

# Project glossary

**afterlife**

The life that is believed to begin after death.

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**ancient Egypt**

A civilisation that existed around the banks of the Nile from c3100 BC until 30 BC.

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**ancient Sumer**

The first civilisation in the world that existed in Mesopotamia, modern-day Iraq, from c4500 BC until c1900 BC.

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**archaeologist**

A person who studies human history by excavating sites and analysing artefacts.

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**archaeology**

The study of human history by excavating sites and analysing artefacts.

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**artefact**

An object that was made in the past, such as a tool.

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**canopic jar**

A wood, stone or clay container with a lid used in ancient Egypt to hold organs from a mummified body.

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**civilisation**

The developed culture and way of life of a society.

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**cuneiform**

Ancient writing used by the Sumerians made up of simple pictures.

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**Fertile Crescent**

The area of land in the Middle East where the first ancient civilisations began.

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**floodplain**

A fertile area of low-lying land near a river that often floods when the river rises.



**hierarchy**

A system in society where people are organised into different levels of importance from highest to lowest.

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**hieroglyph**

A picture or symbol representing a word used in ancient Egyptian writing.

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**Indus Valley**

The area next to the Indus River in modern-day Pakistan and north-west India where the Indus Valley civilisation developed from c2500 BC to c1700 BC.

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**irrigation**

The digging of channels to allow water to flow through a field to water crops.

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**lugal**

The name for a king in ancient Sumer.

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**Mesopotamia**

An ancient historical area in modern-day Iraq where the Ancient Sumerian civilisation developed in c4500 BC.

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**mummification**

The process of preserving a dead body by drying and wrapping that was used by the ancient Egyptians.

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**necropolis**

A large cemetery belonging to an ancient city.

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**nomad**

A person who travels from place to place to find food, water and shelter.

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**papyrus**

A material made in ancient Egypt from the stem of a water plant and used in sheets for writing or painting.

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**pharaoh**

A ruler of ancient Egypt.



**pyramid**

A structure with a square or triangular base and sloping sides used as a royal tomb in ancient Egypt.

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**sarcophagus**

A stone coffin usually decorated with carvings or inscriptions used in ancient Egypt.

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**scribe**

A professional writer.

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***shaduf***

An irrigation device from ancient Egypt that used a lever mechanism to raise water from a water source onto the land.

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**vizier**

The pharaoh's chief minister in ancient Egypt.

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**ziggurat**

A large pyramid in ancient Sumer made from mud bricks, with a temple on top.

