

# Ancient Egyptians

Learning Objective:

To find out about the pyramids of ancient Egypt.

NEXT

What do you  
already know about  
the pyramids of  
ancient Egypt?



Think, pair, share your ideas.

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What ideas did you come up with?

What we know about the pyramids:



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The ancient Egyptians believed that when you died you went on to the afterlife. They preserved their bodies using mummification so that their bodies could live forever in the underworld. Those who could afford it built tombs for their mummified bodies to be placed in when they died.



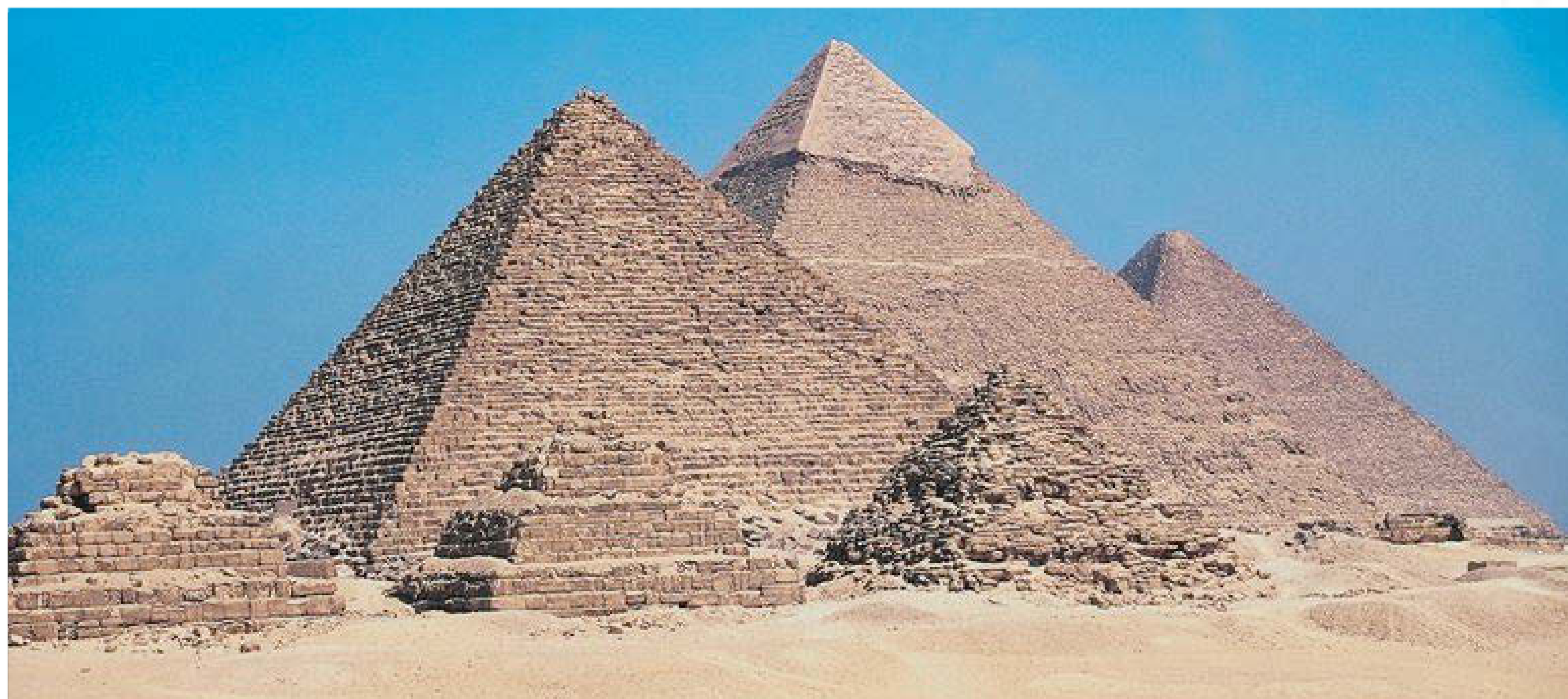
An Egyptian mummy at the Louvre Museum in Paris

Tombs were also filled with anything a person might need in the afterlife, such as clothes, food, furniture, jewellery and other treasures.

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Between around 2630 BC and 2250 BC, the pharaohs of ancient Egypt built pyramids as their tombs. Inside the pyramids are a series of corridors and chambers, one of which would hold the mummy of the pharaoh when he died. The pyramids were also filled with treasures and objects a pharaoh would need in the afterlife. Pyramids were designed to protect the pharaoh in death.



