

Chapter Preview

This chapter will introduce you to the civilizations of Ancient Egypt and Nubia.

Section 1

The Geography of the Nile

Section 2

The Rulers of Egypt

Section 3

Egyptian Religion

Section 4

Ancient Egyptian Culture

Section 5

The Cultures of Nubia

Target Reading Skill

Context In this chapter you will focus on using context to help you understand unfamiliar words. The context of a word includes the words, phrases, and sentences surrounding the word.

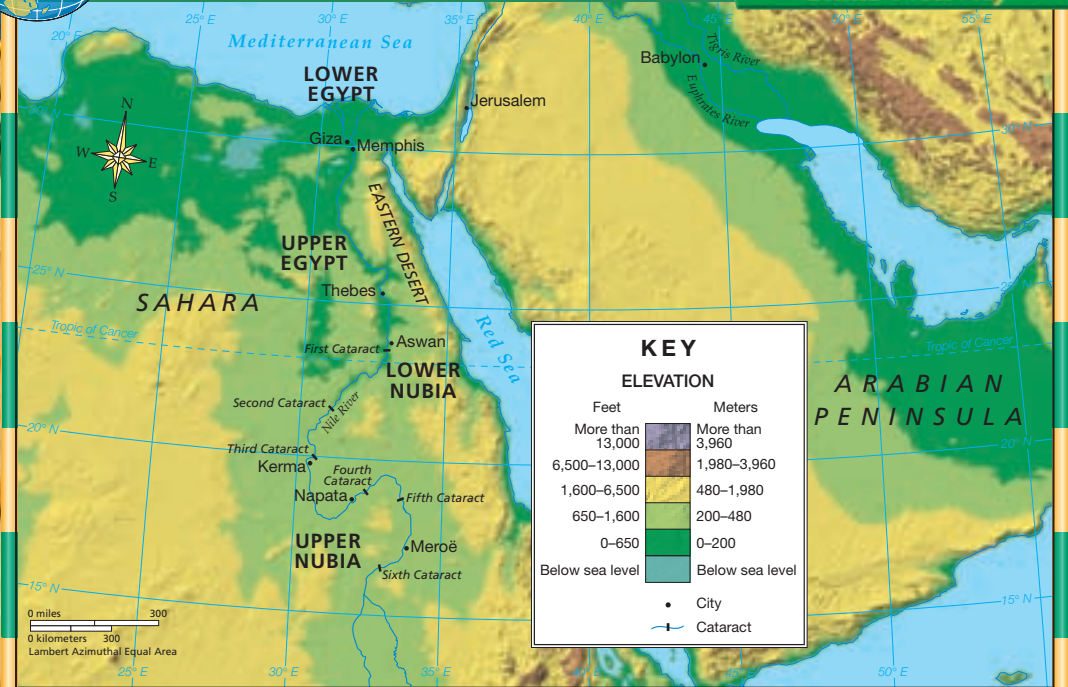
▶ **A tomb painting of Egyptian fishermen, dating from about 1292 to 1225 B.C.**





Ancient Egypt and Nubia

MAP MASTER™ Skills Activity



Location The waters of the Nile River flow through Nubia and Egypt and spill into the Mediterranean Sea. **Use a Compass Rose** In which direction does the Nile River flow? **Draw Conclusions** Use the map key to support this statement: Water always flows downhill.

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 map skills practice.



The Geography of the Nile

Prepare to Read

Objectives

In this section you will

1. Find out how the geography of the Nile changes as the river runs its course.
2. Learn about the types of communities that first appeared along the Nile, and how the Nile was used for trade.

Taking Notes

As you read, note the effects the Nile had on the growth of communities and trade. Copy the chart below, and use it to record your findings.

The Nile River		
Geography	Communities	Trade
• • •	• • •	• • •

Target Reading Skill

Use Context Clues When reading, you may come across an unfamiliar word, or a word that is used in an unfamiliar way. Look for clues in the context—the surrounding words, sentences, and paragraphs—to help you understand the meaning. Look at the context for the word *sediment* on page 70 in the paragraph that begins with The Gifts of the Nile. What do you think *sediment* means?

Key Terms

- **Nubia** (NOO bee uh) *n.* an ancient region in the Nile River Valley, on the site of present-day southern Egypt and northern Sudan
- **cataract** (KAT uh rakt) *n.* a large waterfall; any strong flood or rush of water
- **delta** (DEL tuh) *n.* a plain at the mouth of a river, formed when sediment is deposited by flowing water
- **silt** (silt) *n.* fine soil found on river bottoms

The Greek historian Herodotus (huh RAHD uh tus) wrote, “Egypt is the gift of the Nile.” Herodotus explored Egypt in the 400s B.C. On his journey, he saw the life-giving waters of its great river. He traveled upriver until he was stopped by churning rapids of white water. Forced to turn back, he never found the source of the river.

Herodotus wrote down his observations of Egypt and other lands. His writings still make interesting reading today. Despite his failure to locate the source of the Nile, Herodotus had learned a basic truth: There would be no Egypt without the Nile.



River of Life

An Egyptian uses a throwstick, a sort of boomerang, to hunt for birds from his boat. **Analyze Images** What gifts of the Nile are shown in this painting?



The Course of the Nile River

The Nile River is the world's longest river. It flows north from its sources in East Africa to the Mediterranean Sea for more than 4,000 miles (6,400 kilometers). That is about the distance from New York to Alaska. The Nile has two main sources. The Blue Nile rises in the highlands of the present-day country of Ethiopia and races down to the desert in thundering torrents. The White Nile is calmer. It begins deep in East Africa and flows northward through swamps. The two rivers meet in the present-day country of Sudan. There, the Nile begins its journey through desert lands to the Mediterranean Sea.

The Nile Through Ancient Nubia Just north of the point where the Blue Nile and White Nile meet, the Nile makes two huge bends. It forms an S shape 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers) in length. The northern tip of the S is at the city of Aswan in Egypt. Along this stretch of the Nile was **Nubia, an ancient region in the Nile River valley.**

The Nubian section of the Nile contained six **cataracts, or rock-filled rapids.** Between the first and second cataracts was Lower Nubia. In that region, the desert and granite mountains lined the riverbanks, leaving very little land for farming. Because it rarely rained in Lower Nubia, people had to live close to the Nile for their water supply.

Farther south, between the second and sixth cataracts, lies the area that was known as Upper Nubia. In that region, rain does fall, so people could plant in the fall and then harvest in the spring. But the farmland was in a very narrow strip, no more than 2 miles (3 kilometers) wide on each side of the river.

Nubia's Resources

Nubian princes bring gifts of gold to an Egyptian ruler. **Infer** How did geography help link the cultures of Egypt and Nubia?





Using Context Clues

In the paragraph at the right, sediment is described as being mineral rich and carried by water. If you read ahead, you will learn that silt is a kind of sediment. What is the meaning of *sediment*?

The Nile Through Ancient Egypt The Nile ran for about 700 miles (1,100 kilometers) through ancient Egypt, from the First Cataract at Aswan to the Mediterranean Sea. On its way, it passed through a narrow region called Upper Egypt. This fertile strip had an average width of around 6 miles (10 kilometers) on each side of the river. In the north, the Nile spread out to form a fertile, marshy area called Lower Egypt. Deserts stretched on each side of the river's green banks.

At the end of the Nile in the north, the river split into several streams that flowed to the Mediterranean Sea. These streams formed an area called the delta. **A delta is a plain at the mouth of a river.** The flowing water deposited mineral-rich sediment. Because of this, the Nile delta contained very fertile farmland.

The Gifts of the Nile Every spring, far away in the highlands of Africa, waters began to rush downstream. As they flowed, they brought a rich, fertile sediment called silt. **Silt is fine soil found on river bottoms.** By late summer, the Nile spilled over its banks all the way to the delta. The floodwaters deposited a thick layer of silt, making the land ideal for farming. In gratitude, the Egyptians praised Hapi (HAH pea), the god of the Nile:

“Hail to you, O Nile, who flows from the Earth and comes to keep Egypt alive.”

—ancient Egyptian prayer

Black Land and Red Land The ancient Egyptians called their land Kemet (KEH met), “the black land,” because of the dark soil left by the Nile’s floods. The timing of the floods and the height of the floodwaters might vary from year to year. But unlike the Mesopotamians, the Egyptians usually did not have to worry about flash floods. Dry years were rare in Egypt, but they could cause famine.

Beyond the fertile river banks lay the “red land,” the vast desert. It spread out on either side of the river. Most of the Sahara lay to the west, and the part of the Sahara called the Eastern Desert lay to the east. These lands were not friendly to human life. They were useless for farming. Only those who knew the deserts well dared travel over this blistering-hot land.

