Answer key to exercise on xiéshēngzì 4

Study the following sets of xiéshēngzì, and answer the questions below

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| 甫fǔ | 浦pǔ逋bǔ |
| 阜fù | 埠bù |
| 奉fèng逢féng | 捧pěng |
| 方fāng房fáng | 旁páng |

1. Identify the common component for each set

甫阜奉方

1. In terms of the place of articulation of the initials in each group, what places of articulation are there in each set?

In each set, the ones in the left column are labiodental fricatives, while the ones in the right column are labial stops.

1. What is the principle of using xiéshēngzì for studying Old Chinese initials?

The characters that belong to the same xiéshēngzì series should have the same place of articulation for their initials.

1. If you put your answers to question 2 and question 3 together, what conclusion can you draw?

Since each row of characters represents a xiéshēngzì series, the initials of all the characters in each row should have had the same place of articulation in Old Chinese.

1. Qian Daxian discovered this fact first. What was his original claim?

He claimed that in old times there were no labiodental sounds such as the f （古無輕脣音）. Therefore the characters in the left column should have had a labial stop initial similar to those in the right column in Old Chinese.