

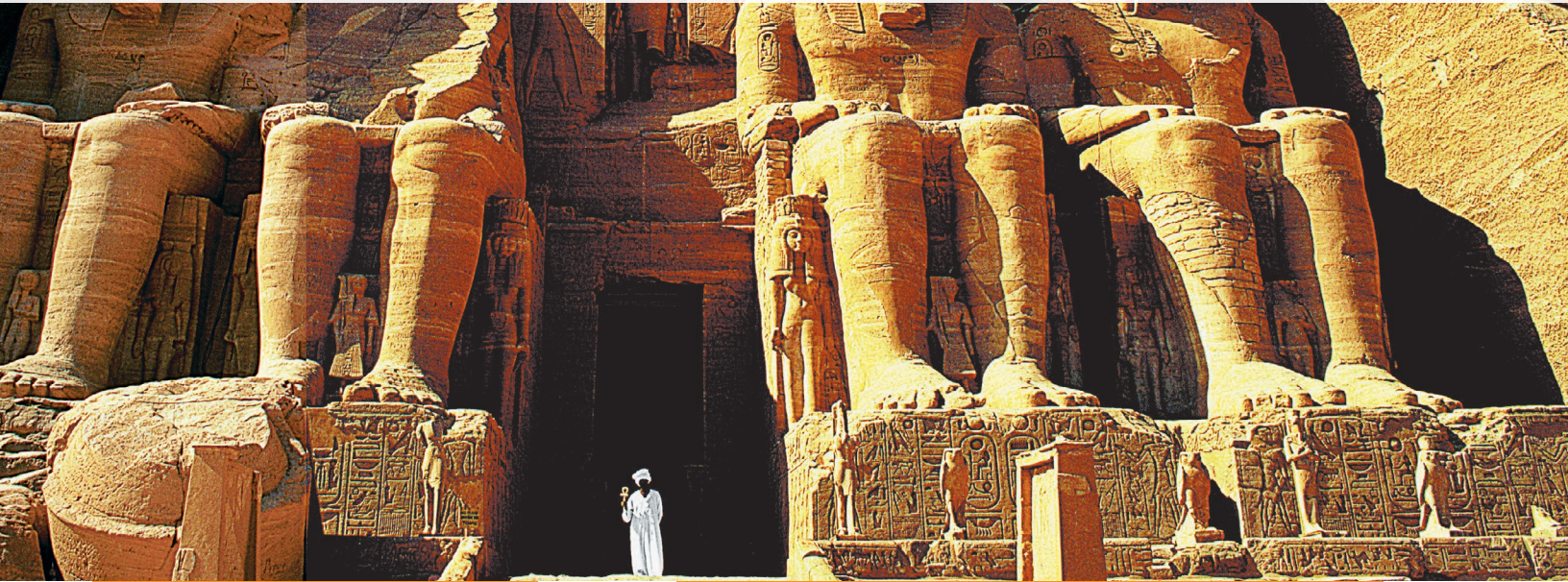
## Module 4

# Kingdoms of the Nile



### Essential Question

Why were Egyptians able to create such a long-lasting civilization?



**About the Photo:** The photo shows an ancient temple of Ramses II, one of Egypt's most powerful rulers.

In this module you will learn about how the civilizations of ancient Egypt, Kush, and Aksum developed along the Nile River.

### What You Will Learn...

**Lesson 1: Geography and Early Egypt** . . . . . 104

**The Big Idea** The water and fertile soils of the Nile Valley allowed a great civilization to develop in Egypt.

**Lesson 2: The Old Kingdom** . . . . . 110

**The Big Idea** Egyptian government and religion were closely connected during the Old Kingdom.

**Lesson 3: The Middle and New Kingdoms** . . . . . 117

**The Big Idea** During the Middle and New Kingdoms, order and greatness were restored in Egypt.

**Lesson 4: Egyptian Achievements** . . . . . 123

**The Big Idea** The Egyptians made lasting achievements in writing, architecture, and art.

**Lesson 5: Kush and Aksum** . . . . . 129

**The Big Idea** The kingdoms of Kush and Aksum, which arose south of Egypt, developed advanced civilizations with large trading networks.

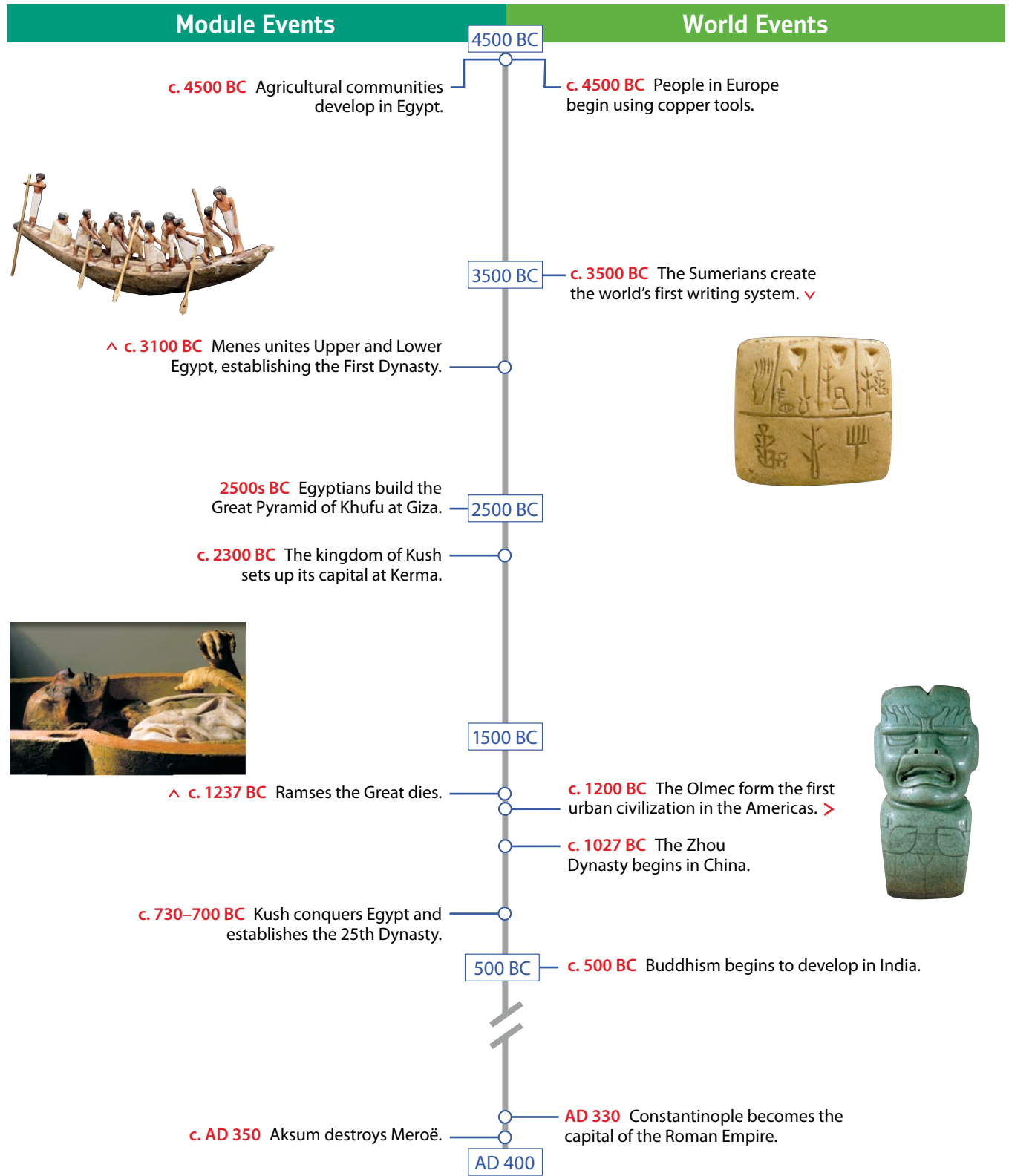
### Explore ONLINE!



#### VIDEOS, including...

- The Egyptian Empire Is Born
- The Sphinx of Egypt
- The Egyptian Book of the Dead

- ✓ Document-Based Investigations
- ✓ Graphic Organizers
- ✓ Interactive Games
- ✓ Animation: The Structure of a Pyramid
- ✓ Interactive Map: Ancient Egypt
- ✓ Image with Hotspots: Building the Pyramids of Giza





# Reading Social Studies

## THEME FOCUS:

### Geography, Religion, Economics

In this module you will read about Egyptian and other civilizations of the Nile River. You will learn how the Nile River, nearby deserts, and other geographic features shaped early societies. You will learn how religious beliefs shaped everything from the daily lives of Egyptians to the art they created. You will also learn how the economies of these kingdoms were based on trade.

## READING FOCUS:

### Causes and Effects in History

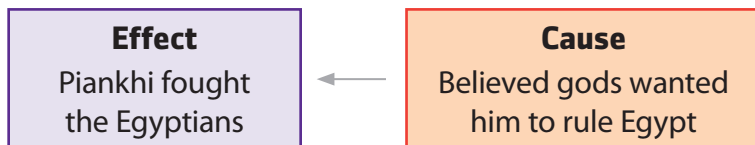
Have you heard the saying, “We have to understand the past to avoid repeating it”? That is one reason we look for causes and effects in history.

**Identify Causes and Effects** A **cause** is something that makes another thing happen. An **effect** is the result of something else that has happened. Most historical events have a number of causes as well as a number of effects. You can understand history better if you look for causes and effects of events.

1. Because the Egyptians had captured and destroyed the city of Kerma, the kings of Kush ruled from the city of Napata.



2. Piankhi fought the Egyptians because he believed that the gods wanted him to rule all of Egypt.



Sometimes writers use words that signal a cause or an effect. Here are some:

**Cause**—*reason, basis, because, motivated, as*

**Effect**—*therefore, as a result, for that reason, so*

# You Try It!

*As you read each of the selections below, identify which phrase or sentence describes a cause and which describes an effect.*

## Find Causes and Effects

1. "During the mid-1000s BC the New Kingdom in Egypt was ending. As the power of Egypt's pharaohs declined, Kushite leaders regained control of Kush. Kush once again became independent."
2. "A series of inept pharaohs left Egypt open to attack."
3. "The Assyrians' iron weapons were better than the Kushites' bronze weapons. Although the Kushites were skilled archers, they could not stop the invaders."
4. "Iron ore and wood for furnaces were easily available, so the iron industry grew quickly."

*Answer these questions based on the passages you just read.*

1. In selection 1, is "Kush once again became independent" the cause of the Egyptians growing weaker or the effect?
2. In selection 2, what left Egypt open to attack? Is that the cause of why Egypt was easily attacked or the effect?
3. In selection 3, who is using the iron weapons, the Assyrians or the Kushites? What was the effect of using the weapons?
4. In selection 4, does the word "so" signal a cause or an effect?

**As you read this module,** look for words that signal causes or effects. Make a chart to keep track of these causes and effects.

