

EVERYTHING ANCIENT EGYPT

Find out about the jobs, buildings, fashions, beliefs and culture of the Ancient Egyptians...

GODS & GODDESSES

Ancient Egyptians believed in more than 2,000 deities! They had gods for everything, from dangers to chores! Each had different responsibilities and needed to be worshipped so that life could be kept in balance. Check out our faves...

RA

Hawk-headed sun god Ra was one of the most important gods of all. He was gobbled up every night by the sky goddess Nut, then reborn every morning at sunrise.



TEFNET

Controlling the rain and water, lion-headed Tefnet was the goddess of moisture. She was spat into existence by her dad, Ra, the sun god.



BES

A dwarf with lion features, little Bes's job was to look after babies and mums. He also protected against scorpion bites. And nightmares. What a guy!



ANUBIS

This dog-faced deity was the god of embalming and the dead. Wild dogs, or jackals, were often seen hanging around in cemeteries, so it was thought they watched over people in the afterlife.



SOBEK

The god of the waterways, Sobek was a fierce protector of Egyptian people. He also liked to eat flesh. In pools crocodiles were kept in pairs at temples to honour him.



HAPI

This blue pot-bellied fellow was the god of the Nile, responsible for the annual flooding of the great river.



Well, almost everything!

The kingdom of Ancient Egypt lasted for a whopping 3,000 years. Through the heart of this great civilisation flowed the mighty River Nile, which provided water for drinking, washing and transportation.

Fantastic flood

The Nile flooded every year, but this wasn't a disaster — it was brilliant! The annual swelling of the river soaked the surrounding fields. Then, when the waters receded, they left behind rich black mud that was great for growing crops in.

People power

In the months when the river was flooded, farmers were made to do national service — working to build pyramids, tombs and monuments for the pharaohs. World-famous places like Giza (right) were once huge construction sites, cities of 20,000 labourers working to build the giant tombs. The workers were fed, clothed, housed and given medical care, so they weren't exactly slaves, as once was thought.



This cool vulture goddess pendant was found in King Tut's tomb!

Magic crafts

Many other Ancient Egyptians worked for the pharaoh's government, decorating

tombs and temples and creating precious jewellery and objects. Paintings were created using a grid and following a set of 'magical rules' — because if they were exactly the right proportions, they would come alive in the afterlife! These highly skilled craftspeople weren't famous like today's artists, and wouldn't get credit for their work — it was just another job.

Marvellous medicines

Magic and medicine went side by side in Ancient Egypt! As well as having amazing medical knowledge — such as how to set broken bones, make effective medicines from herbs and perform minor surgery — doctors had some wacky ideas, too. Docs would prescribe mice to cure coughs, pig's teeth to calm dodgy tummies and even smear crocodile poo on skin to get rid of demons!



FUNKY FASHIONS!

The long black beaded hairstyles of Ancient Egyptians were actually wigs. Their real hair was shaved off so they wouldn't catch lice. Even their beards were fake! Thick black eyeliner and green eye shadow were worn by both men and women as it was said to protect against eye infections — and help fight off evil!

The complicated mummification process shows that Egyptians had a good knowledge of the human body.



Egyptians were the first people to keep cats as pets. Cats were considered sacred — more mummified moggles have been found than humans!

FAMOUS PHAROHS!

Roughly 170 kings ruled Ancient Egypt, but the unpopular ones were erased from monuments, so they're hard to keep track of! Here are some of the most well known...

KHUFU



REIGN 2589 — 2566 a.c.
FAMOUS FOR Building the Great Pyramid of Giza — which was the world's biggest building for nearly 4,000 years
• The entire project took about 23 years to complete, during which time 2,300,000 building blocks, weighing an average of 2.5 tonnes each, were moved!

HATSHEPSUT



REIGN 1479 — 1458 a.c.
FAMOUS FOR Being the most powerful female ruler — and one of the most successful ever
• Taking over the throne from her stepson, by claiming the gods had given her permission!
• Dressing as a king and wearing a fake beard!

RAMESSES II



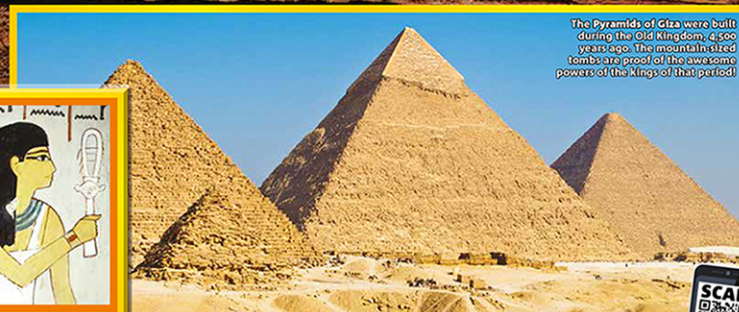
REIGN 1279 — 1213 a.c.
more than 65 years. Woah!
FAMOUS FOR Being a fierce warrior
• Having over 100 kids
• Building more monuments than any other king
• Living to be over 90 — more than double the average life expectancy!
• Having red hair
• Travelling around with a pet lion!

CLEOPATRA VII



REIGN 51 — 30 a.c.
FAMOUS FOR Being the last ever pharaoh
• Having relationships with two Roman generals — Julius Caesar and Mark Antony
• Committing suicide when
• Inspiring many films, plays and stories worldwide

The Pyramids of Giza were built during the Old Kingdom, c.4,500 years ago. The mountain-sized tombs are kings of the awesome powers of the pharaohs of that period!



Turn over to read about Egyptian hieroglyphics...