

Egypt

Egypt is in the north-east corner of Africa and is well-known for its ancient history and culture. Much of Egypt is covered in desert and there is very little rain. The Nile is the main river that flows through Egypt.



A map of Egypt

Life in ancient Egypt

The Nile played an important part in the daily life of the ancient Egyptians. It provided water, food, transportation and excellent soil for growing food. The people of ancient Egypt built cities, temples, palaces and pyramids on both sides of the river and created a great civilisation. The Egyptian people were ruled by a pharaoh. Pharaohs were the richest and most powerful kings or queens and were believed to be messengers of the gods. The rest of the people were organised into a very strict hierarchical system of viziers; nobles; scribes; priests; farmers, craftspeople and soldiers; peasants and slaves.

Ancient Egypt

Afterlife

One of the key beliefs in ancient Egypt was that when a person died, their spirit would live again in the afterlife. The ancient Egyptians had special rituals to prepare the body, and the dead were buried with possessions that would help them in the afterlife, such as food, drink, clothes and treasures. The pharaohs had huge tombs built to house their bodies and possessions. These tombs are the famous Pyramids of Giza that are guarded by a sphinx.

Term	Definition
Pyramid	A group of huge monuments in the desert of Egypt. Most pyramids were built for tombs for the countries Pharaohs.
Artefact	An item that has been made of changed by past human cultures
Amulet	A small object that a person wears, carries, or offers to a God because he or she believes it will magically power.
Pharaoh	A ruler in ancient Egypt
Irrigation	The process of washing out an organ or wound with continuous water or medication.
Sarcophagus	A stone coffin, usually made with a sculpture or inscription associated with the ancient Egyptians

Egyptian gods

Ancient Egyptians believed that many different gods and goddesses controlled the world. They were thought to look like humans and animals and each god represented a different aspect of life in ancient Egypt. The Egyptians performed rituals and built temples to honour the gods.

Ra was the most important Egyptian god. He was the god of the Sun and was thought to be reborn every morning.

Anubis was the god of embalming and the dead. He had the head of a jackal and the body of a man.

Ma'at was the goddess of truth, justice and harmony. She symbolised the balance of life on Earth.

Tefnut was the goddess of moisture and the mother of the sky and the Earth. She had the head of a lioness.



Ra

Anubis

Ma'at

Tefnut

Hieroglyphics

Ancient Egyptian writing is called hieroglyphics. Hieroglyphics use pictures to represent different objects, sounds, actions and ideas. Each character is known as a hieroglyph. There are more than 700 hieroglyphs. In 1799, a stone carving called the Rosetta Stone was found in Egypt. The Rosetta Stone had the same writing on it in three different languages and helped a Frenchman, Jean-François Champollion, to read hieroglyphics.