

Life Along the River Nile

Learning objective: To understand the importance of the River Nile to Ancient Egyptian civilisation.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below. Use full sentences where appropriate.

Ellie the elephant loves exploring the history of Ancient Egypt. She often tells her friends that without the River Nile, the great civilisation of Egypt would never have survived. The Nile was the heartbeat of the land, providing water for people, animals, and crops in the middle of a vast, dry desert. Every year, the river flooded, leaving behind a thick layer of rich, dark mud called silt. This made the ground perfect for growing wheat and barley to make bread and beer. To help move water from the river to their fields, farmers used a clever tool called a shadoof, which worked like a giant lever. Beyond farming, the Nile was used as a busy highway for boats carrying stone for building massive pyramids or papyrus reeds to make paper. Because the river was so reliable, the Ancient Egyptians were able to build thriving cities, beautiful temples, and grand monuments. It is no wonder that the people considered the river a precious gift from the gods, essential for their way of life.

Word bank: civilisation · fertile · pharaoh · shadoof · silt · papyrus

1. What was the name of the tool farmers used to help move water to their crops? (1 mark)

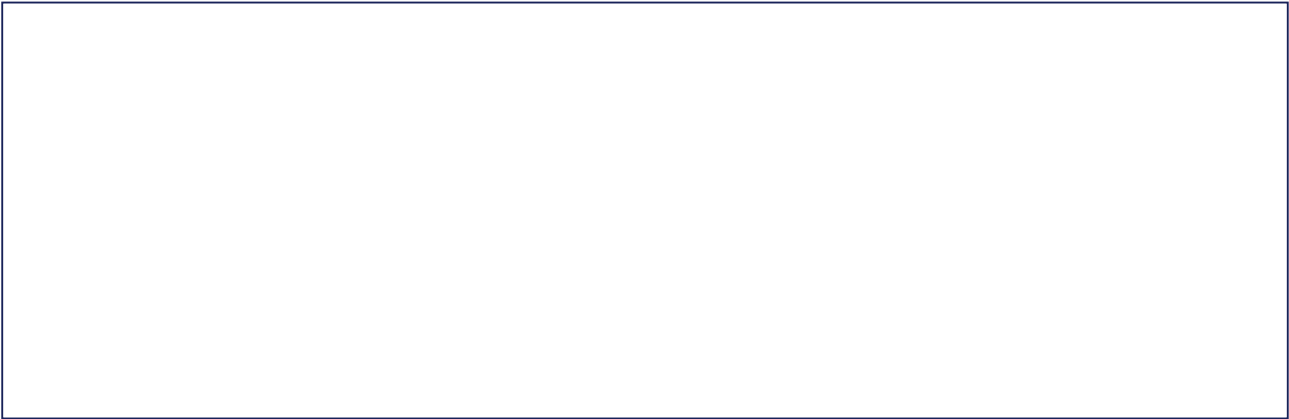
2. What two crops does the text mention that the Ancient Egyptians grew? (1 mark)

3. Why do you think the Ancient Egyptians called the Nile a 'gift'? (2 marks)

4. How did the yearly flooding of the Nile help the farmers? (2 marks)

5. If you lived in Ancient Egypt, would you rather be a farmer or a boat trader? Explain your choice. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of the River Nile showing a farmer using a shadoof near the water and a boat sailing in the background.



Extension challenge: Research how papyrus was turned into paper and write a short paragraph explaining the process.