

# Ancient Egypt

*KS2 History*

<b>Mother</b>	
<b>Uncle</b>	a scribe, imperious
<b>Vizier (f)</b>	official
<b>Anubis (m)</b>	God of the Underworld
<b>Isis (f)</b>	whispery, ethereal

*The River Nile.*

**Narrator (m):** You're sitting on the banks of the River Nile. The river is wide and slow moving. Stand up and look at the river stretching all the way across Egypt. Your mother needs you to collect some water so using your bucket, scoop up some water. Carefully carry it back to your house in the South. Don't spill any - water is precious in the dry season ... Are you in the south?

*Mother fades in with farmyard noises*

**Mother (f):** Move you stupid sheep, deary me. Yes, shoo now, into the.... [beat] Oh there you are, darling! Don't worry about that bucket now – put it down. Come and sit with me on the floor. And look! A letter's arrived for you, I think it's from your Uncle. Well come on then, open it up.

**Uncle (m):** "Child, it is time for you to become a scribe. A scribe in the temple of the Sun God Ra."

**Narrator (m):** Holy pyramids! Just think of it! The Pharaoh's temple itself! Ooh and there's more over the page, turn it over, "You must leave immediately. Come to the capital city, Memphis". [thrown] Oh! Now? Really? Yes, well we must do as he says ...of course. Get packing your bag, the only boat leaves in an hour. [almost teary] You mustn't worry about us, we'll be fine...right, that's it then. All ready? [kiss] Off you go then, the boat's in the North... remember to write...!

**Narrator (m):** Grab your bag and walk towards the boat. The warm black mud oozes between your toes, making it hard to walk. Climb into the boat and sit down.

Look back across the fields toward your mother's house. Can you see your her waving? The boat is moving off and she's getting smaller and smaller.

Trail your hand over the side of the boat and feel the coldness of the water. It's a relief from the beating sun, splash it on your face. [noise] Pull your hand out the water! What's that shadow moving the water? It's a hippo! It's coming towards the boat... [sound of the boat

*rocking dangerously, water splashing, screams*] the boat rocks left, now right... it's passed underneath you. That was close. Now you can lie back in the sun and enjoy your journey down the River Nile.

*[Sudden eruption of Ancient Egyptian city hustle and bustle]*

You've arrived in the city! Stand up and look around at all these funny people! You need to find your uncle before it gets dark. There's a door, go and try that one. Go on, knock on it.

**Citizen (f):** What d'you want? Your Uncle, you say? A scribe? I think there's one who lives in the West, go try there.

**Narrator (m):** Get to the West and try another door. Knock on it then!

**Citizen (m):** WHAT! Speak up, speak up I'm deaf. Looking for your uncle. He's a scribe. Hmmm try in the South.

**Narrator (m):** To the South! There's a door!

**Citizen (f):** Yes? You look terribly out of place dear. The scribe? Well there is one living in the East. Go try there.

**Narrator (m):** Off you go! And knock on the door, quick before the sun goes down.

**Uncle:** Ah, yes. It's you. What time do you call this? All the other scribes arrived hours ago. I see your mother's still as disorganized as ever.... Are you sure you're ready to become a scribe? Hmm. Put down your bag and find a space in the room amongst the other scribes.

Point at the jug of water in front of you. Next to it is a little bottle of oil. You need to purify yourself so pour five drops of oil – no more! – into the water. Now wash your face and feet.

Good. I'm going to teach you some simple hieroglyphs, our way of writing. Put down that quill, we're not using papyrus yet! You'd only botch it. Stand up and you can draw in the air. The first hieroglyph to learn is the Sun God Raa. First draw the head of a falcon, that's a bird with a sharp beak and then above it, the sun. Too fast, child, too fast.

[impatient] Let's leave that for now and practice your mummification skills. We preserve the bodies of the dead because your spirit must return to your body so that you can travel to the Kingdom of the dead.

Do you see that corpse on the floor? That's Ramises. Don't worry – he's not real. He's just a fabric one we keep for our trainee scribes. First thing first: you have to pour salt all over his body to stop it from rotting. Then you have to remove the most important organs. Pretend to remove Ramises' lungs from his chest. And put them in a jar. Good. Then the liver, that's just above his belly button and to the side a bit. In the jar. And finally his brain. What about the heart...? No! Leave that! Do you know why? Because Ramises will need his heart in the afterlife. Now I want you to bind him with long white bandages - that's it, wrap him up from head to toe. And finally you have to point your wand at his mouth so it opens to let its spirit back in. Off you go. The reason we do this is....

Hang on, what's this. A letter! Open it up. It's from the Vizier, the Pharaoh's adviser,

**Vizier (f):** "The Pharaoh is dead! All scribes have been called to the great temple".

**Narrator (m):** Oh dear, you're hardly ready at all! We'll have to hope for the best. Come on then, the Great Temple's in the South. Don't bump into any of the other scribes...

**Uncle (m):** Backs to the wall, young scribes, and look up. That's the great Temple. It's huge - over 5 stories high. In a minute The Vizier will come out of the temple. He will choose one scribe to travel with the Pharaoh to the afterlife.

**Narrator (f):** Look up to the top of the stairs of the Great Temple. Is that...? It is! It's the Vizier. Kneel on the floor and bow your head. Now look up at him and listen.

**Vizier:** Our Pharaoh is dead. His spirit will now begin a journey through the underworld. He will need one scribe to go with him ... Let me see...

**Uncle:** [whispering] Stand up quick. Nice and straight! He's coming closer.

**Vizier:** [muttering] No, not quite right. You? Not responsible enough. [louder] And what about...what about you. Hmmm.... [he breathes] Yes. You... are the chosen one.

**Uncle:** Holy Pyramids, I don't believe it. Now, listen carefully. The Pharaoh's Mummy is in there, in the middle of Temple. You've got to help him journey to the afterlife. Are you up to it? You won't see me again - or that mother of yours. You sure? Right then, you better start climbing up the Temple.

**Narrator (f):** Climb the steps which go North. Each step is like a mountain. 47, 48, 49, 50.... You've made it. Look back down at the people far below. This is the last time you'll ever see them again, the last time you'll breathe this air. Turn around and walk into the entrance to the Pyramid. Spread out, sit down and shut your eyes tightly.

*[some kind of sound effect conveying shock, horror, happiness, excitement, fear etc - a tumult if you will then turns into soundscape establishing a large unpopulated tomb; sound of a huge stone being rolled into place, people walking away, sense of being locked in and alone.]*

**Narrator (f):** Did you hear that? That was the last stone being put in place. Open your eyes. It's pitch black - you are deep inside the pyramid. Take a deep breath – smell the rich perfumes and spices. Feel around the floor until you find the oil lamp they left for you. Stand up with your lamp and watch it come to life. Hold it up to head height and investigate the tomb...every corner.

*SCRIPT CONTINUES (THIS IS HALF WAY THROUGH)...*