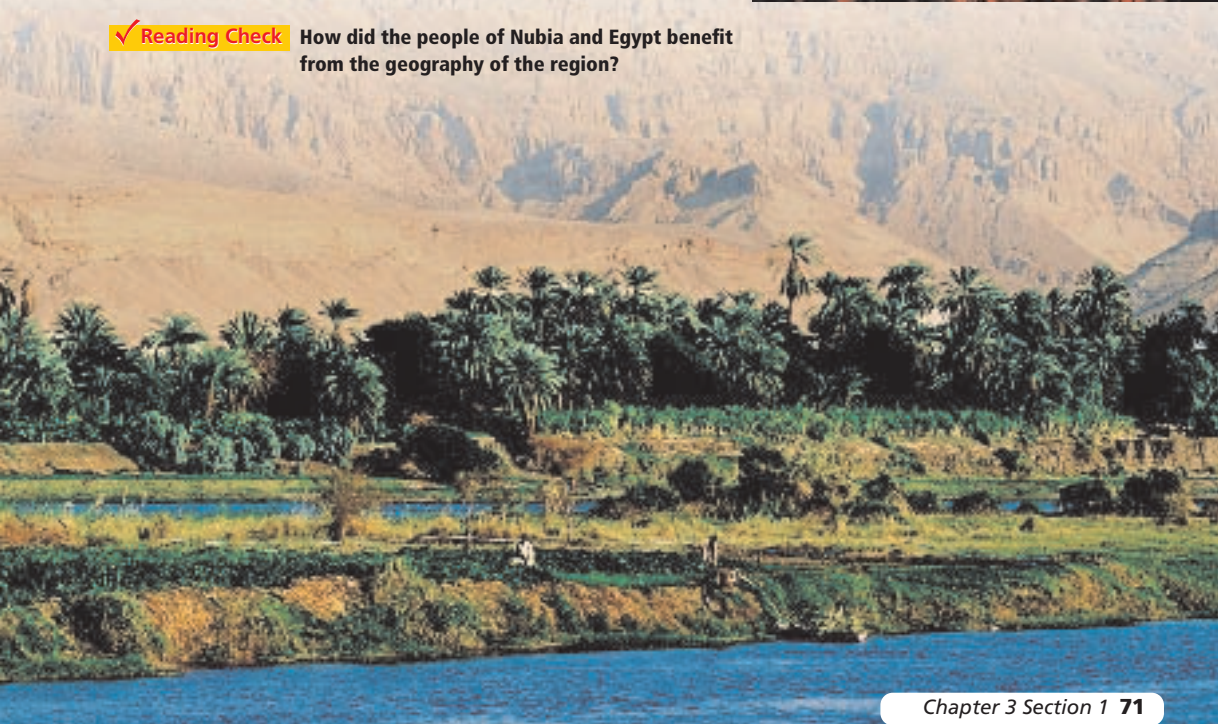
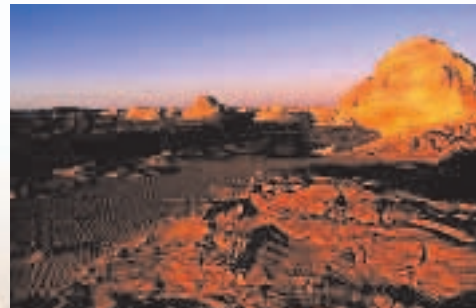
Desert Protection The hot sands shielded Egypt and Nubia from foreign attacks. That was a protection Mesopotamia did not have. The land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers was wide open to outsiders. The people of Mesopotamia often faced invasions. Over a period of 2,000 years, the people of ancient Egypt and Nubia faced few invasions. Yet they were not isolated. The Nile valley provided a path for trade with Central Africa. The Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea provided access to South-west Asia.

✓ Reading Check How did the people of Nubia and Egypt benefit from the geography of the region?

Geography and Civilization

In the large photo below, you can see the date palms and fields that line the Nile River near the city of Luxor. The small photo shows the desert landscape that surrounds the Nile.

Analyze Images Compare the two photos. What are the challenges of living in the desert? What are the advantages of living along the Nile?



The Growth of Communities and Trade Along the Nile

Settled hunting and fishing communities may have appeared in Nubia around 6000 B.C. Unlike the communities of the Fertile Crescent that settled after taking up agriculture, the Nubians formed settlements before they began to farm. Settled farming communities began to appear in both Egypt and Nubia sometime around 5000 B.C. As these communities grew, trade also expanded.

Links Across

Time

Saving Monuments To control flooding, the Egyptians built the Aswan High Dam on the Nile River in the 1960s. The water held back by the dam created Lake Nasser. During its creation, Lake Nasser threatened to flood ancient monuments that had been carved in the cliffs above the Nubian Nile. Egypt, with the help of about 50 nations, saved some of the monuments. At a site called Abu Simbel, the temple of Ramses II (below) was saved. Workers cut the temple into blocks. They moved the blocks to higher ground and then rebuilt the temple.

Living Along the Nile Egypt's early farming communities settled in the delta and valley regions of the Nile. The people of the delta built villages around the fertile river beds. Their homes were built of straw or of bricks made from a mix of mud and straw. To the south, in Upper Egypt, people built scattered farming villages along the banks of the Nile.

Nubia had less farmland along the Nile than Egypt. Because of the shortage of farmland, Nubians added to their diet by fishing in the Nile and hunting ducks and other birds along its banks.



A Highway for Trade In Egypt, the Nile was used to transport goods. Ships could travel north on the Nile because it was moving downriver. But they could also sail upriver with the help of the winds that blew toward the south. Other trade links ran east across the desert to the Red Sea ports or to Mesopotamia. Caravans loaded with gold, silver, copper, and fine pottery traveled the overland trade routes. Valuable goods such as cedar from the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea and gold from Nubia were sold in the bazaars of Egypt's towns.

Routes Through Nubia Because of the cataracts, people could not travel through Nubia by river. Instead, the Nubians developed trade routes over land. The Nubians became famous traders of the ancient world. They carried goods from central Africa and Nubia into Egypt and southwestern Asia and brought other goods back.

One Nubian caravan that traveled into Egypt had 300 donkeys. The donkeys carried ebony wood, ivory from elephant tusks, ostrich feathers and eggs, and panther skins. Another popular object was a throwstick, a type of boomerang that Africans used for hunting.

 **Reading Check** How did the Nile operate as a "highway for trade"?



Nubians traded many valuable goods. This Nubian bronze mirror with a gilt silver handle, from about 700 B.C., was found in present-day Sudan.



Section 1 Assessment

Key Terms

Review the key terms at the beginning of this section. Use each term in a sentence that explains its meaning.

Target Reading Skill

Find the word *torrents* on page 69. Use context clues to find the meaning of *torrents*.

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

1. (a) **Recall** Describe the course of the Nile River from its source all the way to the delta.

(b) Identify Cause and Effect

How did the Nile River affect the lives of the early Egyptians and Nubians?

(c) **Predict** If the Nile did not flood regularly, how might life along the river have been different in ancient times?

2. (a) **List** What kinds of trade goods passed through Nubia on their way to Egypt?

(b) **Identify Effects** How did the cataracts of the Nile River affect Nubian trade?

(c) **Draw Conclusions** How did the Nubians become famous as traders?

Writing Activity

Suppose that you are traveling along the Nile from its source to the Nile delta. Write a journal entry about the changes you notice in the river as you travel.

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For: An activity on the Nile River
Visit: PHSchool.com
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The Rulers of Egypt

Prepare to Read

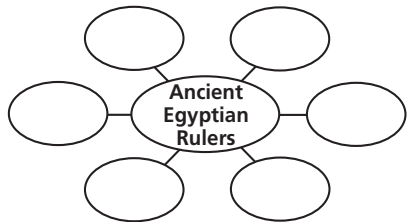
Objectives

In this section you will

1. Learn about the history of kingship in ancient Egypt.
2. Find out about Egypt's accomplishments during each of the three kingdom periods.
3. Understand what characterized the rule of Egypt during the New Kingdom period.

Taking Notes

As you read, look for the main ideas about ancient Egyptian rulers. Copy the diagram below, and record your findings in it.



Target Reading Skill

Use Context Clues When you read an unfamiliar word, you can sometimes figure out its meaning from clues in the context. Sometimes the context will restate the word. The following phrase, for example, restates the meaning of *sphinx*: “a legendary creature with a lion’s body and a human head.” As you read, look at the context for the word *timber* on page 76. What do you think *timber* means?

Key Terms

- **pharaoh** (FEHR oh) *n.* the title of the kings of ancient Egypt
- **dynasty** (DY nus tee) *n.* a series of rulers from the same family or ethnic group
- **absolute power** (AB suh loot POW ur) *n.* complete control over someone or something
- **regent** (REE junt) *n.* someone who rules for a child until the child is old enough to rule

A sculpture of Queen Hatshepsut as a sphinx, a legendary creature with a lion’s body and a human head



She seized control of Egypt’s throne and made herself **pharaoh** (FEHR oh), the title used by the kings of Egypt. Hatshepsut (haht SHEP soot) was not the only woman to rule Egypt. But the title of pharaoh was traditionally held by men. Hatshepsut took on all the responsibilities of a pharaoh. Sometimes she even wore the false beard traditionally worn by pharaohs. Like all Egyptian pharaohs, Hatshepsut controlled the wealth and power of a great civilization.

Egyptian Kingship

Hatshepsut was one of many famous Egyptian pharaohs who ruled Egypt. Some, like her, were wise. Others were careless or cruel. Egypt’s fortunes rested on the strength of its pharaohs.

From Dynasty to Dynasty The history of ancient Egypt is the history of each of its dynasties. A **dynasty is a series of rulers from the same family or ethnic group**. Egypt had 31 dynasties, from about 3100 B.C. until it was conquered in 332 B.C. Historians group Egypt's dynasties into three major time periods, called kingdoms. The earliest major time period is called the Old Kingdom. Next comes the Middle Kingdom. The latest time period is called the New Kingdom. The timeline titled Major Time Periods in Ancient Egypt on page 76 shows the approximate dates of each kingdom. Remember, these kingdoms are not places. They are time periods.

The gaps between the kingdoms were times of troubles—wars, invasions, or weak rulers. These in-between periods were rare, however. For most of ancient Egyptian history, rule was stable.

Egypt Is Unified According to legend, Egypt's first dynasty began when a king named Menes (MEE neez) united Upper and Lower Egypt. Menes built a city named Memphis near the present-day city of Cairo (KY roh). From there, he ruled over the Two Lands, the name the ancient Egyptians gave to Upper and Lower Egypt. Carvings from Menes' time show a pharaoh named Narmer wearing two crowns—the white crown of Upper Egypt and the red crown of Lower Egypt. Some historians believe that Menes and Narmer may have been the same man. The unification of Egypt was the beginning of one of the most stable civilizations in history.

All-Powerful Pharaohs The pharaohs had **absolute power, or complete control over their people**. For help in making decisions, they could turn to their advisors or appeal to Ma'at, the goddess of truth. In the end, whatever the pharaoh decided became law. For example, he decided when the fields would be planted. At harvest time, he demanded crops from the workers in the fields.

The Narmer Palette

This two-sided tablet honors the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt by a king named Narmer.

- 1 Narmer wears symbols of Egyptian kingship: the cone-shaped crown of Upper Egypt and a false beard and tail. He prepares to strike the enemy.
- 2 The falcon represents Horus, the god of kingship.
- 3 Reed plants, which grow in the Nile delta, represent Lower Egypt.
- 4 A royal sandal bearer carries Narmer's shoes. **Predict** Narmer wears a different crown on the opposite side of the tablet. What crown do you think he wears?



Major Time Periods in Ancient Egypt



Old Kingdom

- c. 2589 B.C. Builders begin Great Pyramid.
- c. 2533 B.C. Great Sphinx statue is completed.

