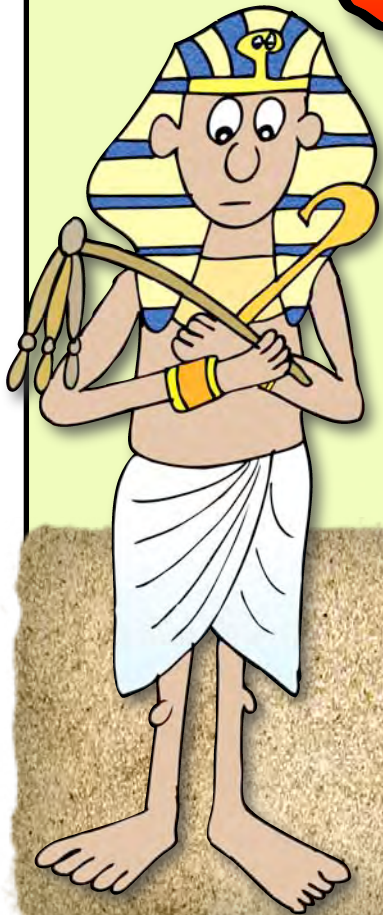
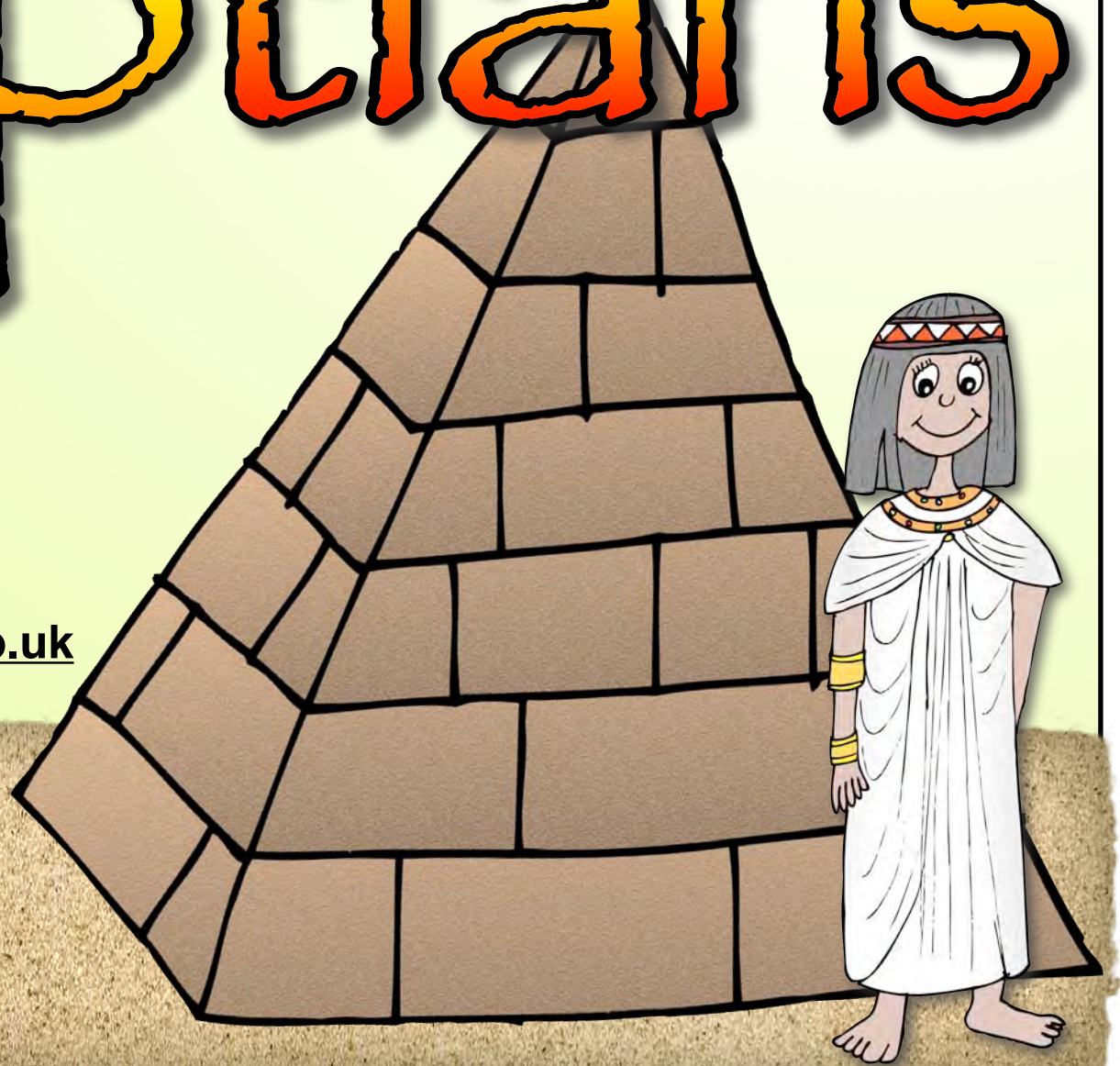


