

# Egyptian Civilization

Focus Question: How did religion and learning play important roles in ancient Egyptian civilization?

# Lesson Objectives



27. Describe the ways in which religious beliefs shaped the lives of ancient Egyptians.
28. Understand how Egyptians viewed the afterlife.
29. Explain how the Egyptians organized their society.
30. Outline the advances that the Egyptians made in learning, the arts, science, and literature.

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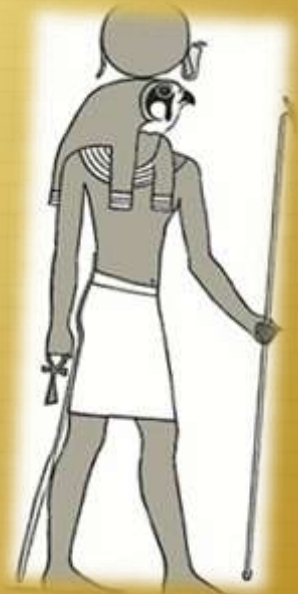
# Religion Shapes Life in Ancient Egypt

- ✦ Religious beliefs about gods, values, and life after death affected the daily lives of ancient Egyptians.
- ✦ We know much about their religion because of inscriptions on monuments and paintings in tombs.



# Chief Gods and Goddesses

- ✦ Chief god was the sun god. → Amon-Re
- ✦ Pharaohs received their right to rule from Amon-Re.
- ✦ Osiris and Isis
  - ✦ Egyptians related more to these gods.
  - ✦ Osiris → god of the afterlife and the Nile
  - ✦ Isis → first taught women how to carry out duties like preparing food and taking care of children.



# A Pharaoh Tries to Reshape Religion

- ✦ 1380 B.C.- Ahmenotep IV challenged the powerful priests of Amon-Re.
- ✦ He worshipped a minor god named Aton.
- ✦ He changed his name to Akhenaton (“he who serves Aton”).
- ✦ His changes had little success. After his death priests of the old gods reasserted their power.



28. Understand how Egyptians viewed the afterlife.



# Proving Oneself to Osiris



- ✦ Each soul had to pass a test to win eternal life.
- ✦ Soul would be ferried across the lake of fire to Osiris.
- ✦ Osiris then weighed each soul's heart against the feather of truth.
- ✦ Sinners → fed to the crocodile shaped "Eater of the Dead".
- ✦ Worthy souls → entered the "Happy Field of Food".



# Preparing the Dead for the Afterlife


- ✦ Believed afterlife would be much like life on earth.
- ✦ Buried the dead with everything they would need for eternity.
- ✦ Perfected **mummification**, the preservation of bodies by embalming them and wrapping them in cloth.




# Evidence found in the Tomb of King Tut

- ✦ Most tombs of Egyptian Pharaohs had been robbed of all their valuables over time.
- ✦ However, in 1922 the tomb of 18 year old King Tutankamen was found.
- ✦ All of the objects found in the tomb fill several rooms in the Egyptian museum in Cairo.



