Section 1
The Geography of the Nile
The longest river in the world is...

- The Nile River
  - Flows north – East Africa to Mediterranean Sea
  - Over 4,000 miles long (more than the width of the U.S.)
  - 2 sources
    - Blue Nile – highlands of present day Ethiopia – Rapids
    - White Nile – calmer
    - Meet in Sudan
Nile through Nubia

- North of where they meet form “S” – 1,000 miles

- **Nubia** – ancient region in the Nile River Valley

- This section contains 6 cataracts – rock filled rapids
  - 1st & 2nd – lower Nubia - Aswan
    - Desert & mountains
    - Little farming
    - Had to live near river – little rain
  - Further south – 2nd – 6th – Upper Nubia
    - Rain – plant & harvest
    - Farmland narrow – 2 miles wide
Nile through Egypt

- 700 miles long
  - From 1st cataracts – Aswan to Mediterranean Sea
  - Passes through Upper Egypt
  - 6 miles wide farmland on each side

- North – forms a delta – a plain at the mouth of a river
  - Splits into several streams
  - Very fertile farmland
What the river provides

- Spring – river rises – brings rich sediment – silt – fine soil found on river bottoms

- When river floods, leaves behind rich layer of silt
  - Praised god of Nile - Hapi
Egyptians called their land Kemet – “Black Land” – because color of soil
- Floods varied each year
- No flash floods
- Rare-dry years

Beyond river banks – “Red Land”
- Sahara desert
- Lay west and Eastern Sahara lay east
- Not friendly to human life
- Useless for farming
- Only experienced would travel in it
Desert is still good...

- Acted like a shield from foreign attacks
- Mesopotamia did not have this
  - Land between Tigris and Euphrates were always under attack
- For 2,000 years there were few attacks in Egypt and Nubia
  - Nile Valley was a path for trade in Central Africa
  - Mediterranean Sea & Red Sea – path to Southwest Asia
Good river = New Communities

- Early communities built villages around delta and valley near fertile river beds
  - Homes made of straw or brick – mix of mud and straw
- South – Upper Egypt – scattered villages
  - Farming villages along banks of Nile
- Nubian
  - Farming difficult
  - Fished
  - Hunted ducks and other birds
Nile = trade

- Used to ship goods
  - Travel North & South
- Other routes:
  - Across desert to Red Sea ports
- Caravans loaded with:
  - Gold
  - Silver
  - Copper
  - Fine pottery

- Cedar – east coast of Mediterranean sea and gold from Nubia sold in Egypt bazaars
Nubia left out

- Cataracts would not allow traders
- Became world famous trade routes on land
- Goods from central Africa & Nubia into Egypt from Southwest Asia
Section 2
The Rulers of Egypt
Pharaohs – title used by the kings of Egypt
History of Egypt is...

- A history of their **dynasties** – series of rulers from the same family or ethnic group
  - Had 31 dynasties 3100B.C. – 332 B.C.

- 3 time periods of dynasties
  - Old Kingdom – 2700 B.C. – 2200 B.C.
  - Middle Kingdom – 2050 B.C. – 1800 B.C.
  - New Kingdom – 1500 B.C. – 1100 B.C.

- Gaps were times of trouble, wars, invasions, weak rulers
  - Periods were rare
  - Most of Egyptian history, there was a stable ruler
Who began the 1\textsuperscript{st} dynasty?

- According to legend – Menes – united Upper & Lower Egypt
  - Built Memphis – near present day Cairo
  - Ruled both lands from there
    - Double Crown
    - White Crown for Upper Egypt
      - Nekhbet – vulture goddess was the patroness
    - Red Crown for Lower Egypt
      - Wadjet – cobra goddess was the patroness
Power of Rulers

- **Absolute power** – complete control over their people
  - Get help from:
    - Advisors
    - Ma’at – goddess of truth
- Pharaoh’s decisions become law
  - Decide when to plant and harvest

- Believed pharaoh was earthly form of Horus – falcon god
  - They were god – kings
  - Believed they provided the yearly flood
Old Kingdom 2686 B.C. – 2125 B.C.

- Peaceful & traded with Nubia
  - Few conflicts
  - Searched east coast of Mediterranean
    - Timber – houses, boats, furniture

- Golden age were many things were built and discoveries made
  - Pharaoh Khufu began work on the Great Pyramid at Giza
  - Statue of the Sphinx was built at Giza

- In end – governors of providences challenged power of pharaohs
  - Dynasties grew weak
Middle Kingdom 2055 B.C. – 1650 B.C.