## Key Terms and People

### Lesson 1

cataracts  
delta  
Menes  
pharaoh  
dynasty

### Lesson 2

Old Kingdom  
theocracy  
Khufu  
nobles  
afterlife  
mummies  
elite  
pyramids  
engineering

### Lesson 3

Middle Kingdom  
New Kingdom  
trade routes  
Queen Hatshepsut  
Ramses the Great

### Lesson 4

hieroglyphics  
papyrus  
Rosetta Stone  
sphinxes  
obelisk  
King Tutankhamen

### Lesson 5

Piankhi  
trade network  
merchants  
exports  
imports  
Queen Shanakhdakheto  
Aksum  
King Ezana





# Geography and Early Egypt

## The Big Idea

The water and fertile soils of the Nile Valley allowed a great civilization to develop in Egypt.

## Main Ideas

- Egypt was called the “gift of the Nile” because the Nile River was so important.
- Civilization developed after people began farming along the Nile.
- Strong kings unified all of Egypt.

## Key Terms and People

cataracts  
delta  
Menes  
pharaoh  
dynasty

Along the banks of the Nile is a fertile river valley. Beyond the valley are hundreds of miles of desert.



## If YOU were there . . .

Your family farms in the Nile Valley. Each year when the river’s floodwaters spread rich soil on the land, you help your father plant barley. When you are not in the fields, you spin fine linen thread from flax you have grown. Sometimes you and your friends hunt birds in the tall grasses along the river banks.

### Why do you like living in the Nile Valley?

## The Gift of the Nile

Geography played a key role in the development of Egyptian civilization. The Nile River brought life to Egypt and allowed it to thrive. The river was so important to people in this region that a Greek historian named Herodotus (hi-RAHD-uh-tuhs) called Egypt the gift of the Nile. Over time, Egyptians developed technologies that helped them take advantage of the river.

**Location and Physical Features** The Nile is the longest river in the world. It begins in central Africa and runs north through Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea, a distance of over 4,000 miles. The civilization of ancient Egypt developed along a 750-mile stretch of the Nile.

Ancient Egypt included two regions, a southern region and a northern region. The southern region was called Upper Egypt. It was so named because it was located upriver in relation to the Nile’s flow. Lower Egypt, the northern region, was located downriver. The Nile sliced through the desert of Upper Egypt. There, it created a fertile river valley about 13 miles wide. On either side lay hundreds of miles of desert.

The Nile flowed through rocky, hilly land south of Egypt. At several points, this rough terrain caused **cataracts**, or rapids, to form. The first cataract, located 720 miles south of the Mediterranean Sea, marked the southern border of Upper Egypt. Five more cataracts lay farther south. These cataracts made sailing on that portion of the Nile very difficult.

# Ancient Egypt



**Interpret Maps**

- 1. Place** What bodies of water can you see on the map?
- 2. Location** Is Upper Egypt located to the north of Lower Egypt or to the south?

In Lower Egypt, the Nile divided into several branches that fanned out and flowed into the Mediterranean Sea. These branches formed a **delta**, a triangle-shaped area of land made from soil deposited by a river. In ancient times, swamps and marshes covered much of the Nile Delta. Some two-thirds of Egypt's fertile farmland was located in the Nile Delta.

**The Floods of the Nile** Because little rain fell in the region, most of Egypt was desert. Each year, however, rainfall far to the south of Egypt in the highlands of East Africa caused the Nile to flood. The Nile's floods were easier to predict than those of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in

### Reading Check

#### Summarize

Why was Egypt called the gift of the Nile?

Mesopotamia. Almost every year, the Nile flooded Upper Egypt in mid-summer and Lower Egypt in the fall.

The Nile's flooding coated the land around it with a rich silt. As in Mesopotamia, the silt made the soil ideal for farming. The silt also made the land a dark color. That is why Egyptians called their country the black land. They called the dry, lifeless desert beyond the river valley the red land. Each year, Egyptians eagerly awaited the flooding of the Nile. For them, the river's floods were a life-giving miracle. This why the Nile is featured in many Egyptian myths and rituals. Without the floods, people never could have farmed in Egypt.

## Civilization Develops in Egypt

The Nile provided both water and fertile soil for farming. Over time, scattered farms grew into villages and then cities. Eventually, an Egyptian civilization developed.

**Increased Food Production** Hunter-gatherers first moved into the Nile Valley more than 12,000 years ago. They found plants, wild animals, and fish there to eat. In time, these people learned how to farm, and they settled along the Nile. By 4500 BC, farmers living in small villages grew wheat and barley.

Over time, however, Egyptians needed to modify their environment in order to feed growing populations. As in Mesopotamia, farmers in Egypt developed an irrigation system to improve agricultural production. Unlike farmers in Mesopotamia, however, Egyptian farmers did not need to build basins for storing water. The Egyptians simply built a series of canals and walls to direct the river's flow and carry water to their fields.

The Nile provided Egyptian farmers with an abundance of food. In addition to watering their crops, the Nile allowed farmers to raise animals. Farmers in Egypt grew wheat, barley, fruits, and vegetables. They also raised cattle and sheep. The river provided many types of fish, and hunters trapped wild geese and ducks along its banks. Like the Mesopotamians, the Egyptians enjoyed a varied diet.

Even today, the Nile continues to be a valuable resource for people living along its banks. Recent technologies have changed how Egyptians interact with the Nile. For example, construction of the Aswan High Dam along the Nile River was completed in 1970. The dam provides a significant source of electric power. This electricity has improved the standard of living for many people in the region.

Construction of the dam also has negative consequences. Farmers in Egypt still rely on the fertile lands along the Nile River to grow food. However, the dam limits the amount of silt on farmland from annual flooding. The silt from the river makes farmland more productive. Egyptians now use fertilizer on farmland to make up for the lost silt.

**Two Kingdoms** In addition to a stable food supply, Egypt's location offered another advantage. It had natural barriers that made it hard to invade Egypt. The desert to the west was too big and harsh to cross. To the





Farmers in ancient Egypt learned how to grow wheat and barley. This tomb painting (above) shows a couple harvesting their crop. Farmers in Egypt (right) still use the fertile lands along the Nile River to grow food.

### Reading Check

Summarize  
What attracted  
early settlers to the  
Nile Valley?

north, the Mediterranean Sea kept many enemies away. More desert lands and the Red Sea to the east provided protection against invasion as well. In addition, cataracts in the Nile made it difficult for invaders to sail in from the south.

Protected from invaders, the villages of Egypt grew. Wealthy farmers emerged as village leaders, and strong leaders gained control over several villages. By 3200 BC, the villages had grown, banded together, and developed into two kingdoms. One kingdom was called Lower Egypt, and the other was called Upper Egypt.

Each kingdom had its own capital city where its ruler was based. The capital of Lower Egypt was located in the northwest Nile Delta at a town called Pe. There, wearing the red crown that symbolized his authority, the king of Lower Egypt ruled. The capital city of Upper Egypt was called Nekhen. It was located on the west bank of the Nile. In this southern kingdom, the king wore a cone-shaped white crown. For centuries, Egyptians referred to their country as the two lands.



## Kings Unify Egypt

According to tradition, around 3100 BC **Menes** (MEE-nee-z) rose to power in Upper Egypt. Some historians think Menes is a myth and that his accomplishments were really those of other ancient kings named Aha, Scorpion, or Narmer.

Menes wanted to unify Upper and Lower Egypt. His armies invaded and took control of Lower Egypt. He then married a princess from Lower Egypt to strengthen his control over the newly unified country. Menes wore both the white crown of Upper Egypt and the red crown of Lower Egypt to symbolize his leadership over the two kingdoms. Later, he combined the two crowns into a double crown. He formed one government in Egypt under a single monarchy.

Government power was more centralized in Egypt than in other places such as Sumer. In Sumer, leaders ruled over individual city-states. These city-states controlled large areas within Sumer. The government in Egypt, however, ruled over all of the cities within Egypt's borders. Many historians consider Menes to be Egypt's first **pharaoh** (FEHR-oh), the title used by the rulers of Egypt. The title *pharaoh* means "great house." The pharaoh ruled over Egypt with total control.

Egyptians believed that the pharaoh acted as a mediator between the people and the gods. This idea provided further reason to justify the pharaoh's rule. Menes founded Egypt's first **dynasty**, or series of rulers from the same family. Under dynasties, rule was generally passed from one generation to the next, which gave them significant political power. Pharaohs used this power to make laws and enforce order.

Menes built a new capital city at the southern tip of the Nile Delta. The city was later named Memphis. For centuries, Memphis was the political and cultural center of Egypt. Many government offices were located there, and the city bustled with artistic activity.



Menes combined the white crown of Upper Egypt and the red crown of Lower Egypt as a symbol of his rule of Egypt as one kingdom.

**Reading Check**  
Make Inferences  
Why do you think  
Menes wanted to rule  
over both kingdoms?

The First Dynasty lasted for about 200 years. Rulers who came after Menes also wore the double crown to symbolize their rule over Upper and Lower Egypt.

They extended Egyptian territory southward along the Nile and into Southwest Asia. Eventually, however, rivals arose to challenge the First Dynasty for power. These challengers took over Egypt and established the Second Dynasty.

**Summary and Preview** As you have read, ancient Egypt began in the fertile Nile River Valley. Two kingdoms developed. The two kingdoms were later united under one ruler, and Egyptian territory grew. In the next lesson, you will learn how Egypt continued to grow and change under later rulers in a period known as the Old Kingdom.

## Lesson 1 Assessment

### Review Ideas, Terms, and People

- a. Identify** Where was Lower Egypt located?

**b. Analyze** Why was the Nile Delta well suited for settlement?

**c. Predict** How might the Nile's cataracts have both helped and hurt Egypt?
- a. Describe** What foods did the Egyptians eat?

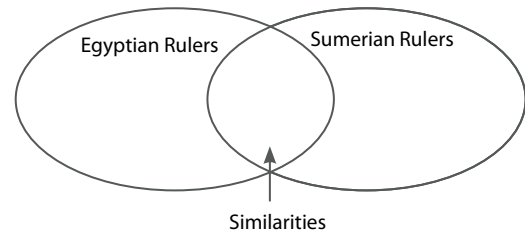
**b. Analyze** What role did the Nile play in supplying Egyptians with the foods they ate?

**c. Elaborate** How did the desert on both sides of the Nile help ancient Egypt?
- a. Identify** Who do some think was the first pharaoh of Egypt?

**b. Draw Conclusions** Why did the pharaohs of the First Dynasty wear a double crown?

### Critical Thinking

- Compare and Contrast** Draw a diagram like the one here. Use it to show the differences and similarities between Egyptian and Sumerian rulers.







# The Old Kingdom

## The Big Idea

Egyptian government and religion were closely connected during the Old Kingdom.

## Main Ideas

- Life in the Old Kingdom was influenced by pharaohs, roles in society, and trade.
- Religion shaped Egyptian life.
- The pyramids were built as huge tombs for Egyptian pharaohs.

## Key Terms and People

Old Kingdom  
theocracy  
Khufu  
nobles  
afterlife  
mummies  
elite  
pyramids  
engineering

## If YOU were there . . .

You are a farmer in ancient Egypt. To you, the pharaoh is the god Horus as well as your ruler. You depend on his strength and wisdom. For part of the year, you are busy planting crops in your fields. But at other times of the year, you work for the pharaoh. You are helping to build a great tomb so that your pharaoh will be comfortable in the afterlife.

**How do you feel about working for the pharaoh?**

## Life in the Old Kingdom

The First and Second Dynasties ruled Egypt for about four centuries. Around 2700 BC, though, a new dynasty rose to power in Egypt, called the Third Dynasty. Its rule began a period in Egyptian history known as the Old Kingdom.

