

Life Along the River Nile: Ancient Egypt

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

Read the passage below carefully, then answer the questions that follow in full sentences.

Ellie the elephant loves to look back in time, and she finds the story of Ancient Egypt truly fascinating. Over 5,000 years ago, a great civilisation grew along the banks of the River Nile. Without this mighty river, Egypt would have been nothing more than a dry, sandy desert. Every year, the Nile flooded, leaving behind a thick layer of dark, nutrient-rich soil called silt. This made the land perfectly fertile for growing crops like wheat and barley, which were essential for feeding the growing population.

Beyond farming, the Egyptians were brilliant inventors. They created a type of paper called papyrus from reeds found in the marshes. They also developed a complex system of irrigation, digging canals to carry water to fields further away from the riverbank. The Pharaoh, who was the supreme ruler, was responsible for keeping the country running smoothly. Whether they were building massive stone pyramids or painting intricate stories on temple walls, the Ancient Egyptians built a culture that has captured our imaginations for thousands of years. It is no wonder Ellie is so captivated by their incredible ingenuity.

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

1. What is the name of the substance left behind by the Nile that made the soil fertile? (1 mark)

2. According to the text, what were two specific crops grown by the Ancient Egyptians? (1 mark)

3. Why was the invention of irrigation canals important for the people living in Ancient Egypt? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, why might the Egyptians have been considered a clever or 'ingenious' society? (2 marks)

5. If you were a farmer living in Ancient Egypt, do you think you would have preferred to live near the Nile or further away? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene of the River Nile in Ancient Egypt. Include the river, a field of crops, and a pyramid in the background.



Extension challenge: Research one Ancient Egyptian invention other than papyrus or irrigation and write a short paragraph explaining how it changed daily life.