

### Think As You Read

1. Why ancient Egypt was called the “gift of the Nile?”
2. How was ancient Egypt ruled?
3. Why did ancient Egyptians build tombs and pyramids?

### New Words

- Civilization
- Fertile soil
- Irrigate
- Pharaohs
- Gods
- Pyramids
- Tombs
- Slaves
- Weapons
- Temple

### People and Places

- Ancient Egypt
- Nile River
- Egyptian
- Hatshepsut
- King Tutankhamen

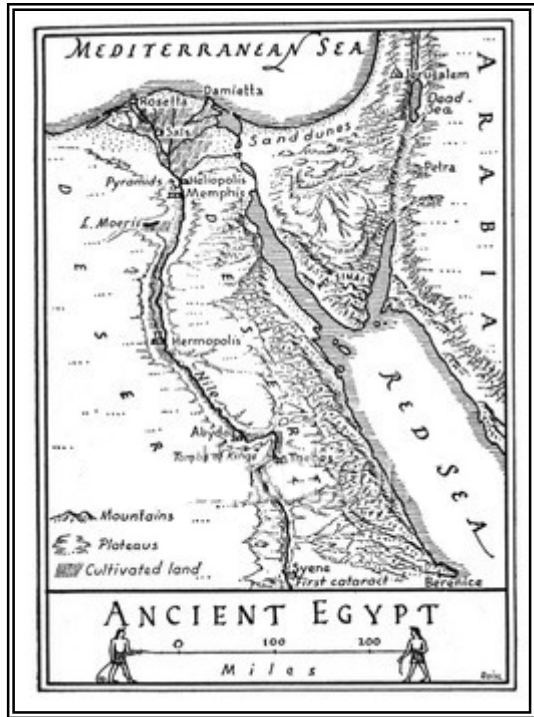
# People of Ancient Egypt

Imagine how difficult it is to grow food in a land that is always hot and dry. The people of ancient Egypt faced that problem long ago. Egypt is a hot, dry land in Africa. It gets little rain. The Nile River flows through Egypt. More than 7,000 years ago, people in Africa learned to use water from the Nile River to grow food. As more people began to farm together along the Nile, they developed the **civilization** of ancient Egypt.

Egypt has been called "the gift of the Nile." This is because the Nile River prevented Egypt from being a huge desert. Without the Nile, people in ancient Egypt would not have been able to grow crops. The Nile made it possible for the civilization of ancient Egypt to last thousands of years.

The Nile is the longest river in the world. It is more than 4,150 miles long. Every summer in ancient Egypt, the Nile flooded the land around it. The floods left **fertile soil** on the land near the river. This soil was good for- growing food. The farmers planted after the floods. If there was a lot of water in a flood, they could plant many crops. If there was not very much water, they planted fewer crops.

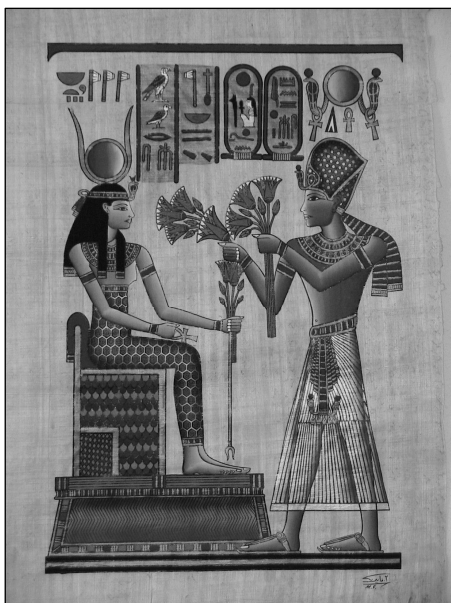




About 5,000 years ago, farmers found a way to use the Nile River to irrigate their land. They brought water from the river to use on dry land in order to grow plants and food. The farms were better-and larger when people irrigated. Farmers did not have to wait until after the floods to plant their seeds. The farmers learned to work together to bring water from the Nile to their farms. People made rules as they worked together. They began to live in villages.

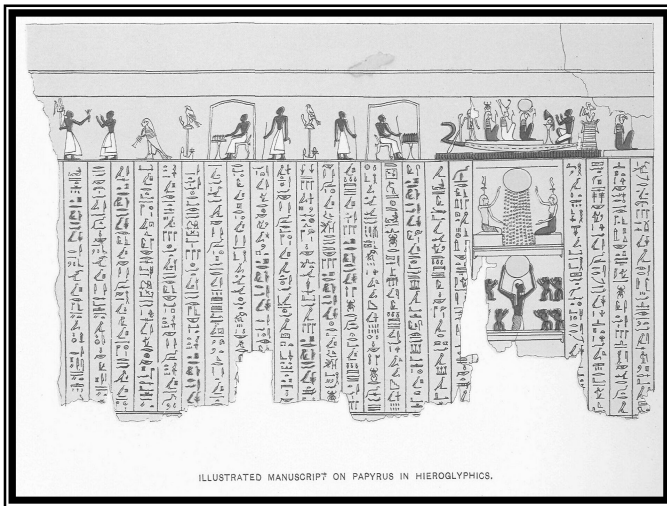
Soon there were many villages. Around 3100 B.C., one king began to rule all the villages in Egypt. Later, Egyptian rulers were called **pharaohs**. The pharaohs made laws for all the people of Egypt. People believed a pharaoh was both a god and a ruler. The pharaohs were very powerful. All farmers had to give some of their food to the pharaohs. Most of the pharaohs were men, but one of the greatest pharaohs was a woman. Her name was Hatshepsut. Hatshepsut helped Egypt become a very rich country. She sent ships to trade items with other countries. Many large buildings were built when Hatshepsut was pharaoh.