**Early Pharaohs** The **Old Kingdom** was a period in Egyptian history that lasted for about 500 years, from about 2700 to 2200 BC. During this time, the Egyptians continued to develop their political system.

The system they developed was based on the belief that the pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, was both a king and a god. It was a **theocracy**, or a government ruled by religious authorities. In a theocracy, all political authority comes from religion. Religious leaders have the power to make, approve, or enforce laws. They look to sacred texts or belief systems to justify their laws and actions. Priests and other religious leaders fill political offices. Individuals must follow religious laws carefully and may not have the right to freely choose what religion to practice.

The ancient Egyptians believed that Egypt belonged to the gods. They believed that the pharaoh had come to earth in order to manage Egypt for the rest of the gods. This is why he was chosen as a leader. The pharaoh had absolute

power over all land and people in Egypt. He made laws, enforced order, and protected individual rights.

In Egypt, the pharaoh's status as both king and god came with many responsibilities such as this. People blamed him if crops did not grow well or if disease struck. They also demanded that the pharaoh make trade profitable and prevent wars.

The most famous pharaoh of the Old Kingdom was **Khufu** (KOO-foo), who ruled in the 2500s BC. Even though he is famous, we know relatively little about Khufu's life. Egyptian legend says that he was cruel, but historical records tell us that the people who worked for him were well fed. Khufu is best known for the monuments that were built to him.

**Society and Trade** By the end of the Old Kingdom, Egypt had about two million people. As the population grew, social classes appeared. The Egyptians believed that a well-ordered society would keep their kingdom strong. A social structure similar to what was found in Mesopotamia formed.

At the top of Egyptian society was the pharaoh. Just below him were the upper classes, which included priests and key government officials. Many of these priests and officials were **nobles**, or people from rich and powerful families.

## Egyptian Society



### Pharaoh

The pharaoh ruled Egypt as a god.



### Nobles

Officials and priests helped run the government and temples.



### Scribes and Craftspeople

Scribes wrote and craftspeople produced goods.



### Farmers, Servants, and Slaves

Most Egyptians were farmers, servants, and slaves.

### Analyze Visuals

Which group helped carry out religious rituals?

**Academic Vocabulary**  
acquire (uh-KWYR)  
to get

**Reading Check**  
Form Generalizations  
How was society structured in the Old Kingdom?

Next in society was the middle class. It included lesser government officials, scribes, and a few rich craftspeople.

The people in Egypt's lower class, more than 80 percent of the population, were mostly farmers. During flood season, when they could not work in the fields, farmers worked on the pharaoh's building projects. Servants and slaves also worked hard.

As society developed during the Old Kingdom, Egypt traded with some of its neighbors. The Egyptians had a comparative advantage over their trading partners. This means that Egypt had access to resources that its neighbors did not have. For example, Egyptian traders traveled south along the Nile to Nubia to **acquire** gold, copper, ivory, slaves, and stone for building. These resources were not easily available in Syria to the east.

However, Syria had wood for building. Wood was not easily available in Egypt. So Egypt traded resources such as metal and stone to Syria. In return, Syria provided Egypt with wood for building and for fire. Egypt and its neighbors benefited from trade because it gave each of them access to natural resources unavailable at home.

Egyptian society grew more complex during this time. It continued to be organized, disciplined, and highly religious.

## Religion and Egyptian Life

Worshipping the gods was a part of daily life in Egypt. But the Egyptian focus on religion extended beyond people's lives. Many customs focused on what happened after people died.

**The Gods of Egypt** Like the Sumerians, the Egyptians practiced polytheism and believed the gods were very powerful. Before the First Dynasty, each village worshipped its own gods. During the Old Kingdom period, Egyptian officials expected everyone to worship the same gods, though how they worshipped the gods might differ from place to place.

The Egyptians built temples to the gods all over the kingdom. Temples collected payments from both worshippers and the government. These payments allowed the temples to grow more influential.

### Compare River Valley Civilizations

#### Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia

Powerful leaders were chosen by the gods.

Government managed water resources.

Social divisions existed between classes of people.

Creation myths explained the natural world.

#### Interpret Charts

Why was it necessary for both governments to manage water?



Over time, certain cities became centers for the worship of certain gods. As in other river valley civilizations, much of this worship was based on creation myths. Creation myths are ideas about how the world came into existence. In the city of Memphis, for example, people prayed to Ptah, who they believed created the world. Different theories about the beginning of the world developed throughout ancient Egypt. One stated that a group of eight gods called the Ogdoad were responsible. Another myth said a god named Atum rose from water to create the planet.

The Egyptians had gods for nearly everything, including the sun, the sky, and the earth. Many gods mixed human and animal forms. For

example, Anubis, the god of the dead, had a human body but a jackal's head. Other major gods included

- Re, or Amon-Re, the sun god
- Osiris, the god of the underworld
- Isis, the goddess of magic
- Horus, a sky god, god of the pharaohs
- Thoth, the god of wisdom
- Geb, the earth god

Egyptian families also worshipped household gods at shrines in their homes.

## Mummies



1. Only the god Anubis was allowed to perform the first steps in preparing a mummy.



2. The body's organs were preserved in special jars and kept next to the mummy.



3. The body was preserved as a mummy and kept in a case called a sarcophagus.

**Emphasis on the Afterlife** Much of Egyptian religion focused on the **afterlife**, or life after death. The Egyptians believed that the afterlife was a happy place. Paintings from Egyptian tombs show the afterlife as an ideal world where all the people are young and healthy.

The Egyptian belief in the afterlife stemmed from their idea of *ka* (KAH), or a person's life force. When a person died, his or her *ka* left the body and became a spirit. The *ka* remained linked to the body and could not leave its burial site. However, it had all the same needs that the person had when he or she was living. It needed to eat, sleep, and be entertained.

To fulfill the *ka*'s needs, people filled tombs with objects for the afterlife. These objects included furniture, clothing, tools, jewelry, and weapons. Relatives of the dead were expected to bring food and beverages to their loved ones' tombs so the *ka* would not be hungry or thirsty.

**Burial Practices** Egyptian ideas about the afterlife shaped their burial practices. The Egyptians believed that a body had to be prepared for the afterlife before it could be placed in a tomb. This meant the body had to be preserved. If the body decayed, its spirit could not recognize it. That would break the link between the body and spirit. The *ka* would then be unable to receive the food and drink it needed.

## Historical Source

### The Afterlife in Ancient Egypt

The ancient Egyptians believed that a person's soul was judged when he or she died. This papyrus shows how that judgment occurred.

Osiris, god of the underworld, waited to judge the dead person's soul.

The god Anubis weighed the dead person's heart against the feather of truth. If they weighed the same amount, the person was allowed into the underworld.



**Analyze Historical Sources** Where is Osiris in this drawing? Explain the details that help identify him as the god of the underworld.

#### Academic Vocabulary

**method** a way of doing something

To keep the *ka* from suffering, the Egyptians developed a **method** called embalming to preserve bodies and keep them from decaying. The Egyptians preserved bodies as **mummies**, specially treated bodies wrapped in cloth. Embalming preserves a dead body for many, many years. A body that was not embalmed would decay quickly in a tomb.

Embalming was a complex process that took several weeks to complete. In the first step, embalmers cut open the body and removed all the organs except for the heart. The removed organs were stored in special jars. Next, embalmers used a special substance to dry out the body and later applied some special oils. The embalmers then wrapped the dried-out body with linen cloths and bandages, often placing special charms inside the cloth wrappings. Wrapping the body was the last step in the mummy-making process. Once it was completely wrapped, a mummy was placed in a coffin.

Only royalty and other members of Egypt's **elite** (AY-leet), or people of wealth and power, could afford to have mummies made. Peasant families did not need the process, however. They buried their dead in shallow graves at the edge of the desert. The hot, dry sand of the desert preserved the bodies naturally.

#### Reading Check

**Analyze Effects**  
How did religious beliefs affect Egyptian burial practices?



## The Pyramids

The Egyptians believed that burial sites, especially royal tombs, were very important. As a result, they built spectacular monuments in northern Africa in which to bury their rulers. The most spectacular of all were the **pyramids**—huge, stone tombs with four triangle-shaped sides that met in a point on top. The Egyptians first built pyramids during the Old Kingdom.

Many of these huge pyramids are still standing. The largest example of this architecture is the Great Pyramid of Khufu near the town of Giza. It covers more than 13 acres at its base and stands 481 feet high. This single pyramid took thousands of workers and more than two million limestone blocks to build.

Like all the pyramids, it is an amazing reminder of Egyptian scientific contributions and **engineering**, the application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes. For example, the designers of the Great Pyramid of Khufu used a mathematical formula that is still being used millennia later.

The Egyptians applied their engineering abilities to other monuments as well. The Great Sphinx of Giza is a colossal limestone statue of a mythical creature with a lion's body and a human head. Large stones were moved over long distances to build the Sphinx.

**Building the Pyramids** The earliest pyramids did not have the smooth sides we usually imagine when we think of pyramids. The Egyptians began building the smooth-sided pyramids we usually see around 2700 BC. The steps of these pyramids were filled and covered with limestone. The burial chamber was deep inside the pyramid. After the pharaoh's burial, workers sealed the passages to this room with large blocks.

Historians are not sure how the Egyptians built the pyramids. What is certain is that such enormous projects required a huge labor force. As many as 100,000 workers may have been needed to build a single pyramid. The government kept records and paid the peasants for their work. Wages were paid in goods such as grain instead of money.



The Great Sphinx of Giza and the Great Pyramid of Khufu are symbols that demonstrate the importance ancient Egyptians placed on the afterlife.



Workers built massive pyramids as tombs for their rulers. In this illustration, men work to build the pharaoh Khafre's pyramid.

For years, scholars have debated how the Egyptians moved the massive stones used to build the pyramids. Some believe that during the Nile's flooding, builders floated the stones downstream directly to the construction site. Most historians believe that workers used brick ramps and strong sleds to drag the stones up the pyramid once they reached the site.

**Significance of the Pyramids** Burial in a pyramid demonstrated a pharaoh's importance. The size and shape of the pyramid were symbolic to ancient Egyptians. Pointing to the skies, the pyramid was an icon that symbolized the pharaoh's journey to the afterlife. The Egyptians wanted the pyramids to be spectacular because they believed that the pharaoh, as their link to the gods, controlled everyone's afterlife. Making the pharaoh's spirit happy was a way of ensuring one's own happy afterlife.

To ensure that pharaohs remained safe after their deaths, the Egyptians sometimes wrote magical spells and hymns on the pharaohs' tombs. Together, these spells and hymns are called Pyramid Texts. The first such text, addressed to Re, was carved into the pyramid of King Unas (oo-nuhs), a pharaoh of the Old Kingdom:

“Re-Atum, this Unas comes to you,  
 A spirit indestructible . . .  
 Your son comes to you, this Unas . . .  
 May you cross the sky united in the dark,  
 May you rise in lightland, [where] you shine!”

—from Pyramid Text, Utterance 217

The builders of Unas's pyramid wanted the god to look after their leader's spirit. Even after death, their pharaoh was important to them.

**Summary and Preview** During the Old Kingdom, new political and social orders were created in Egypt. Religion was important, and many pyramids were built for the pharaohs. In the next lesson, you will learn about life in later periods, the Middle and New Kingdoms.

