Year 4 History

The Ancient Egyptians

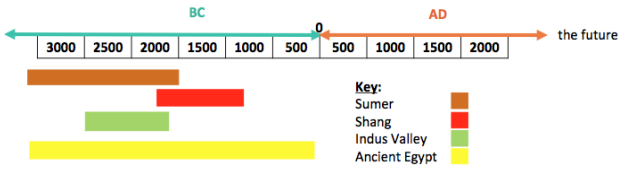
How much did the Ancient Egyptians achieve?

What I should already know:
How people lived in Britain during the Stone Age, the Bronze Age and the Iron Age.

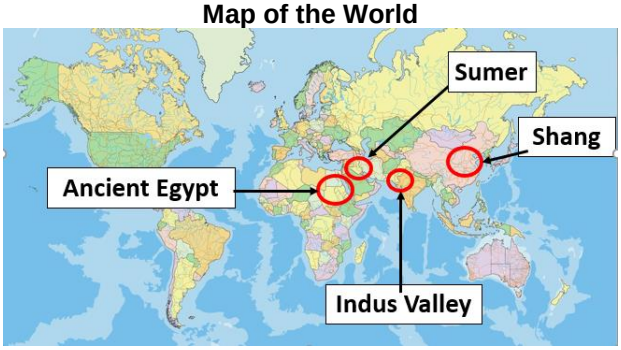
Lesson 1: Why were people able to prosper in the desert land of Ancient Egypt? (Activity: draw the River Nile onto a map of Ancient Egypt and note down key facts about it and why it was important around the edge.)

- Ancient Egypt (in Africa) overlapped in time with ancient civilisations in Asia: the Sumer, the Shang and the Indus Valley.
- The Bronze Age in Britain overlapped in time with the Ancient Egyptian civilisation.
- The River Nile gave the Ancient Egyptians fertile farming land, fresh water, mud for building, fresh fish and a way of transporting things more easily by boat.

Timeline



Map of the World



to prosper	*to do well, live successfully*
ancient	*very old – from more than 1,500 years ago*
civilisation	*a developed, organised society that large numbers of people live within*
BC	*the time before the birth of Jesus*
AD	*the time after the birth of Jesus*
fertile	*good conditions for growing crops*
River Nile / Nile River	*the main river that flows through Egypt and the longest river in the world*

Lesson 2: Why do we know so much about the Ancient Egyptians? (Activity: create a picture glossary of Ancient Egyptian artefacts and remains.)

- Pyramids, artefacts and mummies have survived for thousands of years.
- Pharoahs were mummified and buried in very secure tombs with their belongings, some of which have been discovered and studied.
- The tomb of the pharaoh Tutankhamun was discovered in 1922 by the archaeologist Howard Carter while he was digging in the Valley of the Kings.

Howard Carter with Tutankhamun's coffin case

hieroglyphs

artefact	*object made in the past*
archeologist	*someone who uncovers and studies ancient objects*
tomb	*where a body is buried*
pyramid	*a stone structure built in Ancient Egypt*
pharaoh	*an Egyptian king*
cartouche	*an engraved stone tablet*
papyrus	*a plant with papery leaves that the Egyptians wrote on*
mummy	*a preserved body*
sarcophagus	*a stone coffin*

Lesson 3: How and why did the Ancient Egyptians mummify their dead? (Activity: ordering the steps in the mummification process.)

- The Ancient Egyptians believed in many different gods and in an afterlife.
- The point of mummification was to preserve the body so that the dead person would have it in the afterlife.
- The families of most people could not afford mummification. It was saved for pharaohs, members of the nobility and people who had important roles in society.