Middle Kingdom

- c. 1991–1786 B.C. Egypt expands into Lower Nubia. Literature and art flourish.

New Kingdom

- c. 1503–1482 B.C. Queen Hatshepsut rules.
- c. 1504–1450 B.C. Reign of Thutmose III; empire expands into Syria.

Timeline Skills

Notice the three time periods called kingdoms, as well as the number of years between the kingdoms.

Identify How many dynasties ruled from 2686 to 2125 B.C.? How many ruled from 2125 to 2055 B.C.? **Infer** During which of those two time periods was Egypt most stable? Explain your answer.

Ancient Egyptians believed that their pharaohs were the earthly form of Horus, the falcon god. Over time, pharaohs came to be connected with other gods, including the sun god Re (ray). In this way, the pharaohs were god-kings. It was the pharaoh, Egyptians believed, who provided his people with the Nile's yearly floods and the harvests that followed.

“He is the god Re whose beams enable us to see.
He gives more light to the Two Lands than the sun’s disc.
He makes Earth more green than the Nile in flood.
He has filled the Two Lands with strength and life.”

—an official of ancient Egypt

✓ Reading Check Who was Menes and what did he accomplish?

The Three Kingdoms

Important events and achievements marked each of Egypt’s three kingdoms. The Old Kingdom was noted for its well-run system of government.

The Old Kingdom The Old Kingdom pharaohs kept the peace and traded with Nubia, with only occasional conflicts. They sent merchants to the eastern coast of the Mediterranean to find timber, or trees used for building. The timber was used to make houses, boats, and furniture. Merchants may have traveled north across the Mediterranean in search of trade items.

Toward the end of the Old Kingdom, governors in the provinces began to challenge the power of the pharaohs’ government. Egypt’s unity crumbled, and the dynasties grew weak.



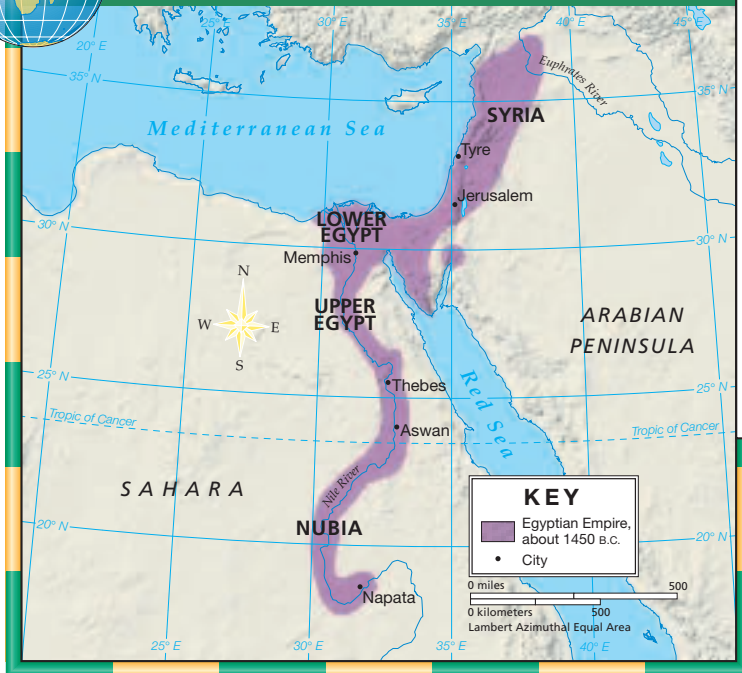
Use Context Clues

If you do not know what timber is, look for context clues. Find a restatement of the word *timber*. Then reread what the Egyptians used timber for. What is timber?



Egyptian Empire, About 1450 B.C.

MAP MASTER Skills Activity



Movement Egypt expanded its rule during the New Kingdom. As the empire grew, Egyptian goods and ideas reached new places.

Identify Which waterways could the Egyptians use to transport goods? **Infer** How did the empire's access to waterways help it to control the empire?

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map skills practice.

The Middle Kingdom The early rulers of the Middle Kingdom restored order and reunited the country. Pharaohs spent the nation's wealth on public works instead of on wars. For example, they constructed buildings and irrigation projects. Egypt grew even richer. However, weaker and less able rulers followed. In time, they lost control of the country to foreign invaders.

The New Kingdom Egyptian princes became strong enough to drive out the foreign invaders. This event marks the start of the New Kingdom, which began in 1567 B.C. The first pharaohs of the New Kingdom wanted to build an empire. They created huge armies of foot soldiers, mounted warriors, and charioteers. Bronze swords and body armor made the Egyptians nearly unbeatable. One New Kingdom pharaoh is of special interest to scholars. King Tutankhamen became ruler of Egypt while he was still a child. At about age 18 he died and was buried with many precious objects. An archaeologist discovered his tomb in 1922. Since then, studies of Tutankhamen's funeral treasures have taught us a great deal about the ancient Egyptians.

A gold portrait mask was one of the many treasures found in King Tutankhamen's tomb.



Reading Check What characterized each of the three kingdoms?

Rule During the New Kingdom

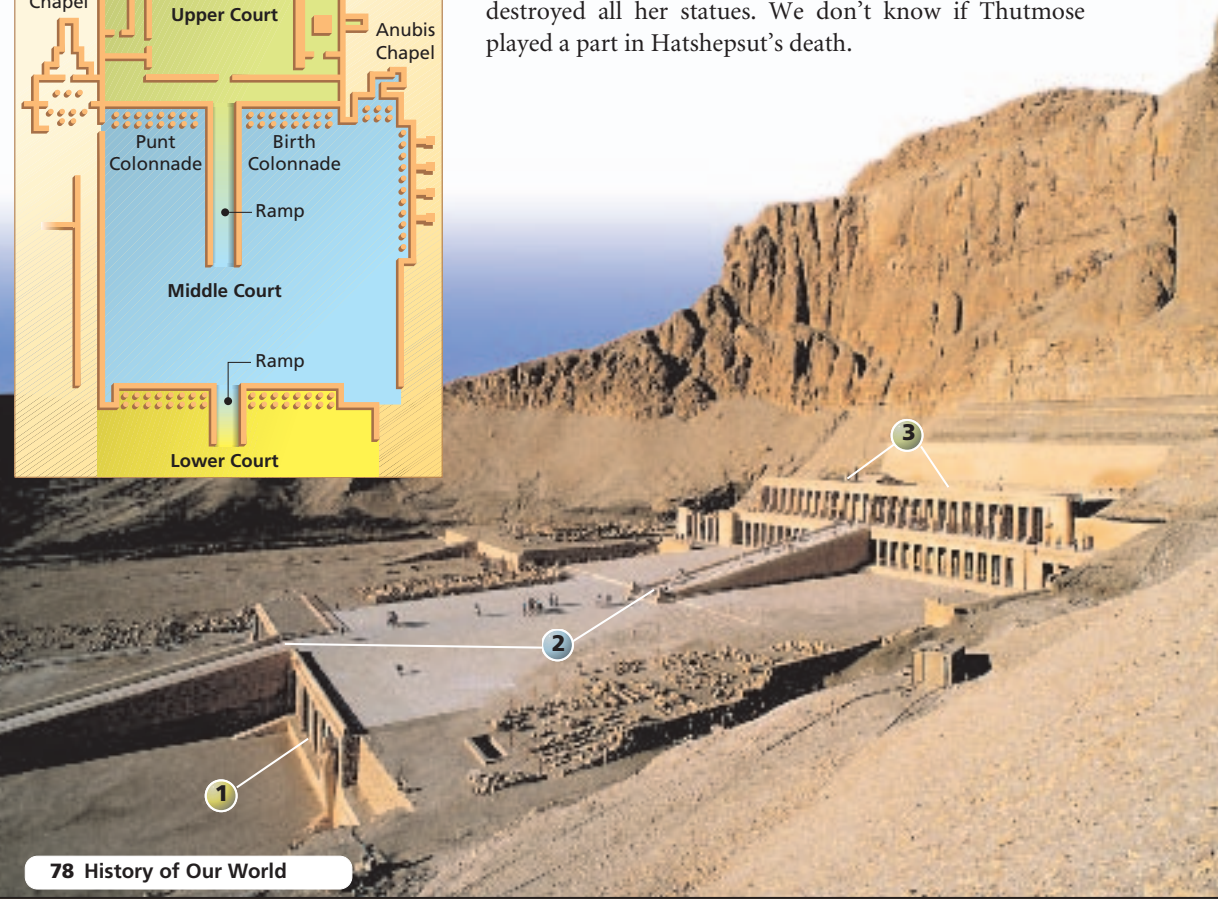
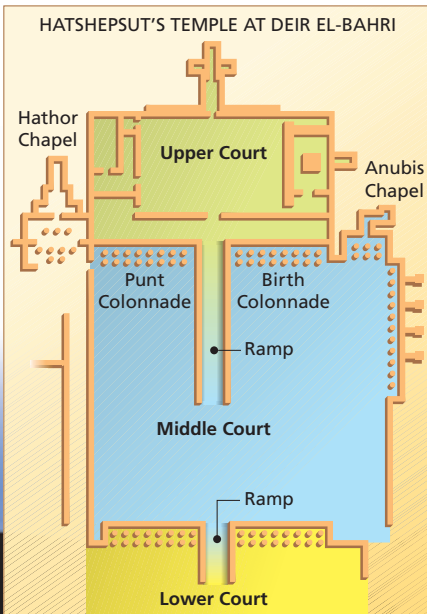
In 1504 B.C., a child named Thutmose III (thoot MOH suh) began his reign. Because of his youth, his stepmother was appointed regent. **A regent is someone who rules for a child until the child is old enough to rule.** His stepmother was Hatshepsut, whom you read about at the beginning of this section. Not content to be regent, Hatshepsut had herself proclaimed pharaoh. She was Egypt's supreme ruler for about 15 years.

The Pharaoh Queen Hatshepsut's reign was good for Egypt. She was a bold leader who is most known for creating a time of great peace and economic success. She encouraged trade with faraway places, sending a famous expedition to the land of Punt on the east coast of Africa. Egyptian traders returned with shiploads of ivory, leopard skins, and special trees used to make incense, a substance burned for its fragrance. When Thutmose grew up, Hatshepsut refused to yield the throne to him. After her death, Thutmose became pharaoh and destroyed all her statues. We don't know if Thutmose played a part in Hatshepsut's death.