### Reading Check

**Summarize** Why were pyramids important to the ancient Egyptians?

## Lesson 2 Assessment

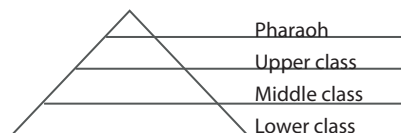
### Review Ideas, Terms, and People

1. a. **Recall** To what does the phrase *Old Kingdom* refer?
- b. **Analyze** Why was the pharaoh's authority never questioned?
- c. **Elaborate** Why do you think pharaohs might have wanted the support of nobles?
2. a. **Define** What did Egyptians mean by the afterlife?
- b. **Analyze** Why was embalming important to Egyptians?
3. a. **Describe** What is engineering?

- b. **Elaborate** What does the building of the pyramids and the Sphinx at Giza tell us about Egyptian society?

### Critical Thinking

4. **Organize Information** Draw a pyramid like the one here. In each level, write a sentence about the corresponding social class.







# The Middle and New Kingdoms

## The Big Idea

During the Middle and New Kingdoms, order and greatness were restored in Egypt.

## Main Ideas

- The Middle Kingdom was a period of stable government between periods of disorder.
- The New Kingdom was the peak of Egyptian trade and military power, but its greatness did not last.
- Work and daily life were different among Egypt's social classes.

## Key Terms and People

Middle Kingdom  
New Kingdom  
trade routes  
Queen Hatshepsut  
Ramses the Great

**Reading Check**  
Summarize What caused the end of the Middle Kingdom?

## If YOU were there . . .

You are a servant to Hatshepsut, the ruler of Egypt. You admire her, but some people think a woman should not rule. She calls herself king and dresses like a pharaoh—even wearing a fake beard. That was your idea! But you want to help more.

**What could Hatshepsut do to show her authority?**

## The Middle Kingdom

At the end of the Old Kingdom, the wealth and power of the pharaohs declined. Building and maintaining pyramids cost a lot of money. Pharaohs could not collect enough taxes to keep up with their expenses. At the same time, ambitious nobles used their government positions to take power from pharaohs.

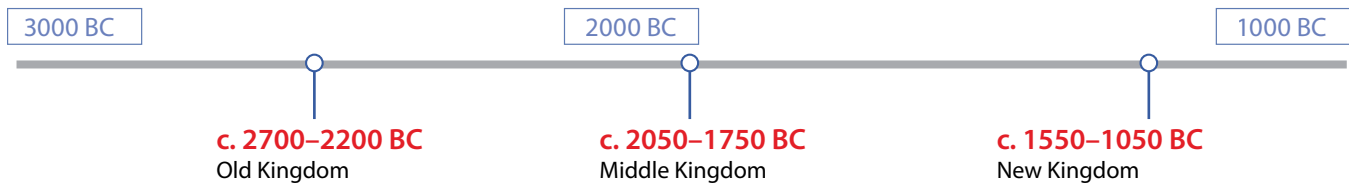
In time, nobles gained enough power to challenge the pharaohs. By about 2200 BC, the Old Kingdom had fallen. For the next 160 years, local nobles ruled much of Egypt. The kingdom had no central ruler.

Finally, around 2050 BC, a powerful pharaoh defeated his rivals, and once again all of Egypt was united. His rule began the **Middle Kingdom**, a period of order and stability which lasted to about 1750 BC. Toward the end of the Middle Kingdom, however, Egypt began to fall into disorder once more.

Around 1750 BC, a group from Southwest Asia called the Hyksos (HIK-sohs) invaded. They used horses, chariots, and advanced weapons to conquer Lower Egypt. The Hyksos ruled the region as pharaohs for 200 years.

The Egyptians eventually fought back, however. In the mid-1500s BC, Ahmose (AHM-ohs) of Thebes declared himself king and drove the Hyksos out of Egypt. Ahmose then ruled all of Egypt.

## Timeline: Periods of Egyptian History



### The New Kingdom

Ahmosé's rise to power marked the beginning of Egypt's 18th Dynasty. More importantly, it was the beginning of the **New Kingdom**, the period during which Egypt reached the height of its power and glory. During the New Kingdom, which lasted from about 1550 to 1050 BC, conquest and trade brought wealth to the pharaohs.

**Building an Empire** After battling the Hyksos, Egypt's leaders feared future invasions. To prevent such invasions from occurring, they decided to take control of all possible invasion routes into the kingdom. In the process, these leaders turned Egypt into an empire.

Egypt's first target was the homeland of the Hyksos. After taking over that area, the army continued north and conquered Syria. Egypt took over the eastern shore of the Mediterranean and the kingdom of Kush, south of Egypt. By the 1400s BC, Egypt was the leading military power in the region. Its empire extended from the Euphrates River to southern Nubia.

Military conquests made Egypt rich. The kingdoms it conquered regularly sent treasures to their Egyptian conquerors. For example, the kingdom of Kush in Nubia south of Egypt sent annual payments of gold, leopard skins, and precious stones to the pharaohs. In addition, Assyrian, Babylonian, and Hittite kings sent expensive gifts to Egypt in an effort to maintain good relations.

#### BIOGRAPHY

### Queen Hatshepsut

Ruled c. 1503–1482 BC

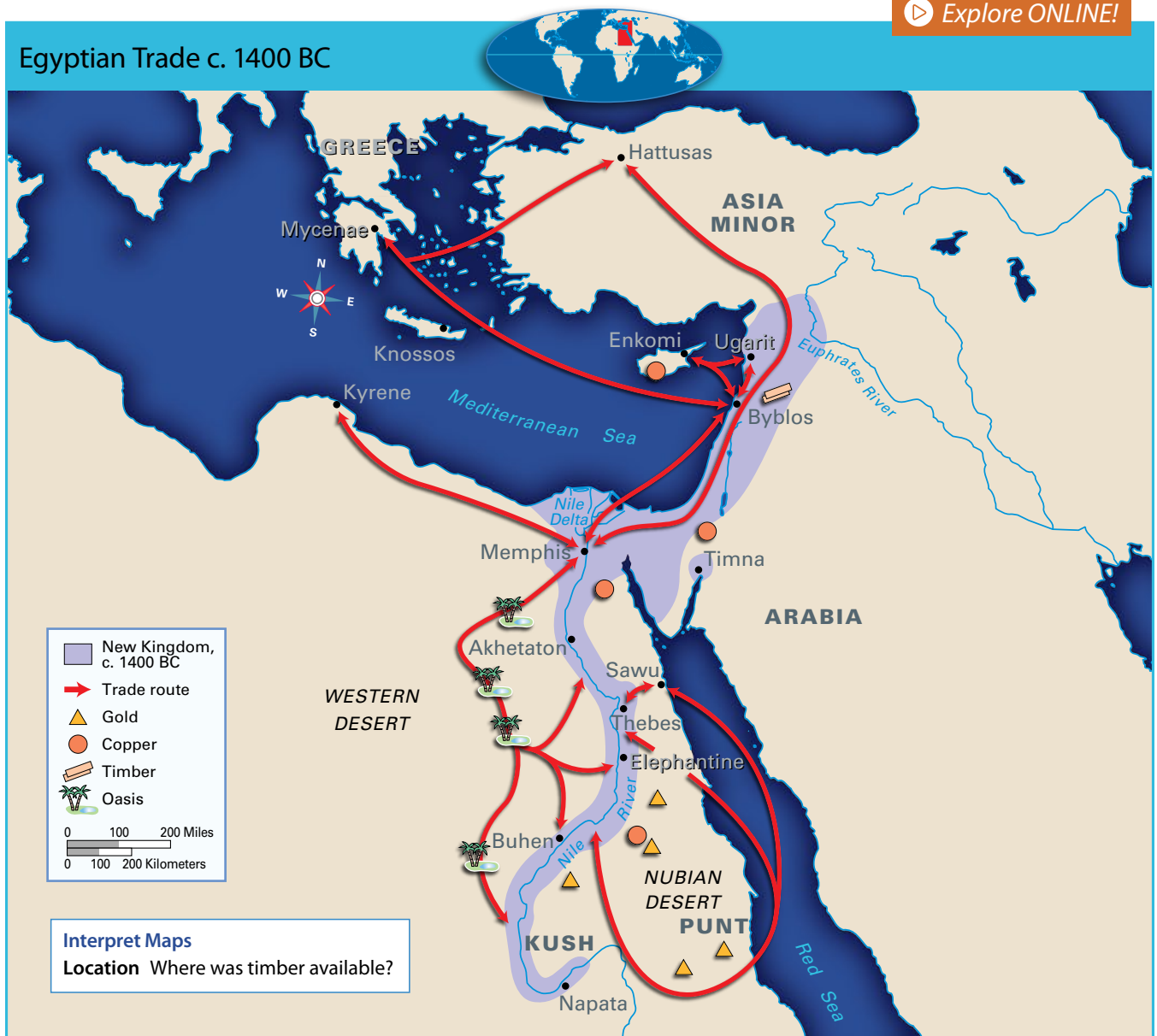
Hatshepsut was married to the pharaoh Thutmose II, her half-brother. He died young, leaving the throne to Thutmose III, his son by another woman. Because Thutmose III was still very young, Hatshepsut took power. Many people did not think women should rule, but Hatshepsut dressed as a man and called herself king. After she died, her stepson took back power and vandalized all the monuments she had built.

#### Analyze Causes

What do you think caused Hatshepsut to dress like a man?



## Egyptian Trade c. 1400 BC



### Interpret Maps

**Location** Where was timber available?

**Growth and Effects of Trade** Conquest also brought Egyptian traders into contact with more distant lands. Egypt's trade expanded along with its empire. Profitable **trade routes**, or paths followed by traders, developed. Many of the lands that Egypt took over also had valuable resources for trade. The Sinai Peninsula, for example, had large supplies of turquoise and copper.

One ruler who worked to increase Egyptian trade was **Queen Hatshepsut** (hat-SHEP-soot). She sent Egyptian traders south to trade with the kingdom of Punt on the Red Sea and north to trade with people in Asia Minor and Greece.

Hatshepsut's decision to establish these trade routes strengthened Egypt. Hatshepsut and later pharaohs



This jar probably held perfume, a valuable trade item.



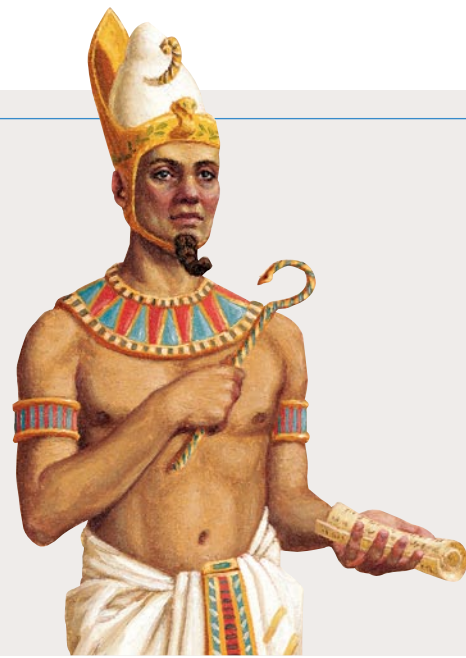
## Ramses the Great

Ruled c. 1279–1213 BC

Many people consider Ramses the last great Egyptian pharaoh. From a young age, Ramses was trained as a ruler and a fighter. Made an army captain at age ten, he began military campaigns even before he became pharaoh. During his reign, Ramses greatly increased the size of his kingdom. He is known largely for the massive monuments he built. The temples at Karnak, Luxor, and Abu Simbel stand as 3,000-year-old symbols of the great pharaoh's power.

