

Historian tip # 2: Historians think about what they already know about the topic they are studying, ask questions about what they do not know, and ask new questions based on new information.

Today's investigation: **What we already know about China**

Outcome of the investigation: Our historians will be able to

1. tap and report prior knowledge about China
2. prepare questions about what they would like to learn about China
3. formulate new questions based on new information
4. survey new information for answers to questions they have already developed

Vocabulary: prior knowledge

Materials: "Great Wall of Knowledge" (a large "wall" created somewhere in the room on which students will be able to stick post-its of something new they learn each day)

small post-its

D is for Doufu: an alphabet book of Chinese culture, by M.S Krach

Mini lesson: One of the first things that good historians will do before they begin their investigations is to think of everything they already know about the topic, and to think about everything which they would like to learn. Let's all open our notebooks, and write down what we already know China and what we would like to know. You can put each of these lists in two different columns, or in two different pages (you can model this). Turn to a partner and share your knowledge about China, and the questions which you have. We are going to have plenty of time to investigate answers to some of your questions. Right now, I'm going to read you an ABC book of China, like the one that you will construct at the end of the unit. As you listen to the read aloud, if I answer one of the questions you had you can place write the answer next to your question. Also, if you hear some information which make you think of a new question, write the new question down on your question list. I am going to pause a few times during the read-aloud to give you a little extra time to do this, but feel free to write as I am reading, also.

Read-aloud: D is for Doufu: an alphabet book of Chinese culture, by M.S Krach

Activities: Prior to the read-aloud, students should make lists in their notebooks (this can be done in columns if they prefer) of what they know and what they would like to know. They then share this information with a partner. During the read aloud, they should answer their own questions and

formulate new ones. Following the read-aloud they can reconvene in partners to share their updated information.

Group share: Have a few students share some of the information they learned. Then discuss that just as the Chinese built a Great Wall piece by piece, the class is going to build a **“Great Wall of Knowledge”** piece by piece in the classroom so the class can watch their knowledge about China grow. At the end of each day, every student should place a post-it on the wall containing a new piece of knowledge about China. Give each student a post-it, to write down something important he or she learned today. Each post-it is then put on the wall. (Keep post-its and markers or pens near the wall for easy access in the future).