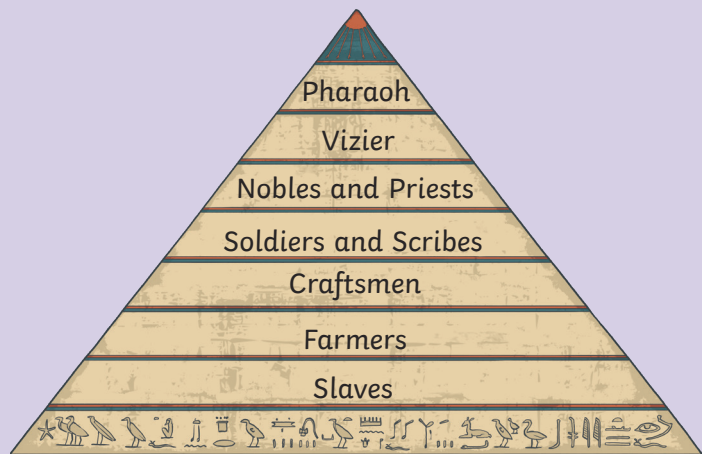


Life in Ancient Egypt

Ancient Egypt began over 5,000 years ago in modern-day North Africa. It was a culture of beliefs, invention, and a legacy that inspires people to this day.

Society

Lasting for 3,000 years, ancient Egyptian life saw many changes and laid the foundations for many features of modern society. For example, ancient Egyptians were masters of farming, produced one of the first solar calendars as well as a writing system based on images, called **hieroglyphics**. The power of the pharaohs was absolute. Believing them to be gods on earth, the pharaohs were respected above all others, and it was from their position at the top of the **hierarchy** that all other positions and responsibilities came.



Pharaoh

God on earth, who made laws and oversaw all of their land.



Vizier

Top official and pharaoh's second-in-command.



Nobles and Priests

Made laws/led worship and performed rituals.



Soldiers and Scribes

Warriors and those who kept official records.



Craftsmen

People who had specific trades, such as carpenters.



Farmers

Farmed the land to grow food.



Slaves

Worked in temples or for wealthy families.

Markets and Merchants



Markets and trade were vital to life in ancient Egypt. Grain was often plentiful and used as part of a 'barter system'. Stone weights named 'debens' were used to weigh the value of items during a trade. Having established trade links was all a part of ensuring citizens got the food and materials they needed to prosper.



Some of the most popular items for trade included: linen, papyrus, grain and various precious metals and stones. Many of the ancient Egyptian trading partners were from the Mediterranean, Middle Eastern countries such as Lebanon and Afghanistan, and many neighbouring nations in east Africa.

Did You Know...?

- The ancient Egyptians believed the 2,000 gods and goddesses were linked to many natural forces.
- The afterlife was incredibly important. As such, ancient Egyptians prepared for what would happen after they died.
- Important people's bodies were preserved through mummification.
- The god Anubis was responsible for weighing the hearts of the citizens to decide if they had lived a good life.



Transport and the Nile

Ancient Egyptian life grew around the river Nile. Due to the hot and dry conditions, the water was critical to all areas of life. For transport, trade and day-to-day activities, the Nile was key.

Towns and cities sprung up on the river's banks due the **fertile** ground the water created. During the summer months, the monsoon weather would cause the river to flood, which led to perfect conditions for growing crops.

Additionally, the Nile was an important route for people to travel and trade. All over the Mediterranean and Africa, the ancient Egyptians used skiffs, simple sailboats, to trade gold, linen, papyrus and much more.

The river Nile truly was the source of life to the people of ancient Egypt.

Glossary

fertile – Land able to produce lots of crops.

hierarchy – Ranking people according to how important they are.

hieroglyphics – Language using symbols and pictures.

Questions

1. List the social classes from top to bottom.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

2. Draw three lines to match the social class to its description.

Slaves

Pharaoh's second-in-command

Vizier

Kept official records.

Scribes

Worked for wealthy families.

3. What were debens used for?

4. Complete the sentence.

Important people's bodies _____
_____.

5. Describe the climate of ancient Egypt.

6. Look at the section titled 'Transport and the Nile'.

Why did the author choose to discuss the river Nile in such detail?

7. Why did the author describe ancient Egyptian culture as one of belief and invention?

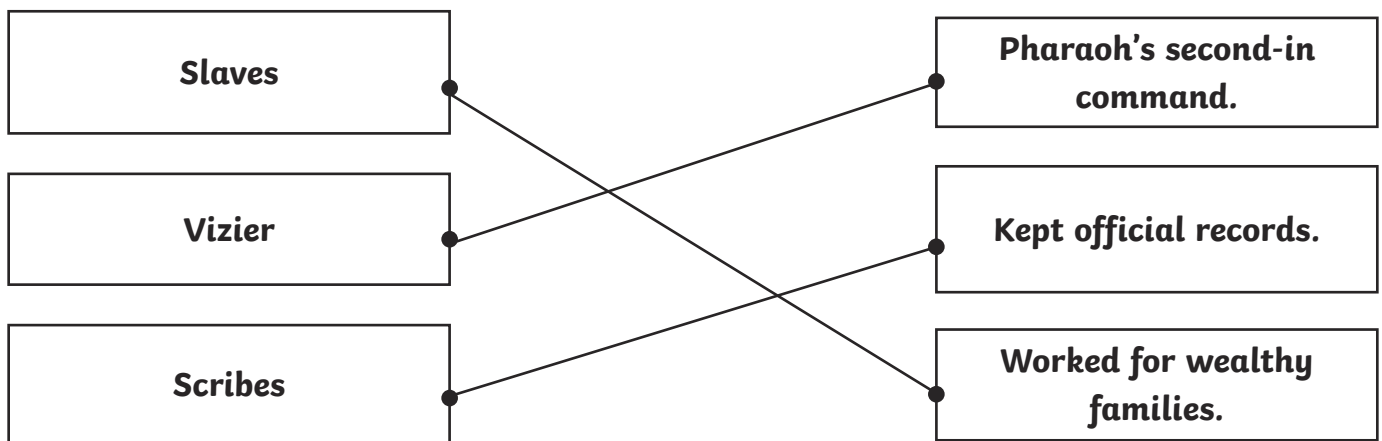
8. Why was it important for ancient Egyptians to live a good life?

Answers

1. List the social classes from top to bottom.

1. **Pharaoh**
2. **Vizier**
3. **Nobles and Priests**
4. **Soldiers and Scribes**
5. **Craftsmen**
6. **Farmers**
7. **Slaves**

2. Draw three lines to match the social class to its description.



3. What were debens used for?

Debens stone weights used as part of the barter system of trade.

4. Complete the sentence.

Important people's bodies **were preserved through a process of mummification.**

5. Describe the climate of ancient Egypt.

The ancient Egyptian climate was hot and dry except for during the monsoon season when the river Nile would flood.

6. Look at the section titled 'Transport and the Nile'.

Why did the author choose to discuss the river Nile in such detail?

The river Nile was critical to all life in ancient Egypt. From trade, to transport, farming and more, it was the source of life there.

7. Why did the author describe ancient Egyptian culture as one of belief and invention?

Pupils' own responses, such as: The author chose these words because the ancient Egyptians believed in over 2,000 gods. They also believed many natural forces were caused by these gods. The ancient Egyptians also invented many things we see today, such as calendars, farming and written language.

8. Why was it important for ancient Egyptians to live a good life?

Pupils' own responses, such as: The ancient Egyptians chose to lead good lives because of their belief that the afterlife was as important as their mortal one. Also, they would expect to have their heart weighed by the god Anubis once they died.