



The Role of Pharaohs in Ancient Egypt

KS2 HISTORY

Ages 11-14 ⌚ 3 min read

Who Were the Pharaohs?

Pharaohs were the all-powerful rulers of **ancient Egypt**, and they were believed to be living gods. The word "pharaoh" comes from ancient Egyptian and means "great house." For thousands of years, from around **3100 BCE** to **30 BCE**, pharaohs controlled one of the world's greatest civilizations. People trusted and obeyed them completely because they believed pharaohs had special powers that connected them to the gods.

Think of it like: A pharaoh was like a combination of a modern-day president, a religious leader, and a movie star all rolled into one—but with even more power!

Their Most Important Jobs

Ruling the kingdom was the pharaoh's main job. They made all the big decisions about laws, taxes, and how people lived. Pharaohs also **led armies** into battle to protect Egypt and win new lands.

Another huge responsibility was **building monuments**. Pharaohs ordered the construction of incredible temples, palaces, and tombs—including the famous **pyramids**. These buildings showed how powerful they were and were meant to last forever.

Pharaohs were also **religious leaders**. They performed special ceremonies to keep the gods happy and make sure the **Nile River** flooded each year (which was essential for farming). Egyptians believed that if the pharaoh did the right ceremonies, their crops would grow and their country would be safe.

Think of it like: A pharaoh's religious role was like being a school headteacher, a team captain, and the person who organized all special events—they connected everyone to something bigger and more important.

Why People Obeyed Them

Egyptians believed pharaohs weren't just regular humans—they thought **pharaohs were actually gods living on Earth**. This made people willing to work hard, pay taxes, and even die for their pharaoh. Pharaohs owned all the land, all the gold, and all the resources in Egypt, which gave them complete control.

Famous pharaohs like **Ramesses II** and **Tutankhamun** became legendary because of their power and the amazing things they built. Their tombs, filled with treasure, show us today how important and wealthy they were.