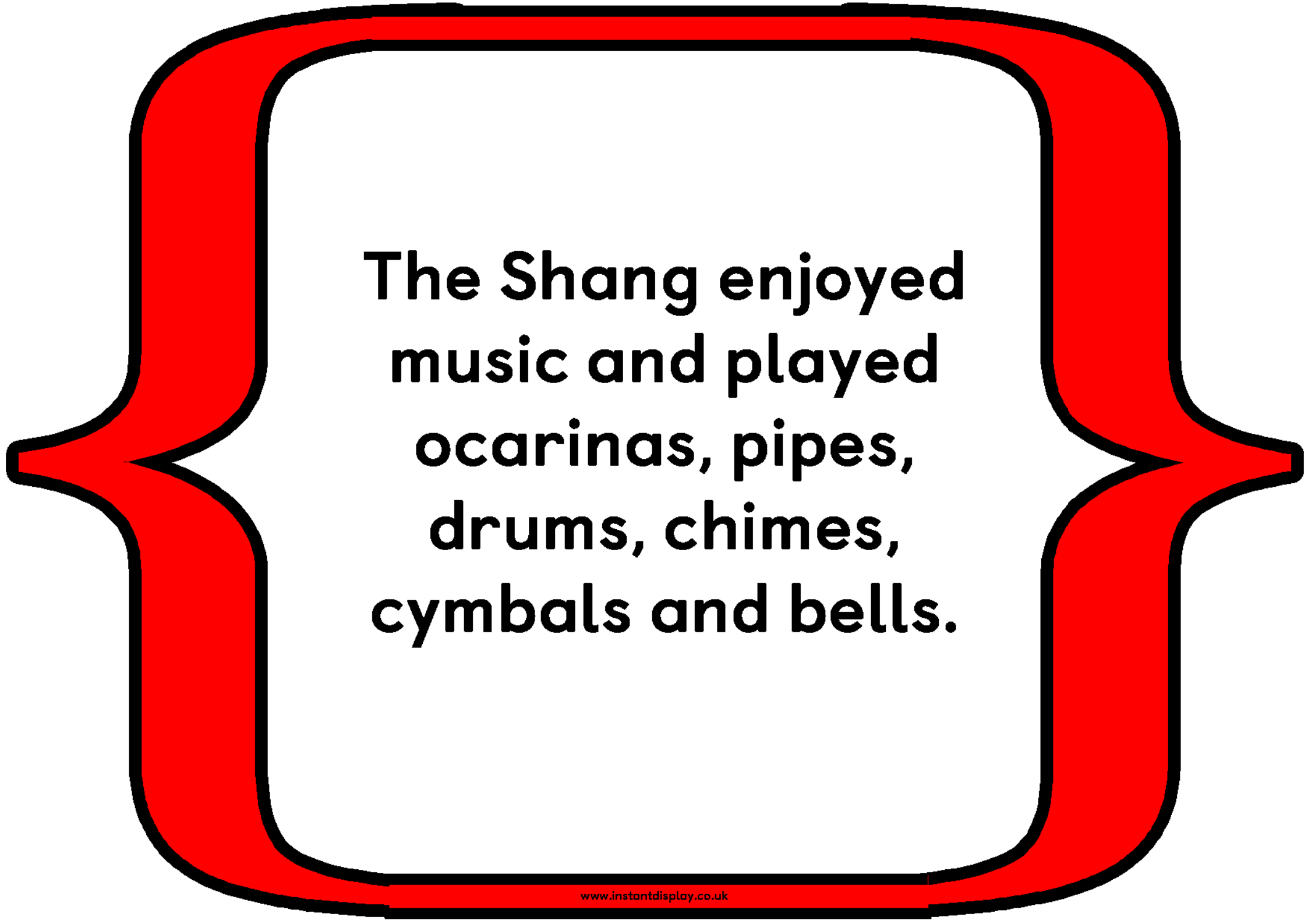
**To predict the future
people would engrave
questions on oracle
bones (tortoise shells
or cow bones). These
would then be burned
and the priests would
'read' the cracks
which then appeared.**

**Chinese people used
to grind down these
ancient animal bones
to make traditional
medicines. In 1899
some scholars noticed
engravings on the
bones.**

**Scholars discovered
that these carved
bones had come from
North East China. In
1928 excavations
began and evidence of
the Shang was
discovered.**

The Shang dynasty was said to have come to power when Tang Shang defeated the evil King Jie of the Xia Dynasty. Historians believe that the Xia dynasty may be just a legend.

Lady Fu Hao was a Shang dynasty queen and military leader who died c1200 BCE. She led an army of 10,000 men. Her tomb contains the remains of 16 slaves and six dogs who were sacrificed when she died.



**The Shang enjoyed
music and played
ocarinas, pipes,
drums, chimes,
cymbals and bells.**

Emperor Zhou, the last Shang Emperor, was said to have been very cruel. He was overthrown by Wu who became founder of the Zhou dynasty.

