

Name: _____ Date: _____ Hr: _____

Ancient Egypt Homework Packet



Due: _____

Africa Race

Complete the Challenge Activities on this page. Must write in **COMPLETE** sentences

History of Ancient Egypt

Section 1: When early Egyptians stopped being hunter-gathers and started growing their own crops, what started to form? When this formed what also increased? _____

Section 2: In what ways do the views on our U.S. Presidents and Egyptian Pharaohs have in common? In what ways are they different? _____

History of Ancient Kush

Section 1: Some leaders do not take control of other lands and people, even though they have the power to do so. What does this tell you about village leaders who make themselves kings over whole regions? _____

Section 2: You are a Kushite leader in the 600s BC. Write a short paragraph explaining your plan to make the kingdom of Kush rich and powerful again. _____

History of Ancient Egypt

Section 1



MAIN IDEAS

1. Egypt was called the gift of the Nile because the Nile River was so important.
2. Civilization developed after people began farming along the Nile River.
3. Strong kings unified all of ancient Egypt.

Key Terms and Places

Nile River important river in Egypt

Upper Egypt southern part of Egypt

Lower Egypt northern part of Egypt

cataracts river rapids

delta triangle-shaped area of land made from soil deposited by a river

pharaoh ruler of ancient Egypt, literally means “great house”

dynasty series of rulers from the same family

Section Summary

THE GIFT OF THE NILE

The existence of Egypt was based solely around the **Nile River**, the world’s longest river. The Nile carries water from central Africa through a vast stretch of desert land. The river was so important to people that Egypt was called the gift of the Nile.

Ancient Egypt developed along a 750-mile stretch of the Nile, and was originally organized into two kingdoms—**Upper Egypt** and **Lower Egypt**. Upper Egypt was located upriver in relation to the Nile’s flow. Lower Egypt was the northern region and was located downriver.

Cataracts, or rapids, marked the southern border of Upper Egypt. Lower Egypt was centered in the river **delta**, a triangle-shaped area of land made of soil deposited by the river. In midsummer, the Nile would flood Upper Egypt and in the fall the river would flood Lower Egypt. This made sure that the farmland would stay moist and fertile. As the land surrounding the Nile Valley was arid desert,

Why is a river a gift to a desert land?

Section 1, *continued*

this watered area was the lifeline for everyone who lived in the region.

CIVILIZATION DEVELOPS IN EGYPT

With dry desert all around, it is no wonder that ancient settlers were attracted to this abundant and protected area of fertile farmland. Hunter-gatherers first moved to the area around 12,000 years ago and found plenty of meat and fish to hunt and eat. By 4500 BC farmers were living in villages and growing wheat and barley. They were also raising cattle and sheep.

Around 3200 BC the Egyptian villages became organized into two kingdoms. The capital of Lower Egypt was located in the northwest Nile Delta at a town called Pe. The capital city of Upper Egypt was called Nekhen. It was located on the west bank of the Nile.

KINGS UNIFY EGYPT

Around 3100 BC Menes (MEE-neeZ), the king of Upper Egypt, invaded Lower Egypt. He married a princess there in order to unite the two kingdoms under his rule. Menes was the first **pharaoh**, which literally means ruler of a “great house.” He also started the first Egyptian **dynasty**, or series of rulers from the same family. He built a new capital city, Memphis, which became a popular cultural center. His dynasty ruled for nearly 200 years.

Why do you think Menes wanted to unite the two kingdoms?

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences Villages did not develop until people could stop being hunter-gatherers and start growing their own food. From villages came powerful leaders who united larger territories and people under one organization. Imagine that you are an ancient Egyptian interested in becoming a leader. Write a speech explaining what would make you a powerful person fit for ruling a large village.

History of Ancient Egypt

Section 2



MAIN IDEAS

1. Life in the Old Kingdom was influenced by pharaohs, roles in society, and trade.
2. Religion shaped Egyptian life.
3. The pyramids were built as tombs for Egypt's pharaohs.