The Egyptians



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*By Helen and
Mark Warner*



Who were the Ancient Egyptians?

In this section, you will learn about...

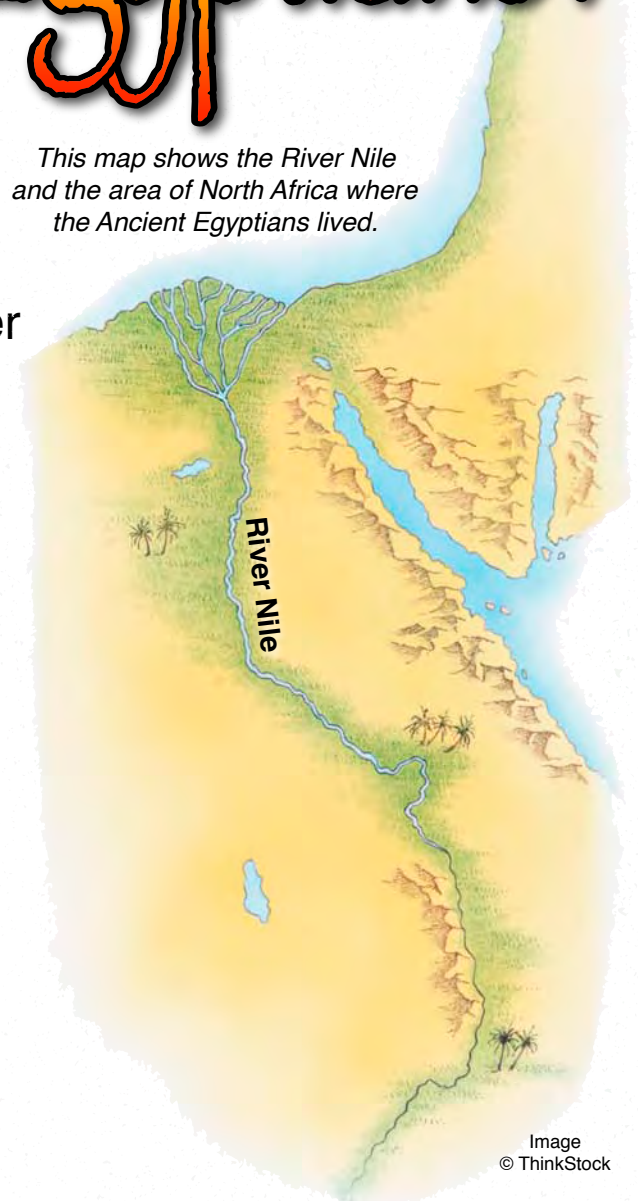
1. When the Ancient Egyptians lived.
2. The River Nile and why it was important to the Ancient Egyptians.
3. How long the Ancient Egyptians ruled for.

The Ancient Egyptian civilisation was one of the greatest ancient civilisations.

The Egyptians began to settle by the River Nile in Egypt around 3100BC. Egypt is a very hot country, which is covered in deserts, so the River Nile was essential to their success.

The river provided water, irrigation for farming and enabled the Egyptians to travel and trade using boats. The surrounding desert also protected the people from attack.