A mummy - mummification

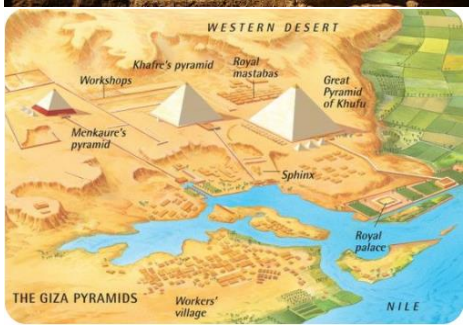
canopic jars

afterlife	*life after death*
natron	*special salt for mummification*
to embalm	*to preserve something to stop it from rotting*
Anubis	*Egyptian god of the dead*
linen	*a natural fabric*
The Book of the Dead	*pictures spells and other writing papyrus to help a deceased person reach the afterlife*
organs	*the parts of the body that perform a special function, eg. heart, lungs, liver, kidneys*

Lesson 4: What can we learn about the Ancient Egyptians from the Great Pyramid? (Activity: In groups, children devise a theory about how and why the pyramids were built for a class discussion.)

- The Great Pyramid of Khufu at Giza is 147m high, 230m wide and its stones together weigh 6.5 million tonnes.
- The Great Pyramids were built during the same century as Stonehenge.
- Wheels had not been discovered so it is thought Ancient Egyptians used ramps to move the rocks.
- It is thought that the River Nile was used to transport huge rocks over long distances.

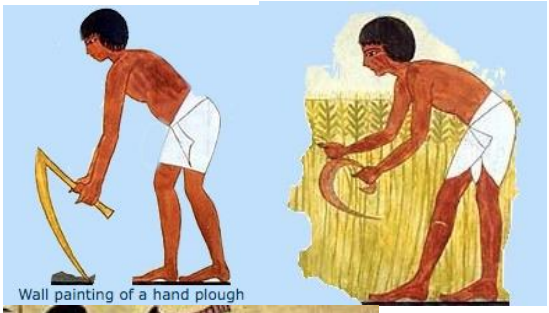
The Great Pyramid of Khufu and sphinx



engineering	*to do with designing and building structures and machines*
a lever	*a simple machine that helps to lift heavy loads*
a chisel	*a tool for scraping/splitting rock*
copper saw	*metal tool for cutting rock*
limestone	*a type of rock (soft)*
granite	*a type of rock (hard)*
a quarry	*a pit where rock is cut out to be used*
a raft	*a floating platform*
a ramp	*a built slope*
ambitious	*to aim to achieve a lot*

Lesson 5: How did different groups contribute to the achievements of Ancient Egyptian society? (Activity: In pairs, children match roles to their correct definitions, then order them by importance, being able to justify their order. Write their opinion on which role is the most important and why. Share with class to understand all roles were important to the society's success.)

- Ancient Egyptian society was very organised, different groups of people did different jobs.
- This organisation helped Egyptians achieve a lot.
- Farmers were important because they produced lots of crops.
- They kept lots of animals e.g. oxen, sheep, goats and cows.
- They kept bees for honey. Honey was used as a sweetener because they did not have sugar.

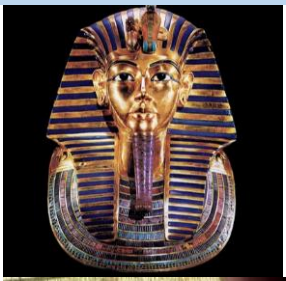


Farming

a role	*part played by a person in society*
a hierarchy	*order of importance*
'White Kilt'	*upper-class people in Ancient Egypt*
Army General	*army leader*
a vizier	*pharaoh's special advisor*
a priest	*religious leader*
an engineer	*highly-skilled building worker*
a physician	*doctor*
a scribe	*men who could read and write*
a peasant	*lower-class workers in farming roles*
a slave	*workers who were owned by someone else*
agriculture	*farming*
a plough	*a farm tool for turning the soil*
a sickle	*a tool for cutting crops and grass*
irrigation	*channeling water to crops*

Lesson 6: BIG FINISH - What should we include in our Ancient Egyptian time capsule? (Activity: Draw and write what you would choose to go in an Ancient Egyptian time capsule and why.)

- We know so much about the Ancient Egyptians because so many artefacts have survived from that time.
- Artefacts allow historians and archeologists to research and learn about what life was like in Ancient Egypt.



Death mask of Tutankhamun

hieroglyphs

time capsule	*method of storing items or information to help future people learn about the past*
achievement	*something done successfully with effort, skill or courage*
egyptology	*the study of Ancient Egypt*

Unit Quiz