Deir el-Bahri, Thebes

This temple built by Queen Hatshepsut was set into a cliff on the west bank of the Nile River.

- 1 The lower court entrance was once planted with trees and vines.
- 2 Ramps lead visitors to the middle and upper levels.
- 3 Inside the colonnades are carvings honoring Hatshepsut's birth as well as a famous trade journey to Punt that she once sponsored. **Analyze** What features of Hatshepsut's temple would have impressed its visitors in ancient Egypt?



Thutmose III Rules Thutmose III became one of the greatest pharaohs of the New Kingdom. He led his army in wars against Syria and Phoenicia, in Southwest Asia. His troops advanced as far east as the Euphrates River and south into Nubia. Yet Thutmose was more than a conqueror. He was an educated man who loved to study plants. Unlike most rulers of his time, he treated those he defeated with mercy.

Ancient Egypt After the New Kingdom Toward the end of the New Kingdom, Egypt declined. Civil war left Egypt weak and poorly defended. In 332 B.C., long after the end of the New Kingdom, Egypt fell to the famous conqueror Alexander the Great of Macedonia. The Macedonians continued to rule Egypt for about 300 years.

In 51 B.C., Queen Cleopatra VII became the last Macedonian to rule Egypt. She shared the throne with other members of her family until Egypt was conquered by the Romans. Egypt became part of the Roman Empire in 31 B.C. Cleopatra suspected that the Romans would parade her through Egypt to celebrate their victory. To avoid this humiliation, she committed suicide. Egypt would not govern itself again for almost 2,000 years.

✓ Reading Check What caused the decline of Egypt during the New Kingdom period?

Thutmose III finally assumed the throne after the death of his stepmother, Hatshepsut.



Section 2 Assessment

Key Terms

Review the key terms at the beginning of this section. Use each term in a sentence that explains its meaning.



Target Reading Skill

Find the word *incense* on page 78. Use context to figure out its meaning. What clues helped you to understand the meaning of *incense*?

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

1. (a) **Identify** What unusual powers did Egyptians believe their kings had?

(b) **Link Past and Present**

Explain why Egypt's rulers had more authority than most rulers have today.

2. (a) **Recall** Describe some of the accomplishments of each of the three Egyptian kingdoms.

(b) **Compare** What characteristics did all three kingdoms have in common?

3. (a) **Generalize** Describe the New Kingdom under Thutmose III and during its later decline.

(b) **Analyze Information** Why do you think the pharaohs of Egypt were so successful for so long? What factors led to the decline of Egypt?

Writing Activity

Write a paragraph explaining the following statement: "Ancient Egypt was strongest when its rulers were strong."

Writing Tip Before you write, reread Section 2. Pay special attention to the parts of the text that describe Egypt's strongest pharaohs. Use the statement above as your topic sentence, the sentence that begins your paragraph.



Egyptian Religion

Prepare to Read

Objectives

In this section you will

1. Learn about Egyptian gods and goddesses.
2. Find out about the Egyptians' belief in the afterlife.
3. Discover how and why the pharaohs' tombs were built.

Taking Notes

As you read, take notes to summarize the religious beliefs and practices of the ancient Egyptians. Copy the chart below, and use it to record your notes.



Target Reading Skill

Use Context Clues When reading, you may find a word that is unfamiliar or even a word you know that is used in an unfamiliar way. Look for clues in the surrounding words and sentences, to help you understand the meaning of the word. For example, look at the context for the word *linen* in the second paragraph on this page. Find the explanation of how linen was used in mummification. What do you think *linen* means?

Key Terms

- **afterlife** (AF tur lyf) *n.* a life after death
- **mummy** (MUM ee) *n.* a dead body preserved in lifelike condition
- **pyramid** (PIH ruh mid) *n.* a huge building with four sloping triangle-shaped sides; built as royal tombs in Egypt
- **Giza** (GEE zuh) *n.* an ancient Egyptian city; the site of the Great Pyramid

As the royal family wept over the pharaoh's body, the priest chanted:

“You will live again. You will live forever. Behold, you will be young forever.”

—ancient Egyptian prayer

One hundred days had passed since the pharaoh had died. During that time, the royal officials had been carefully preparing his body. Now, they wrapped the body in many strips of fine linen and placed it in a gold-covered coffin decorated to resemble the king in all of his royal glory.

The Egyptians believed in an **afterlife, a life after death**. They said prayers during the funeral, hoping to help the pharaoh's soul on its way to the afterlife. Then the nobles and royal family followed the body as it was carried to the royal tomb. Workers closed the tomb and the mourners went home. The pharaoh's journey to the afterlife had begun.



Anubis, god of the dead, tends a dead pharaoh. According to Egyptian myth, Anubis invented mummification.

Egyptian Gods and Goddesses

Religion was an important part of daily life in ancient Egypt. The Egyptians believed that their gods and goddesses controlled the workings of nature. They built temples to honor their gods, and offered them food, gifts, and prayers.

Regional Differences Early on, Egyptian towns had their own gods and goddesses with their own temples. These included gods who were often shown as humans with animal heads. All Egyptians also worshiped certain principal gods, such as the sun god, Re and the falcon god, Horus. Over time, however, all ancient Egyptians came to believe in several groups of gods.

Important Gods The chief god of the ancient Egyptians was Amon-Re (ah mun RAY). He protected the rich and the poor alike. The Egyptians believed that Amon-Re was born each morning in the east with the sunrise. Each evening he died in the west with the setting sun. That is why the desert area to the west was believed to be the home of the dead.

Other powerful gods included Osiris (oh SY ris), the god of the living and the dead. The goddess Isis (EYE sis) was his wife. She was worshiped as the great mother who protected her children. The sky god, Horus, was their son.

Reading Check Who was Osiris?

Egyptian Gods and Goddesses

The ancient Egyptians believed that their gods controlled life, death, and all of nature.

- 1 Horus, the sky god and the god of kingship
- 2 Osiris, the god of the afterlife
- 3 Isis, the goddess of women
- 4 Thoth, the god of wisdom and of writing
- 5 Amon-Re, the sun god and god of creation



The World

A King With One God

Amenhotep IV (ah mun HOH tep) became pharaoh in 1352 B.C. Five years later, he changed his name to Akhenaton (ah keh NAH tun) to show his devotion to the god, Aton, the life-giving disk of the sun. Like the Israelites, Akhenaton worshiped only one god. He ordered workers to remove the names of other Egyptian gods from temples. Most Egyptians rejected the practice of monotheism. After the king's death, they went back to worshipping many gods.

Belief in an Afterlife

Like the people of many civilizations, the ancient Egyptians believed in life after death. Evidence of this belief is often found in the art and artifacts they left behind.

Journey to the Afterlife The ancient Egyptians believed the spirits of the dead made their way to the afterlife in heavenly boats. If they had pleased the gods in this world, they joined Osiris and lived a life of ease and pleasure. They spent their days eating, drinking, and visiting with friends and family members who had died. Because the souls of the dead could not survive without food, clothing, and other items from this life, their possessions were buried with them.

During the Old Kingdom, the afterlife was thought to be only for kings and their associates. But beginning in the Middle Kingdom, people of all classes looked forward to an afterlife.

Preparing the Dead Before the building of pyramids, most Egyptians were buried in the desert in shallow pits. Egypt's climate dried out a person's remains, creating a **mummy, the preserved body of a dead person**. According to religious beliefs,

the soul would leave the mummy, but return to it to receive food offerings. The preserved appearance of the body allowed it to be recognized by the person's spirit. By the time of the Fourth Dynasty, the Egyptians had begun to practice mummification, artificially preserving the bodies before burial.

Mummification was expensive and took two or three months. Workers carefully removed the organs. The body was then filled with a natural salt and stored for about 40 days. During that time, it completely dried out. Once dry, the body was cleaned and bathed in spices. It was then wrapped with long linen bandages.

While workers were preparing the mummy, artisans were busy carving the coffin. Pharaohs actually had three or four coffins. The coffins nested one inside another like boxes. The innermost coffin was usually shaped like a human body, with the dead person's face painted on the cover.

**Burials, rich and poor**

The decorative coffin on the right held the expensively preserved internal organs of King Tutankhamen. The reed coffin tied with rope (above), from about 1450 B.C., holds the naturally preserved body of a baby. **Infer** According to ancient Egyptian religious beliefs, which of the two souls would enjoy a more comfortable afterlife? Explain.

✓ Reading Check Why did ancient Egyptians bury their dead with food and other possessions?

The Great Pyramid

For more than 4,000 years, the Great Pyramid at Giza stood taller than any other human-made structure in the world. About 480 feet (147 meters) high, it still stands today. It has four triangle-shaped sides and a square base.



Inside the Grand Gallery
In the 1800s, Napoleon Bonaparte of France ordered a study of the pyramids. His scientists made drawings as they passed through the Grand Gallery to the King's Chamber.

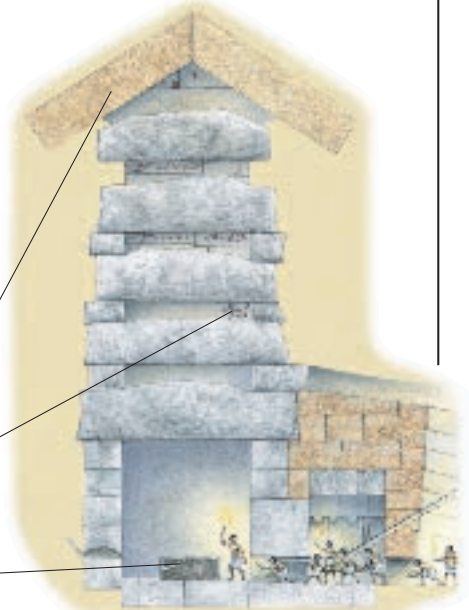
The King's Chamber lay at the center of the pyramid.

A temple held the pharaoh's body before burial.

These stones spread the weight of the pyramid above, preventing the whole structure from collapsing.

Graffiti carved into these slabs records the names of the workers who built the chamber.

The pharaoh's outer coffin is larger than the entrance to the chamber, meaning that the pyramid was built around it.