This map shows the River Nile and the area of North Africa where the Ancient Egyptians lived.



Did you know?

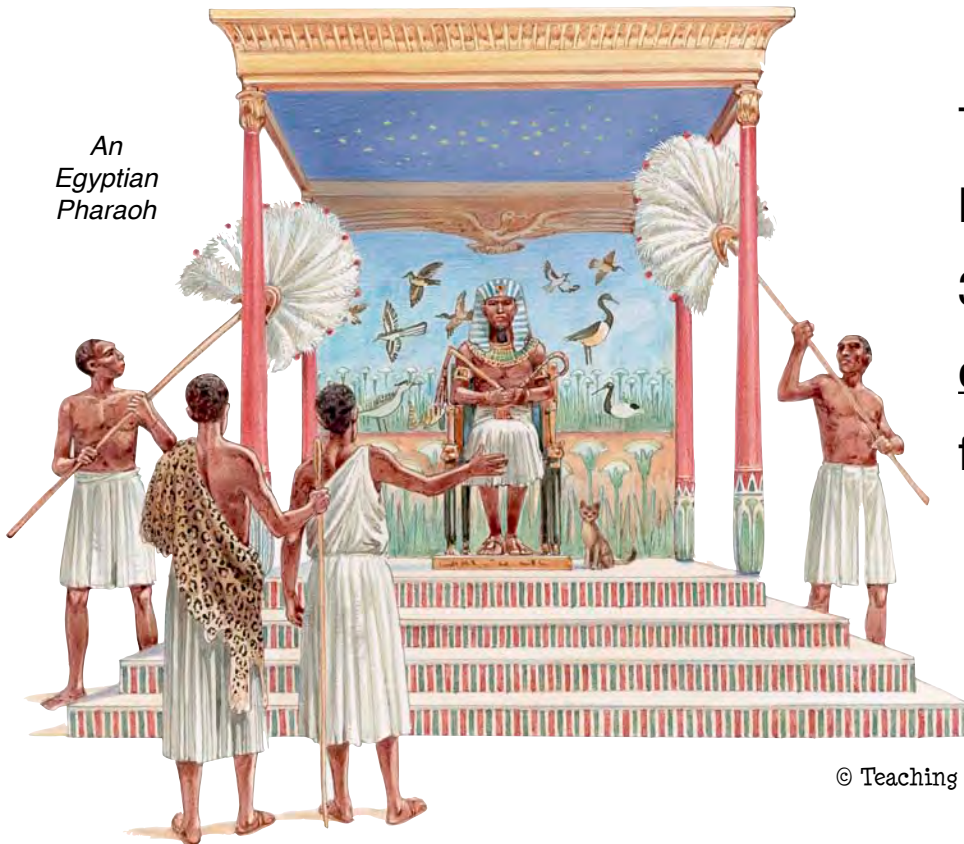
The Egyptians called the area of land near the River Nile **Kemet** (which means 'The Black Land'). They thought that black was the colour of life because it was the colour of their soil.

The Ancient Egyptians were able to increase their **wealth** by finding gold and precious stones in the rocks under the sand.

The Egyptian people were ruled by kings called **Pharaohs**. They also had very clever **engineers** who built cities full of wonderful buildings, **temples**, palaces and **tombs**.

Many of these tombs still stand today.

An
Egyptian
Pharaoh



The Ancient Egyptians lived and ruled Egypt for 3000 years until they were **conquered** by people from other countries.

A gold bust of the
Egyptian pharaoh
Tutankhamun.

