

ANCIENT EGYPT

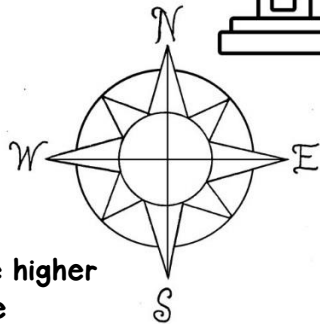
LOCATION

Ancient Egypt was located in northeastern Africa. The area was dominated by the sand dunes, rocks, and plains of the Sahara Desert, but the life giving Nile River made the region habitable and helped it thrive. Ancient Egypt's eastern most border was the Red Sea and its northern most border was the Mediterranean Sea. The Kingdom of Nubia or Kush was located to the south of Ancient Egypt.



THE NILE RIVER

Two tributaries (smaller rivers), the White Nile to the south and the Blue Nile to the east, feed the Nile River. The Nile River flows north from the higher elevations in the interior of the continent to the lower sea level elevations. The Nile River flows into its delta (the place where a river meets a slow moving body of water) at the Mediterranean Sea.



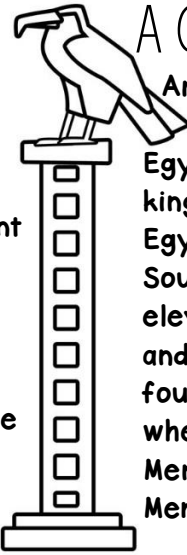
IMPACT

The seasonal and sometimes catastrophic flooding of the Nile River resulted in very fertile soil along the river. As a result, the Egyptians were able to produce enough crops to feed their growing population. The Nile's currents and wind patterns made the river perfect for transporting people and goods. Additionally, the deserts surrounding the Nile offered a natural barrier against invasion.



TRADE

Ancient Egypt's central location and their access to multiple waterways connected them to a massive trade network that stretched from the interior of Africa to the Mediterranean region and the Sinai Peninsula and eastward along the Silk Road. Important centers of trade like Memphis and Thebes grew into wealthy cities and centers of government.

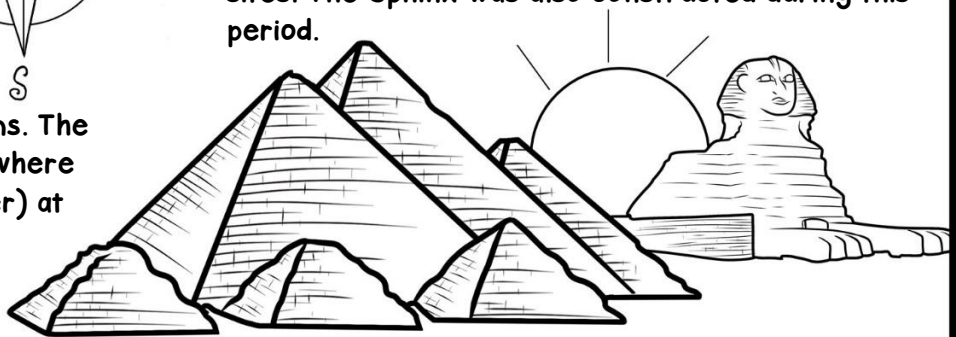


A CIVILIZATION EMERGED

Around 5000 BCE, the first people began to settle along the Nile River. As the centuries passed, Egyptian civilization grew along the river and two kingdoms, Upper and Lower Egypt emerged. Upper Egypt was located in the higher elevations in the South while Lower Egypt occupied the lower elevations of the North. Around 3200 BCE, Upper and Lower Egypt were united by Menes, the founder of the 1st Dynasty (a family of rulers where the right to rule passes within the family). Menes established the capital of a united Egypt at Memphis.

OLD KINGDOM (ABOUT 2680 - 2180 BCE)

During the Old Kingdom, Egyptian kings commissioned the pyramids at Giza as their burial sites. The Sphinx was also constructed during this period.



MIDDLE KINGDOM (ABOUT 2050 - 1650 BCE)

During the Middle Kingdom, the Egyptians defeated the Kingdom of Kush (Nubia). They also built a canal that connected the Nile to the Red Sea and the wealthy city of Thebes emerged as the kingdom's capital.

NEW KINGDOM

(ABOUT 1550 - 1070 BCE)

The New Kingdom brought the first use of the term 'pharaoh.' During this period, the Valley of the Kings, on the west bank of the Nile River across from Thebes, became the necropolis (cemetery) for the majority of the period's pharaohs.