Since Egypt has little rain, there are few trees. The ancient Egyptians did not have much wood for building. Instead, they often used mud bricks. The Egyptians also cut stone blocks to make buildings. Strong metal tools helped the Egyptians cut stone.



The people of ancient Egypt built large stone buildings called **pyramids** in the desert. These pyramids were built for pharaohs. Inside the pyramids were **tombs** for the dead. One of the most famous tombs was built for the young King Tutankhamen. His tomb was not in a pyramid. It was cut deep into rock.

Why did the Egyptians work so hard at building these tombs and pyramids? They built them because they believed that people lived again after they died. They believed that the dead needed a good place to spend their next lives. Egyptians put the bodies of the dead inside tombs. They left food, water, and clothing in the tomb for the dead person to use in the next life. They painted pictures of people on the walls of the tombs. The Egyptians believed that the people in these pictures would be friends with the dead person in the next life.



Archaeologists have learned about life in ancient Egypt from the paintings, foods, and other items found inside tombs and pyramids. Today there are 35 major pyramids still standing in Egypt. The oldest pyramids are almost 5,000 years old.

Many people in Egypt were **slaves**. Slaves were not free men and women. They were not paid for their work. Slaves were forced to build pyramids for the pharaohs. Thousands of slaves built the pyramids. They built many other buildings, too.

The Egyptians were some of the first people to write their words. At first they used tiny pictures to show the words. They needed many small pictures. Then they wrote small signs to show different sounds and ideas. Egyptian writing had more than 800 signs. Archaeologists have found papers and stones with Egyptian writing. We have learned much about the ancient Egyptians by reading their writing.

Ancient Egypt was a great country for more than 2,800 years. As time passed, the pharaohs had less power. Other people gained control of the land, and the pharaohs lost their power. Egypt became weak. Then other countries ruled Egypt.

In the next chapter, you will read about other great people of long ago.

## PEOPLE IN HISTORY: HATSHEPSUT



Hatshepsut was one of the few women to rule ancient Egypt. Many people believe she was one of the greatest pharaohs. Hatshepsut ruled Egypt for 21 years from about 1503 B.C. to about 1482 B.C.

Although it was a custom that pharaohs be male, Hatshepsut declared herself pharaoh. She sometimes even wore clothing that was like the clothing that male pharaohs had worn. Sometimes she also wore a false beard that was like the beards that male pharaohs had worn.

Hatshepsut brought peace to Egypt: She was one of the few pharaohs who was not interested in war. She is best known for her interests in trading and building.

During Hatshepsut's rule, Egyptian traders went on ships to other lands in eastern Africa. The Egyptian traders took their beads, metal tools, and **weapons** to trade. In exchange the traders received such things as ivory, gold, live animals, and trees. Egypt became very rich because of this trade.

Many buildings were made during Hatshepsut's rule. One huge **temple** was built for Hatshepsut. This famous temple was built into the sides of hills. Hatshepsut planned that this temple would be her tomb when she died. She had the walls of the temple decorated with pictures. The pictures tell the story of the important events during Hatshepsut's rule. One story tells about the Egyptian trade in eastern Africa.

Hatshepsut's temple is still standing. It is considered one of the greatest buildings in Egypt. Each year many people visit the temple. There they learn about the history of ancient Egypt during this great pharaoh's rule.



## Using Vocabulary

Match Up Finish the sentences in Group A with words from Group B. Write the letter of each correct answer on the blank line.

### **Group A**

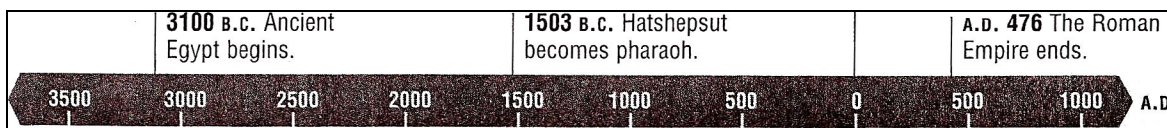
1. The \_\_\_\_\_ from the Nile floods was good for growing crops.
2. To \_\_\_\_\_ their land, farmers brought water from the Nile River.
3. Hatshepsut had people build a \_\_\_\_\_ as a place for the gods.
4. Some tombs were inside large, stone buildings called \_\_\_\_\_

### **Group B**

- a. pyramids
- b. temple
- c. irrigate
- d. fertile soil

## **SKILL BUILDER**

Understanding A.D. and B.C. on a Time Line Dates tell us when events in history happened. We say that events happened before or after the birth of a man called Jesus. A time line helps us show which events happened first. Look at the time line below. Events that happened before Jesus' birth are marked B.C. Events that happened after Jesus' birth are marked A.D. When counting B.C. years, the highest number tells the oldest event. When counting A.D. years, the lowest number tells the oldest event.



