

# YEAR 3: SUMMER 2 – TIME COP: LEARNING FROM THE PAST

## HISTORY: THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS

### CHRONOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING:

To develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of a non-European society that provides contrasts with British history:

<b>Learning links:</b>
<b>History:</b>
Y4: The Roman Empire – time period ended with Roman invasion
Y4: The Greek Empire - invasion by Greeks (Alexander the Great) began 'New Kingdom'
Y5: The Maya - Similar religious beliefs

Chronological order		BC = Before Christ	AD = Anno Domini 'In the year of our Lord'	the Nile	pharaoh	farming seasons	pyramid
mummification	tomb	sarcophagus	canopic jar	Valley of the Kings	Tutankhamun	Howard Carter	archeology

Ancient Egypt was one of the oldest and longest lasting world civilizations. It was located along the **Nile** River in the northeast part of Africa and lasted for over three thousand years!

Historians use two ways to split up the history of Ancient Egypt:

1. **Dynasties:** The first is by using the different dynasties that ruled Egypt. These are the families that had power and passed the leadership down from one family member to another.

2. **Kingdoms and Periods:** There are also three kingdoms that historians use to split up the periods of Ancient Egypt. The three kingdoms were the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms.



#### Old Kingdom c.2600 -2100 BC



- The Sphinx was built.
- Egyptians began building pyramids
- The Great pyramid was built.
- Egyptians began experimenting with mummification.



#### Middle Kingdom c. 2000 - c. 1650 BC

- Pyramid building declined and stopped.
- Orisis became the most important god, especially for ordinary people.

#### New Kingdom 1539-1075 BC

- Pyramids were replaced by elaborate tombs in the Valley of the Kings.
- **Tutankhamun** ruled during some of this period
- Ramesses II ruled for 67 years



#### Greek and Roman Egypt 332 BC-395 AD

- Cleopatra VII reigned (51-30 BC)
- Alexander the Great conquered Egypt
- The Romans took over Egypt after Cleopatra's death (30 BC).
- The Rosetta Stone was carved (196 BC)

#### THINKING POINT:

Where is Egypt located?



Which kingdom do you think will be the most interesting to learn about? Why?

For most of Ancient Egypt's timeline, the whole country was ruled by one person, called **pharaoh**. However, at the start of this civilisation, there had been two rulers and so Egypt was often referred to as Lower and Upper Egypt, even when there was one ruler.

Cairo is the capital city of modern day Egypt, but in ancient times Memphis, Thebes (now called Luxor) and Alexandria all were (at different times!).

#### THINKING POINT:

Why do you think all of the cities are on the river Nile?



Why do you think the capital city kept changing?



# TO UNDERSTAND AND DESCRIBE: ANCIENT EGYPT

To understand and describe a non-European society that provides contrasts with British history:

## Learning links:

### Enquiry:

**Year 5: Ancient Maya (1100BC – 1542 AD)**  
Compare the similarities and differences in lifestyle and civilisation at similar times in various locations in the world

**Year 4: Roman Britain (43AD – 410AD)**  
Compare the similarities and differences in lifestyle and civilisation at similar times in various locations in the world

**Year 4: Ancient Greeks (3000BC – 30BC)**  
Compare the similarities and differences in lifestyle and civilisation at similar times in various locations in the world

## Ancient Egyptian Life

### Ancient Egyptian society

The Egyptian hierarchy (levels of importance) was a lot like the pyramids that they built. At the very top of this social structure was the **pharaoh** and their gods. Since the **pharaoh** was thought to be a god, he took his place next to all of the others. The viziers, high priests and nobles supported the pharaoh and helped with the day-to-day running of the country. Officials and scribes kept records of what was happening. At the bottom were most Egyptians. Most Ancient Egyptians were farmers.

### Egyptian farming

Egyptians grew crops such as wheat, vegetables and fruits. The most important crop was grain as they could use it to make bread, porridge and beer. The Egyptians grew their crops along the banks of the river **Nile** as the black soil that was left behind when the **Nile** flooded each year was very fertile. This meant it was easy to grow healthy crops in it.

Egyptians farmers divided their year in to **three seasons**, based on the flooding cycle of the Nile:

- Akhet (June-September) - Flooding season. Farmers mended tools, looked after animals or found other jobs to do, such as building pyramids.
- Peret (October-February) - Growing season. When crops were planted and tended to.
- Shemu (March-May) - Harvesting season. Crops were cut down and removed to be stored and eaten.

During the growing season, they created canals around their fields filled with water from the Nile. They would then spread this water across their fields to keep the soil moist.



### THINKING POINT:

What was the Egyptian ruler called?



Why did the Egyptians grow crops on the banks of the Nile?

## Ancient Egyptian Religion

### The Gods

There were over 2,000 gods in Ancient Egypt. Some images of Ancient Egyptian gods and goddesses show them with a human body and the head of a bird or animal. Below are some of the more important ones:



### Death and the Afterlife

The Egyptians believed that when they died, they would make their way to another world where they would lead a new life. They would need the things that they had in this life, so they were buried with lots of belongings. It also meant they believed they would need their body in the next life, so they did everything they could to preserve it. To do this, they used a process called **mummification** (if they could afford it - poor Egyptians were just buried in the sand):

1. The body was washed and cleaned.
2. All of the organs, apart from the heart, were removed and put in **canopic jars**.
3. The body was dried by covering it in a type of salt called 'natron'.
4. Then, the body was wrapped in strips of cloth and put in a stone coffin called a **sarcophagus**.



Your body would then be buried in a **tomb**. If you were a pharaoh, it would be buried in a **pyramid**! (In the New Kingdom, pharaohs were buried in tombs too, to hide them and their belongings from grave robbers!)

These **pyramids** would be decorated inside with **hieroglyphics** - the Ancient Egyptian writing system. They wrote spells and prayers to help the **pharaoh** in the afterlife.

### THINKING POINT:

Why did the Egyptians make mummies?



What were the pyramids for?



**Archaeology and Egyptology**

Like every other ancient time period, most of what we know about Ancient Egypt comes from what archeologists have found. Ruins of temples and settlements have taught historians a lot, but a huge amount of knowledge has come from what has been discovered inside pyramids and tombs.

About 100 years ago, there was a sudden interest in Egypt and lots of archeologists went there to see what they could uncover. Many of the pyramids were empty as they have been robbed by thieves over the centuries. However, a lot of the later **pharaohs** had been buried in a place called '**The Valley of the Kings**' and their tombs hadn't been discovered yet.

One of these tombs belonged to a **pharaoh** called **Tutankhamun**, who had died when he was only 19. His tomb was discovered by the archaeologist **Howard Carter** in 1922. It was completely intact and so was full of priceless treasures and the **sarcophagus** and **mummy** of **Tutankhamun**.



**THINKING POINT:**



Who found Tutankhamun's tomb?

Why was the discovery so exciting?

**EXIT QUESTIONS:**

**EXS:**

**GDS:**

How important did the Egyptians think dying was? Explain how you know.

Why is Tutankhamun's tomb so important to historians?