

WALT identify Ancient Egyptian home structures.

WILF:

- Describe the structure of an Ancient Egyptian house and garden.
- Understand the significance of water.
- - Describe both wealthy and less wealthy people's house structures.



What do you think Ancient Egyptian houses looked like?

What do you think you would find inside?

Please watch this video to find out about daily life and homes in Ancient Egypt.



This is an Ancient Egyptian 'soul house'.

The everyday people of Ancient Egypt couldn't afford tombs, so they made these small house models to live in in the afterlife and they were buried with them in the sand. These give us a good idea of what their homes looked like.



Ancient Egyptian houses were built of mudbrick, with palm logs used to support their roofs and ceilings. Mudbrick, also known as adobe, is a cheap and practical material. It was easy to build with and the materials were free and readily available. Bricks were made by mixing mud with chopped-up straw and water, then pressing the mixture into a wooden mould. Once the sun had dried them, they were ready to use.

As a precaution against earthquakes and high Nile floods, the walls of houses were often thicker at the bottom and sloped up, making them stronger and more stable. Rain was rare, so the roofs were flat.

In Egypt's hot climate, mudbrick was a good insulator which helped keep the inside of the house cool in summer. The outside walls were plastered and whitewashed to reflect the sun. They had tiny windows to keep houses cool and ventilated. Some homes even had vents on the roof to allow cool breezes to circulate through the house, a form of natural air conditioning.

Houses were close together in towns and most had gardens, so that they could grow their own fruits and vegetables to eat.



The structure of the home.

Most houses had the same layout. At the front was a reception area, sometimes with a porch. Behind were the private rooms, where members of the family ate and slept.

The largest of these was a common living area, with a raised ceiling supported on wooden columns. Here you might find a shrine to the household gods, or busts of deceased ancestors.

If you were wealthy, you would have a country estate or villa with many rooms, brightly painted patterns, hung textiles and many extra rooms for different purposes. There was quite a difference in size.



Furniture

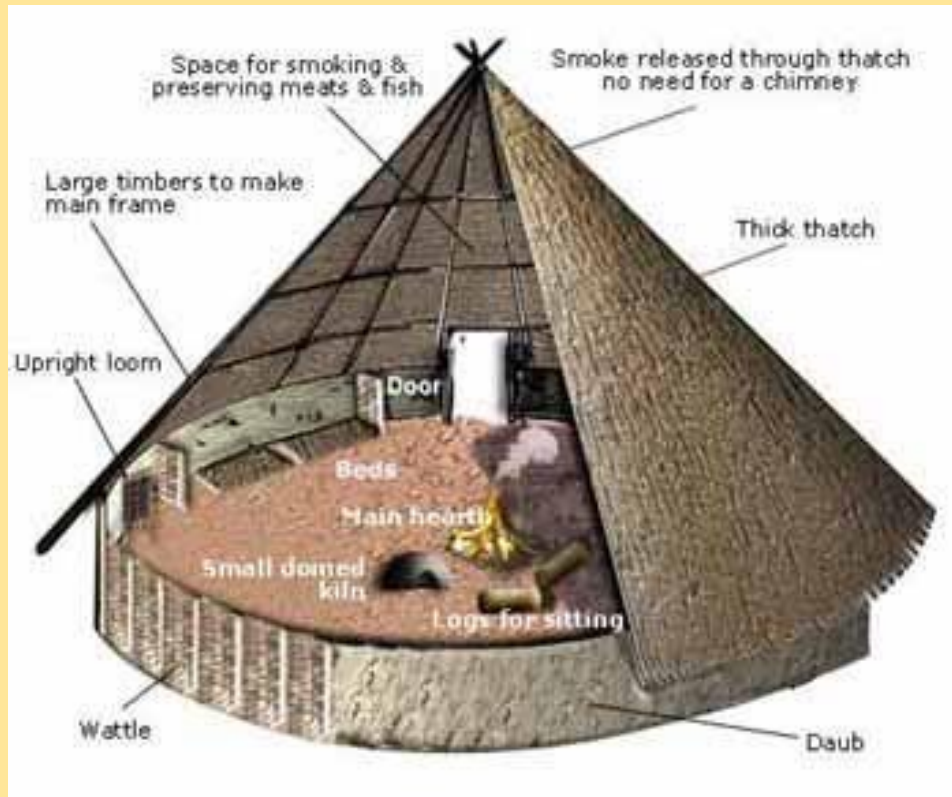
Although the rich had beds with wooden frames, most people slept on built-in mud benches covered in mats. Instead of pillows there were head rests made of ivory, wood or pottery. In wealthy homes there were chairs and feather-filled cushions to sit on, while in poorer homes the sleeping benches doubled by day as seating.

There were no cupboards or wardrobes - clothes and household goods were kept in wooden chests and boxes of various shapes and sizes, while foodstuffs like oil and grain were stored in pots and baskets. Instead of tables, tall stands were used to hold trays of food or jars of drink. At night, light was provided by pottery oil lamps set on stands or in wall niches.



Let's compare! What were houses like in Britain around this time?

In Britain, we had Roundhouses at this time. They were made of thatch (wood) and mud. They had no windows. They had one room, which was used for everything.



Today's Activity:



Today you have two options.

Option 1: Draw an Ancient Egyptian home and label it.

Option 2: Make your own Ancient Egyptian Murdock house by mixing water and mud, or using clay/plasticine/play dough. Stick paper labels on.

Extra challenge: What similarities and differences are there to roundhouses in the UK at a similar time?