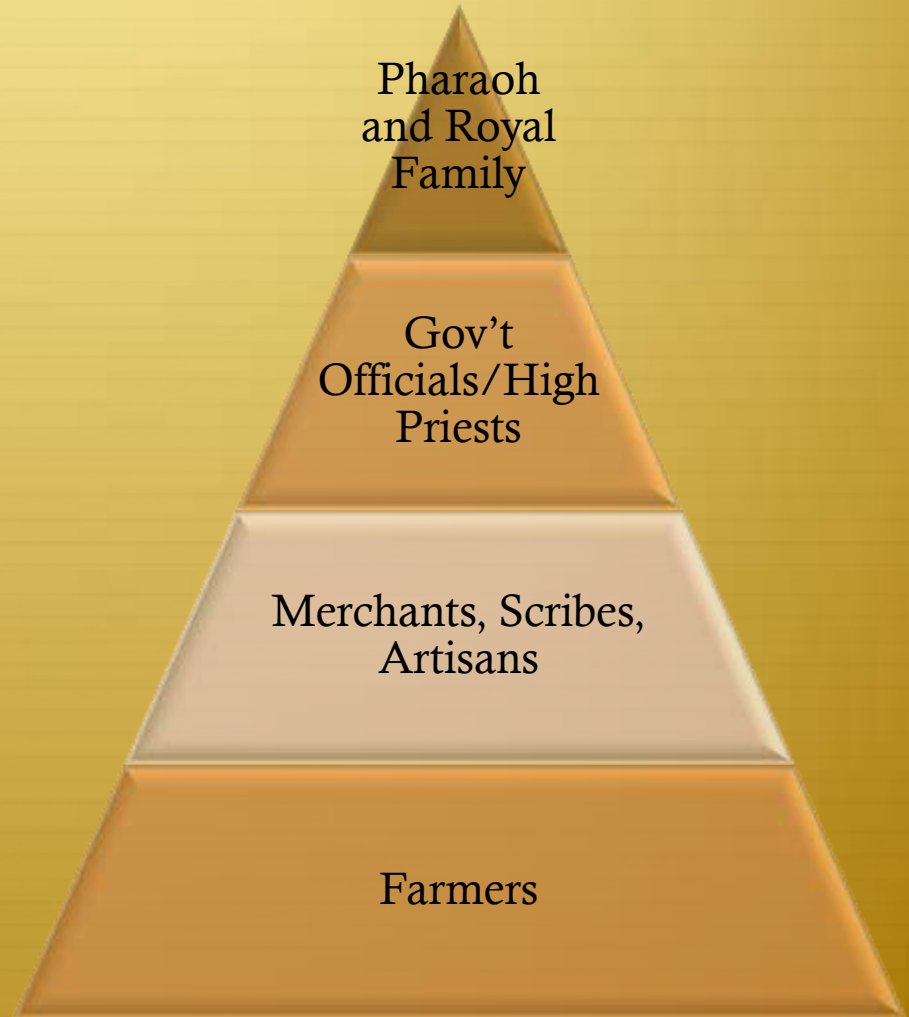


29. Explain how the Egyptians organized their society.



# Egyptians Organize their Society

- ✦ Most people were farmers.
- ✦ Some were slaves.
- ✦ Peasants expected to serve the Pharaoh.
- ✦ More trade allowed for more **social mobility**.



# Egyptian Women Enjoyed Higher Status



- ✦ Women generally enjoyed a higher status than in most ancient civilizations.
- ✦ “The foot of an Egyptian woman may walk where it pleases her and no one may deny her.” – Ramses II
- ✦ Women could NOT:
  - ✦ Learn to read or write
  - ✦ Work as scribes or gov’t officials
- ✦ Women could:
  - ✦ Manage farm estates
  - ✦ Serve as doctors
  - ✦ Could enter the priesthood

30. Outline the advances that the Egyptians made in learning, the arts, science, and literature.



# Egyptians Make Advances in Learning



# Keeping Written Records

- ✦ Egyptians developed several writing systems.
- ✦ **Hieroglyphics**- a system in which symbols or pictures called hieroglyphs represent objects, concepts, or sounds.
- ✦ **Hieratic writing**- a simpler script for everyday use. Cursive like writing which simplified the hieroglyph symbols.
- ✦ **Papyrus**- plant that grows along the Nile. Woven together to make a paper-like material.





# The Clues of the Rosetta Stone

- ✦ After ancient Egypt declined the meanings of Egyptian hieroglyphics and writing was lost.
- ✦ **Rosetta Stone**- a stone with the same passage written in hieroglyphs, demotic script, and Greek.
- ✦ Allowed anthropologists to figure out the meaning of many hieroglyphs.



# Furthering Science and Mathematics

- ✦ Learned about the human body from mummification.
- ✦ Doctors became skilled at observing symptoms, diagnosing illness, and finding cures.
- ✦ Surgical operations performed.
- ✦ Studied the heavens- astronomy
- ✦ Developed geometry- to survey farms and build the pyramids.