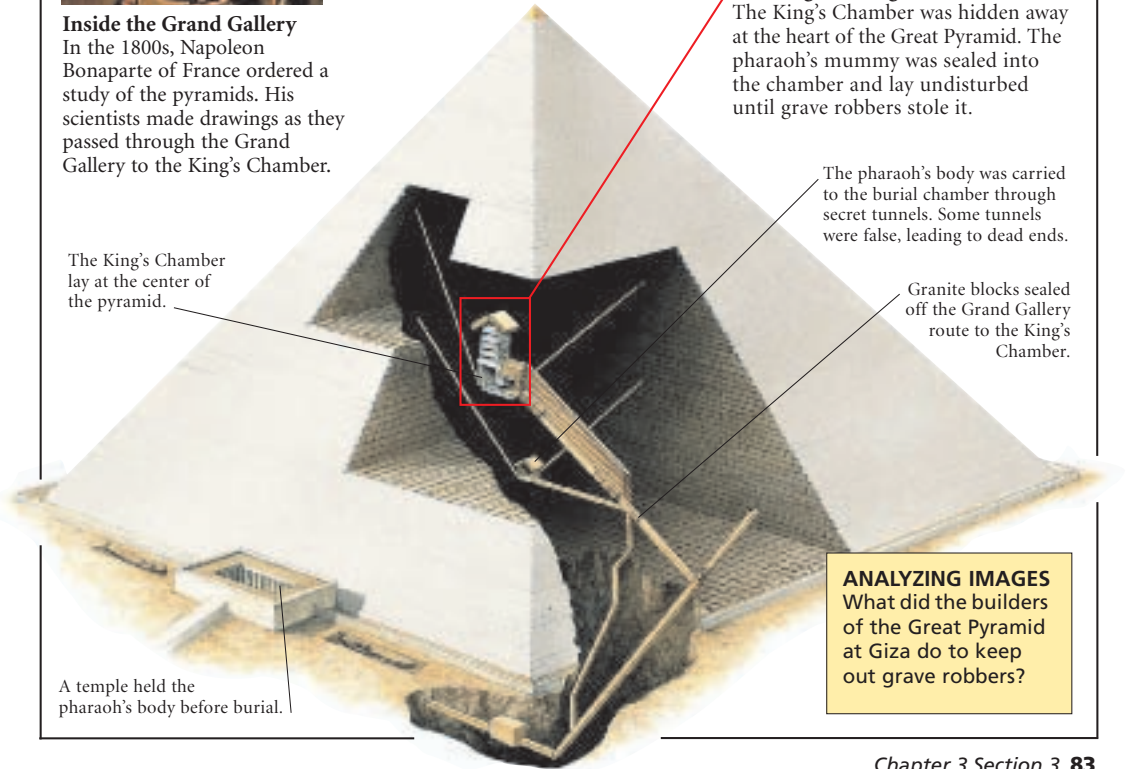


Building the King's Chamber

The King's Chamber was hidden away at the heart of the Great Pyramid. The pharaoh's mummy was sealed into the chamber and lay undisturbed until grave robbers stole it.

The pharaoh's body was carried to the burial chamber through secret tunnels. Some tunnels were false, leading to dead ends.

Granite blocks sealed off the Grand Gallery route to the King's Chamber.



ANALYZING IMAGES
What did the builders of the Great Pyramid at Giza do to keep out grave robbers?

The Pharaohs' Tombs

The planning for a pharaoh's tomb began soon after he was crowned. The earliest royal tombs were made of mud brick. As time went on, however, tomb building became a complex art.

The Pyramids The pharaohs of the Fourth Dynasty built the largest and most famous tombs. These were the **pyramids, huge buildings with four sloping triangle-shaped sides**. Most of the pyramids were built during the Old Kingdom. The largest is called the Great Pyramid, built for Khufu (KOO foo), the second king of the Fourth Dynasty. **The Great Pyramid was built in the ancient city of Giza**. Find Giza on the map at the beginning of this chapter.

The Building Process Building the pyramids required a great deal of organization. The Great Pyramid is made up of more than 2 million stones. The average weight of each stone is 5,000 pounds (2,270 kilograms). Each stone had to be hauled up the side of the pyramid and put into its proper place.

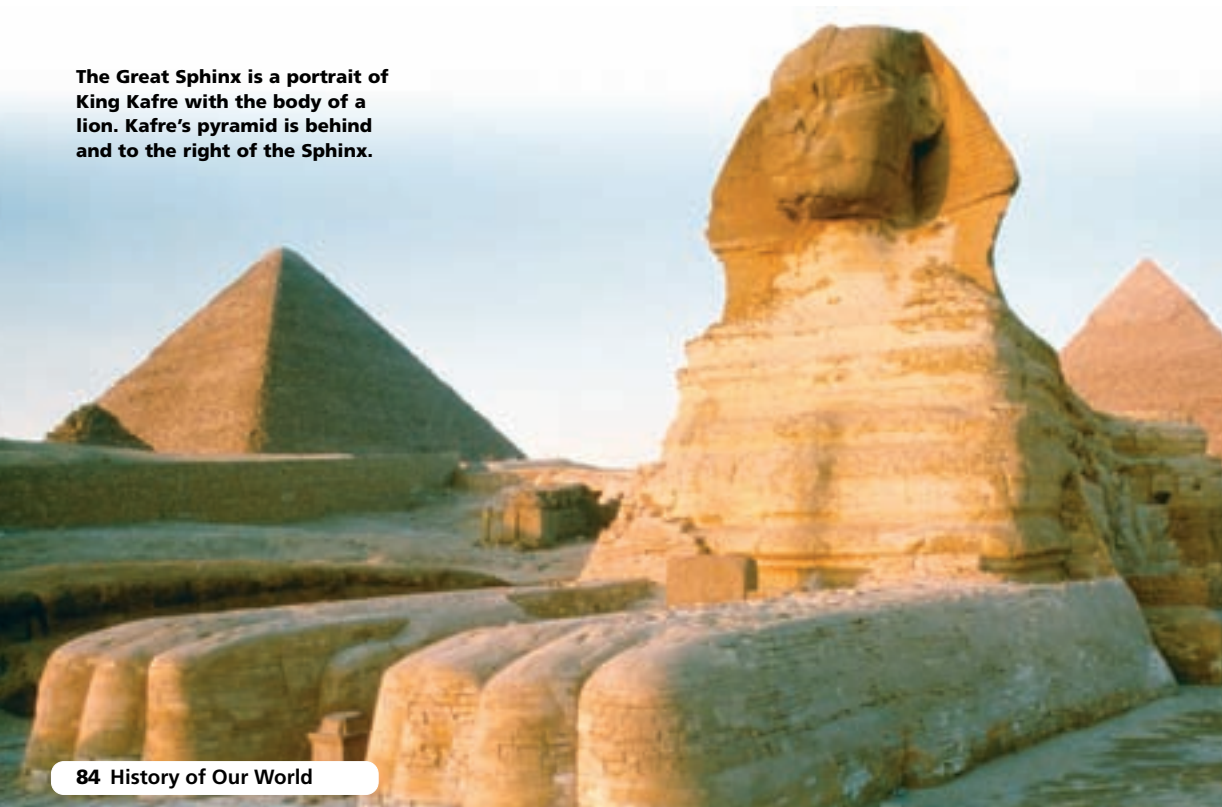


Using Context Clues

What does *hauled* mean?

Look for an explanation in the text under the heading The Building Process.

The Great Sphinx is a portrait of King Kafre with the body of a lion. Kafre's pyramid is behind and to the right of the Sphinx.



A pyramid could take more than 20 years to build. The project began with the selection of a site on the west bank of the Nile. Remember that the west was thought to be the land of the dead. Once the site was chosen, workers cleared the ground. Engineers set the pyramid square so that the sides faced the main points of the compass—north, south, east, and west.

Workers then cut the building blocks. Stone for the inside of the pyramid came from nearby quarries. But fine stone for the outside came from farther away. Some stone came all the way from Nubia. It had to be loaded onto barges and carried to the building site either along the Nile or along canals near the Nile.

Teamwork To get the blocks of stone into place, workers used sleds, wooden rollers, and levers. They dragged and pushed the huge blocks up ramps of packed rubble to the level they were working on.

Building pyramids was dangerous work. Each year, men lost their lives, crushed by falling blocks. But the workers believed in the importance of their work. For them, building a pyramid was an act of faith. It was a way of ensuring the pharaoh's place in the afterlife.



Carpenters at work, from a painting in an official's tomb

 **Reading Check** Why did the Egyptians build pyramids?



Section 3 Assessment

Key Terms

Review the key terms at the beginning of this section. Use each term in a sentence that explains its meaning.



Target Reading Skill

Find the word *quarries* in the second paragraph of this page. What do you think it means?

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

1. (a) **Identify** What were the religious beliefs of the ancient Egyptians?

(b) **Describe** In what ways did the ancient Egyptians use religion to understand nature?

2. (a) **Explain** Why did the Egyptians mummify their dead?

(b) **Analyze** How do we know that the afterlife was important to the ancient Egyptians?

3. (a) **Recall** Why were the pharaohs concerned about the condition of their tombs?

(b) **Sequence** Describe how the ancient Egyptians organized the building of the pyramids.

Writing Activity

Suppose the pharaoh invites you to go with him to inspect his pyramid as it is being built. Write a journal entry describing what you see on your visit.

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the ancient Egyptians
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Ancient Egyptian Culture

Prepare to Read

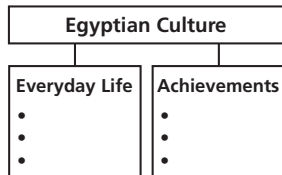
Objectives

In this section you will

1. Find out about the everyday life of the ancient Egyptians.
2. Learn about writing in ancient Egypt.
3. Discover advances made by the Egyptians in science and medicine.

Taking Notes

As you read, look for details about ancient Egyptian culture. Copy the flowchart below and record your findings in it.



Target Reading Skill

Use Context Clues Cause-and-effect clues can help you understand the meaning of an unfamiliar word. In the following sentence, a cause-and-effect clue points to the meaning of *scattered*: When the farmer scattered the seeds, he caused them to fly and land in many directions. What do you think *scattered* means?