### Draw Conclusions

Why do you think Ramses built monuments all over Egypt?



used the money they gained from trade to support the arts and architecture. Hatshepsut especially is remembered for the many impressive monuments and temples built during her reign. The best known of these structures was a magnificent temple built for her near the city of Thebes.

**Invasions of Egypt** Despite its great successes, Egypt's military might did not go unchallenged. In the 1200s BC the pharaoh Ramses (RAM-seez) II, or **Ramses the Great**, fought the Hittites, a group from Asia Minor. The Hittites were known for their effective use of chariots in battle. The two powers fought fiercely for years, but neither could defeat the other.

Egypt faced threats in other parts of its empire as well. To the west, a people known as the Tehenu invaded the Nile Delta. Ramses fought them off and built a series of forts to strengthen the western frontier. This proved to be a wise decision because the Tehenu invaded again a century later. Faced with Egypt's strengthened defenses, the Tehenu were defeated once again.

Soon after Ramses the Great died, invaders called the Sea Peoples sailed into Southwest Asia. Little is known about these people. Historians are not even sure who they were. All we know is that they were strong warriors who had crushed the Hittites and destroyed cities in Southwest Asia. Only after 50 years of fighting were the Egyptians able to turn them back.

Egypt survived, but its empire in Asia was gone. Shortly after the invasions of the Hittites and the Sea Peoples, the New Kingdom came to an end. Egypt fell into a period of violence and disorder. Egypt would never regain its power.

## Work and Daily Life

Although Egyptian dynasties rose and fell, daily life for Egyptians did not change very much. But as the population grew, society became even more complex.

### Reading Check

Analyze Causes

What caused the growth of trade in the New Kingdom?



Egyptian scribes at work.

A complex society requires people to take on different jobs. In Egypt, these jobs were usually passed on within families. At a young age, boys started to learn their future jobs from their fathers.

**Scribes** Other than priests and government officials, no one in Egypt was more honored than scribes. As members of the middle class, scribes worked for the government and the temples. They kept records and accounts for the state. Scribes also wrote and copied religious and literary texts, including stories and poems. Because they were so respected, scribes did not have to pay taxes, and many became wealthy.

**Artisans, Artists, and Architects** Another group in society was made up of artisans whose jobs required advanced skills. Among the artisans who worked in Egypt were sculptors, builders, carpenters, jewelers, metalworkers, and leatherworkers. Most of Egypt's artisans worked for the government or for temples. They made statues, furniture, jewelry, pottery, shoes, and other items. Most artisans were paid fairly well for their work.

Architects and artists were also admired in Egypt. Architects designed the temples and royal tombs for which Egypt is famous. Talented architects could rise to become high government officials. Artists, often employed by the state or the temples, produced many different works. Artists often worked in the deep burial chambers of the pharaohs' tombs painting detailed pictures.

**Merchants and Traders** Although trade was important to Egypt, only a small group of Egyptians became merchants and traders. Some traveled long distances to buy and sell goods. Merchants were usually accompanied by soldiers, scribes, and laborers on their travels.

**Soldiers** After the wars of the Middle Kingdom, Egypt created a professional army. The military offered people a chance to rise in social status. Soldiers received land as payment and could also keep any treasure they captured in war. Those who excelled could be promoted to officer positions.

**Farmers and Other Peasants** As in Old Kingdom society, Egyptian farmers and other peasants were toward the bottom of Egypt's social scale. These hardworking people made up the vast majority of Egypt's population.

Farmers grew crops to support their families. Farmers depended on the Nile's regular floods to grow their crops. They used wooden hoes or plows pulled by cows to prepare the land before the flood. After the floodwaters had drained away, farmers planted seeds. They grew crops such as wheat and barley. At the end of the growing season, farmers worked together to gather the harvest.

Farmers had to give crops to the pharaoh as taxes. These taxes were intended to pay the pharaoh for using the land. Under Egyptian law, the pharaoh controlled all land in the kingdom.

All peasants, including farmers, were also subject to special duty. Under Egyptian law, the pharaoh could demand at any time that people work on projects, such as building pyramids, mining gold, or fighting in the army. The government paid the workers in grain.



Servants worked for Egypt's rulers and nobles and did many jobs, like preparing food.

### Academic Vocabulary

contracts binding legal agreements

### Reading Check

Summarize What types of jobs existed in ancient Egypt?

**Slaves** The few slaves in Egyptian society were considered lower than farmers. Many slaves were convicted criminals or prisoners captured in war. Slaves worked on farms, on building projects, in workshops, and in private households. Unlike most slaves in history, however, slaves in Egypt had some legal rights. Also, in some cases, they could earn their freedom.

**Family Life in Egypt** Family life was important. Most families lived in their own homes. Sometimes unmarried female relatives lived with them. Men were expected to marry young and start having children.

Most Egyptian women were devoted to their homes and their families. Some, however, had jobs outside the home. A few served as priestesses, and some worked as royal officials, administrators, and artisans. Egyptian women had a number of legal rights. They could own property, make **contracts**, and divorce their husbands.

Children's lives were not as structured as adults' lives were. They played with toys such as dolls, tops, and clay animal figurines. Children also played ballgames and hunted. Most children, boys and girls, received some education. At school they learned morals, writing, math, and sports. At age 14 most boys left school to enter their father's profession. At that time, they took their place in Egypt's social structure.

**Summary and Preview** Pharaohs faced many challenges to their rule. After defeating the Hyksos, the kingdom expanded in land and wealth. People in Egypt worked at many different jobs. In the next lesson, you will learn about Egyptian achievements.

## Lesson 3 Assessment

### Review Ideas, Terms, and People

1. a. **Define** What was the Middle Kingdom?  
b. **Analyze** How did Ahmose manage to become king of all Egypt?
2. a. **Identify** For what is Ramses the Great best known?  
b. **Explain** What did Hatshepsut do as pharaoh of Egypt?
3. a. **Identify** What job employed the most people in Egypt?  
b. **Analyze** What rights did Egyptian women have?  
c. **Elaborate** Why do you think scribes were so honored in Egyptian society?

### Critical Thinking

4. **Organize Information** Draw a table like this one. Use it to identify factors in the rise and fall of Egypt's empire during the New Kingdom.

| Rise | Fall |
|------|------|
|      |      |
|      |      |
|      |      |





# Egyptian Achievements

## The Big Idea

The Egyptians made lasting achievements in writing, architecture, and art.

## Main Ideas

- Egyptian writing used hieroglyphics.
- Egypt's great temples were lavishly decorated.
- Egyptian art filled tombs.

## Key Terms and People

hieroglyphics  
papyrus  
Rosetta Stone  
sphinxes  
obelisk  
King Tutankhamen

## If YOU were there . . .

You are an artist in ancient Egypt. A noble has hired you to decorate the walls of his family tomb. You are standing inside the new tomb, studying the bare, stone walls that you will decorate. No light reaches this chamber, but your servant holds a lantern high. You've met the noble only briefly but think that he is someone who loves his family, the gods, and Egypt.

**What will you include in your painting?**

## Egyptian Writing

If you were reading a book and saw pictures of folded cloth, a leg, a star, a bird, and a man holding a stick, would you know what it meant? You would if you were an ancient Egyptian. In the Egyptian writing system, or **hieroglyphics** (hy-ruh-GLIH-fiks), those five symbols together meant "to teach." Egyptian hieroglyphics were one of the world's first writing systems.



**Writing in Ancient Egypt** The earliest known examples of Egyptian writing are from around 3300 BC. These early Egyptian writings were carved in stone or on other hard material. Later, the Egyptians learned how to make **papyrus** (puh-PY-ruhs), a long-lasting, paperlike material made from reeds. The Egyptians made papyrus by pressing layers of reeds together and pounding them into sheets. These sheets were tough and durable, yet easy to roll into scrolls. Scribes wrote on papyrus using brushes and ink.

The hieroglyphic writing system used more than 600 symbols, mostly pictures of objects. Each symbol represented one or more sounds in the Egyptian

These hieroglyphics in the burial chamber of the Pyramid of Teti give us important information about Egyptian society.

language. For example, a picture of an owl represented the same sound as our letter *M*.

Hieroglyphics could be written either horizontally or vertically. They could be written from right to left or from left to right. These options made hieroglyphics flexible to write but difficult to read. The only way to tell which way a text is written is to look at individual symbols.

**The Rosetta Stone** Historians and archaeologists have known about hieroglyphic writing for centuries, but for a long time they didn't know how to read it. In fact, it was not until 1799 when a lucky discovery by a French soldier gave historians the key they needed to read ancient Egyptian writing.

That key was the **Rosetta Stone**, a huge, stone slab inscribed with hieroglyphics. In addition to the hieroglyphics, the Rosetta Stone had text in Greek and a later form of Egyptian. Because the text in all three languages was the same, scholars who knew Greek were able to figure out what the hieroglyphics said.

After the soldier's discovery, the Rosetta Stone was later translated by the French historian and linguist Jean-François Champollion in the early 19th century. His world-changing discoveries helped later historians understand ancient Egypt.







**Egyptian Texts** Because papyrus did not decay in Egypt's dry climate, many Egyptian texts still survive. Historians today can read Egyptian government records, historical records, science texts, and medical manuals. Writing also influenced Egyptian religion and culture. It allowed Egyptians to creatively express ideas. For example, some of the world's earliest examples of literature come from ancient Egyptian culture. *The Story of Sinuhe* and *The Eloquent Peasant* were popular stories about gods and kings.

Egyptians used papyrus for written records and literature, such as this page from the *Book of the Dead*.





## Egyptian Writing

|   | Sound | Meaning    |
|---|-------|------------|
|  | Imn   | Amon       |
|  | Tut   | Image      |
|  | Ankh  | Living     |
| Translation—"Living image of Amon"  |       |            |
|  | Heka  | Ruler      |
|  | lunu  | Heliopolis |
|  | Resy  | Southern   |
| Translation—"Ruler of Southern Heliopolis"  |       |            |

### Analyze Visuals

What does the symbol for ruler look like?



Egyptian hieroglyphics used picture symbols to represent sounds.

**Reading Check**  
**Compare** How is our writing system similar to hieroglyphics?

Egyptians also wrote religious texts, such as the *Book of the Dead*, which tells about the afterlife. The development of writing helped ideas such as this to be communicated from one generation to the next. Other religious texts include the *Book of Caverns*, which discussed the journey of the sun god Re. Historians have also discovered religious texts inside coffins. They were often spells or magic formulas.

**Egyptian Calendar** The Egyptians created two calendars. One consisted of 12 months, each of which were based on the lunar cycle. This is the time it took for the moon to revolve around the earth. Each month was 28 or 29 days long.

Another Egyptian calendar was based on the solar cycle, or the movement of the sun. It also consisted of 12 months. Each month was 30 days long with an additional 5 days at the end of the year. The solar calendar proved to be more accurate. It was the first calendar that was 365 days long.

## Egypt's Great Temples

In addition to their writing system, the Egyptians are famous today for their magnificent architecture of sacred spaces. You have already read about the Egyptians' most famous structures, the pyramids. But the Egyptians also built massive temples. Those that survive are among the most spectacular sites in Egypt today.



