



KS2 History Lesson Plan: **Achievements of the Earliest** **Civilisations – Focus on Ancient** **Egypt**

Subject and year group	History – KS2 (Year 3/4 or 4/5)
Duration	60 minutes
Topic and focus	Topic: The achievements of the earliest civilisations Focus: Overview of early civilisations and a depth study of Ancient Egypt

Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, pupils will:

- Know that the first civilisations appeared in different parts of the world (e.g. Ancient Sumer, Indus Valley, Ancient Egypt, Shang Dynasty).
- Locate Ancient Egypt and at least one other early civilisation on a world map.
- Place Ancient Egypt on a timeline in relation to other periods studied.
- Describe key achievements of Ancient Egypt (e.g. pyramids, writing, farming along the Nile, religion).
- Use appropriate historical terms (e.g. civilisation, pharaoh, pyramid, hieroglyphs, Nile).

Key Vocabulary

civilisation, ancient, pharaoh, pyramid, tomb, hieroglyphs, Nile, irrigation, temple, mummy, scribe, archaeologist, timeline, river valley

Resources

- World map showing locations of Ancient Sumer, Indus Valley, Ancient Egypt, Shang Dynasty
- Timeline of world history with early civilisations marked
- Images of Ancient Egyptian achievements (pyramids, temples, hieroglyphs, farming by the Nile, artefacts)
- Short information texts or fact cards about Ancient Egypt
- Large paper for group posters
- Pens, pencils, glue

Lesson Sequence

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Time	Lesson phase	Teacher activity	Pupil activity	Assessment/checks
10 minutes	Starter Activity	Show a world map with four areas highlighted (Mesopotamia, Indus Valley, Egypt, China). Ask: “What do these places have in common?” (all near big rivers, all very old). Introduce the idea of the “earliest civilisations” and name them.	Discuss what the places have in common and share prior ideas.	Listen for the river connection and prior knowledge.
10–15 minutes	Main Teaching Input	Briefly explain that early civilisations developed in river valleys and had features such as cities, writing, rulers, religion and specialised jobs. Zoom in on Ancient Egypt: show where it is on the map, place it on the timeline, introduce key achievements, and model how to pick out key information from a short text or fact card.	Locate Ancient Egypt on the map and timeline, identify key achievements, and respond to the modelled example.	Check map and timeline responses, understanding of river valleys, and use of key terms.
25–30 minutes	Pupil Activities	Organise pairs to label a simple world map. In small groups, distribute fact and picture cards about Ancient	Activity 1: Mapping the Earliest Civilisations Label a simple world map with the four early civilisations	Observe map accuracy and check posters include location, time, achievements,

		Egypt and prompt pupils to create an achievement poster.	and add a simple key and title. Activity 2: Ancient Egypt Achievement Poster Create a poster titled “Ancient Egypt: An Early Civilisation” including where and when it existed, at least three key achievements (e.g. pyramids, writing, farming, religion), and one or two sentences explaining why it was an important civilisation.	explanation, and historical vocabulary.
Within 25–30 minutes	Challenge	Support higher-attaining pupils to compare Ancient Egypt with one other early civilisation.	Write a short paragraph comparing Ancient Egypt with one other early civilisation (e.g. both near rivers, both had writing) using historical terms.	Check that the comparison includes similarities and accurate historical terms.
5–10 minutes	Plenary	Ask groups to share one achievement of Ancient Egypt they think is most impressive and explain why. Revisit the world map and timeline to reinforce where and when the earliest civilisations appeared. Briefly discuss how	Share one achievement, explain why it is impressive, and contribute to the discussion about evidence.	Listen for accurate place, time, achievement, and evidence language.

		we know about these civilisations (archaeology, artefacts, buildings, writing).		
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Differentiation

- **Struggling learners** – Provide a simple or part-labelled world map, a vocabulary bank, picture cards, and sentence starters; pair pupils for support.
- **On-level** – Complete the map and poster tasks using the fact cards and key historical terms.
- **Higher-attaining** – Write a short paragraph comparing Ancient Egypt with one other early civilisation (e.g. both near rivers, both had writing) using historical terms.
- **English Language Learners** – Use visual prompts, model pronunciation of key vocabulary, and rehearse responses orally before writing.

Homework

Homework task: pupils design a “travel poster” for Ancient Egypt, showing one achievement (e.g. pyramids or the Nile) and writing a few sentences to persuade someone to visit.

Assessment Notes

- Look for pupils locating early civilisations correctly on a simple map and timeline.
- Check use of historical terms and ability to describe key achievements of Ancient Egypt.
- Note who can explain at least one reason why Ancient Egypt (and other early civilisations) are important to study.
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