Key Terms

- **hieroglyphs** (HY ur oh glifs) *n.* pictures and other written symbols that stand for ideas, things, or sounds
- **papyrus** (puh PY rus) *n.* an early form of paper made from a reed plant found in the marshy areas of the Nile delta; the plant used to make this paper
- **astronomer** (uh STRAHN uh mur) *n.* a scientist who studies the stars and other objects in the sky



A high official of ancient Egypt and his wife

Uni was a high-ranking Egyptian of the Old Kingdom. His life story—a success story—is recorded in his tomb.

Uni began his career in a simple way—running a storehouse. Later, he was promoted to groundskeeper of the royal pyramid. In his job, he oversaw the delivery of stone from the quarry, the site where stone was cut, to the pyramid. Uni must have worked hard, because later he was made a general. Then, he became Governor of Upper Egypt, in charge of goods and taxes for half the kingdom. By the time of his death, Uni had become royal tutor at the palace and an honored companion of the pharaoh. Uni and many other people like him were part of everyday life in ancient Egypt.

The Lives of the Egyptians

Most of what we know about the everyday life of the Egyptians is based on paintings that cover the walls of tombs and temples. Written records also tell us much about their lives.

Social Classes Historians often turn to Egyptian art to learn about the social classes of ancient Egypt. Egyptian paintings and carvings show royalty and ordinary people involved in all aspects of life. Like Uni, most Egyptians were busy and hard-working people. They also had a sense of fun and a love of beauty.

Egyptian society itself resembled a pyramid. At the very top stood the pharaoh. Beneath him was a small upper class. This group included priests, members of the pharaoh's court, and nobles who held the largest estates. The next level was the middle class, made up of merchants and skilled workers. At the base of the pyramid was by far the largest class, the peasants. Mostly, the peasants did farm labor. But they also did other kinds of labor, such as building roads and temples. A person could rise to a higher class. Generally, the way to rise was through service to the pharaoh, as Uni did.

Slavery Prisoners captured in wars were made slaves. Slaves formed a separate class, which was never very large. Egyptian society was flexible, however. Even slaves had rights. They could own personal items and inherit land from their masters. They could also be set free.

Nekhebu, Royal Architect

A man named Nekhebu worked his way up from the bottom of society to become an architect during the Old Kingdom. At first, he carried other builders' tools for them. Eventually, his hard work paid off. The pharaoh made him Royal Architect. Nekhebu believed in always doing the best possible work, and in "never going to bed angry against anybody."

Working in Egypt

Models showing scenes from everyday life were often placed in tombs. This wood model shows workers in a bakery. **Infer** Why do you think such scenes are useful to archaeologists?



Lives of the Peasants Although peasants could own land, most worked the land of wealthier people. During the flood season, the peasants worked on roads, temples, and other buildings. As soon as the waters left the land, they had to plant the fields. The work had to be done quickly while the soil was still moist. One farmer plowed the black earth with a team of oxen while another followed behind, scattering the seeds.

The harvest was the busiest season for Egypt's peasants. All men, women, and older children went into the fields to gather the crops of wheat or barley. Work went on from sunrise to sunset. Once the crops were gathered, the villagers feasted. They offered food and drink to the gods in thanks for their help.

Women of Egypt Egyptian women were looked upon as living models of Isis, the wife of the god Osiris. They had most of the rights that men had. They could own property, run businesses, and enter into legal contracts. For the most part, women traveled about freely. Egyptian paintings often show them supervising farm work or hunting. And women performed many roles—from priestess to dancer.

Noble women held a special position in Egyptian society. Sometimes they were in charge of temples and religious rites. They could also use their position to influence the pharaoh. Some women acted as regents until the pharaoh was old enough to rule on his own.

 **Reading Check** How was Egyptian society organized?



Women's Lives

The women shown above are wearing scented wax cones on their heads. The wax melted in the heat, surrounding the women with perfume. At the right, a woman works in a field with her husband. **Conclude** Which social classes do you think the women in the paintings belonged to? Explain your answer.





Hieroglyphs

A		P	
AH		F	
AY		M	
EE		N	
U		L	
B		H	
H		Q	
S		K	
SH		T	

Writing in Ancient Egypt

The records and writings left by the ancient Egyptians allow us to learn more about their culture. From these records, we know that they possessed an amazing amount of knowledge.

A New System of Writing In ancient Egypt, as in Mesopotamia, ideas were written down in **picturelike symbols called hieroglyphs (HY ur oh glifs)**. In this script, some pictures stand for ideas or things. For example, a picture of two legs means “go.” Other pictures stand for sounds. For example, a drawing of an owl stands for the “m” sound.

The Egyptians began to use hieroglyphs because they needed a way to keep track of the kingdom’s growing wealth. As the Egyptian empire grew, it became necessary to create more pictures for more complicated ideas.

Writing Materials At first, the Egyptians wrote on clay and stone, as the Sumerians did. But they needed a more convenient writing surface. They found it in **papyrus (puh py ruhs)**, an early form of paper made from a reed found in the marshy areas of the Nile delta. The plant used to make this paper is also called papyrus. To make the paper, the inner stalks of the plant were cut into narrow strips. The strips were cut to the same length and placed side by side in one layer. Another layer of strips was placed crosswise on top to form a sheet. Papyrus makers wet the sheet, pressed it flat, and dried it in the sun. Sap from the plant glued the strips together. Pasted side by side, the sheets formed a long strip that could be rolled up.

Chart Skills

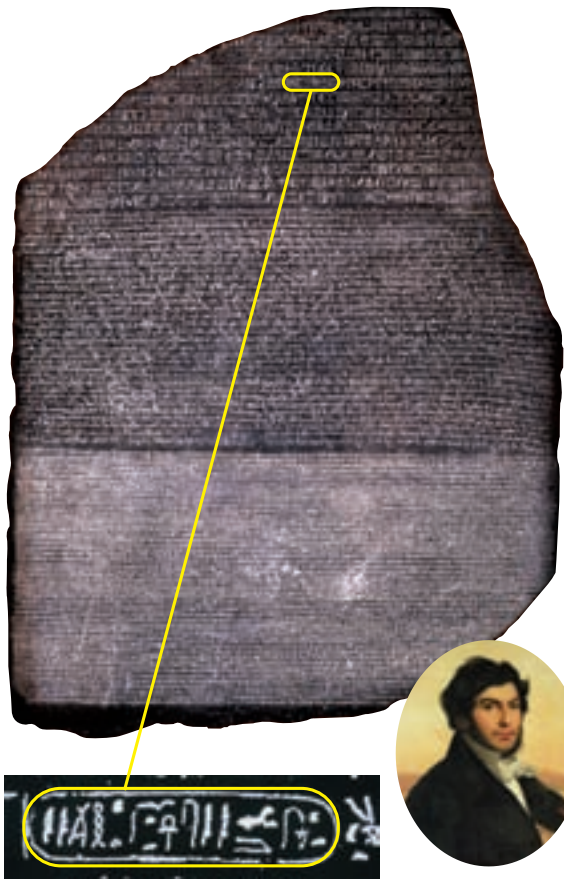
The text of the *Book of the Dead* (top left) was meant to guide the dead on their journey to the afterlife. The book’s hieroglyphs are written on papyrus. The table (above) shows some hieroglyphs and the sounds they stood for. **Identify** What is the hieroglyph for the “p” sound? **Analyze Images** What are some English words you could spell using the hieroglyphs in the chart?



Use Context Clues

What does *sap* mean?

Look for cause-and-effect clues in the text. Sap from the plant glues the strips of papyrus together. What does that tell you about sap?



Clues to the Past

The circled hieroglyphs on the Rosetta Stone (above left) spell the name of King Ptolemy V. Jean François Champollion (above right) realized that hieroglyphs stood for sounds in the Egyptian language and was able to decipher the hieroglyphs used to spell Ptolemy's name.

Generalize Why was the translation of hieroglyphs an important discovery in the study of Egyptian history?

Unlocking a Mystery The meaning of ancient Egypt's hieroglyphic writing was lost after the A.D. 400s. Scholars could not read the mysterious pictures. It wasn't until about 200 years ago, in 1799, that an important find took place. A soldier digging a fort near the Nile found a large black stone with three different types of writing on it. The upper part showed hieroglyphs, the middle part showed a later Egyptian script called demotic, and the lower part showed Greek letters. The stone was named the Rosetta Stone because it was found near Rosetta, a city in the Nile delta near the Mediterranean Sea.

The three texts on the stone held the same meaning. Therefore, many scholars tried to use the Greek letters on the Rosetta Stone to figure out the meaning of the hieroglyphs. But it was not an easy task. Then, in the 1820s, a young French scholar named Jean François Champollion (zhahn frahn SWAH shahm poh LYOHN) finally figured it out. When Champollion published his results, a new window onto the world of ancient Egypt opened.

✓ Reading Check What was the significance of the Rosetta Stone?

Science and Medicine

In addition to their developments in writing, the ancient Egyptians made important advances in such fields as astronomy and medicine. Among the people of the ancient world, Egypt was known as a land of great learning.

Keeping Track of Time Because they were an agricultural people, the Egyptians needed to be able to predict when the Nile would flood. Astronomers noticed that the Nile appeared to rise rapidly about the same time that they could see Sirius (SIHR ee us), the Dog Star, in the sky shortly before sunrise. **Astronomers are scientists who study the stars and other objects in the sky.** They worked out the average time between the appearances of the star. They found that it came to about 365 days. This became the length of their year.

Mathematics The Egyptians used basic mathematics in finding solutions to problems they faced every day. We know they could add, subtract, multiply, and divide. We also know they used simple fractions. Mathematics helped Egyptians measure stone so that it could be cut to the proper size to build pyramids. They used geometry to measure area so that they could figure out the amount of taxes for a plot of land.

Medicine Religion and medicine were closely related in ancient Egypt. Doctors were specially trained priests who used religious practices and their knowledge of illnesses to try to heal the sick. Probably because of their work on mummies, the ancient Egyptians knew a great deal about the body. By studying the body, they learned to perform surgery. They could set broken bones and treat many minor injuries.

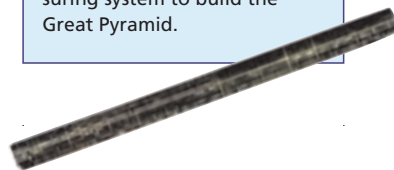
The Egyptians also understood herbalism, the practice of creating medicines from plants. They used these natural remedies to help ease everyday illnesses such as stomachaches and headaches. Mothers prepared their own home remedies, or cures, to reduce children's fevers. The Egyptians wrote much of their medical knowledge down on papyrus. Centuries later, the ancient Greeks and Romans used these records.

