Sample Essay – Food and drink in Ancient Egypt

Food and drink is a crucial aspect of life for all people throughout history as food allows humans to survive, grow, do what needs to be done in daily life and is an outlet for celebration and the bringing together of family and friends. In Ancient Egypt food and drink was a large part of their world. They consumed a varied diet, made food using many different methods and celebrated with feasts and festivals. Much of life in Ancient Egypt centred around food.

**Ancient Egyptians ate a variety of food and drink.** [Many people were farmers so they used the Nile to water their crops and grow grains such as wheat to make into bread. Bread was a main part of any meal and tasted good with all other foods too. The ancient Egyptians lived so close to water that fish was a huge source of food. Most of the people who could eat and afford meat were rich, so poor people lived off bread, fish and vegetables. The most popular drink in Ancient Egypt was beer because it was cleaner than water and was also a festive drink the people could enjoy with friends. Egyptians enjoyed a diverse diet and their cities were located to take advantage of the nearby produce.]

**Making food in Ancient Egypt required patience and time as the methods were not always easy.** [To make bread, the wheat needed to be harvested, then ground to a pulp, probably by hand or large stones. It would then be kneaded into a dough and baked in an oven, fired by wood. In ancient Egypt they would usually bake, boil or grill their food and they used salt to flavour it. Not much is actually known about how Egyptians cooked their food as most of the information comes from drawings or paintings from the time. There are no written records about how food was prepared but it is clear that it involved various procedures.]

People in ancient Egypt enjoyed having food and drink to help them celebrate important festivals. The ‘Beautiful Feast of the Valley’ was a festival celebrated every year in Egypt. It celebrated the connection between the living and the dead and involved a procession where people would offer food and drink to their dead ancestors and the Gods. After the ceremony, people ate and drank until the sun went down and enjoyed each other’s company. Without food and drink, festivals would not have been as much fun.

In Ancient Egypt the food and drink was very different to what we eat today. The foods the Egyptians ate were healthy and were made from ingredients they could grow and make themselves. Preparing food took a long time as they needed to cook with wood and prepare meals by hand. Like people nowadays the Egyptians also liked to celebrate with food and drink. Despite existing such a long time ago, the ancient Egyptians recognised the importance of food harvesting, preparation and consumption.