Circle the older date in each pair.

1. 1503 B.C. or 3100 B.C.
2. 3100 B.C. or A.D. 476
3. A.D. 1503 or 1503 B.C.
4. A.D. 476 or 0

**Finish Up** Choose a word in bold print to best complete each sentence. Write the word on the correct blank line.

**Hatshepsut      civilization      Nile      Egyptians      slaves**

1. Ancient Egypt has been called the "gift of the \_\_\_\_\_"
2. The pharaoh was the ruler of all \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ was known for her interests in building and trading.
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ of ancient Egypt lasted for more than 2,800 years.
5. Egyptian \_\_\_\_\_ were forced to work hard without pay.

### **Think and Apply**

**Cause and Effect:** A **cause** is something that makes something else happen. What happens is called the **effect**.

**Cause** Stone Age people learned to farm.

**Effect** People did not need to move from place to place to find food.

Match each cause on the left with an effect on the right. Write the letter of the effect on the correct blank.

#### **Cause**

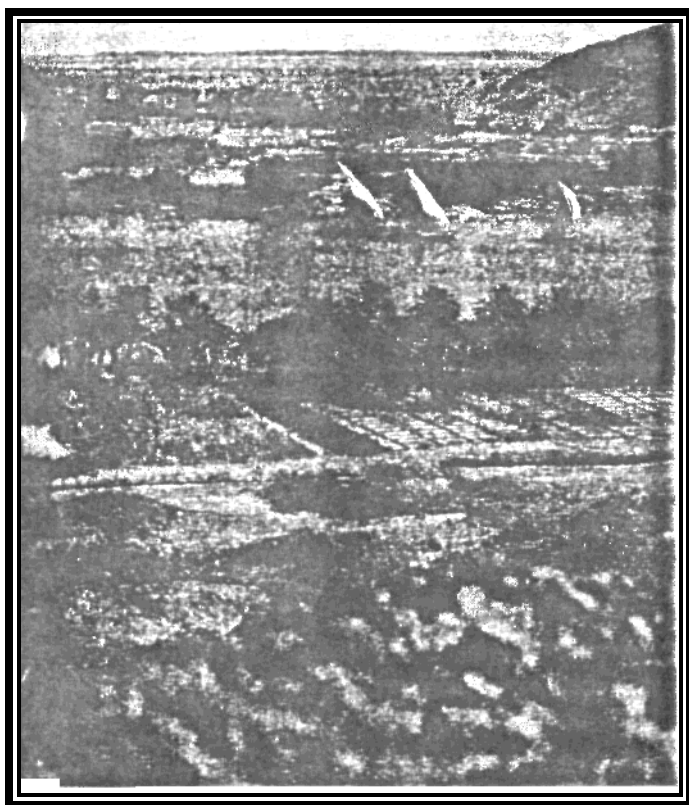
1. Ancient Egyptians believed in life after death, so \_\_\_\_\_
2. Farmers in ancient Egypt found a way to irrigate dry land, so \_\_\_\_\_
3. Ancient Egypt had few trees, so \_\_\_\_\_
4. Archaeologists have learned to read stones with Egyptian writing, so \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Effects**

- a. they have learned a lot about the ancient Egyptians.
- b. they did not have to wait until after the floods to plant their seeds.
- c. many buildings were made from stone blocks.
- d. they left food and clothing in tombs.



## Ancient Egypt



You read that the Sumerians built the first civilization along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. At about the same time, other people were building a civilization along the Nile River in ancient Egypt. Those people were the **Egyptians**.

The civilization of ancient Egypt lasted over 3000 years—longer than any other ancient civilization.

- Where was ancient Egypt located?
- Why was the Nile River important to the ancient Egyptians?
- What was life like in ancient Egypt?
- What contributions did the Egyptians make to later civilizations?

**Key Words** You will be using these words in this chapter.

**Architecture**

**Central government**

**kingdom**

**rebellion**

## The Land and Climate of Egypt

**Ancient Egypt** lay in northeastern Africa, where the modern country of Egypt is today. Like modern Egypt, the climate of ancient Egypt was hot and dry. Most of ancient Egypt was desert land. But running through the desert was the **Nile River**. The waters of the Nile created a narrow valley of fertile farmland. During the New Stone Age, people began to settle in the valley.

### ***The Gift of the Nile***

The Nile River is over 4000 miles long. It begins in the mountains of central Africa. From there, it flows north through the desert to the Mediterranean Sea.

Every year heavy rains fell on the mountains where the Nile begins. Black soil from the hills washed into the river. The river rose and flooded the valley. When the flooding ended, a layer of rich black soil was left behind.