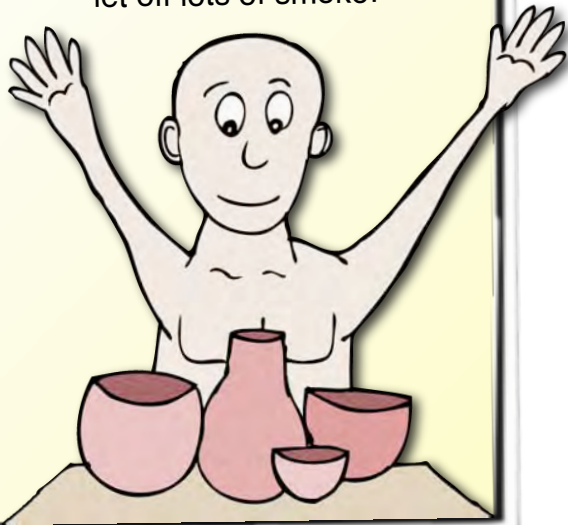


Craftsmen

There were lots of different types of craftsmen in Ancient Egypt:

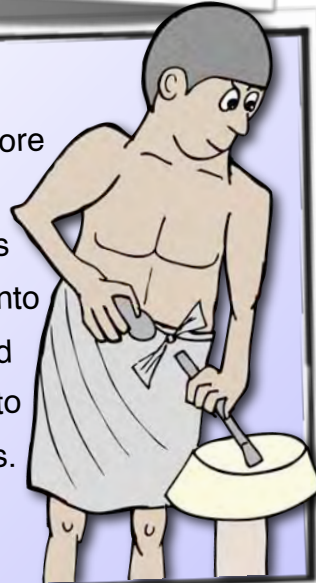
Tanners worked in **tanneries**, beating animal skins and treating them until they were smooth enough to make clothes or harnesses for horses and chariots.

Potters spun clay, using simple wheels, to make pots and bowls. The **kilns** that they used to heat and harden the clay let off lots of smoke!



Glass workers used glass to glaze pots and beads. Later on, as their skills developed during the New Kingdom, they could make brightly coloured jars and bottles.

Metal workers heated ore (rock containing metal) to extract copper. It was then moulded, beaten into copper sheets, cut and hammered into shape to make tools or weapons.



Jewellers worked with precious metals such as gold, turning it into jewellery and other treasured decorative items that were bought by the wealthy. Later on, they worked with imported silver.

Carpenters built simple structures and objects (e.g. doors) as well as beautifully decorated items (e.g. carved chests). Egyptian wood was only good enough for basic structures. Imported wood, such as cedar, was saved for the most elaborate, carved work (for the rich and wealthy).



Painters and sculptors

were the most respected and esteemed craftsmen. They were employed by the Pharaoh to decorate **tombs**.

They could become very famous and wealthy.



Egyptian Hieroglyphics

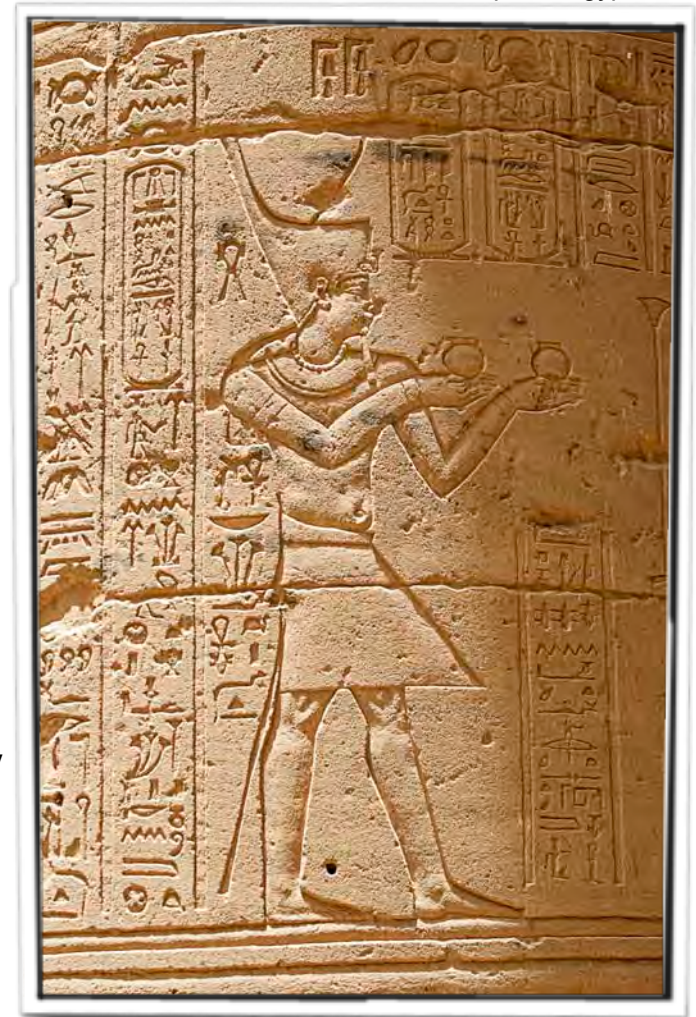
Hieroglyphics at
Philae Temple in Egypt

In this section, you will learn about...

