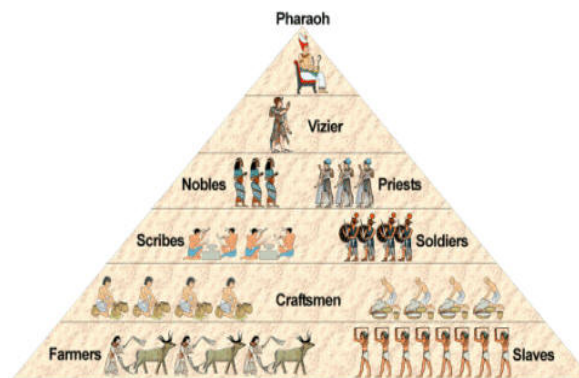


The Egyptians - Society

The ancient Egyptian people were grouped in a hierarchical system with the Pharaoh at the top and farmers and slaves at the bottom. The groups of people nearest the top of society were the richest and most powerful.

The diagram below shows the structure of ancient Egyptian society.



The Pharaoh was believed to be a God on earth and had the most power. He was responsible for making laws and keeping order, ensuring that Egypt was not attacked or invaded by enemies and for keeping the Gods happy so that the Nile flooded and there was a good harvest.



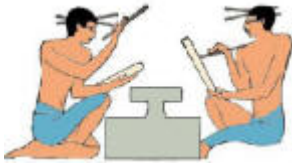
The Vizier was the Pharaoh's chief advisor and was sometimes also the High Priest. He was responsible for overseeing administration and all official documents had to have his seal of approval. He was also responsible for the supply of food, settling disputes between nobles and the running and protection of the Pharaoh's household.



Nobles ruled the regions of Egypt (Nomes). They were responsible for making local laws and keeping order in their region.



Priests were responsible for keeping the Gods happy. They did not preach to people but spent their time performing rituals and ceremonies to the God of their temple.



Scribes were the only people who could read and write and were responsible for keeping records. The ancient Egyptians recorded things such as how much food was produced at harvest time, how many soldiers were in the army, numbers of workers and the number of gifts given to the Gods.



Soldiers were responsible for the defence of the country. Many second sons, including those of the Pharaoh often chose to join the army. Soldiers were allowed to share riches captured from enemies and were also rewarded with land for their service to the country.



Craftsmen were skilled workers such as - pottery makers, leatherworkers, sculptors, painters, weavers, jewellery makers, shoe makers, tailors. Groups of craftsmen often worked together in workshops.



Farmers worked the land of the Pharaoh and nobles and were given housing, food and clothes in return.

Some farmers rented land from nobles and had to pay a percentage of their crop as their rent.



There were no slave markets or auctions in Ancient Egypt. Slaves were usually prisoners captured in war. Slaves could be found in the households of the Pharaoh and nobles, working in mines and quarries and also in temples.

Ancient Egyptian Society Quick Quiz

Answer true or false to the questions below:

1. The Pharaoh was the head of Ancient Egyptian society **T/F**
2. People believed the Pharaoh to be a God on Earth **T/F**
3. The vizier was the Pharaoh's chief advisor **T/F**
4. Soldiers were more important than nobles **T/F**
5. Nobles ruled over regions called Nomes **T/F**
6. Priests taught people about the Gods **T/F**
7. Scribes were able to read and write **T/F**
8. Farmers were more important than soldiers **T/F**
9. Craftsmen were skilled workers **T/F**
10. Slaves were bought at auctions **T/F**