Egyptian farmers raised wheat, barley, grapes, and other crops in the fertile soil brought by the river. Boats carried people and goods up and down the river. The river provided the people with water to drink and fish to eat. The Egyptians hunted birds and game along the river's banks.

Without the Nile River, the Egyptians could not have survived. Egypt became known as the "Gift of the Nile."

### ***Looking Back***

1. Where was ancient Egypt located?
2. Describe the climate and land of ancient Egypt.
3. Why was the Nile River important to the Egyptians?
4. *Map Work:* Look at the map on page 32. What deserts surround Egypt on the east, south, and west?

## The Land of the Pharaohs

Like the Sumerians, the Egyptians learned to irrigate their dry land. They dug irrigation canals from the Nile to their fields. They also dug *reservoirs*, or lakes, to store water for use during the dry season.

The food supply increased, and the population of Egypt grew. Villages sprang up along the Nile River. Governments arose to run the villages and carry out the building of reservoirs and canals.

### Menes Unites Egypt

At first, each Egyptian village had its own government. Then, powerful rulers took control of several villages and formed *kingdoms*. (A kingdom is a territory ruled by a king.) In time, Egypt was divided into two large kingdoms called Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt.

A king named Menes ruled Upper Egypt. About 3100 B.C., Menes conquered Lower Egypt and united all of Egypt under one government.

### The Old Kingdom

Historians divide the history of Egypt into three periods. The first period is called the Old Kingdom. It began about 2700 B.C. and lasted about 500 years.

During the Old Kingdom, rulers built a strong *central government* in Egypt. (That is a government that rules over an entire country.) You read that Sumer was divided into city-states that fought among themselves. The constant fighting weakened Sumer. Egypt remained united under one central government during most of its long history. Egypt's unity helped to keep it strong.

### Pharaohs Rule Egypt

The head of Egypt's government was called the pharaoh. The pharaoh was an *absolute ruler*. (That means the pharaoh had *absolute*, or total, power.) Egyptians worshiped the pharaoh as a god. They obeyed the pharaoh's commands without question.

The pharaoh *appointed* (chose) officials to help run the government. The highest officials were, called *viziers*. Under the viziers were thousands of lower officials, such as governors, mayors, judges, and tax collectors.

### The Middle Kingdom

About 2300 B.C., powerful viziers *rebelled* against (fought to get rid of) the pharaoh. The Old Kingdom came to an end. For the next 200 years, *rebellions* and unrest troubled Egypt.

A pharaoh named Amenemhet ended the rebellions. Amenemhet's rule began the period known as the Middle Kingdom.

During the Middle Kingdom, pharaohs rebuilt Egypt's strong central government. Once again, Egypt was united and at peace.

Egypt increased its trade with other lands during the Middle Kingdom. Trading ships traveled to Mesopotamia, Syria, and other lands. To improve trade, Egyptians built a canal connecting the Nile River to the Red Sea.

### Looking Back

1. How did Menes unite Egypt?
2. How was government in Egypt different from government in Sumer?
3. Describe the government of Egypt.
4. How did Egypt increase trade during the Middle Kingdom?



## The New Kingdom

For many years, natural barriers protected Egypt from invaders. Deserts and mountains surrounded Egypt on three sides. The Mediterranean Sea protected Egypt to the north.

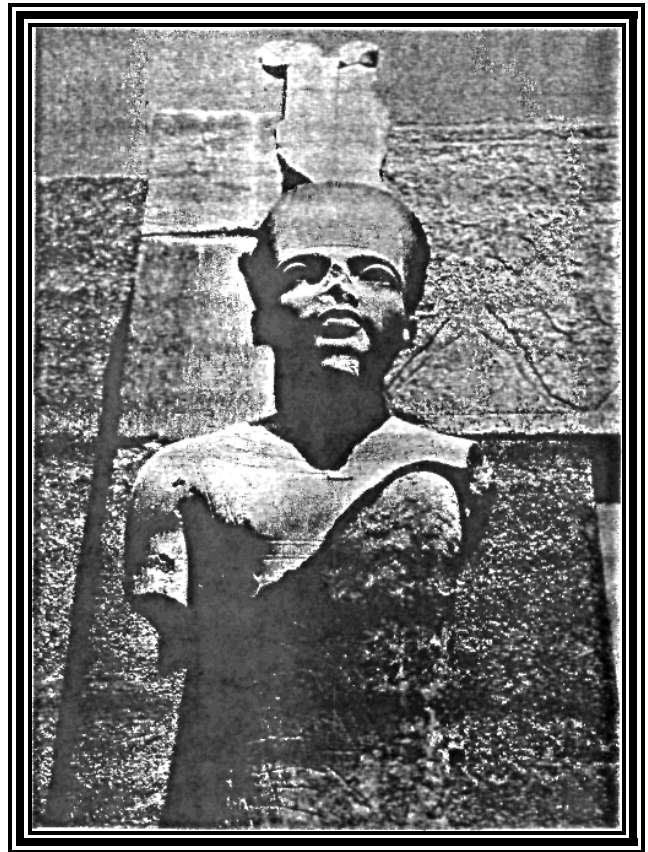
But around 1730 B.C., invaders from western Asia attacked Egypt. The invaders were known as the **Hyksos**. The Hyksos had chariots and bronze weapons, which the Egyptians did not have. The Hyksos easily conquered the Egyptians. They ruled Egypt for about a hundred years.