1. The symbols and pictures that Egyptian scribes used to write.
2. The different types of writing that were used by Egyptians.
3. The Rosetta Stone and how it helped us to understand hieroglyphics.

Hieroglyphics were Egypt's first written language. They were 'written' using over 700 different symbols and pictures of birds, beasts and shapes.

Only the most common words had their own sign. Other, more unusual, words were written using sound signs. If there was a word that couldn't be drawn, scribes would draw several words that together sounded like the word that they wanted to write. So, to write '*belief*', they might draw a *bee* and a *leaf*.



Mummification

Because the ancient Egyptians believed in life after death, they also believed that it was important to **preserve** the bodies of the dead. Bodies were wrapped in **bandages** to stop them rotting. We now call these bodies '**mummies**'.

How did the Egyptians preserve the bodies of the dead?

1

Before wrapping a body in bandages, the body was **embalmed** to help preserve it. Embalmers washed the body in palm oil and removed all of the **organs**. The brain was pulled out through the nose using a copper hook. The heart was the only organ that was left in the body. The organs were then dried and placed in four **canopic jars** next to the mummy in their **tombs**.



The four canopic jars all looked different:

1. **Qebhsenuf** (a falcon) protected the intestines,
2. **Duamutel** (a jackal) protected the stomach,
3. **Hapy** (a baboon) protected the lungs,
4. **Imsety** (a human) protected the liver.