- Early rulers restored order
- Money spent on public works – not wars
  - Buildings
  - Irrigation projects
- Weak and poor rulers = foreign invaders
New Kingdom 1550 B.C. – 1069 B.C.

- Strong princes regained power – 1567 B.C.
- 1st pharaoh – built an empire
  - Huge army of foot soldiers
  - Mounted warriors
  - Charioteers
  - Bronze swords
  - Bronze armor
    Made them almost unbeatable
Rulers during New Kingdom

- 1923 Howard Carter discovered King Tutankhamen's tomb – in the Valley of the Kings
  - Only tomb untouched by grave robbers
  - Make it the most famous
- King Tut only 18 or 19 when died
  - Some believe he was murdered

- Items found inside:
  - Chariots
  - Solid gold statues
  - Beds
  - Models of boats
  - Chairs
  - Gold throne
  - Couches
  - Statues of Anubis guarding the tomb entrance
Rulers during New Kingdom

- 1504 B.C. – Thutmose III became pharaoh
  - Too young to rule
  - Step mother- Hatshepsut - was appointed **regent** – someone who rules for a child until the child is old enough to rule
  - She did not like being regent and made herself pharaoh
    - Ruled for 22 years
    - Became first woman rulers known to history
- Lead her army into battle
  - Might have fought in battle
- Created time of peace and economic success
- Traded all over Africa
  - Traders returned with shiploads of ivory, gold, and spices
Rulers during New Kingdom

- She refused to give up the throne
- Took over after she died
  - Had all her statues destroyed
  - Some wondered if he was involved in her death
How did Thutmose do?

- One of the greatest rulers
- Wars with Syria & Phoenicians
- Educated, loved plants
- Treated those he conquered with mercy
How did the New Kingdom fail?

- Civil war caused decline
- 332 B.C. Alexander the Great conquered
- 300 years later Egypt conquered by Romans and became part of the Roman Empire
  - Would not be free for almost 2,000 years
Whose Cleopatra?

- 51 B.C. shared throne with members of family until Romans conquered – 31 B.C.
  - Married her younger brother (it was a custom)
  - Revolted against him to help Julius Ceaser and won the kingdom
  - After her husband died she married another brother
    - Still saw Ceaser
  - After Ceaser died she was visited by Marc Antony
    - He fell in love with her
  - They married in 36 B.C.
    - She used him to regain her power
  - Romans attacked Egypt
    - Cleopatra committed suicide – let an asp bit her – died from venom
  - Antony found her dead and attacked the Romans but was killed
Section 3
Egyptian Religion
What did they believe?

- **Afterlife** – life after death
- Believed their gods and goddesses controlled nature
- Built temples to honor the gods
- Offered:
  - Food
  - Gifts
  - Prayers
Different Area...Different Attitude

Early on – each town had their own god or goddess & temples
What did the gods look like?

- Animal head & body of human
- Principle gods
  - Re – Sun god
  - Horus – Falcon god
More gods...

- Amon – Re – chief god
  - Protected rich and poor
  - Thought he was born each morning in the east and died each day in the west
    - Thought west was home of the dead – afraid to be there
- Osiris – god of the living and dead
  - Had a family
- Isis – Osiris wife – one of the most powerful goddesses
  - Egyptians worshipped as a great mother who protected the health of her children
- Horus – his son – god of the sky
  - Head of a falcon
- Anubis – his son god of the dead
  - Said to have invented mummification
  - Head of a jackal - dog
How were Ancient Egyptians buried?

- Believed spirits of the dead made their way to the afterlife in a heavenly boat
  - They would join Osiris, their dead family and friends and live in pleasure
- Believed the souls needed food, clothing, and other items from their lives
- Buried with items such as:
  - Sandals
  - Furniture
  - Favorite horses

Why were mummies made?

- Believed if the bodies were preserved and made into mummies, the spirit would exist in the afterlife
How were mummies made?

- Process took 2 – 3 months
  - Workers removed organs and placed them into containers called Canopic jars
- Body packed with salt and stored for 42 days
  - Body dried out
- Body then cleaned and bathed in spices
- Wrapped in up to 20 layers of bandages
  - Several hundred yards

What were mummies placed in?