### ***The Age of Empire***

The Egyptians learned to use the chariots and bronze weapons of their conquerors. In about 1580 B.C., an Egyptian prince named **Ahmose** led a rebellion against the Hyksos. The Egyptians drove the Hyksos from Egypt. That victory began the period called the **New Kingdom**.

One of the great rulers of the New Kingdom was **Queen Hatshepsut**. She was the first woman to rule Egypt. Hatshepsut rebuilt temples destroyed by the Hyksos. She also increased Egyptian trade and brought new wealth to Egypt-

Later pharaohs built an Egyptian empire through conquest. Pharaohs conquered Palestine, Syria, and other lands. In time, the Egyptian empire stretched from Egypt to Mesopotamia.



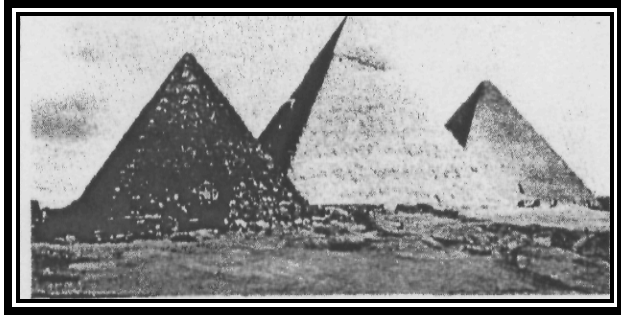
### ***Egypt Loses Its Independence***

About 1100 B.C., Egypt began to decline in power. Weak pharaohs lost control of the government. Conquered peoples rebelled, and Egypt lost its empire.

Invaders began to attack Egypt. The Assyrians conquered Egypt in the 600s B.C. In 525 B.C., the Persians conquered Egypt. After 3000 years of greatness, Egypt had lost its *independence* (freedom).

### ***Looking Back***

1. How did natural barriers help to protect Egypt from invaders?
2. Why were each of these rulers important?
  - a. Ahmose
  - b. Queen Hatshepsut
3. How did Egypt lose its independence?



## Religion and Architecture

Religion was an important part of life in Egypt. You read that Egyptians worshiped many gods. Re, the god of the sun, was the chief god. Osiris, the god of the Nile River, was also important.

Egyptians believed in life after death. They believed that each person had a *soul*, or spirit, that lived on after death. A person's soul was judged by the gods. The souls of good people lived forever in heaven. The souls of evil people lived forever in darkness and pain.

### Mummies

Egyptians believed that the soul needed its body as a home in the afterlife. So they learned to *mummify* bodies, or preserve bodies from decay.

First, they removed the insides of a body. Then they treated the body with salts and oils. After that, they wrapped the *mummy*, or preserved body, in strips of linen and placed it in a tomb; Egyptians believed the tomb protected the body in the afterlife.

## The Pyramids

The ancient Egyptians are probably best known for their *architecture*. They built great temples as homes for their gods. They also built huge tombs for their pharaohs. Those tombs are called pyramids. There are about 80 pyramids still standing today.

The first pyramid was built around 2650 B.C. for the pharaoh Zoser. The pyramid of Zoser was planned by an *architect* named Imhotep. (An architect is a person who plans a structure.)

Later pharaohs copied Imhotep's ideas to build even greater pyramids. The largest pyramid is the Great Pyramid of Giza, built for the pharaoh Khufu. The Great Pyramid stands as tall as a 40-story building.

### Building the Pyramids

Building the pyramids was a great achievement. The Egyptians had no machinery. They used hand tools made of copper and stone to do the work.

First, workers cut huge stone blocks from cliffs along the Nile. Then they dragged the blocks on sleds to the building site. Some of the blocks weighed several tons. At the site, the blocks were cut into their final shape and moved into place. As the pyramid rose higher, workers built ramps to drag blocks to the upper levels.

It took many years and thousands of workers to build a pyramid. Historians believe it took 20 years and 7 million people to build the Great Pyramid.

### Looking Back

1. What did Egyptians believe about life after death?
2. Why did Egyptians preserve bodies from decay?
3. What are the pyramids? How were they built?

## Life in Ancient Egypt

Like the Sumerians, the Egyptians were divided into social classes. The upper class was made up of the pharaoh, priests, high government officials, and a few wealthy families. The upper class controlled the government and wealth of Egypt.

Below the upper class was a middle class made up of traders, merchants, and crafts workers. The middle class carried on the business and trade of Egypt.

The lower class was made up mainly of farmers and slaves. People in the lower class did farm work, dug irrigation canals, and built the pyramids and temples.