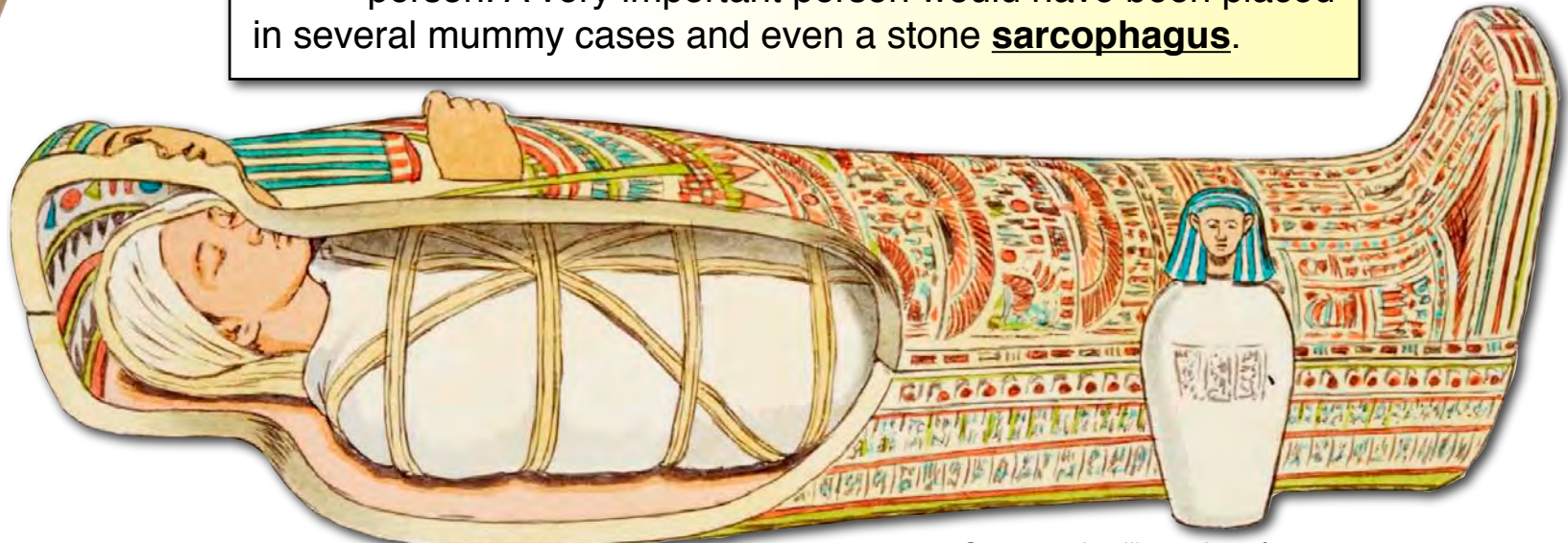


A
canopic
jar.

2 Once the organs were removed, the body was covered in a natural salt called **natron**, which was dug up from the desert. This soaked up any body fluids and dried the body out. Richer people were left in natron for longer periods of time. A Pharaoh might lay in natron for 70 days.

3 Once the body was finished in the natron, it was cleaned and stuffed with saw dust, rags or sand and sweet smelling spices. It was then wrapped in bandages, which were soaked in oil. The very rich were wrapped in fine linen bandages but poor people were wrapped in old linen cloth or sheets. Jewels and **amulets** were placed between the layers of bandages to protect the person in the afterlife.

4 Once the mummy was wrapped, the linen covering them was painted in sticky **resin**. A mask was put over their face and it was placed in a wooden case the shape of a person. A very important person would have been placed in several mummy cases and even a stone **sarcophagus**.



Did you Know?

The Egyptians even mummified their pets to keep them company in the afterlife.

Glossary

Acetum

A diluted acid like vinegar.

Afterlife

Egyptian people believed that the dead came back to life here (in a place called the Field of Reeds).

Amulet

A small figure of a god, goddess or a sacred object.

Ancient

Something that comes from the very distant past.

Ankh

An Egyptian amulet shaped like a cross. This was the Egyptian symbol of life.

Anklet

Jewellery that was worn around the ankle.

Archaeologist

Somebody who studies human history by excavating and looking at objects and artefacts.

Architect

Someone who designs and helps to construct buildings.

Atef crown

A tall crown that was worn by the pharaoh for religious ceremonies.

Bandage

Material that was wound round part (or all) of the body.

Banquet

A gathering of people eating and drinking together.

Barque

A sailing ship.

Barracks

A set of buildings where soldiers and workers stayed.

Canal

A man-made waterway used for irrigation.

Canopic Jar

A jar that was used to hold organs of the body.

Capstone

The piece at the top of a pyramid.

Carpenter

A person who makes objects using wood.

Causeway

A raised roadway that was built over water.

Ceremonies

Special religious or public events.

Chariot

A two-wheeled vehicle that was drawn by horses.

Civilisation

An organised society.

Conquer

To defeat in battle.

Conscript

A person who was forced to do certain work.

Corvée

The tax on Egyptian people, which meant that they had to spend time working on royal building projects.

Crops

Plants grown by farmers for eating.

Demotic

A shorthand version of hieroglyphic writing.

Dynasty

Rules of a country who came from the same family.

Egyptologist

A person who studies the history of Ancient Egypt.

Embalm

To treat a dead body to stop it decaying.

Empire

A group of countries or lands that are under the control of one ruler.

Engineer

Somebody who designs and builds buildings and machines.

Fertile

Soil that is good for growing crops.

Flax

A flowering plant that was cultivated for its fibres. These were spun into linen cloth.

Flood

An overflow of a large amount of water.



My journey had
been almost
impossible,
but I had arrived!

I accidentally pressed the
button on the stopwatch and
it sent me back in time to...
Ancient Egypt!