The Egyptians believed that temples were the homes of the gods. People visited the temples to worship, offer the gods gifts, and ask for favors.

Many Egyptian temples shared some similar features. Rows of stone **sphinxes**—imaginary creatures with the bodies of lions and the heads of other animals or humans—lined the path leading to the entrance. That entrance itself was a huge, thick gate. On either side of the gate might stand an **obelisk** (AH-buh-lisk), a tall, four-sided pillar that is pointed on top.

Inside, the temples were lavishly decorated. Huge columns supported the temple's roof. In many cases, these columns were covered with paintings and hieroglyphics, as were the temple walls. Statues of gods and pharaohs often stood along the walls as well. The sanctuary, the most sacred part of the building, was at the far end of the temple.

The Temple of Karnak is only one of Egypt's great temples. Others were also built by Ramses the Great at Abu Simbel and Luxor. The temple at Abu Simbel is especially known for the huge statues carved out of the sandstone cliffs at the temple's entrance. These 66-foot-tall statues show Ramses as pharaoh. Nearby are some smaller statues of his family.

## Egyptian Art

One reason Egypt's temples are so popular with tourists is the art they contain. The ancient Egyptians were masterful artists. Many of their greatest works of artistic expression were created to fill the tombs of pharaohs and other nobles. The Egyptians took great care in making these items because they believed the dead could enjoy them in the afterlife.

**Paintings** Egyptian art was filled with lively, colorful scenes. Detailed works covered the walls of temples and tombs. Artists also painted on canvas, papyrus, pottery, plaster, and wood. Most Egyptians, however, never saw these paintings. Only kings, priests, and important people could enter temples and tombs, and even they rarely entered the tombs.

The subjects of Egyptian paintings vary widely. Some paintings show important historical events, such as the crowning of kings and the founding of temples. Others illustrate major religious rituals. Still other paintings show scenes from everyday life, such as farming or hunting. The environment in which they lived inspired Egyptian artists. Their work showed the marshes of the Nile River and the wildlife living there.

Egyptian painting has a distinctive style. People, for example, are drawn in a certain way. In Egyptian paintings, people's heads and legs are always seen from the side, but their upper bodies and shoulders are shown straight on. In addition, people do not all appear the same size. Important figures such as pharaohs appear huge in comparison to others, especially servants or conquered people. In contrast, Egyptian animals are usually drawn realistically.

**Carvings and Jewelry** Painting was not the only art form Egyptians practiced. The Egyptians were also skilled stoneworkers. Many tombs included huge statues and detailed carvings.

**Reading Check**  
Form Generalizations  
What were some features of Egyptian temples?



The Temple of Karnak was Egypt's largest temple. This illustration shows how Karnak's great hall may have looked during an ancient festival.

## Treasures of King Tut's Tomb

In 1922 the archaeologist Howard Carter discovered the tomb of King Tut. Although the tomb had been robbed in ancient times, it was still filled with treasures, some of which are shown here.



King Tut's tomb



Howard Carter examining King Tut's coffin in 1925



The back of King Tut's chair was decorated with this image of the pharaoh and his wife.



Gold mask

### Analyze Visuals

What might archaeologists learn about ancient Egypt from these artifacts?



The Egyptians also made beautiful objects of gold and precious stones. They made jewelry for both women and men. This jewelry included necklaces, collars, and bracelets. The Egyptians also used gold to make burial items for their pharaohs.

Over the years, treasure hunters emptied many pharaohs' tombs. At least one tomb, however, was not disturbed. In 1922 some archaeologists found the tomb of **King Tutankhamen** (too-tang-KAHM-uhn), or King Tut. The tomb was filled with treasures, including boxes of jewelry, robes, a burial mask, and ivory statues. King Tut's treasures have taught us much about Egyptian burial practices and beliefs.

**Summary and Preview** Ancient Egyptians developed one of the best-known cultures of the ancient world. Next, you will learn about a culture that developed in the shadow of Egypt—Kush.

### Reading Check

**Summarize** What types of artwork were contained in Egyptian tombs?

## Lesson 4 Assessment

### Review Ideas, Terms, and People

- a. Identify** What are hieroglyphics?

**b. Contrast** How is hieroglyphic writing different from our writing today?

**c. Evaluate** Why was finding the Rosetta Stone so important to scholars?
- a. Describe** What are two ways the Egyptians decorated their temples?

**b. Evaluate** Why do you think pharaohs like Ramses the Great built huge temples?
- 3. Recall** Why were tombs filled with art, jewelry, and other treasures?

### Critical Thinking

- 4. Summarize** Draw a table like the one below. In each column, list two facts about the achievements of the ancient Egyptians.

| Writing | Architecture | Art |
|---------|--------------|-----|
|         |              |     |
|         |              |     |





# Kush and Aksum

## The Big Idea

The kingdoms of Kush and Aksum, which arose south of Egypt, developed advanced civilizations with large trading networks.

## Main Ideas

- The geography of early Nubia helped civilization develop there.
- Kush and Egypt traded, but they also fought.
- Later Kush became a trading power with a unique culture.
- Both internal and external factors led to the decline of Kush and Aksum.

## Key Terms and People

Piankhi  
trade network  
merchants  
exports  
imports  
Queen Shanakhdakheto  
Aksum  
King Ezana

## If YOU were there . . .

You live along the Nile River, where it moves quickly through swift rapids. A few years ago, armies from the powerful kingdom of Egypt took over your country. Some Egyptians have moved here. They bring new customs, and many people are imitating them. Now your sister has a new baby and wants to give it an Egyptian name! This upsets many people in your family.

**How do you feel about following Egyptian customs?**

## The Geography of Early Nubia

South of Egypt, a group of people settled in the region we now call Nubia. These Africans established the first great kingdom in the interior of Africa. We know this kingdom by the name the Egyptians gave it—Kush. The development of Kushite society was greatly influenced by the geography of Nubia, especially the role played by the Nile River.

**The Land of Nubia** Today desert covers much of Nubia, but in ancient times the region was more fertile than it is now. Rain flooded the Nile every year, providing a rich layer of silt to nearby lands. The kingdom of Kush developed in this fertile area.

Ancient Nubia was rich in minerals such as gold, copper, and stone. These resources played a major role in the area's history and contributed to its wealth.

**Early Civilization in Nubia** Like all early civilizations, the people of Nubia depended on agriculture for their food. Fortunately for them, the Nile's floods allowed the Nubians to plant both summer and winter crops. Among the crops they grew were wheat, barley, and other grains. Besides farmland, the banks of the Nile also provided grazing land for livestock. As a result, farming villages thrived all along the Nile by 3500 BC.

Over time some farmers grew richer than others. These farmers became village leaders. Sometime around 2000 BC, one of these leaders took control of other villages and made himself king of the region. His new kingdom was called Kush.

The kings of Kush ruled from their capital at Kerma (KAR-muh). This city was located on the Nile just south of the third cataract. Because the Nile's cataracts made parts of the river hard to pass through, they were natural barriers against invaders. For many years the cataracts kept Kush safe from the more powerful Egyptian kingdom to the north.

As time passed, Kushite society grew more complex. Besides farmers and herders, some Kushites became priests and artisans. Early Kush was influenced by cultures to the south. Later, Egypt played a greater role in Kush's history.

### Reading Check

#### Find Main Ideas

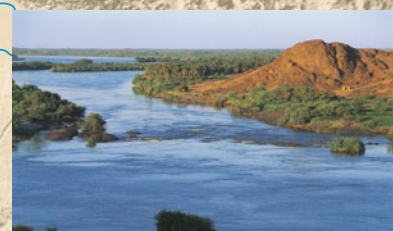
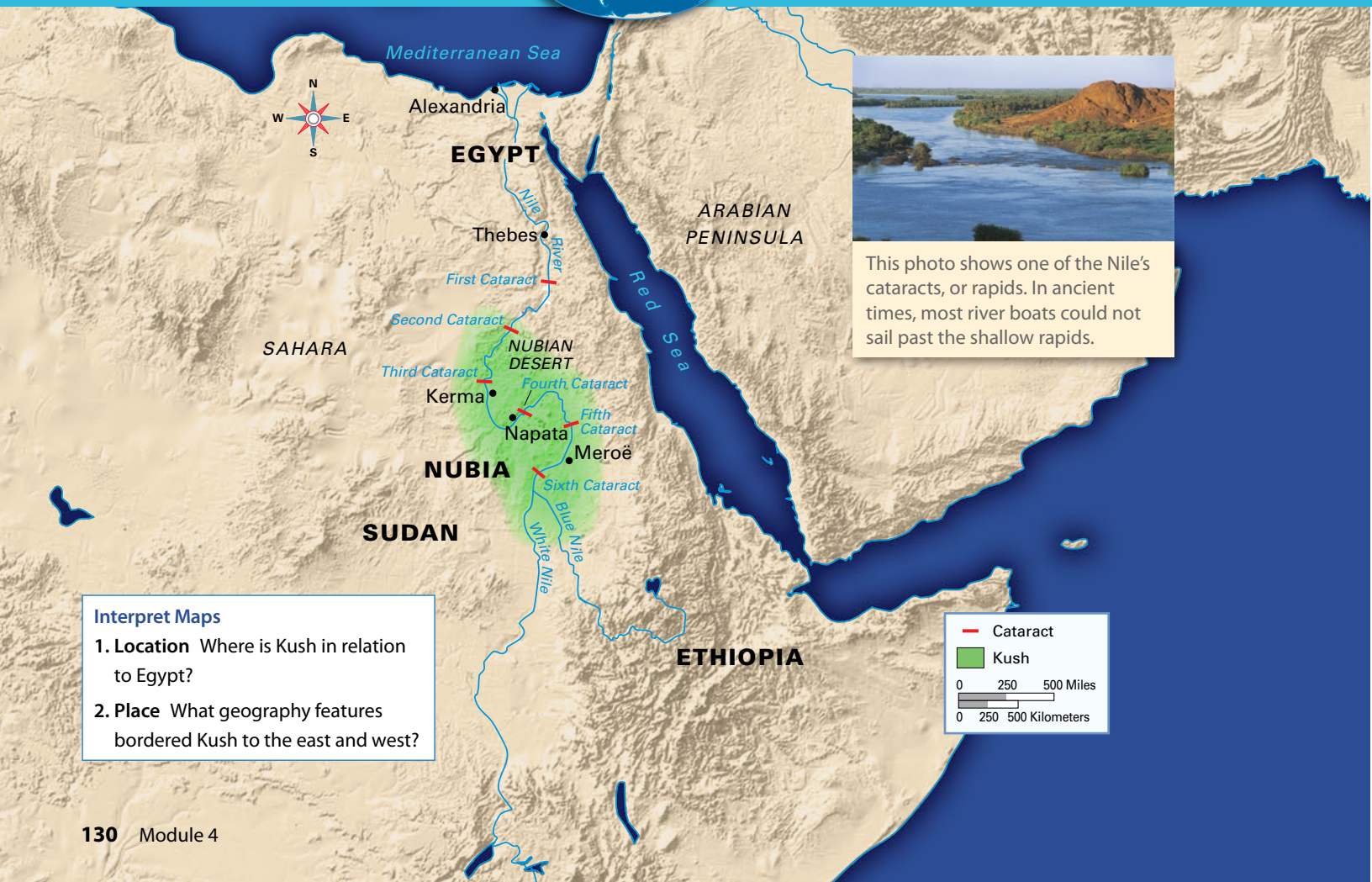
How did geography help civilization grow in Nubia?