### ***Life in the Upper and Middle Classes***

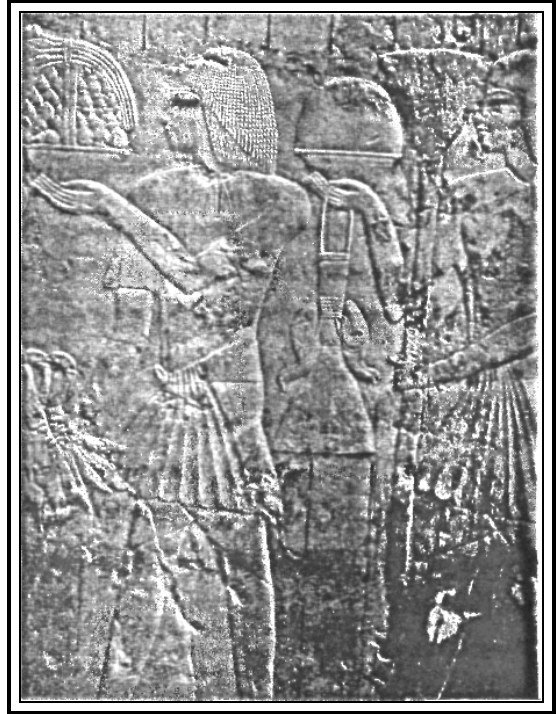
People in the upper class lived well. They had large houses built around cool, shady gardens. The walls of their homes were painted with scenes of plants and birds. They had free time for picnics and boat trips down the Nile.

Wealthy people dressed in clothes made of fine linen. They enjoyed wearing wigs and jewelry. The women used makeup. Women lined their eyes in black and painted their eyelids green,

People in the middle class also lived comfortably, though not as richly as the upper class.

### ***Life in the Lower Class***

People in the lower class had harder lives. They lived in small, mud brick houses with one or two rooms. They spent most of their day working in the fields or in the homes of the rich.



People in the lower class could rise to a higher class through education. For example, a farmer who learned to read and write could become a government official.

### ***Women in Egypt***

Women in Egypt had more rights and freedom than women in many ancient lands. In Egypt, women were respected as wives and mothers. Women could own property, *testify* (speak) in court, and divorce their husbands. Some women became government officials.

In other lands, women had few rights and little freedom. Husbands owned their wives the same way they owned their land and cattle. A husband could sell his wife, or even kill a wife who displeased him.

### ***Looking Back***

1. Describe the social classes of Egypt.
2. How did people in the lower class live?
3. How could people rise to a higher class?
4. What rights did women have in Egypt?



### **Egyptian Contributions**

About 3100 B.C., Egyptians developed a system of writing. At first, they used pictures of objects to stand for words. For example, a picture of a bird meant "bird." Historians call Egyptian picture writing *hieroglyphics*.

In time, Egyptians created *symbols*, or signs, that stood for sounds. By putting sound symbols together, they could write any word.

### **Papyrus**

At first, the Egyptians wrote on wood and stone. Then they learned to make a writing material called *papyrus*. The Egyptians made papyrus from a reed that grew along the Nile. They cut the reed into thin strips. Then they pressed several strips together to form sheets.

The Egyptians wrote on papyrus sheets with pens made from reeds and with brushes. They made ink by mixing soot with water. (Soot is the black powder left after something is burned.)

Writing on papyrus was easier and less costly than writing on wood or stone. In time, the use of papyrus spread throughout the Middle East.

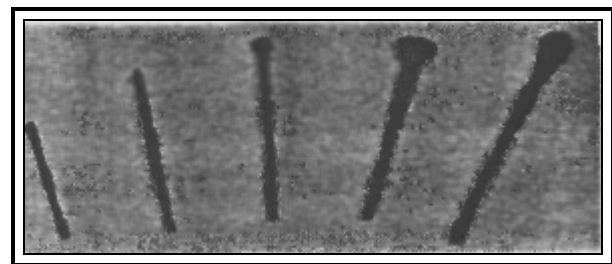
### **Mathematics and Science**

Egyptians used mathematics to help them solve everyday problems. For example, floodwaters often washed away fields and boundary markers. Egyptians used geometry to measure their fields and lay out new boundaries. Architects also used geometry to plan pyramids, temples, and other buildings.

Like the Babylonians, the Egyptians studied the skies. They noticed that the star Sirius appeared at a certain place in the sky every 365 days. Egyptians used that knowledge to make a calendar with 365 days in a year. They divided the year into 12 months. Our calendar today is based on the Egyptian calendar.

### **Medicine**

Some historians believe Egyptians began the science of medicine. Writings from ancient Egypt show that Egyptians studied *anatomy*, or the inner structure of the body.



Egyptian doctors performed operations, sewed up cuts, and set broken bones. They also used herbs to make medicines. The Egyptians set up the first medical schools. And the world's first medical books were written in Egypt 5000 years ago.

