

Ancient Egypt

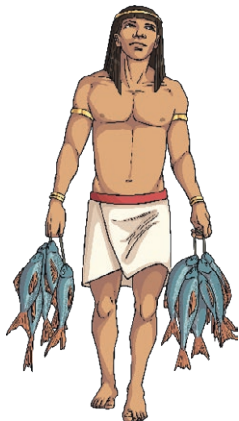
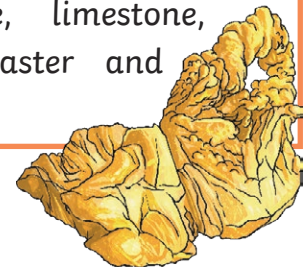
Important to survival in ancient Egypt was the River Nile. At 6,853km long, it is the longest river in the world, starting in the mountains of Tanzania and flowing through most of north-eastern Africa.

'Black Land'

In ancient times its soil was rich for growing crops, which fed and clothed the people who lived along the banks of the Nile. Some of the food grown was also swapped for other goods that could not be found or made in Egypt. The land flooded every year, leaving thick, black sand on the ground, which made it very good for growing plants. This was known as the 'black land'.

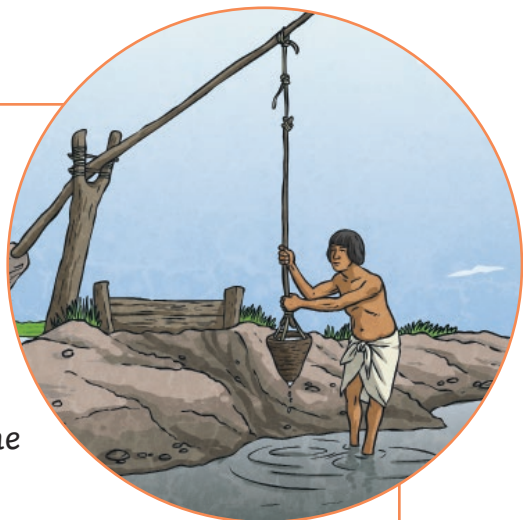
'Red Land'

Egyptians also had 'red land', which was the red, dry desert where nothing could grow. It protected the people of ancient Egypt from enemies because it was so difficult for invading armies to cross. The 'red land' was also full of precious metals and gems such as gold, copper, granite, limestone, amethyst, alabaster and turquoise.



Egyptian people relied on the water of the River Nile for drinking and washing. A useful crop living along the banks of the river was papyrus reeds. They were dried and used to make a type of paper. Travelling along the river were traders (people who sold goods), fishermen and sailors, moving materials such as stones for building pyramids.

Pharaohs enjoyed cruising up and down the river. Meanwhile, ordinary Egyptians created different ways of using the river water as much as possible. One important invention was the shaduf. This was designed to scoop water from the river and move it so that it could be sprinkled on the land where crops were growing.



Questions

1. How long was the River Nile?

2. What does the author mean by the word 'flowing'?

3. If you could choose to live in the 'black land' or the 'red land', which area would you choose to live in and why?

4. Why do you think rivers are so important to people's lives?

5. Name two precious metals found in Egypt.

6. What is a shaduf?
