

Lesson 2: Life in Egypt

Directions: Read the summary about the first great and complex civilizations in ancient Egypt. As you read, underline important details that relate to that section's title. Think about what you already know, what you want to know, and what you have learned after reading the summary.

Vocabulary

unify: to join together

pharaoh: an Egyptian god-king

hieroglyphics: a form of writing made up of pictures and symbols

pyramid: a large stone building that served as a house or tomb for the dead

mummy: a preserved dead body

economy: the way people use and manage resources

Unifying Egypt (p. 85)

Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt were **unified**, or joined together, into one country. Legend says that King Menes led his army into Lower Egypt and joined the two kingdoms in about 3150 B.C. Historians divided ancient Egypt into the Old Kingdom (c. 2575–2181 B.C.), the Middle Kingdom (c. 2040–1782 B.C.), and the New Kingdom (c. 1570–1070 B.C.). During the New Kingdom, the king became known as the **pharaoh**, or god-king.

Egyptian Records (p. 86)

Like the Sumerians, the Egyptians developed a type of writing based on pictures. This writing is called **hieroglyphics**, or “sacred carvings.” The pictures stood for objects and ideas. Unlike Sumerian cuneiform, the Egyptian pictures also stood for sounds. A passage on the Rosetta Stone was written in Greek and Egyptian. Archaeologists read Egyptian hieroglyphics by comparing them to the Greek words. Priests, officials, and scribes, or professional writers, kept written records. These records help archaeologists understand ancient Egyptian life.

Pyramid Building (p. 87)

Old Kingdom pharaohs built **pyramids**, or large stone tombs for dead pharaohs. Egyptians believed that pharaohs were gods even after they died. Pyramids were filled with all the pharaoh's possessions. The pharaoh's preserved body, or **mummy**, was placed in the pyramid.

Social Life (p. 89)

Trade grew during the Middle Kingdom. A new middle class came into being. In the new class system, the pharaoh was at the top. Then came nobles and priests. Next were merchants, craftspeople, and scribes. Then came farmers and unskilled workers. Enslaved people were at the bottom of the class system. Egyptians could move between classes. Like Sumerian women, Egyptian women could inherit land and take part in business. Most women were not taught to read and write.

Trade and Technology (p. 89)

During the Middle Kingdom, the Egyptian **economy** became stronger. An economy is the way people use and manage resources. The Hyksos from Asia took over Egypt in about 1660 B.C. After about 100 years, the Egyptian pharaohs took over again. This began the New Kingdom.

New Kingdom Pharaohs (p. 90)

Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom pharaohs ruled with their sons or wives. In 1350 B.C., Amenhotep IV became pharaoh. He and his wife Nefertiti began to worship a new sun god called Aton. Amenhotep neglected his duties as pharaoh. The next pharaoh, Tutankhamun, brought back order to Egypt. Aton was no longer worshipped.

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Directions: Unscramble the letters in (parenthesis) below to make a word that makes each sentence true. You will use your textbook to locate your answer. Please use the word bank provided for help.

- chariot
- Great Pyramid
- Manetho
- Memphis
- Middle Kingdom
- mummification
- pharaoh
- Rosetta
- women
- Zoser

- p. 85 1. According to legend, King (seenm) Menes, wearing the double crown, led his army north.
- p. 85 2. (sheimmp) _____ was made the capital of Egypt during the first dynasty.
- p. 85 3. Historians know little about life in Egypt before the third dynasty, when (teaonhm) _____ began to keep records.
- p. 86 4. Hieroglyphics could not be read until the (storate) _____ Stone was decoded.
- p. 87 5. The ancient Egyptians buried each (ahorpah) _____ in a pyramid with a variety of his possessions.
- p. 87 6. To preserve their pharaohs' bodies for the afterlife, the Egyptians used a process called (oumiatmmfcin) _____.
- p. 87 7. King (sreoz) _____ hired an architect to build a step pyramid.
- p. 87 8. The (targe dipayrm) _____ was the tallest human-made structure in the world until the 1800s.
- p. 89 9. A new middle class of artisans and scribes emerged during the (dlmedi gmondki) _____.
- p. 89 10. The Hyksos of western Asia brought new technology to Egypt, including the (traihoc) _____.
- p. 90 11. Sobeknefru and Hatshepsut were powerful (mnowe) _____ rulers in Egypt.