- While the mummy was being prepared workers worked on the coffin or sarcophagus
  - Several wooden coffins
    - Usually 3 or 4, one fit inside another
    - Innermost coffin shaped like a human
    - Dead persons face painted on the cover
Where were pharaohs buried?

- When pharaoh was crowned his tomb began to be planned
- During 4th dynasty built pyramids – huge building with four sloping outside walls shaped like triangles
  - Most built during Old Kingdom
  - Largest called the Great Pyramid – found at Giza

How were pyramids built?

- Great Pyramid has over 2 million stones
  - Each weighs 5,000 pounds
  - Hauled up the side and put in place
  - Needed 112 men to lift one stone
  - 481 feet tall
  - Took 20 years and 84,000 men to build
- Only surviving Ancient Wonder of the World
How were pyramids built?

- Originally built on west bank of the Nile (the land of the dead)
- Ancient Egyptians did not use the wheel
  - Workers used:
    - Sleds
    - Wooden rollers
    - Levers
- Workers dragged and pushed blocks up ramps of packed rubble to the level they were working on
- Workers lived in villages near the pyramids
  - Hundreds died each year
What was the purpose of the Sphinx?

- No real purpose is known
- One theory:
  - Built during the time of the Great Pyramid – face of Pharaoh Chephren
- No definite date when it was built
- Theories:
  - During time of Great Pyramid
Section 4
The Culture of the Ancient Egyptians
How do we know what we do about the Egyptians?

- Paintings on walls of temples and tombs
  - Show royalty
  - Everyday life
- Written records

How were social classes set up?

- Like a pyramid
  - Pharaoh at top
  - Upper class (priest, members of pharaohs court, and nobles)
  - Middle class (merchants, skilled workers)
  - Peasants (largest class - farm labor, built roads, temples)
- Person can advance by doing things for the pharaoh
What about slavery?

- Prisoners of war were made slavery
- They created their own class – small
- Could become free, inherit land from master, also had rights
What was life like a peasant?

- Most farmed on land of wealthier people
  - During floods - worked on roads, temples, and other buildings
- Planting season busiest time of year
  - Men, women, and children gathered crops of wheat and barley from sunrise to sunset

What were the roles of women?

- Living models of Isis - wife of Osiris
- Had many rights of men
  - Own property
  - Run businesses
  - Travel freely
- Noble women - in charge of temples, influence pharaohs, act as regents
What were some achievements of the Egyptians?

- Ancient Egypt known as land of great learning
- New writing system developed
  - Like Mesopotamia ideas written down in picture like symbols called **hieroglyphs**
  - Began as a way to keep track of the kingdoms wealth
    - As kingdom grew symbols became more complicated

What were hieroglyphs written on?

- First on clay and stone
- Later used **papyrus** - early form of paper made from a reed-like plant found by the marshy areas of the Nile delta
  - They cut the plant into narrow slivers
  - Soaked the slivers and pounded them flat
  - Left to dry in the air – they became stiff
  - Joined side by side the pieces formed a long roll
How was it discovered how to read hieroglyphs?

- Scholars did not know how to read them

- 1799 soldiers digging a fort near the Nile
  - Found a large black stone with 3 different types of writing on it
  - Upper part showed hieroglyphs
  - Middle part showed different form of hieroglyphs - demotic
  - Lower part showed Greek letters

- Stone called the Rosetta Stone
  - Called this because found near Rosetta - city near Nile delta near the Mediterranean Sea

- 1820’s French scholar - Jean Francois Champollion figured it out
  - Allowed historians to better understand Ancient Egyptians
How did the Egyptians predict the Nile's flood?

- Noticed it rose near the same time they could see Sirius - the Dog Star was seen
  - **Astronomers** - scientists who study the stars and other objects in the sky, figured out how long it would take to appear - 365 days - which became the length of their year

What about mathematics?

- Knew how to add, subtract, multiply, & divide
- Helped with building the pyramids and other buildings
What did the Egyptians know about medicine?

- Knew a lot from working on mummies
- They preformed surgery
- Set broken bones and treated injuries to the spine
- Practiced herbalism - created medicine from plants
  - Used to cure everyday illnesses
  - Remedies were written down - Greeks and Romans used them centuries later