



Foot Binding

DIRECTIONS: Read the passage. Answer the questions.

Foot binding is an ancient Chinese custom that is no longer practiced today, but was once a status symbol among the elite of China. Beginning at about the age of 4 or 5, families wishing their daughters to marry well would break and bind their small feet so tightly that they simply stopped growing. The ideal foot was no more than three inches long – called “the golden lotus.” “The silver lotus” – a four-inch-long foot – was acceptable as well. But girls with feet five inches or longer faced dim marriage prospects. Evidence of this practice has been found from as far back as 1243, when archeologists discovered the body of an imperial Chinese wife with malformed feet. Her tiny feet, no bigger than a doll’s, were wrapped in gauze and slipped inside golden lotus shoes.

1. What evidence does the author offer that foot binding was once a status symbol among the elite of China?

2. What evidence does the author offer that foot binding is an ancient practice?
