

Ancient Egyptian Farming Activity

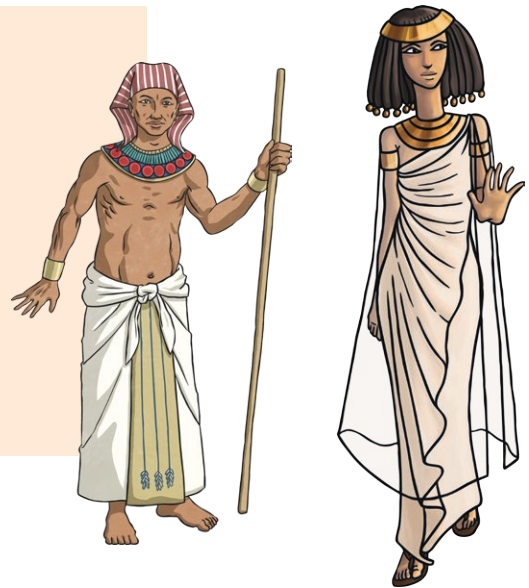
Farming Calendar

As the climate in Egypt is hot and dry, the ancient Egyptians relied on the river Nile to provide fertile land to plant their crops. In fact, it was so important that Herodotus, an ancient Greek historian, remarked that Egypt was 'the gift of the Nile'.

Create an ancient Egyptian farming calendar to help children understand when farmers planted and harvested their crops.

What you need:

- A set of three circles to make the wheel
- Scissors
- Split pin
- Coloured pencils
- Examples of ancient Egyptian drawings
- Information sheet



What to do:

1. Cut out the three circles from the activity sheet.
2. The smallest circle is divided into 12 parts. Write the months of the year in order.
3. Colour the months below using the following colours:
Blue: June, July, August, September, October ●
Green: November, December, January, February ●
Red: March, April, May ●
4. The middle-sized circle is divided into three parts. Along the outside edge of each section, write the information for the three ancient Egyptian farming seasons: **akhet**, **proyet** or **shomu**. The information is provided on the activity sheet. Children can copy it, rewrite it in their own words or research each season and create their own text. Remind them to write along the outside edge only as the text should not be covered when the circles are fitted together.
5. Colour the months below using the following colours:
Akhet (flood) - blue ●
Proyet (planting) - green ●
Shomu (harvest) - red ●

6. The large circle is also split into three parts. Along the outside edge, write either **akhet**, **proyet** or **shomu** in the appropriate month. It can then be illustrated to show what ancient Egyptian farmers would be doing during each season. The children could colour the headings to match the other two wheels.
7. Lay each circle one on top of the other and fix together with the split pin.
8. The children can now move the circles to match up the farming seasons and discover what jobs kept ancient Egyptian farmers busy.



Ancient Egyptian Farming Information

Months of the Year

January	April	July	October
February	May	August	November
March	June	September	December

The Farming Seasons of Ancient Egypt

Akhet: Flooding

At this time of year, the Nile flooded the land. During these months, farmers could not work. Instead, they worked as labourers often building temples and pyramids.

Proyet: Planting

As the floods retreated, the fields reappeared. Farmers repaired any damage, making sure channels were clear for drainage and watering. During this season, fields were ploughed and crops, such as barley, cucumber, lentils, beans, onions and dates, were planted.

Shomu: Harvest

During this season, fields were baked hard by the hot desert sun. Farmers used shadufs to transport water from the Nile to their crops. It was a busy time when farmers gathered their crops before the floods returned. Some farmers even used baboons to pick hard-to-reach fruit.

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