### **Looking Back**

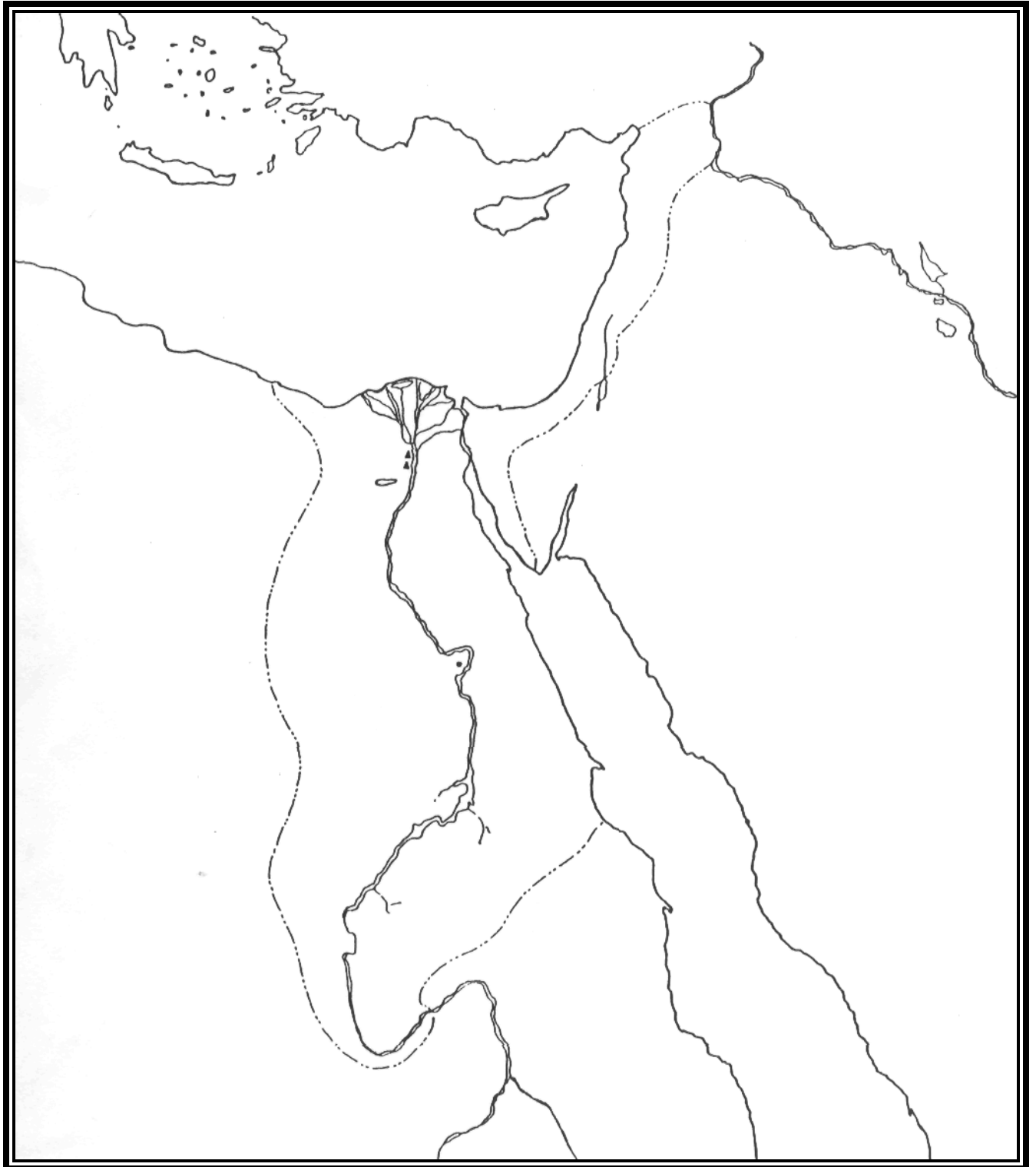
1. Describe Egyptian writing.
2. How did Egyptians use geometry?
3. What contributions did Egyptians make in medicine?

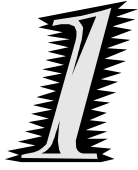
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Ancient Egypt Map

The map below shows an outline of ancient Egypt. Learn more about this country by labeling the map with the following: Delta, Mediterranean Sea, Nile River, Red Sea, Lower Egypt, and Upper Egypt. Color all bodies of water blue, the deserts tan, and the farmland green.





## The Geography of the Nile

### A. As You Read

*Directions:* As you read Section 1, complete the statements below.

1. An early description of the Nile was written by the Greek historian \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The direction that the Nile River flows is \_\_\_\_\_ to the Mediterranean Sea from its sources in Africa.
3. The Blue Nile and White Nile meet at the city of \_\_\_\_\_, in the present-day country of Sudan.
4. The marshy region of the Nile near the Mediterranean Sea is known as \_\_\_\_\_ Egypt.
5. The ancient Egyptians called their land \_\_\_\_\_, "the black land," because of the dark soil left by the Nile's floods.
6. Deserts to the east and west protected the Egyptians from \_\_\_\_\_ by foreign enemies.
7. Communities appeared in the Nile delta of Lower Egypt by around \_\_\_\_\_.

### B. Reviewing Key Terms

*Directions:* Complete each sentence by writing the correct term in the blank provided.