## Kush and Egypt

Kush and Egypt were neighbors. Sometimes the neighbors lived in peace with each other and helped each other prosper. For example, Kush became a major supplier of both slaves and raw materials to Egypt. The Kushites sent materials such as gold, copper, and stone to Egypt. The slaves were forced to be domestic servants and soldiers in pharaoh's army. The

▶ Explore ONLINE!

### Ancient Kush

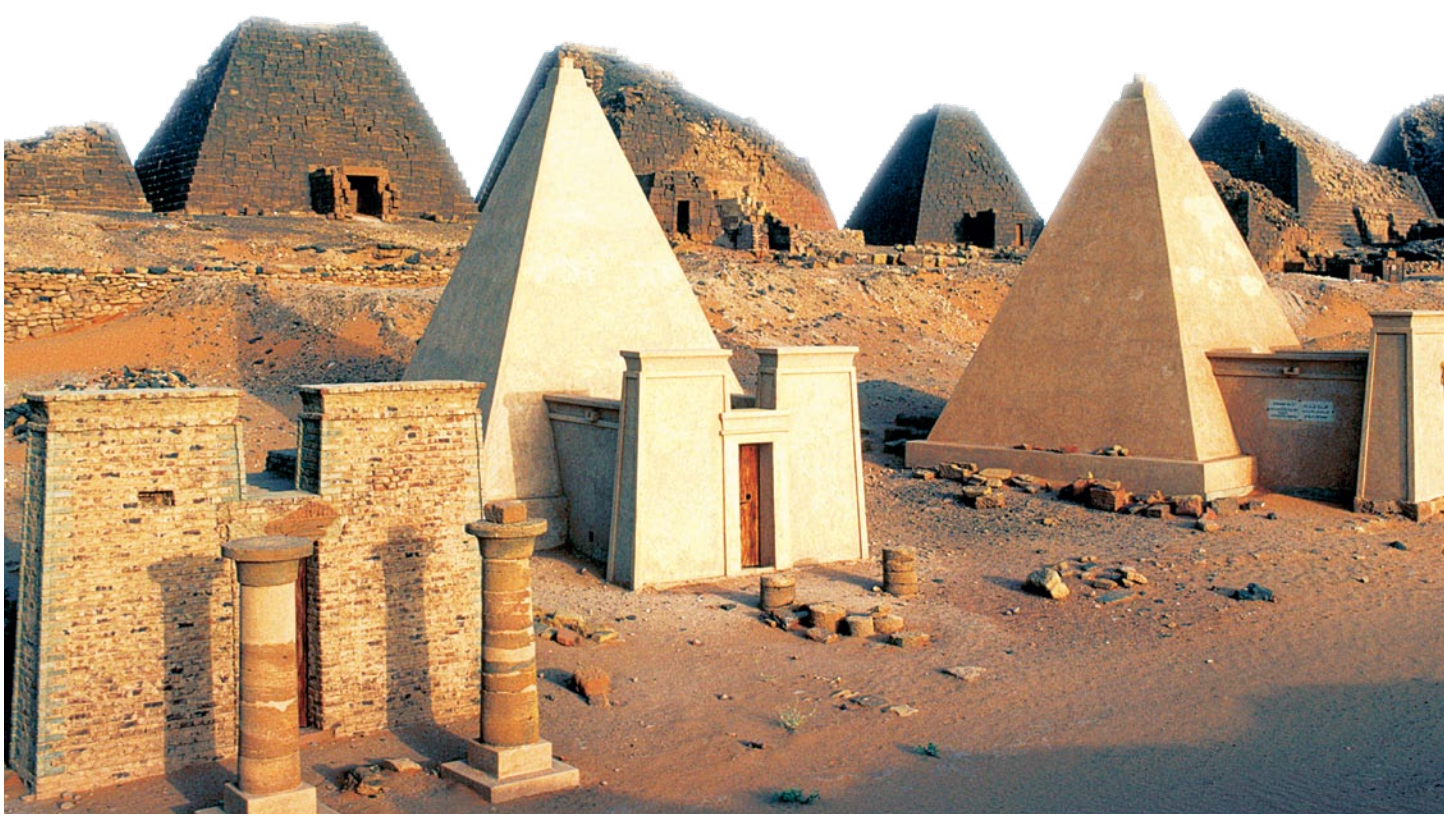


This photo shows one of the Nile's cataracts, or rapids. In ancient times, most river boats could not sail past the shallow rapids.

#### Interpret Maps

1. **Location** Where is Kush in relation to Egypt?
2. **Place** What geography features bordered Kush to the east and west?





The ruins of ancient Kushite pyramids stand behind those reconstructed to look the way they did when originally built.

Kushites also sent the Egyptians ebony, a type of dark, heavy wood, and ivory, the hard white material that makes up elephant tusks.

**Egypt's Conquest of Kush** Relations between Kush and Egypt were not always peaceful, however. As Kush grew wealthy from trade, its army grew stronger as well. Egypt's rulers soon feared that Kush would grow even more powerful and attack Egypt.

To prevent such an attack from occurring, the pharaoh Thutmose I sent an army to take control of Kush around 1500 BC. The pharaoh's army conquered all of Nubia north of the Fifth Cataract. As a result, Kush became part of Egypt.

After his army's victory, the pharaoh destroyed Kerma, the Kushite capital. Later pharaohs—including Ramses the Great—built huge temples in what had been Kushite territory.

**Effects of the Conquest** Kush remained an Egyptian territory for about 450 years. During that time, Egypt's influence over Kush grew tremendously. Many Egyptians settled in Kush. Egyptian became the language of the region. Many Kushites used Egyptian names and wore Egyptian-style clothing. They also adopted Egyptian religious practices.

**A Change in Power** During the mid-1000s BC, the New Kingdom in Egypt was ending. As the power of Egypt's pharaohs declined, Kushite leaders regained control of Kush. Kush once again became independent.

We know almost nothing about the history of the Kushites from the time they gained independence until 200 years later. Kush is not mentioned in any historical records that describe those centuries.



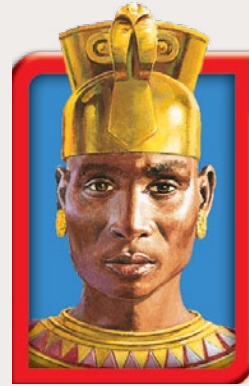
## Piankhi (PYAN-kee)

(c. 751 BC–716 BC)

Also known as Piye, Piankhi was among Kush's most successful military leaders. A fierce warrior on the battlefield, the king was also deeply religious. Piankhi's belief that he had the support of the gods fueled his passion for war against Egypt. His courage inspired his troops on the battlefield. Piankhi loved his horses and was buried with eight of his best steeds.

### Draw Conclusions

How did Piankhi's belief that he was supported by the gods affect his plans for Egypt?



**The Conquest of Egypt** By around 850 BC, Kush had regained its strength. It was once again as strong as it had been before it had been conquered by Egypt. Because the Egyptians had captured and destroyed the city of Kerma, the kings of Kush ruled from the city of Napata. Built by the Egyptians, Napata was on the Nile, about 100 miles southeast of Kerma.

As Kush grew stronger, Egypt was further weakened. A series of inept pharaohs left Egypt open to attack. In the 700s BC a Kushite king, Kashta, seized on Egypt's weakness and attacked it. By about 751 BC he had conquered Upper Egypt. He then established relations with Lower Egypt.

After Kashta died, his son **Piankhi** (PYAN-kee) continued to attack Egypt. The armies of Kush captured many cities, including Egypt's ancient capital. Piankhi fought the Egyptians because he believed that the gods wanted him to rule all of Egypt. By the time he died in about 716 BC, Piankhi had accomplished this task. His kingdom extended north from Napata to the Nile Delta.

**The Kushite Dynasty** After Piankhi died, his brother Shabaka (SHAB-uh-kuh) took control of the kingdom. Shabaka then declared himself pharaoh. This declaration began the 25th Dynasty, or the Kushite Dynasty, in Egypt.

Shabaka and later rulers of his dynasty believed that they were heirs of the great pharaohs of Egypt's past. They tried to restore old Egyptian cultural practices and renew faded traditions. Some of these practices and traditions had been abandoned during Egypt's period of weakness. For example, Shabaka was buried in a pyramid. The Egyptians had stopped building pyramids for their rulers centuries before.

The Kushite rulers of Egypt built new temples to Egyptian gods and restored old temples. They also worked to preserve Egyptian writings. As a result, Egyptian culture thrived during the 25th Dynasty.

**Reading Check**  
Analyze Effects  
How did internal  
problems in Egypt  
benefit Kush?

**The End of Kushite Rule in Egypt** The Kushite Dynasty remained strong in Egypt for about 40 years. In the 670s BC, however, the powerful army of the Assyrians from Mesopotamia invaded Egypt. The Assyrians' iron weapons were better than the Kushites' bronze weapons. Although the Kushites were skilled archers, they could not stop the invaders. The Kushites were steadily pushed southward. In just ten years, the Assyrians had driven the Kushite forces completely out of Egypt.

## Later Kush

After losing control of Egypt, the people of Kush devoted themselves to agriculture and trade, hoping to make their country rich again. Within a few centuries, the Nubian kingdom of Kush had indeed become prosperous and powerful once more.

**Kush's Iron Industry** The economic center of Kush during this period was at Meroë (MER-oh-wee), the kingdom's new capital. Meroë's location on the east bank of the Nile helped Kush's economy to grow. Large deposits of gold could be found nearby, as could forests of ebony and other wood. More importantly, the area around Meroë was full of rich iron ore deposits.

In this location, the Kushites developed Africa's first iron industry. Iron ore and wood for furnaces were easily available, so the iron industry grew quickly.

**The Expansion of Trade** In time, Meroë became the center of a large **trade network**, a system of people in different lands who trade goods. The Kushites sent goods down the Nile to Egypt. From there, Egyptian and Greek **merchants**, or traders, carried goods to ports on the Mediterranean and Red seas and to southern Africa. These goods may have eventually reached India, and perhaps China.

Kush's **exports**—items sent out to other regions—included gold, pottery, iron tools, slaves, and ivory. Kushite merchants also traded leopard skins, ostrich feathers, and elephants. In return, the Kushites received **imports**—goods brought in from other regions—such as luxury items and inventions from Egypt, Asia, and other lands along the Mediterranean Sea. Producing and exporting goods in exchange for importing other goods encourages economic growth. In this case, acquiring new resources from other regions had a positive effect on the Kushite economy. People in Kush had access to resources they would otherwise not have had because of their trade networks.

**Kushite Culture** As Kushite trade grew, merchants came into contact with people from other cultures. As a result, the people of Kush combined customs from other cultures with their own unique Kushite culture.

The most obvious influence on Kushite culture and religious tradition was Egypt. Many buildings in Meroë, especially temples, resembled those in Egypt. Many people in Kush worshipped Egyptian gods and wore Egyptian clothing. Kushite rulers used the title *pharaoh* and were buried in pyramids.

Many elements of Kushite culture were not borrowed. Kushite houses and daily life were unique. One Greek geographer noted some Kushite differences.

“The houses in the cities are formed by interweaving split pieces of palm wood or of bricks. . . . They hunt elephants, lions, and panthers. There are also serpents . . . and there are many other kinds of wild animals.”