Key Terms and Places

Old Kingdom a period in Egyptian history that lasted from about 2700 to 2200 BC

nobles people from rich and powerful families

afterlife life after death, a widely held ancient Egyptian belief

mummies specially treated bodies wrapped in cloth

elite people of wealth and power

pyramids huge, stone tombs with four triangle-shaped walls that meet at a top point

engineering application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes

Section Summary

LIFE IN THE OLD KINGDOM

Around 2700 BC the Third Dynasty began a period in Egyptian history known as the **Old Kingdom**. During the next 500 years, the Egyptians developed a political system based on the belief that the pharaoh was both a king and a god. The most famous pharaoh of the Old Kingdom was Khufu, in whose honor the largest of the pyramids was built.

Although the pharaoh owned everything, he was also held personally responsible if anything went wrong. He was expected to make trade profitable and prevent war. To manage these duties, he appointed government officials, mostly from his family. Social classes developed, with the pharaoh at the top and **nobles** from rich and powerful families making up the upper class. The middle class included some government officials, scribes, and rich craftspeople. Most people, including farmers, belonged to the lower class. Lower-class people were often used by the pharaoh as labor.

Would you say that there was any distinction between religion and politics in Egypt's Old Kingdom? Why or why not?

Of the upper, middle, and lower classes, which was the largest in ancient Egypt?

Section 2, *continued*

Trade also developed during the Old Kingdom. Traders sailed on the Mediterranean and south on the Nile and the Red Sea to acquire gold, copper, ivory, slaves, wood, and stone.

RELIGION AND EGYPTIAN LIFE

The Old Kingdom formalized a religious structure that everyone was expected to follow. Over time, certain cities built temples and were associated with particular gods.

Much of Egyptian religion focused on the **afterlife**. Each person's *ka* (KAH), or life force, existed after death, but remained linked to the body. To keep the *ka* from suffering, the Egyptians developed a method called embalming to preserve bodies. Royalty had their bodies preserved as **mummies**, specially treated bodies wrapped in cloth. Other members of the **elite** also had their bodies preserved.

What is the *ka*?

THE PYRAMIDS

Pyramids, spectacular stone monuments, were built to house dead rulers. Many pyramids are still standing today, amazing reminders of Egyptian **engineering**.

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences Think about the way in which Egyptians viewed the pharaoh. Then think about how we view our current U.S. President. In what ways are these views similar? In what ways are they different? Write a one-page essay considering whether a god-king pharaoh ruling today would be loved or hated by his people.

History of Ancient Egypt

Section 3



MAIN IDEAS

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

Key Terms and Places

Middle Kingdom period of stability and order in ancient Egypt between about 2050 and 1750 BC

New Kingdom the height of Egypt's power and glory, between 1550 and 1050 BC

Kush kingdom south of Egypt

trade routes paths followed by traders

Section Summary

THE MIDDLE KINGDOM

The Old Kingdom ended with the pharaohs in debt. Ambitious nobles serving in government positions managed to take power from the pharaohs and rule Egypt for nearly 160 years. Finally, a powerful pharaoh regained control of Egypt around 2050 BC and started a peaceful period of rule. This era was called the **Middle Kingdom** and lasted until Southwest Asian invaders conquered Lower Egypt around 1750 BC.

From where did the raiders who ended the Middle Kingdom come?

THE NEW KINGDOM

When an Egyptian named Ahmose (AHM-ohs) drove away the invaders and declared himself king of Egypt in 1550 BC, he ushered in Egypt's eighteenth dynasty and the start of the **New Kingdom**. Responding to invasions, Egypt took control of possible invasion routes by taking over areas such as Syria and **Kush**, and quickly became the leading military power in the region, with an empire extending from the Euphrates River in the northeast to Nubia in

Section 3, *continued*

the south. These conquests also made Egypt rich, through gifts and vastly expanded **trade routes**. One ruler in particular, Queen Hatshepsut, was active in establishing new paths for traders.

Despite the strong leadership of Ramses the Great, a tide of invasions from Southwest Asia and from the west eventually reduced Egypt to violence and disorder.

Which direction would you go from Egypt to reach Nubia?

WORK AND DAILY LIFE

During the Middle and New Kingdoms, Egypt’s population continued to grow and become more complex. Professional and skilled workers like scribes, artisans, artists, and architects were honored. These roles in society were usually passed on in families, with young boys learning a trade from their fathers.

For farmers and peasants, who made up the vast majority of the population, life never changed. In addition to hard work on the land, they were required to pay taxes and were subject to special labor duty at any time. Only slaves were beneath them in social status.