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There are over 100 pyramids in Egypt, but when most people think of the pyramids they think of the Great Pyramids of Giza. There are 3 pyramids in Giza. The largest was built for Pharaoh Khufu and is the oldest of the Seven Wonders of the World. The Great Pyramids are guarded by the Sphinx.



Have a look at the pictures of the Great Pyramids on the next slides.

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How do you think the pyramids were made?

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Pyramids were built using large blocks of sandstone. Most of the pyramids were built near the west bank of the River Nile so that the heavy blocks could be transported easily by boat. There is little evidence about exactly how the pyramids were built but most historians and archaeologists agree that a ramp was built so that the blocks could be put into place correctly. Some people think the ramp went straight up while others think that it spiraled around the pyramid. It is possible to see the progression in pyramid building techniques by looking at the earliest pyramids.

Have a look at the pictures on the next slides. Can you spot how the pyramids changed over time?



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The step pyramid of Saqqara. This was the first pyramid to be built in Egypt.



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The Bent Pyramid of Dahshur. This was the first attempt at the smooth-sided pyramid design.



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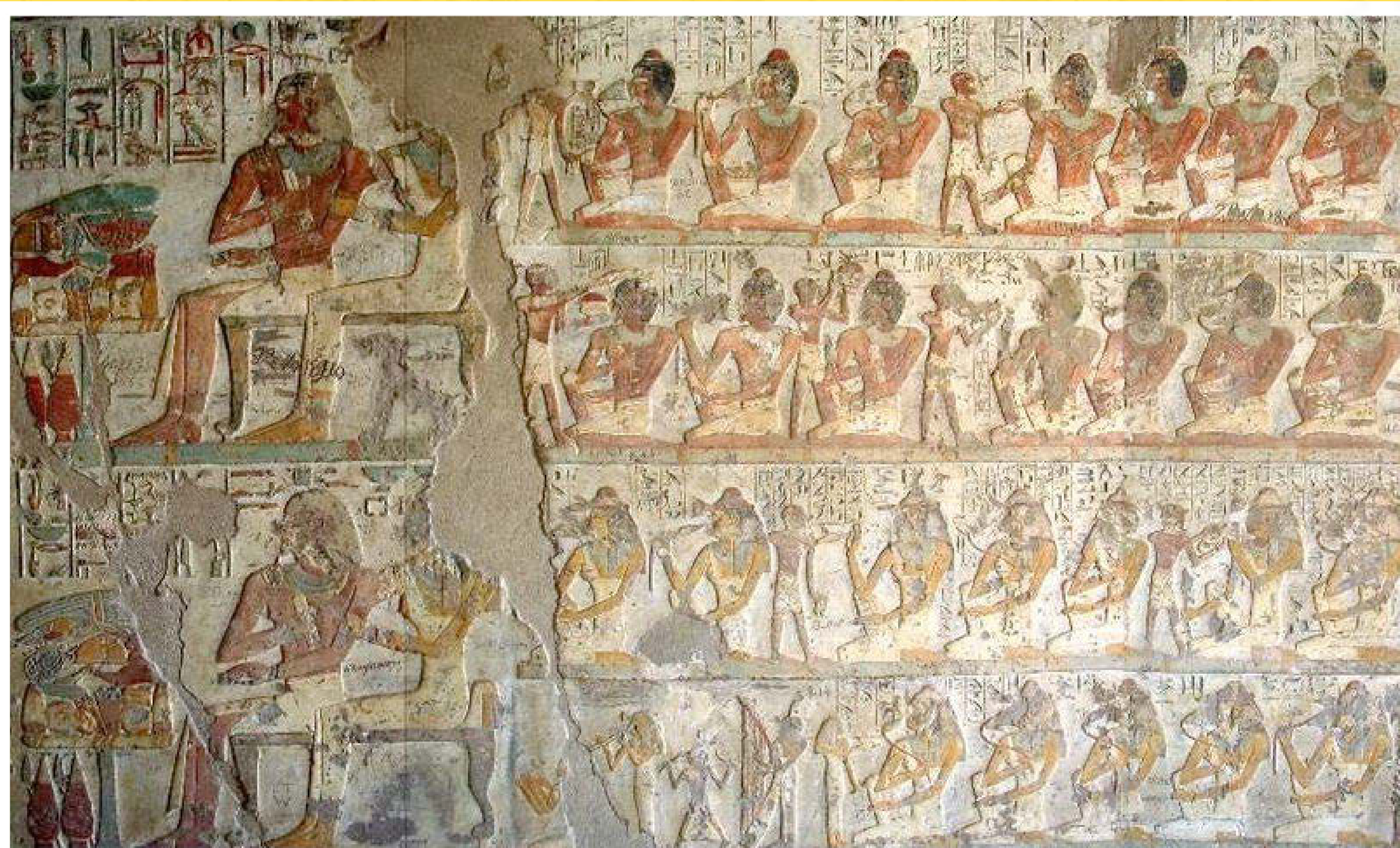
The pyramid of Menkaure, the last of the great pyramids.