—Strabo, *The Geographies*

Queens seem to have been more important in Kush than in Egypt. A few powerful queens ruled the dynasty. In addition to Egyptian gods, the people of Kush worshipped their own gods and built pyramids. They believed in the afterlife and mummified their dead, just as the Egyptians did.

The Kushites also developed their own written language, Meroitic. They made stone carvings to commemorate important buildings and events, just like in Egypt. Meroitic is similar to Egyptian hieroglyphics, but historians are not yet able to understand most of it.

▶ Explore ONLINE!

## Kush's Trade Network

Ancient Kush was at the center of a large trading network with connections to Europe, Africa, and Asia. Kush's location and production of iron goods helped make it a rich trading center.



Goods from the Mediterranean came to Kush through trade with Egypt.

EGYPT

Giza

Luxor

Mediterranean Sea

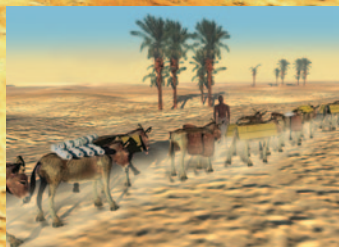
Nubian Desert

KUSH

Meroë



In Meroë, workers made iron tools and weapons, jewelry, pottery, and other goods.



Caravans from the south brought goods like leopard skins and ostrich eggs to Kush.

Red Sea



At ports on the Red Sea, merchants traded Kush's goods for luxury items like silk and glass.



**Academic Vocabulary**  
authority power  
or influence

**Reading Check**  
**Contrast** How do archaeologists and historians know that Kushite culture was unlike Egyptian culture?

**New Discoveries** Archaeologists have uncovered evidence that helps us understand Kushite society. They study artifacts, or what people have made or used, to provide a more complete picture of Kushite society. Historians also help us learn about Kushite society and how the Kush economy functioned. By studying the written record left behind on Egyptian pottery, buildings, and other artifacts, historians have also discovered information about the people who lived in Kush. For example, artifacts and written records have helped us understand the accomplishments of Kushite rulers such as Kashta. Both historians and archaeologists help us draw conclusions about the past.

**Women in Kushite Society** The women of Kush were expected to be active in their society. They worked in the fields, raised children, cooked, and performed other household tasks.

Some Kushite women rose to positions of **authority**. Some served as co-rulers with their husbands or sons. A few women ruled the empire alone. Historians believe that the first woman to rule Kush was **Queen Shanakh-dakheto** (shah-nakh-dah-KEE-toh). She ruled from 170 BC to 150 BC.

## The Decline of Kush

Kush gradually declined in power. A series of problems within the kingdom weakened its economy. One problem was that Kush's cattle were allowed to overgraze. When cows ate all the grass, wind blew the soil away, causing farmers to produce less food.

In addition, ironmakers used up the forests near Meroë. As wood became scarce, furnaces shut down. Kush produced fewer weapons and trade goods.

**The Influence of Aksum** Kush was also weakened by a loss of trade. Foreign merchants set up new trade routes that went around Kush. One such trade route bypassed Kush in favor of **Aksum** (AHK-soom), a kingdom located along the Red Sea in what is today Ethiopia and Eritrea. This location made it easy to transport goods over water, and Aksum became a major trading power in the first two centuries AD as a result.

Traders from inland Africa brought goods like gold and ivory to Aksum. From there, the items were shipped to markets as far away as India. In return for their goods, the people of Aksum received cloth, spices, and other products. Because Aksum was a thriving trade center, people from various cultures gathered there. As these people met and mingled to trade goods, they also traded ideas and beliefs.

One of the beliefs brought to Aksum by traders was Christianity. Christian teachings quickly took hold in Aksum, and many people converted. In the late AD 300s, Aksum's most famous ruler, **King Ezana** (AY-zah-nah), made Christianity the kingdom's official religion.

By the AD 300s, Kush had lost much of its wealth and military might. The king of Aksum took advantage of his former trade rival's weakness. In about AD 350 the Aksumite army destroyed Meroë and took over Kush. About two hundred years later, the Nubians also converted to Christianity. The last influences of Kush had disappeared.

### Reading Check

Summarize What factors led to the decline of Kush?

**The Decline of Aksum** Although Aksum itself was never conquered, its major ports were taken by other peoples. As a result, the kingdom became isolated from other lands. Cut off from their allies and their trade, the people of Aksum retreated to the mountains of northern Ethiopia.

**Summary** The people of Kush and Aksum controlled powerful trading networks. As Kush declined, Aksum grew into an important trade center.

## Lesson 5 Assessment

### Review Ideas, Terms, and People

- a. Recall** On which river did Kush develop?

**b. Evaluate** How did Nubia's natural resources influence the early history of Kush?
- a. Identify** Who was Piankhi, and why was he important to the history of Kush?

**b. Analyze** What were some elements of Egyptian culture that became popular in Kush?

**c. Draw Conclusions** Why is the 25th Dynasty significant in the history of both Egypt and Kush?
- a. Describe** What advantages did the location of Meroë offer to the Kushites?

**b. Compare** How were Kushite and Egyptian cultures similar?

- a. Identify** Who conquered Kush in the AD 300s?

**b. Evaluate** What was the impact of new trading routes on Kush?

**c. Identify** What was the first kingdom in Africa to become Christian? Which ruler was responsible for its conversion?

### Critical Thinking

- Organize Information** Create a table like this one. Using your notes, list an effect for each cause.

| Cause                                | Effect |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Thutmose I invades Kush.             |        |
| Power of Egyptian pharaohs declines. |        |
| Piankhi attacks Egypt.               |        |

# Social Studies Skills

## Assess Primary and Secondary Sources

### Define the Skill

*Primary* sources in history are materials created by people who lived during the times they describe. Examples include letters, diaries, and photographs. *Secondary sources* are accounts written later by someone who was not present. They are designed to teach about or discuss a historical topic. This textbook is an example of a secondary source.

Together, primary and secondary sources can present a good picture of a historical period or event. However, they must be used carefully to make sure that the picture they present is accurate.

### Learn the Skill

Here are some questions to ask to help you judge the accuracy of primary and secondary sources.

- 1. What is it?** Is it a firsthand account, or is it based on information provided by others? In other words, is it primary or secondary?
- 2. Who wrote it?** For a primary source, what was the author's connection to what he or she was writing about? For a secondary source, what makes the author an authority on this subject?
- 3. Who is the audience?** Was the information meant for the public? Was it meant for a friend or for the writer alone? The intended audience can influence what the writer has to say.
- 4. What is the purpose?** Authors of either primary or secondary sources can have reasons to exaggerate—or even lie—to suit their own goals or purposes. Look for evidence of emotion, opinion, or bias in the source. These might influence the accuracy of the account.

- 5. What facts does the author use?** Why did the author use some facts or avoid others in the source? Authors will include or avoid particular facts to support their purpose.

### Practice the Skill

Below are two passages about the military in ancient Egypt. Read them both, and use the guidelines to answer the questions that follow.

“The pharaohs began . . . leading large armies out of a land that had once known only small police forces and militia. With remarkable speed the Egyptians conquered a large, profitable empire that included the rich provinces of Syria and Palestine.”

—C. Warren Hollister, from *Roots of the Western Tradition*

“Let me tell you how the soldier fares . . . how he goes to Syria, and how he marches over the mountains. His bread and water are borne [carried] upon his shoulders like the load of [a donkey]; they make his neck bent as that of [a donkey], and the joints of his back are bowed [bent]. His drink is stinking water. . . . When he reaches the enemy, he is trapped like a bird, and he has no strength in his limbs.”

—from *Wings of the Falcon: Life and Thought of Ancient Egypt*, translated by Joseph Kaster

- 1.** Which quote is a primary source, and which is a secondary source? Which do you think would be more accurate?
- 2.** Why does the author include the fact about large armies in the first quote?
- 3.** What is the author's purpose in the second quote? What evidence of opinion, emotion, or bias supports your answer?



# Module 4 Assessment

## Review Vocabulary, Terms, and People

Imagine these terms from the module are correct answers to items in a crossword puzzle. Write the clues for the answers. Then make the puzzle with some answers written down and some across.

1. cataract
2. Menes
3. pharaoh
4. nobles
5. mummy
6. elite
7. contract
8. Ramses
9. hieroglyphics
10. Tutankhamen

## Comprehension and Critical Thinking

### Lesson 1

11. **a. Identify** Where was most of Egypt's fertile land?  
**b. Make Inferences** Why did Memphis become a political and social center of Egypt?  
**c. Predict Effects** How might history have been different if the Nile hadn't flooded every year?

### Lesson 2

12. **a. Describe** What responsibilities did pharaohs have?  
**b. Analyze** How were beliefs about the afterlife linked to items placed in tombs?  
**c. Elaborate** What challenges, in addition to moving stone blocks, do you think the pyramid builders faced?

### Lesson 3

13. **a. Describe** What did a scribe do?  
**b. Analyze** What two factors contributed to Egypt's wealth during the New Kingdom?

- c. Evaluate** Ramses the Great was a powerful pharaoh. Do you think his military successes or his building projects are more important to evaluating his greatness? Why?

### Lesson 4

14. **a. Describe** For what was papyrus used?  
**b. Explain** What effect did the Rosetta Stone have on our understanding of ancient Egypt?  
**c. Elaborate** How does the Egyptian style of painting people reflect their society?

### Lesson 5

15. **a. Describe** Where did the Kushite and Aksum civilizations develop?  
**b. Draw Conclusions** Why did Egypt want to gain control of Kush?  
**c. Evaluate** Why was the 25th Dynasty so important for both Kush and Egypt?

# Module 4 Assessment, continued

## Review Themes

16. **Geography** Do you think that Egyptian society could have flourished in North Africa if the Nile had not existed? Why or why not?
17. **Religion** How did religious beliefs shape the rest of Egyptian culture?
18. **Economics** What evidence from the text shows that the ancient Egyptian economy was based on trade?

## Social Studies Skills

**Assess Primary and Secondary Sources** Read the following passage and answer the questions.

From a young age, Ramses was trained as a ruler and a fighter. Made an army captain at age ten, he began military campaigns even before he became pharaoh. During his reign, Ramses greatly increased the size of his kingdom. He is known for the massive monuments he built.

19. What facts does the author choose to include in the source?
20. What purpose does the author's use of these facts serve?

## Reading Skills

**Causes and Effects in History** Use the Reading Skills taught in this module to answer the questions about the reading selection below.

Much of Egyptian religion focused on the afterlife, or life after death. The Egyptians believed that the afterlife was a happy place. The Egyptian belief in the afterlife stemmed from their idea of *ka*, or a person's life force. When a person died, his or her *ka* left the body and became a spirit. The *ka*, however, remained linked to the body and could not leave its burial site. The *ka* had all the same needs that the person had when he or she was living. To fulfill the *ka*'s needs, people filled tombs with objects for the afterlife.

21. What is the cause of the Egyptian custom of putting objects in tombs?
22. According to the passage, what is an effect of the Egyptian belief in *ka*?

## Focus On Writing

23. **Write a Caption** From what you've learned about Egyptian society, create a visual representation that clearly shows the relationship between the following individuals: scribes, merchants, slaves, and the pharaoh. Write a caption that explains your visual and gives details about the relationships between the groups.