Most Egyptian families lived in their own homes. Boys were expected to marry young and start their own families. Women focused on the home, but many also had jobs outside the home. Egyptian women had the legal rights to own property, make contracts, and divorce their husbands.

Which type of workers likely designed the pyramids?

For farmers, did daily life in Egypt change much with the rise and fall of dynasties and kingdoms?

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences Design a “want ad” for a position held in ancient Egyptian society. Then write a letter to a potential employer explaining why you should be hired.

History of Ancient Egypt

Section 4



MAIN IDEAS

1. Egyptian writing used symbols called hieroglyphics.
2. Egypt's great temples were lavishly decorated.
3. Egyptian art filled tombs.

Key Terms

hieroglyphics Egyptian writing system, one of the world's first, which used symbols

papyrus long-lasting, paper-like substance made from reeds

Rosetta Stone a stone slab discovered in 1799, that was inscribed with hieroglyphics and their Greek meanings

sphinxes imaginary creatures with the bodies of lions and the heads of other animals or humans

obelisk a tall, four-sided pillar that is pointed on top

Section Summary

EGYPTIAN WRITING

Egyptians invented one of the world's first writing systems, using a series of images, symbols, and pictures called **hieroglyphics** (hy-ruh-GLIH-fiks). Each symbol represented one or more sounds in the Egyptian language.

At first hieroglyphics were carved in stone. Later, they were written with brushes and ink on **papyrus** (puh-PY-ruhs). Because papyrus didn't decay, many ancient Egyptian texts still survive, including government records, historical records, science texts, medical manuals, and literary works such as *The Book of the Dead*. The discovery of the **Rosetta Stone** in 1799 provided the key to reading Egyptian writing, as its text was inscribed both in hieroglyphics and in Greek.

What language helped scholars to understand the meaning of hieroglyphics on the Rosetta Stone?

EGYPT'S GREAT TEMPLES

Egyptian architects are known not only for the pyramids but also for their magnificent temples. The temples were lavishly designed with numerous

Section 4, *continued*

statues and beautifully painted walls and pillars. **Sphinxes** and **obelisks** were usually found near the entrances to the temples.

EGYPTIAN ART

Ancient Egyptians were masterful artists and many of their greatest works are found in either the temples or the tombs of the pharaohs. Most Egyptians, however, never saw these paintings, because only kings, priests, or other important people could enter these places.

Egyptian paintings depict a variety of subjects, from crowning kings to illustrating religious rituals to showing scenes from daily life. The paintings also have a particular style, with people drawn as if they were twisting as they walked, and in different sizes depending upon their stature in society. In contrast, animals appear more realistically. The Egyptians were also skilled stone and metal workers, creating beautiful statues and jewelry.

Much of what we know about Egyptian art and burial practices comes from the tomb of King Tutankhamen, one of the few Egyptian tombs that was left untouched by raiders looking for valuables. The tomb was discovered in 1922.

Who got to see ancient Egyptian sculpture and painting?

Why is King Tutankhamen's tomb so important for the study of Egyptian history?

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences Using the library or an online resource, find a key to translate Egyptian hieroglyphics into English. Write a message using hieroglyphics and trade with another student to see if you can read each other's messages. Be sure to provide a copy of your message and the translation to your teacher.

History of Ancient Kush

Section 1



MAIN IDEAS

1. Geography helped early Kush civilization develop in Nubia.
2. Egypt controlled Kush for about 450 years.
3. After winning its independence, Kush ruled Egypt and set up a new dynasty there.

Key Terms and Places

Nubia a region in northeast Africa where the kingdom of Kush developed

ebony a type of dark, heavy wood

ivory a white material taken from elephant tusks

Section Summary

GEOGRAPHY AND EARLY KUSH

The kingdom of Kush developed south of Egypt along the Nile, in the region we now call **Nubia**. Every year, floods provided a rich layer of fertile soil. Farming villages thrived. The area was also rich in minerals such as gold, copper, and stone. These resources contributed to the region's wealth.

Over time some rich farmers became leaders of their villages. Around 2000 BC, one of these leaders took control of other villages and made himself king of Kush.

The kings of Kush ruled from their capital at Kerma (KAR-muh). The city was located on the Nile just south of a cataract, or stretch of rapids. Because the Nile's cataracts made parts of the river hard to pass through, they were natural barriers against invaders.