8. Water from the Nile River deposited rich, fertile soil called \_\_\_\_\_ when the river overflowed its banks.
9. In the Nubian section of the Nile, the river contains many rock-filled rapids, or \_\_\_\_\_.
10. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Nile, a triangle-shaped area of very rich farmland, is located in Lower Egypt.

## CHAPTER

Ancient Egypt  
and Nubia**Egypt's Powerful Kings and Queens****A. As You Read**

**Directions:** As you read Section 2, fill in the table below with information about Egypt's ancient rulers. Under each main idea, write two supporting details.

**Main Idea A**

The rulers of the Old Kingdom paved the way for Egypt's long history as one of the most stable societies in the ancient world.

1.

2.

**Main Idea B**

The able rulers of the New Kingdom built an empire.

3.

4.

**B. Reviewing Key Terms**

**Directions:** Complete each sentence by writing the correct term in the blank provided.

5. The ancient Egyptians' name for their king was \_\_\_\_\_.
6. During its long history, ancient Egypt was governed by 31 different ruling families called \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Someone who rules for a child until the child is old enough to rule is called a \_\_\_\_\_.



**GUIDED READING AND REVIEW**

# Egyptian Religion

CHAPTER 3  
**Ancient Egypt and  
Nubia**

**A. As You Read**

*Directions:* As you read Section 3, fill in the table below with information about ancient Egyptian religion.

**Religious Beliefs of the Ancient Egyptians**

Egyptian God	Description
<b>Amon-Re</b>	1.
<b>Osiris</b>	2.
<b>Isis</b>	3.

*Directions:* Use the information in Section 3 to describe how to build a pyramid in four or five steps. If you need more space, write the steps on the back of this page or on another sheet of paper.

4. \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Reviewing Key Terms**

*Directions:* On a separate sheet of paper, write the definitions for the following key terms.

5. afterlife

6. mummy

7. pyramid

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**GUIDED READING AND REVIEW**

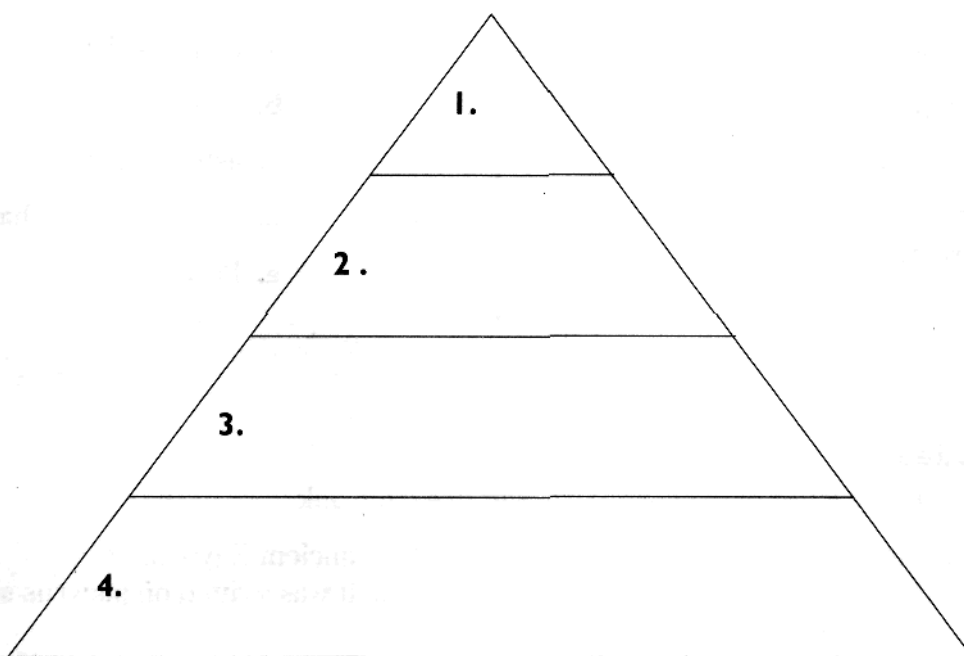
CHAPTER 3  
Ancient Egypt  
and Nubia

## The Culture of the Ancient Egyptians



### A. As You Read

*Directions:* As you read Section 4, fill in the pyramid below with information about Egyptian social classes. On each level of the pyramid, write the name and a brief description of the appropriate class.



### B. Reviewing Key Terms

*Directions:* In the blanks provided, write the definitions for the following key terms.

5. hieroglyph

6. papyrus

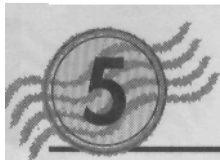
7. astronomer

GUIDED READING AND REVIEW

CHAPTER 3

Ancient Egypt

Nubia



The Resource-Rich  
Cultures of Nubia

A. As You Read

Directions: As you read Section 5, fill in the table below with information about the three ancient Nubian kingdoms.

Three Nubian Kingdoms

Nubian Kingdom	Location	Achievements
1.	2.	3.
4.	5.	6.
7.	8.	9.

B. Reviewing Key Terms

Directions: In the blank provided, write the definition for the following key term.

10. artisan