 **Reading Check** Why was it important for the Egyptians to figure out the length of their year?

Links to

Math

Measurement Some units of measurement used by the Egyptians were based on the human body. The cubit was the distance from an elbow to the tip of the fingers. Of course, this length varied from person to person, so the Egyptians made a standard cubit out of black granite. Other cubits, such as the one below, could then be modeled from the standard. The Egyptians used their accurate measuring system to build the Great Pyramid.



Section 4 Assessment

Key Terms

Review the key terms at the beginning of this section. Use each term in a sentence that explains its meaning.

Target Reading Skill

Find the word *remedies* in the last paragraph in this section. Use cause-and-effect clues to figure out its meaning.

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

1. (a) **Describe** How were the lives of Egypt's peasants ruled by the seasons?

(b) **Draw Conclusions** How did the seasons affect all of Egyptian society?

2. (a) **Recall** Describe how the Egyptians used hieroglyphs to communicate.

(b) **Analyze Information** What was the importance of writing in Egyptian society?

3. (a) **List** What areas of science and medicine did the ancient Egyptians study?

(b) **Link Past and Present** How did the learning achievements of the Egyptians affect later civilizations?

Writing Activity

Suppose you are an Egyptian scribe. Write a description that shows how you use your skill in the service of the pharaoh. Then, use the table of hieroglyphs in this section to create a word.

Writing Tip Scribes kept records and accounts for the pharaohs. They also wrote prayers on the wall paintings of tombs. Think about some other work a scribe might perform for a pharaoh. Then write your description from the scribe's point of view.



Section
5

The Cultures of Nubia

Prepare to Read

Objectives

In this section you will

1. Examine the relationship between Nubia and Egypt.
2. Learn about the Nubian kingdoms centered in Kerma, Napata, and Meroë.

Taking Notes

As you read, find details on the resources and culture of ancient Nubia. Copy the table below, and fill in the columns to record your findings.

Nubia			
Relations With Egypt	Kerma	Napata	Meroë
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•



Target Reading Skill

Use Context Clues You can use synonyms, words that have similar meanings, to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Find the synonym for *ultimate* in the following sentence: Taharka received the *ultimate* prize, the greatest honor possible. *Greatest* is a synonym for *ultimate*. As you read, look for synonyms and other context clues.

Key Terms

- **ore** (awr) *n.* a mineral or a combination of minerals mined for the production of metals
- **Lower Nubia** (LOH ur NOO bee uh) *n.* the region of ancient Nubia between the first and second Nile cataracts
- **Upper Nubia** (UP ur NOO bee uh) *n.* the region of ancient Nubia between the second and sixth Nile cataracts
- **artisan** (AHR tuh zun) *n.* a worker who is skilled in crafting goods by hand



This Egyptian bronze statue shows Pharaoh Taharka making an offering to the falcon god.

Prince Taharka of Nubia loved a good contest. He once held a 5-hour, 30-mile race across the desert. The athletes, Taharka's soldiers, ran at night to avoid the blazing heat. In the end, he gave prizes to the winners and losers alike.

In 690 B.C., Taharka himself would receive the ultimate prize: He was to be crowned king of both Nubia and Egypt. He would become the greatest ruler of his dynasty. Taharka's mother traveled 1,200 miles from Nubia north to Memphis to see her son made king. Their homeland of Nubia gave birth to some of the world's oldest cultures.

Nubia and Egypt

Archaeologists have found pottery, weapons, and jewelry at Nubian burial sites. Some of these items date to about 6000 B.C. Findings also show that trade existed among these early peoples. From about 3100 B.C., many Nubian kingdoms arose, only to die out as their rulers lost power.

Land of the Bow Recall that the region of Nubia was located south of ancient Egypt, beyond the first cataract of the Nile River. For most of their long history, Nubia and Egypt were peaceful, friendly neighbors. The Egyptians called Nubia Ta Sety (tah SEHT ee), the “land of the bow.” They were probably referring to the Nubians’ skill as archers. The Nubian archers were so skilled that Egypt hired many of them for its armies.

Valuable Resources Egypt valued Nubia for its rich mineral resources, such as gold, copper, and iron ore. **An ore is a mineral or a combination of minerals mined for the production of metals.** Because of its location, Nubia became a bridge for goods traveling between central Africa and Egypt. Early in its history, Egypt benefited from goods that came from **Lower Nubia, the region between the first and second Nile cataracts.** Later, powerful kingdoms began to rise to the south, in **Upper Nubia, the region between the second and sixth Nile cataracts.** These kingdoms rivaled Egypt for control of land. The most powerful of these kingdoms were in the cities of Kerma (KUR muh), Napata (nuh PAY tuh), and Meroë (MEHR oh ee). Find these cities on the map on page 98. These kingdoms were ruled by Kushites, people who lived in southern Nubia.

✓ Reading Check Why did Nubia and Egypt become rivals?

Nubia and Egypt A recent discovery of a Nubian incense burner has some scientists thinking about Nubia’s early relationship with Egypt. Some scientists think the object was made around 3100 B.C., or even earlier. Carved on its side are a seated king and other figures that later became the symbols of Egyptian pharaohs. Scholars are debating whether Nubia or Egypt had the first kings.

Nubian Archers

A model shows an army of Nubian archers. The Egyptians admired the Nubians’ skill in archery. **Conclude** Why was Nubia called the “land of the bow”?





Human-Environment Interaction The natural resources of Nubia formed the basis of its wealth.

Locate Which metal was found between the second and third cataracts of the Nile River?

Identify Effects How did Nubia's metal resources affect its relationship with Egypt?

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The Kerma Culture

The Kushites came to power at a time when Egypt was weakening. By about 1600 B.C., the Kushite kingdom had expanded from the city of Kerma into parts of southern Egypt. These Nubians are known as the Kerma culture. Their kingdom lasted from about 2000 to 1500 B.C.

Kerma's Wealth Kerma had gained not only power but wealth, mainly from controlling the trade between Central Africa and Egypt. It was noted for its **artisans, or workers skilled at crafting items by hand**. They made highly prized, delicate pottery. Items made by Kerma artisans have been found in the tombs of pharaohs.

Like the Egyptians, the people of Kerma devoted a great deal of energy and resources to royal burials. They buried their kings in mounds of earth as large as football fields. Inside their tombs, the kings' bodies rested on top of gold-covered beds surrounded by jewelry, gold, and ivory.

A Kerma pottery bowl





Target Skill

Use Context Clues

Do you know what *recover* means? Find a synonym for *recover* later in the same sentence. What does it mean?

Conflict With Egypt Around the 1500s B.C., Egypt began to recover its strength and to reclaim control of the area. Pharaoh Thutmose I sent his armies into Nubia. After a war that lasted about 50 years, the Egyptians took control of Nubia as far south as the fourth cataract. Egypt ruled Nubia for about the next 700 years.

During this period, the Nubians adopted many Egyptian ways. They even began to worship Egyptian gods along with their own. Throughout these times of conflict and peace, people and goods continued to pass between Nubia and Egypt. The two cultures became mixed.

✓ Reading Check What were some characteristics of Kerma?

Napata and Meroë

South of Kerma lay the Nubian cities of Napata and Meroë, in the ancient land called Kush. After centuries of Egyptian rule, the Kushites rose again to power. Their kingdom was centered in the Nubian city of Napata and then later in Meroë.

The Capital of Napata In the late 700s B.C., Egypt was once again weak and divided. From their capital in Napata, the Kushites expanded their power into Egypt.

The Napatan kings gradually took control of more of Egypt. They moved their capital city first to Thebes and then to Memphis. By the time of Taharka, whose coronation you read about earlier, the Nubians controlled all of Egypt. The pharaohs of Egypt's Twenty-fifth Dynasty were Nubians.

The Napatan kings admired Egyptian culture. They brought back many old Egyptian ways and preserved them. They even began building pyramids in which to bury their kings. The ruins of these small Nubian pyramids can still be seen today.

The rule of the Napatan kings did not last very long. About 660 B.C., they were forced back into Nubia. They retreated to Napata and then gradually moved their capital south to Meroë. The Nubians never again controlled Egyptian land.



Monuments of Napata

The pyramids of Napata (top) and a ram statue (bottom) from the entrance to the Great Amun Temple at Napata reflect the ties between Nubian culture and Egyptian culture. **Contrast** How do the Nubian pyramids differ from the Egyptian pyramids shown in the photo on page 84?

Government

The Women of Nubia

Women held very high status in Nubian society. Most often, the children of the ruler's sister would be next in line for the throne. Compared to Egypt, Nubia had many more women as rulers. In ancient artwork, the queens of Meroë have large and powerful figures. The queens were considered ideal beauties, and their weight reflected their wealth and rank.



The Capital of Meroë After moving south of Egypt's reach, the Nubians founded a royal court in the ancient city of Meroë. This city was located on the Nile between the fifth and sixth cataracts. It became the center of an empire that included much of Nubia. It also stretched south into central Africa.

The rocky desert east of Meroë held large deposits of iron ore. The Nubians used the ore to make iron weapons and tools. Iron plows allowed them to produce generous supplies of food. Iron weapons allowed them to control trade routes that ran all the way to the Red Sea. There they traded goods from central Africa for articles from India, the Arabian Peninsula, and Rome. Meroë grew rich from this trade.

Today, Meroë remains largely a mystery. The Nubians of Meroë created their own system of hieroglyphic writing. Scholars have so far been unable to fully understand these hieroglyphics, which are found on the temples and tombs of the kingdom.

Meroë began to weaken in the A.D. 200s, and it fell to the African kingdom of Axum in the next century. Features of Nubian culture, however, have lasted for 3,500 years. To this day, Nubian styles of pottery, furniture, jewelry, braided hairstyles, and clothing survive among people of the modern-day African country of Sudan.

 **Reading Check** How did the people of Meroë use iron ore?

Section 5 Assessment

Key Terms

Review the key terms at the beginning of this section. Use each term in a sentence that explains its meaning.

Target Reading Skill

Find *articles* in the second paragraph on this page. If it is used in an unfamiliar way, find a synonym to understand its meaning.