As time passed Kushite society became more complex. In addition to farmers and herders, some people of Kush became priests or artisans.

What valuable minerals were important to Kush's prosperity?

Around what year did the first king of Kush appear?

Section 1, *continued*

EGYPT CONTROLS KUSH

Kush and Egypt were neighbors and trading partners. The Kushites sent slaves to Egypt. They also sent gold, copper, and stone, as well as the prized materials **ebony** and **ivory**.

Relations between Kush and Egypt were not always peaceful, however. Around 1500 BC Egyptian armies under the pharaoh Thutmose I invaded and conquered most of Nubia, including all of Kush. The Kushite palace at Kerma was destroyed. Kush remained an Egyptian territory until the mid-1000s BC, when the Kushite leaders regained control.

For about how many years was Kush under Egyptian control?

KUSH RULES EGYPT

By around 850 BC, Kush was once again as strong as it had been before it was conquered by Egypt. During the 700s, under the king Kashta, the Kushites began to invade Egypt. Kashta's son, Piankhi (PYANG-kee), believed that the gods wanted him to rule all of Egypt. By the time he died in 716 BC, Piankhi had accomplished this task. His kingdom extended north from Napata all the way to the Nile Delta.

Piankhi's brother, Shabaka (SHAB-uh-kuh), declared himself pharaoh and began the Twenty-fifth, or Kushite, Dynasty in Egypt. Egyptian culture thrived during the Twenty-fifth Dynasty. 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. The Kushites were slowly pushed out of Egypt.

What metals did the Assyrians and Kushites use to make weapons?

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Making Judgments Some leaders do not take control of other lands and people, even though they have the power to do so. What does this tell you about village leaders who make themselves kings over whole regions?

History of Ancient Kush

Section 2



MAIN IDEAS

1. Kush's economy grew because of its iron industry and trade network.
2. Some elements of Kushite society and culture were borrowed from other cultures while others were unique to Kush.
3. The decline and defeat of Kush was caused by both internal and external factors.

Key Terms and Places

Meroë economic center of Kush, new Kushite capital

trade network a system of people in different lands who trade goods back and forth

merchants traders

exports items sent to other regions for trade

imports goods brought in from other regions

Section Summary

KUSH'S ECONOMY GROWS

After they lost control of Egypt, the people of Kush devoted themselves to increasing agriculture and trade, hoping to make their country rich again. The economic center of Kush during this period was **Meroë** (MER-oh-wee). Gold could be found nearby, as could forests of ebony and other wood. In this rich location the Kushites developed Africa's first iron industry. Iron ore and wood for furnaces were easily available, so the iron industry grew quickly.

In time, Meroë became the center of a large **trade network**. The Kushites sent goods down the Nile to Egypt. From there, Egyptian and Greek **merchants** 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** included gold, pottery, iron tools, ivory, leopard skins, ostrich feathers, elephants, and slaves. **Imports** included fine jewelry and luxury items from Egypt, Asia, and lands along the Mediterranean.

What industry helped make Kush a rich and successful kingdom again?

What direction is "down the Nile?"

Section 2, continued

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

The most obvious influence on Kush during this period was Egyptian, but many elements of Kushite culture were not borrowed from anywhere else.

The people of Kush worshipped their own gods and even developed their own written language. Women were expected to be active in their society. Some women rose to positions of great authority, especially in religion. A few women, such as Queen Shanakhdakheto (shah-nahk-dah-KEE-toh), even ruled the empire alone.

How was the position of women in Kushite society different than that of women in most other ancient civilizations?

DECLINE AND DEFEAT

Kushite civilization centered at Meroë reached its height in the first century BC. Eventually it fell due to both external and internal factors. The stores of iron and other metals dwindled, and the overgrazing of cattle caused a deterioration of farmland. Another powerful trading center, Aksum (AHK-soom), located in modern-day Ethiopia and Eritrea, began competing with Kush. Soon trade routes were bypassing Meroë for Aksum. After Aksum had decimated Kush economically, the Aksumite leader King Ezana (AY-zah-nah) sent an invading army and conquered the once-powerful Kush.

Circle the name and kingdom of the ruler who eventually defeated Kush.

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences You are a Kushite leader in the 600s BC. Write a short essay explaining your plan to make the kingdom of Kush rich and powerful again.