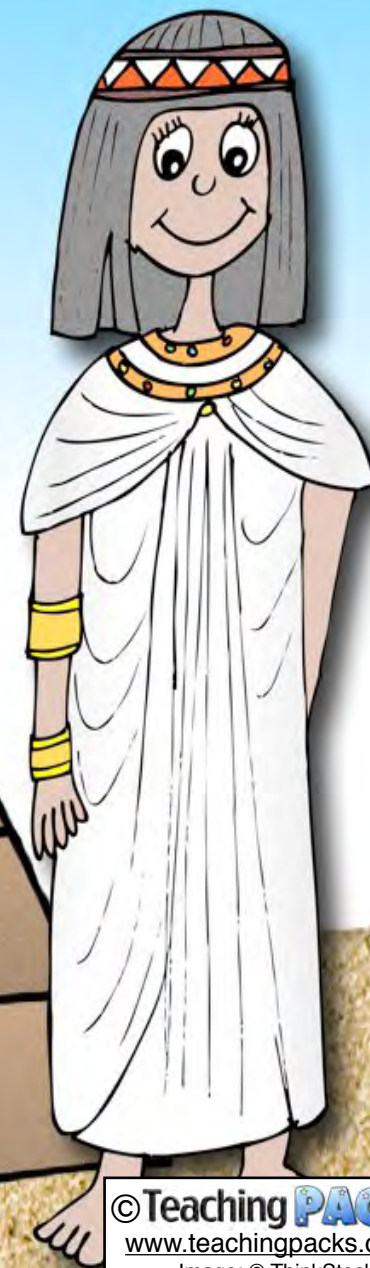




After many years
of searching...
we have finally
discovered the tomb
of Tutankhamun!



