



Greatworth Primary School

Beech Class  
Knowledge  
Organiser

# The Big Question: What made Ancient Egypt such a successful civilisation?

Ancient Egypt was one of the greatest and most powerful civilizations in the history of the world. It lasted for over 3000 years from 3150 BC to 30 BC. The civilization of Ancient Egypt was located along the Nile River in north-east Africa.

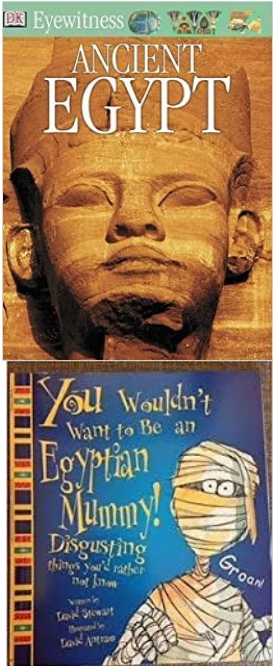
Tutankhamun—the most famous Egyptian pharaoh



The River Nile dominates the Egyptian landscape



Read all about it — try these books!



What was happening in Britain at this time?



Howard Carter



**How do we know about Ancient Egypt?**  
The Ancient Egyptians left buildings, objects, drawings and even writing behind. Archaeologists, such as Howard Carter, excavated many of these treasures and studied them to learn more about life at this time.


Timeline of British history from Stone Age to Modern Britain, including the Iron Age, Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, Normans, Tudors, Civil War & Revolution, Industrial Revolution, Victorians, World Wars, and Modern Britain.

# Glossary

<b>BC</b> 'Before Christ' or the time before Christ was born.	
Afterlife	Belief that after death the soul is reborn in a spiritual world
Amulet	Good luck charm
Ancient	Belonging to the distant past


Archaeology	The study of the past through artefacts and remains
Artefact	An object made by a human
Canopic Jar	Jar used to hold the organs from a mummified body
Cartouche	A tablet or stone carved with writing or pictures
Chronological	In time order or the order in which it really happened
Civilisation	A large organised group of people with their own language and well-developed way of life
Embalm	To prepare a dead body to preserve it so it doesn't decay
Excavate	To dig up
Hieroglyphics	The name for Egyptian writing
Irrigation	To supply land or crops with water
Linen	Cloth made from the flax plant
Mummy	An embalmed body
Papyrus	Paper made from a plant which grows in and around water
Pharaoh	The monarchs of Ancient Egypt (male or female)
Pyramid	A structure with sloping sides and a pointed top built as the tomb of pharaohs
Rosetta Stone	A stone with Egyptian laws inscribed in three languages including hieroglyphics
Sarcophagus	A stone coffin
Shabti Dolls	Dolls or figures placed in a tomb to go with the deceased to the afterlife
Shaduf	A hand-operated device for lifting water
Sphinx	A mythical creature with a lion's body & pharaoh's head
Tomb	A vault or building in which to bury the dead

**7500 BC**



The first settlers arrived in the Nile Valley.

**3200 BC**




Hieroglyphs are used to keep trade records.

**2640 BC**




The first pyramids are built.

**2555 BC**




The pyramids at Giza are built for the kings Kufu, Kharge and Menkaure.

**2250 BC**



The Great Sphinx is built.

**2200 BC**




First ploughs attached to oxen.

**1539 BC**



Valley of the Kings starts and Pharaohs are buried with their treasures.

**1332 BC**



The 10 year rule of Tutankhamun begins.

**51 BC**




Cleopatra's reign begins, the Egyptian civilisation ends.

## The Nile

Egypt is largely desert. The Nile was the vital source of water and of the Ancient Egypt's wealth. Great Egyptian cities grew up along the Nile which provided:


- **Water & Food**
- **Transport & trade**
- **Building materials**
- The **papyrus** plant to make a type of paper



## Farming

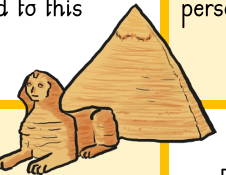
The Ancient Egyptians had 3 seasons based around the annual flooding of the River Nile: **Akhet** (flood), **Pereh** (growing), **Shemu** (harvest)

**Irrigation:**  
The Egyptians dug channels to divert flood water to fields. They invented the **shaduf** to lift the water onto the land.




## Building

They were skilled builders. Towns were built using mud bricks and stone was used for more important buildings such as the **pyramids of Giza**, and statues such as the **Sphinx**. These have survived to this day and are now 4000 years old!




## Society

Ancient Egypt was highly organised and had a strict social structure. The Pharaoh (the king or queen) was the most powerful person in the kingdom. It was believed he or she was half-man, half-god.



## Invention

The Egyptians were very good at maths – they had to be, to invent and work out how to build **pyramids** so perfectly! They also invented **paper, writing, astrology, the calendar, and glassblowing**. Ancient Egyptian writing is known as **hieroglyphics**.



## Beliefs

Religion was a big part in the lives of the Ancient Egyptians. They believed in many of **gods** and **goddesses** which could take different forms, usually animals. They believed that there was a life after death. To get to the **afterlife**, the body had to be preserved. This is why the Egyptians used the **embalming** process, or **mummification**, to preserve the dead.