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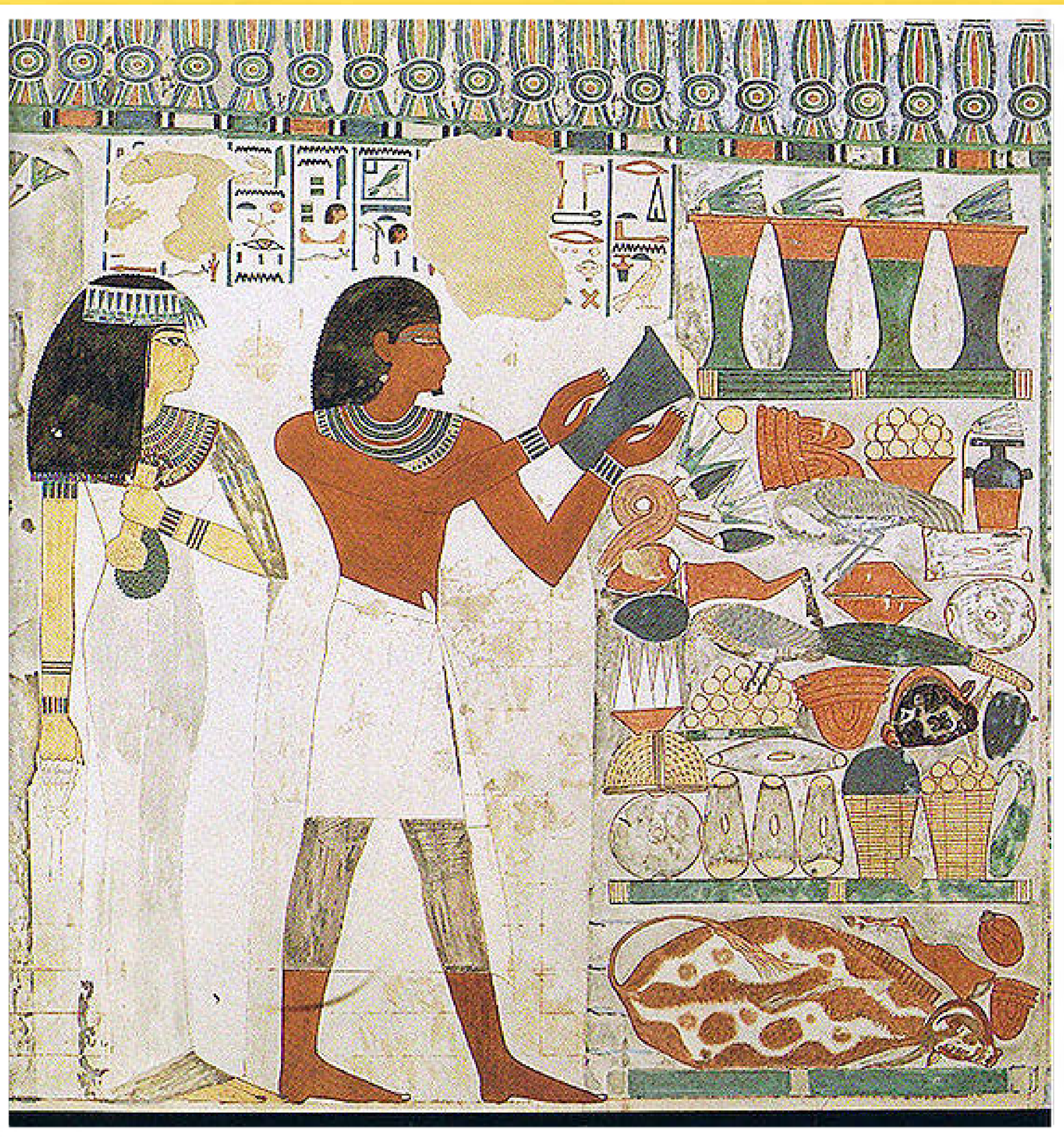
NEXT

The interiors of the pyramids and tombs of ancient Egypt are usually covered with tomb paintings. Have a look at some of them. What do you think we can learn about ancient Egypt from these tomb paintings?



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