

LEVELED BOOK • L

Ancient Egypt

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The Nile River brings water to Egypt's farms and cities.

Introduction

Thousands of years ago, a group of people lived in the African country of Egypt. They lived on the banks of the Nile River. They were farmers and hunters. They used the river for boat travel. They were ruled by a king called a **pharaoh**.

Beliefs

The ancient Egyptians believed that after someone died, he or she went to live in another world. They believed that a person's next life would be like their present life. They thought the dead person would need the same tools and objects in their next life. So people were buried with many of the things that they owned.



Paintings in a tomb show scenes of the next life.

Ancient Egyptians believed in a sun god. They believed that the king was related to this god. When the king died, he was given a very fancy burial. Many riches were buried with him. Queens were also given fancy burials.

A mummy's coffin was often painted to look like the person inside.



After a king died,
his body was
preserved so that
it would not rot.
The king's body
was treated with
spices, oils, and
other things to
preserve it. People
believed that this
would keep his
spirit alive. The
preserved body
was called a
mummy.



Mummy of Siptah wrapped in cloth



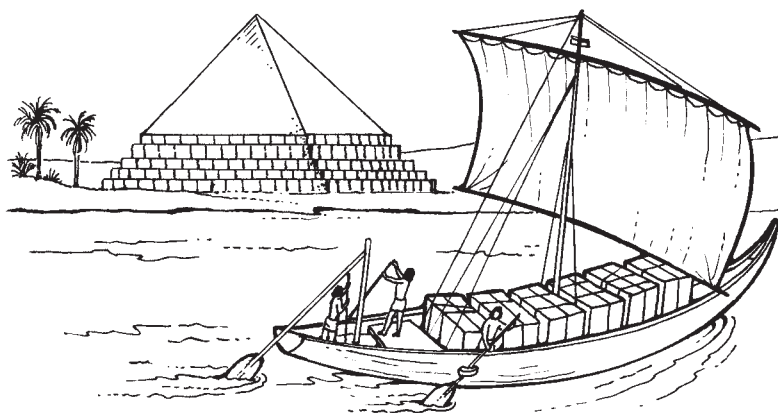
A pyramid's shape is like the Sun's rays shining on Earth.

Pyramids

The king was buried inside a huge stone structure called a pyramid.

The pyramid was shaped to look like the Sun's rays shining on Earth. People believed that the king would go to heaven on the rays of the Sun.

Pyramids took many years to build. When a king was still alive, people began building his pyramid. The stones used to make the pyramid were huge. It took hard work to get the stones out of the ground. It took harder work to move the stones to where the pyramid would be built. Some stones were moved on boats. Other stones were moved over land using big sleds.

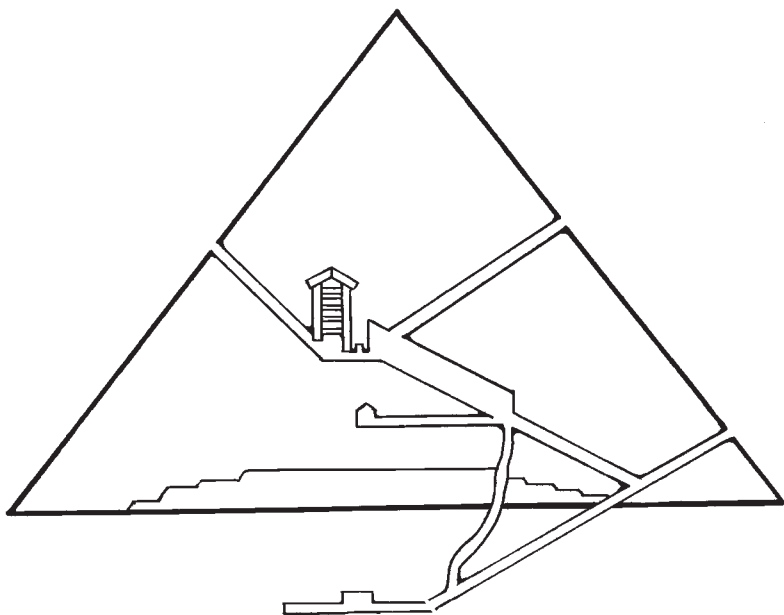


The Egyptians sailed heavy stones down the Nile River.

Inside the pyramid was a **tomb**. This was a special room where the king's body was placed. Many objects were put in the tomb. There were statues, paintings, and many gold things.



Tomb of King Tutankhamun (King Tut)



Drawing of the tunnels and passageways in a pyramid

Many hidden tunnels and rooms were built inside a pyramid. They were built to trick anyone who tried to steal things from the tomb. Giant stones were put in front of the doorway of the real tomb. They were used to keep out thieves. Still, almost every king's tomb has been robbed over the years. But the pyramids still stand.

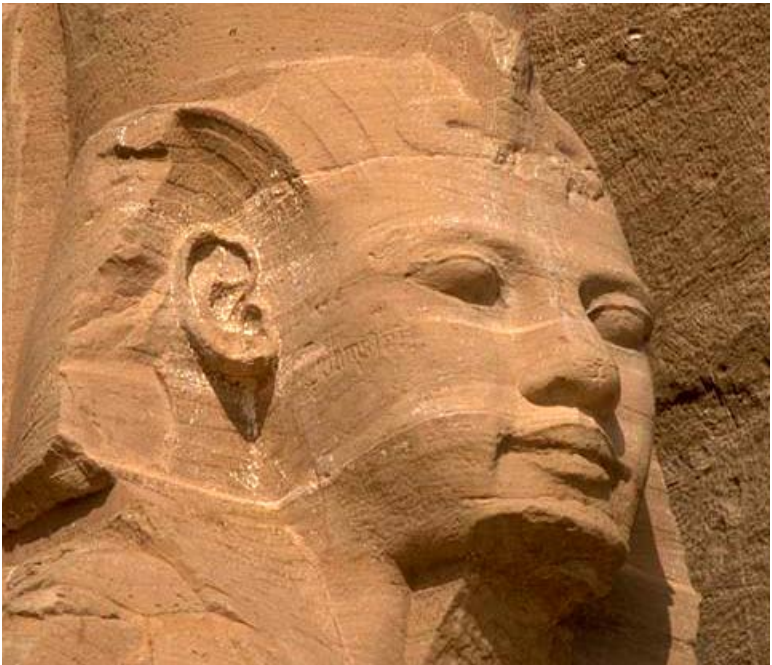
The Great Pyramid at Giza is a famous pyramid. It was built for King Khufu. It has more than two million blocks of stone. Other pyramids near it were built for the king's relatives. A statue called the Sphinx guards all of the pyramids. The Sphinx has the face of a king and the body of a lion.



The Sphinx

Conclusion

Studying the ancient Egyptians teaches us a lot about life long ago. We can learn about the tools these people used and clothes they wore. We can learn about the food they ate and the gods they worshipped. By studying ancient Egyptians, we know that they had a great culture.



A statue of Ramses II at Abu Simbel, Egypt

Glossary

mummy (*n.*) a dead body treated in special ways so that it would not rot (p. 7)

pharaoh (*n.*) what the ancient Egyptians called their king (p. 4)

preserved (*v.*) treated in a special way to prevent spoiling or rotting (p. 7)

tomb (*n.*) a vault, chamber, or grave for a dead person (p. 10)

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Cover photo: One of four statues of Ramses II at Abu Simbel, Egypt

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