

History Knowledge Organiser

Ancient Egypt

OVERVIEW

For 3000 years, Ancient Egypt was home to some of the most influential inventions and discoveries in history. The Egyptians developed systems for writing (including hieroglyphics) and mathematics; they used paper (papyrus) and wrote texts on religion, astronomy and medicine. The Egyptians built magnificent buildings, temples and tombs, decorating them with pictures, paintings and carvings. This great civilisation continued until the death of Cleopatra VII in 30 BCE when Egypt fell to the Roman Empire.

Timeline

WHAT SHOULD I ALREADY KNOW

(links to previous learning)

Romans and the Roman Empire
 Vikings and Anglo Saxons – gods to represent and explain natural phenomena
 Rivers

MAIN EVENTS

(dates)

c.2600 BCE: first known obelisks built

c.2560 BCE: Great Pyramid at Giza completed

c.2200 BCE: end of the pyramid era

c.1460 BCE: Hatshepsut's 'unfinished obelisk' abandoned

1799: Rosetta Stone discovered

1897: Narmer Palette discovered

1922: Tomb of Tutankhamun discovered

1925: Burial mask displayed in Cairo

KEY PEOPLE

Cleopatra

Tutankhamun

Howard Carter

STICKY KNOWLEDGE

(What we will know by the end of the topic)

- 1) Chronology of key events. It ended at the start of the Roman Empire (3000 years ago).
- 2) Ancient landmarks and their significance (buildings, temples and tombs). Pyramids are one of the seven wonders of the world. Location of Egypt, Nile, Giza, Cairo, Alexandria.

The Ancient Egyptians also built dozens of large and small obelisks (pointed stone pillars) to commemorate the achievements of kings, queens and wealthy Egyptians or to worship the gods. Obelisks are usually found in pairs at the entrance of Egyptian temples. They are covered with Egyptian writing (hieroglyphics) offering dedications to the gods, particularly Ra, the sun god, in the hope that the kingdom would be given magical protection.

- 3) Papyrus and hieroglyphics. How the Rosetta stone helped to decipher the hieroglyphics. What papyrus was and how it was made.

One of the most significant artefacts from Ancient Egypt is the Rosetta Stone, which was found in 1799. The same text appears on it in three different types of writing, which has helped historians to decipher hieroglyphics and to understand Ancient Egyptian diaries and accounts.

- 4) Paintings and carvings. What do the paintings tell us about their everyday life? Focus on Hatshepsut tomb/temple.

Tomb paintings are an important historical source, telling us about daily life in Ancient Egypt. There are many pictures, for example, of children at play using balls made of leather, stuffed with grain. We do not know exactly what the rules to these games were but artefacts like this prove that some Egyptian children enjoyed leisure time.

KEY LOCATIONS

Egypt – Cairo , River Nile, Giza, Valley of the Kings, Alexandria, Mediterranean Sea and Red Sea, Africa and Asia

STICKY VOCABULARY

fertile	able to support the growth of plants
irrigation	supplying land with water
immortality:	the ability to live forever
rituals:	religious services that follow set patterns
decipher	work out what something says
archaeologists:	people who study the past by examining remains and objects
canopic jars:	containers holding organs from a body
sarcophagus:	decorative container for a body
mummy:	preserved body
temples:	places of worship
engineering	using scientific knowledge to build
architects:	people who design buildings

STICKY KNOWLEDGE

(What we will know by the end of the topic)

5) Religion and mummification. Where the valley of the kings are and the Gods to explain the natural events. How and why the bodies were mummified?

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6) Significant people (Cleopatra – the last Pharaoh, Tutankhamun – what his tomb shows us about Egyptian life, Howard Carter).

Tutankhamun was a boy-king whose burial tomb, in the Valley of the Kings had gone untouched for thousands of years until it was opened by the famous archaeologist Howard Carter. Once inside the tomb, Carter found treasures, paintings, canopic jars and a sarcophagus containing the king's preserved mummy. The most famous artefact from Ancient Egyptian times, Tutankhamun's burial mask, was still in place.

7) Impact of architecture and engineering on other civilizations. Focus on modern architecture and look at the similarities. How they built the pyramids.

The pyramids were built to bury Ancient Egyptian kings and queens. They were designed to be a comfortable place to enjoy the afterlife, and also acted as a display of power and wealth. Often taking decades to build, the pyramids were not, as many people used to believe, built by slaves. They were made by peasant farmers who provided labour for the king in return for food, oil and cloth. The building work, which usually took place when farmland was flooded, was overseen by architects and the Vizier (the king's chief minister).



Links to British Values:

Democracy
Rule of law
Diversity