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

1. **(a) Explain** What was the relationship between Egypt and Nubia?

(b) Apply Information How did the Nubians and the Egyptians borrow from each other's cultures?

2. **(a) Recall** What were the resources of Kerma?

(b) Identify the Main Idea What part did Kerma's wealth play in its conflict with Egypt?

3. **(a) Explain** How are the histories of Napata and Meroë tied to Egypt?

(b) Link Past and Present What signs of Nubian culture exist in Africa today? Do you think present-day Africans are likely to be interested in Nubian culture? Explain why or why not.

Writing Activity

List the names of the three major Nubian cities you learned about in this section. Write a brief description of each of the cities, and include its importance in the history of Nubia.

Writing Tip Before you begin, reread Section 5. As you read, look for important details about each city of Nubia. Your list should include the most important and most interesting details. Refer to the list when you write your description.

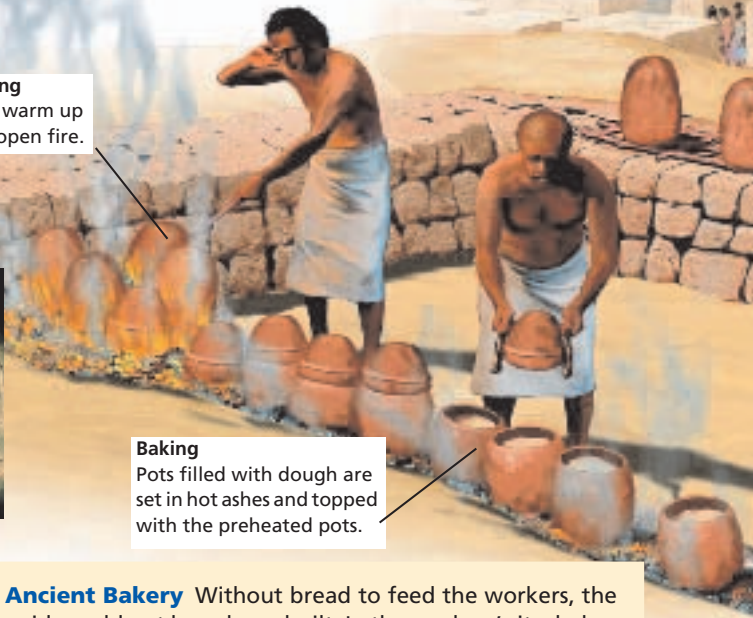


Focus On The Pyramid Builders

In the shadow of the three pyramids at Giza, archaeologists are uncovering a lost city. It is the workers' city, a sprawling site on which as many as 20,000 men and women lived and worked about 4,500 years ago. The workers came from all over Egypt. They included pyramid builders and their bosses, administrators, priests, cooks, doctors, metalworkers, masons, weavers, and gravediggers. Laborers could be forced to work, but some probably volunteered to build the sacred tombs.

Preheating
Pot tops warm up over an open fire.

Baking
Pots filled with dough are set in hot ashes and topped with the preheated pots.

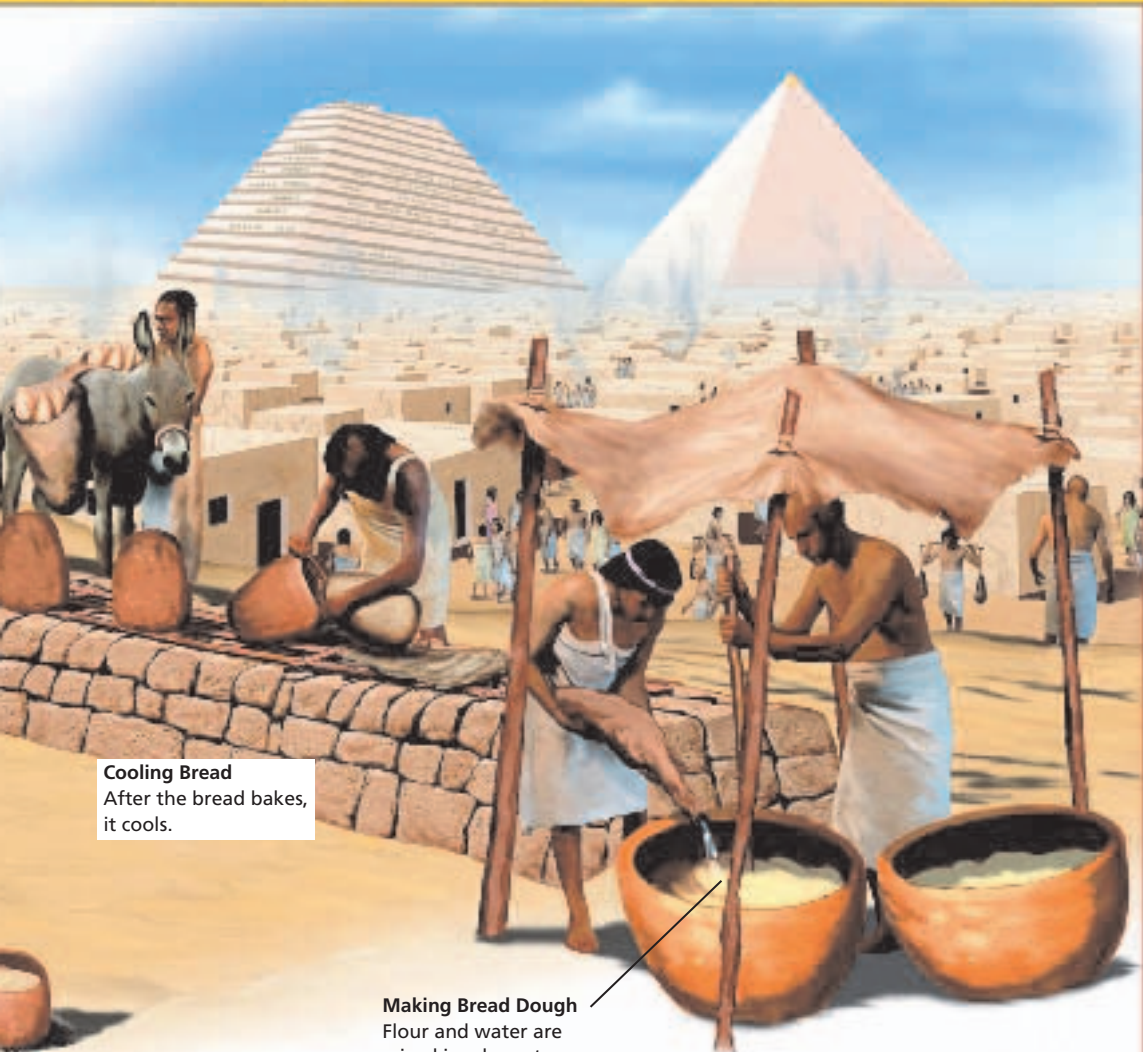


Copper Smelting

This carving shows workers blowing on flames to smelt copper, a process in which heat was used to remove impurities from the metal. Copper tools like the one shown at the top of this page were pounded into wedges to split rock.

An Ancient Bakery Without bread to feed the workers, the pyramids could not have been built. In the workers' city, bakers ground barley and wheat into flour for the bread dough. Wild airborne yeast helped the dough to rise. (The Egyptians, however, believed it rose by the power of the gods.) Workers set covered pots of dough onto a bed of hot ashes for baking. The finished loaves were heavy and filling—enough to feed a hungry pyramid builder.

The workers' site also included buildings for preparing meat and fish, to complete the workers' diet. There was one drawback to the bread-making process. Tiny pieces of the grain-grinding stones often wound up in the loaves, creating life-threatening dental diseases for the Egyptians.



Cooling Bread

After the bread bakes, it cools.

Making Bread Dough

Flour and water are mixed in a large terracotta vat.

Assessment

Identify Who were the people who lived in the lost city near the pyramids at Giza?

Infer Why was a city of workers needed to build the pyramids?



Egyptian Medicine

In the workers' city, doctors set bones and treated a variety of ailments. Egyptians believed the household god Bes, whose statue is shown at the left, could protect them from danger.

Using Route Maps



A silver jug from ancient Egypt

The leader of the caravan turned and saw the storm approaching in the distance. Then he looked ahead, straining to see some glimpse of Assur. The caravan had been traveling for many days, carrying goods from Giza. Although his men were tired, the leader signaled for them to move faster. He wanted to reach the city before the storm came.

For years, the caravan leader had brought goods from Lower Egypt to Syria and Sumer. This particular road, however, was new to him. He hoped that they would reach Assur soon.

The leader of the caravan might have found a route map useful. Although maps did exist in ancient times, most people's knowledge of roads was passed along by word of mouth. Today, most road travel is fairly easy. You just need to know how to read a route map.

Learn the Skill

Use the following steps to read a route map.

- 1 Read the title of the map, and become familiar with the map's features.** What is the purpose of the map? What type of map is it—physical or political, modern or historical, or a standard road map?
- 2 Study the key to understand its symbols.** Colors are generally used on route maps to show different routes or different types of roads.
- 3 Trace routes on the map.** Using the scale of miles, you can calculate distances. A physical map will show the geographic features of a route.
- 4 Interpret the map.** Draw conclusions about which routes would be fastest, safest, most scenic, or the easiest to follow.

A camel caravan in the Sahara





Egyptian Trade Routes, c. 1450 B.C.

Practice the Skill

Use the steps on page 96 and the map at the right to gather and interpret information about ancient trade routes.

- 1 Write down the purpose of the map. What does the map show?
- 2 Look at the key to see information about Egyptian trade routes. Identify the purple region on the map. Find routes that travel over land and water. Identify the landmarks indicated in the map key.
- 3 Using the compass rose, note the general direction of the trade routes. Identify the geographic features of the routes. Look for geographic features that the routes seem to avoid.
- 4 Write a paragraph that draws conclusions about Egyptian trade routes. Answering these questions might help you: Why did most of the trade routes run through the purple area? How did geography influence the paths that traders took? Why does the map show no direct road connecting the major Egyptian cities of Thebes and Giza?



Apply the Skill

Draw a map showing the route you take from your home to your school. Add a scale and a compass rose. Mark the location of your school and your home with symbols. Explain the symbols in a map key.

When you are finished, exchange maps with a classmate. Identify the symbols used in the map key. Determine the distance from your classmate's home to school.