

HISTORY · Y3-Y5

Ancient Egypt

Knowledge Organiser — KS2 History

Key vocabulary

1

Pharaoh

The king of Ancient Egypt, believed to be a living god.

2

Pyramid

Huge stone tomb built for a pharaoh, with triangular sides meeting at a point.

3

Mummy

Dead body preserved for the afterlife, wrapped in linen bandages.

4

Sarcophagus

Stone coffin, often beautifully decorated, that held a mummy.

5

Hieroglyphics

Ancient Egyptian writing system using pictures and symbols.

6

Papyrus

Paper-like material made from the papyrus plant — the world's first paper.

7

Afterlife

Life believed to come after death. Egyptians spent enormous effort preparing for it.

8

Nile

The great river of Egypt — the centre of Egyptian life and farming.



9

Cartouche

Oval-shaped frame containing a pharaoh's name in hieroglyphics.

10

Embalming

Process of preparing a body to become a mummy.

Ant Egypt timeline

A civilisation lasting 3000+ y

- 3100 BC — Egypt united under one pharaoh
- 2550 BC — Great Pyramid of Giza built for Pharaoh Khufu
- 1500 BC — Egyptian Empire at its largest
- 1336 BC — Pharaoh Tutankhamun begins his short reign
- 1279 BC — Pharaoh Ramesses II begins 67-year reign
- 30 BC — Egypt becomes part of the Roman Empire
- 1799 AD — Rosetta Stone discovered, allowing hieroglyphics to be read
- 1922 AD — Tutankhamun's tomb discovered by Howard Carter

e — Egypt's lifeline

Why Egypt couldn't exist with

- Egypt is mostly desert. Without the Nile, almost nothing could grow.
- Every year, the Nile flooded — leaving rich black mud (silt) on the fields.
- Farmers grew wheat, barley, vegetables, flax (for linen) in this rich soil.
- The Nile provided fish for food, water for drinking, and reeds for papyrus.
- Boats sailed the Nile carrying goods and people up and down Egypt.
- All major Egyptian cities were built along the Nile — Memphis, Thebes, Alexandria.
- Egyptians thanked their gods (especially Hapi, god of the flood) for the Nile.



Egyptian gods

Some important ones

- Ra — sun god, ruler of all gods
- Osiris — god of the afterlife and the dead
- Isis — goddess of magic and motherhood, wife of Osiris
- Horus — sky god with the head of a falcon
- Anubis — god of mummification, with the head of a jackal
- Thoth — god of wisdom and writing, with the head of an ibis
- Bastet — cat-headed goddess of home and protection (Egyptians loved cats)
- Sobek — crocodile-headed god of the Nile
- Egyptians believed in over 2,000 gods. Most had animal heads.

Death and the afterlife

How — and why — Egyptians made

- Egyptians believed in the afterlife — a continued existence after death.
- The body had to be preserved for the soul to return to it.
- Mummification took 70 days.
- Step 1: Internal organs removed (except the heart) and placed in canopic jars.
- Step 2: Body covered in natron salt to dry it out — took 40 days.
- Step 3: Body wrapped in long linen bandages with magic charms inside.
- Step 4: Mummy placed in a decorated sarcophagus.
- Pharaohs were buried with treasure, food, and even servants (in early times).
- Tutankhamun's tomb (found 1922) had 5,398 items inside.
- The 'Curse of Tutankhamun' — myth that those who entered the tomb died mysteriously.



