

Egyptian Pharaohs

Who were they?

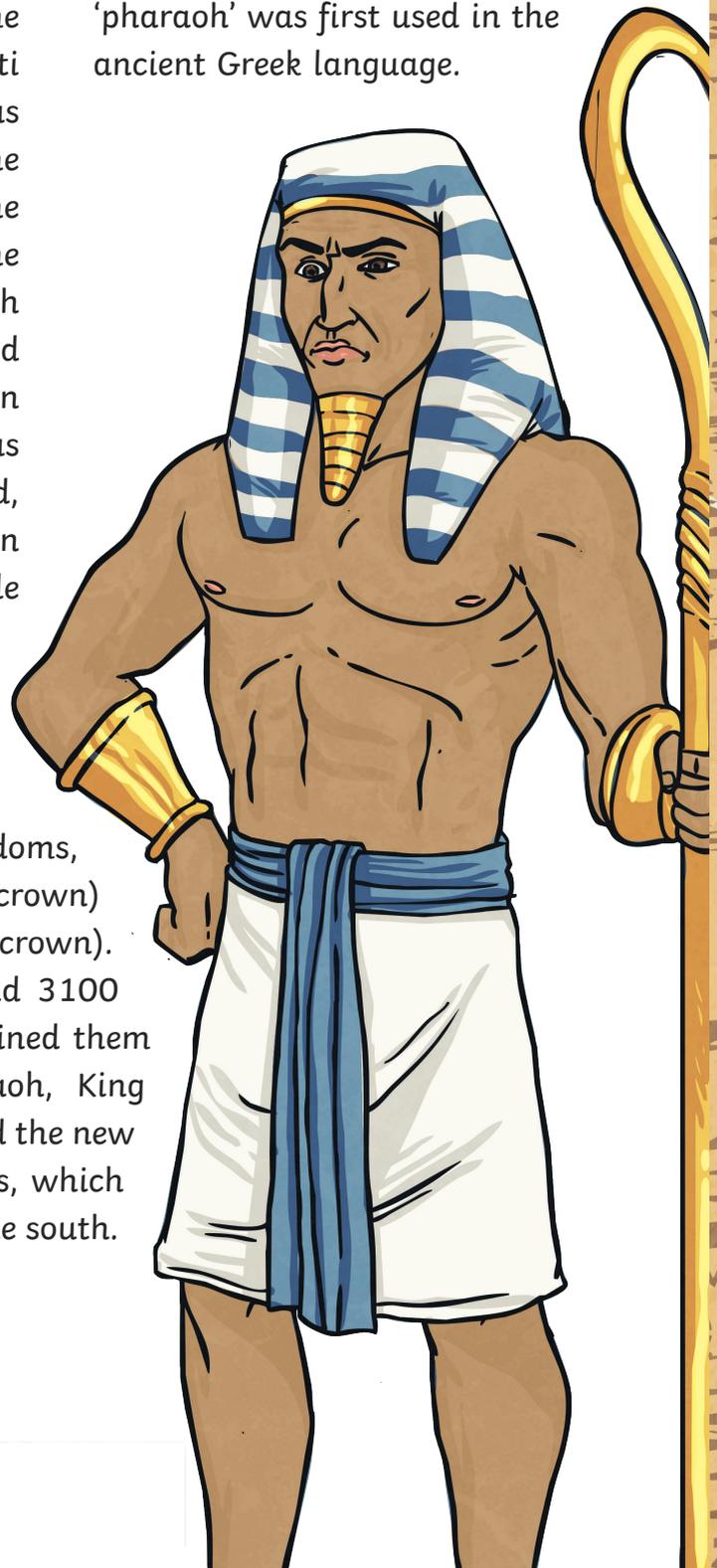
Who were they? The pharaohs were the kings and queens of all of Egypt. Most were men but there were some famous female pharaohs like Nefertiti and Cleopatra. The pharaoh was the most important person in the kingdom and was in charge of the government and every temple. The Egyptian believed that the pharaoh was half-man, half-god. The god half of them was thought to be taken from Horus, the god of the sky. It was thought that after a pharaoh died, they would be joined with the Sun and a new Horus would be sent to rule on Earth.

The First Pharaoh

Egypt used to be split into two kingdoms, Upper Egypt (known as the white crown) and Lower Egypt (known as the red crown). We know that at some time around 3100 BC the north took the south and joined them together and the first true pharaoh, King Narmer ruled over it. Narmer created the new capital of Egypt, known as Memphis, which sat on the border of the north and the south.

Quick Fact

The ancient Egyptians did not call their king a pharaoh. The word 'pharaoh' was first used in the ancient Greek language.



Important Pharaohs

Ramesses II (Ramesses the Great)

Born: 1303 BC. **Died:** 1213 BC

Reign: 1279 - 1213 BC

Ramesses is one of the most famous pharaohs because of his achievements over his long life. He was a great war leader and he held the Egyptian army against many different enemies, like the Hittites, Syrians and Lybians. Ramesses is known for creating one of the first peace treaties with the Hittites to allow peace. Many of the statues still standing today were built for him, including the four statues of himself outside the temple of Abu Simbel (below).

Thutmose III

Born: 1481 BC. **Died:** 1425 BC.

Reign: 1479 - 1425 BC

Thutmose was too young to rule at first so he had his aunt Hatshepsut rule with him. He was not fond of Hatshepsut, even though she was a good ruler, and it is thought he had her killed. Thutmose took the throne and went on to be a famous warrior king, not afraid to go first into battle. He never lost a war and became very well-liked by all for his bravery and strength. In his time as pharaoh, he took back the countries of Syria and Canaan into Egyptian rule which created the largest kingdom at that point.

Cleopatra VII, The Last True Pharaoh

Born: 69 BC. **Died:** 30 BC.

Reign: 51 - 30 BC

Cleopatra was born a princess. Her father was a pharaoh, known as Ptolemy VII. The Ptolemy family was actually Greek but had ruled Egypt for over 300 years. Cleopatra ruled with her brother who then made her leave the palace. In 48 BC, Julius Caesar came to Egypt and they fell in love. Cleopatra got Caesar's army to take back Egypt and they defeated her brother's army so she could rule as pharaoh. Even though she was Greek, Cleopatra loved Egyptian culture and spoke the language. She made a lot of money for the Egyptian kingdom and the people loved her for it.