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Acetum

Afterlife

Amulet

Ancient

Ankh

Archaeologist

Atef Crown

Bandages

Barque

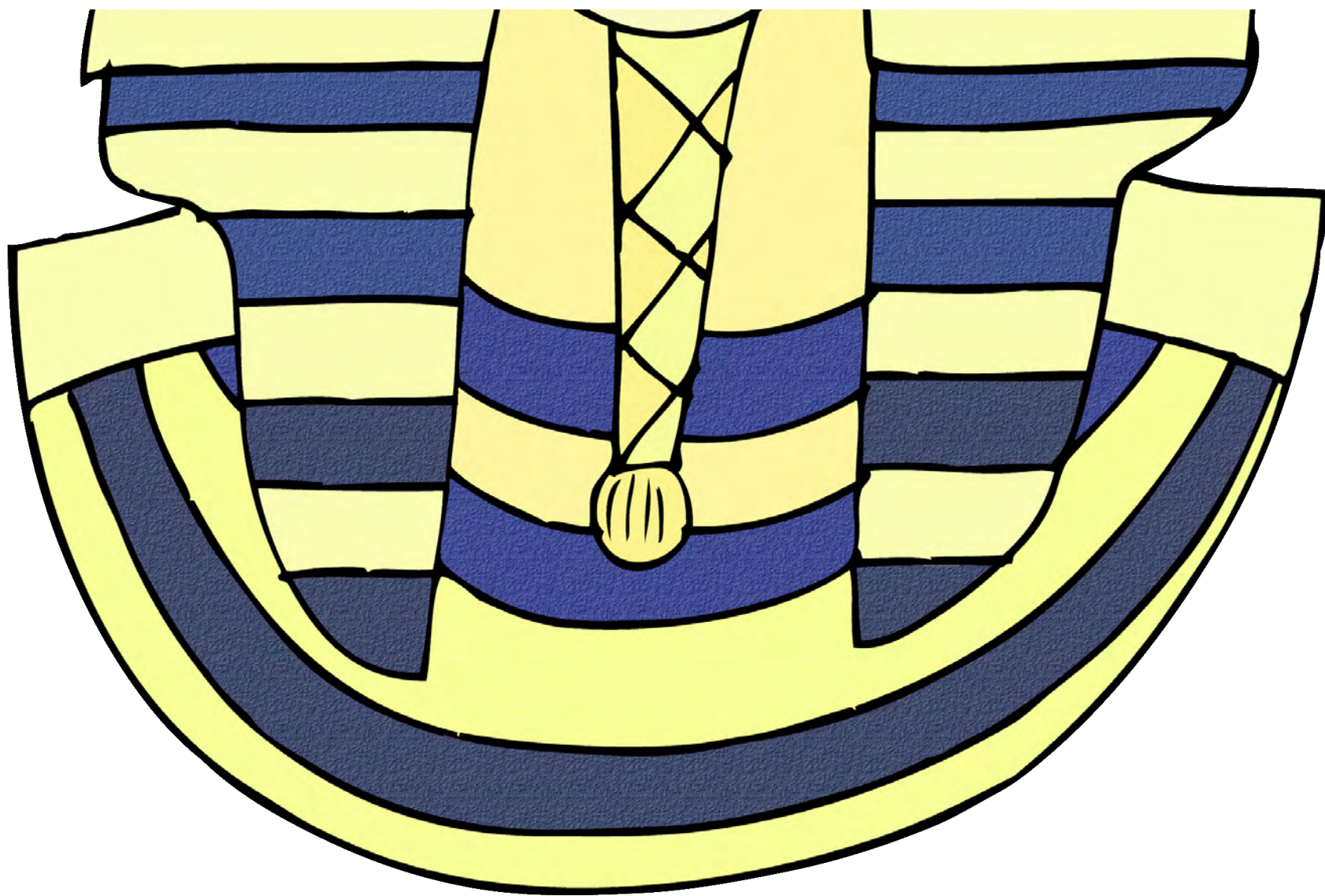
Barracks

Canal

Canopic Jar

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desert

Egypt

hieroglyphics

mummy

Nile

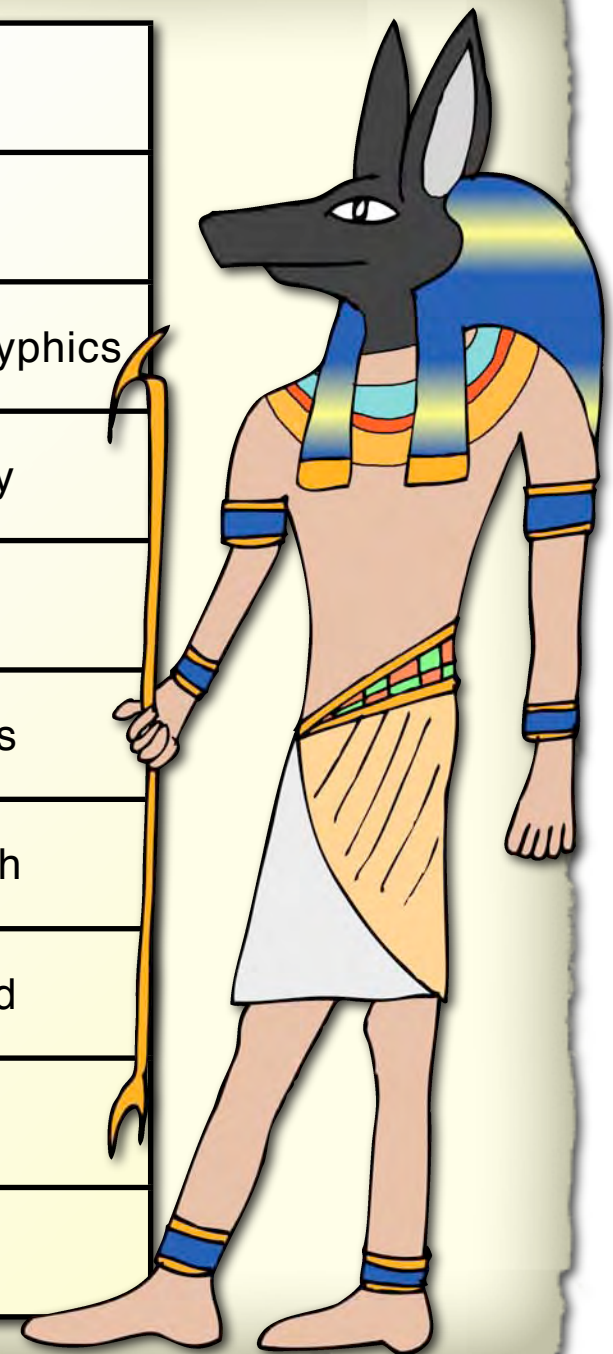
papyrus

pharaoh

pyramid

scribe

sphinx



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Mark and Helen

