

Section Reading Support HOW 64 Ancient Egypt and Nubia, Section 4

Egyptian Culture

Everyday Life

- Egyptian society had social classes—pharaoh, upper class (priests, pharaoh's court, nobles with large estates), middle class (merchants, skilled workers), and peasants (large group of farm laborers, and builders)
- Captured prisoners became slaves—slaves had some rights in Egyptian society; they could own personal items and inherit land from their masters
- Most peasants worked the land of wealthier people; during flood season, they worked on roads, temples, and other buildings; when waters went down, they planted and harvested crops; most peasants helped with the harvest
- Women had most of the rights men had—they could own property, run businesses, enter into legal contracts, and travel freely
- Women held various positions—supervisor of farm workers or hunters, priestess, dancer, supervisor of temples and religious sites, and regent

Achievements

- Used a writing system of hieroglyphs
- Made papyrus—an early form of paper—from reeds found in the Nile delta
- Determined the length of a year (365 days) based on astronomical observations
- Used basic math—addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions—to find solutions to everyday problems
- Had a standard unit of measurement
- Performed surgery, set broken bones, and treated injuries
- Created medicines from plants