

PHARAHOHS OF EGYPT

Mark It on the Map

Have students turn to page 4 and locate Egypt on the inset map. Ask them where the United States is in relation to the inset map. Then have them locate the Nile River, Lower Egypt, Middle Egypt, Upper Egypt, and Cairo on the map of Egypt.

Introduction

Ask students what the word “pharaoh” means to them. Explain that today most books refer to Egyptian kings as “pharaohs.” Technically, however, Egypt’s kings were not called pharaohs until some 1,600 years after the first king (Menes) united Upper and Lower Egypt. The Egyptians had first used the term to mean “great house”—then narrowed its definition to denote the person living in the great house. Ask students to name Egyptian rulers about whom they have heard or read. Write the names on the board with any facts the students volunteer. Keep the list in view for future reference as you study the issue.

Vocabulary

pharaoh	hekat
pyramid	flail
Pyramid Texts	sekhemty
mastaba	hedjet
nemes	deshret
cartouche	kheprsh
cataract	atef
obelisk	sma-tawy
amulet	serekh
relief tile	mummy
scribe	gilded sphinx
uraeus	conservation
coronation	hieroglyph

Questions for Discussion

- What is a pyramid? For whom were they built? Why did they become symbols of ancient Egypt?
- Who built the pyramids? During what time period?
- Why do you think Greek historian Herodotos credited slaves with building the pyramids?
- What does Pepi II’s reaction to Harkhuf’s present of a pygmy tell us about the young ruler? Where did Harkhuf find this pygmy?
- Why is it important to study Egypt’s imports and exports?
- What are the Pyramid Texts? What is the significance of finding these texts in small pyramids built for queens?
- List and describe Akhenaten’s controversial religious beliefs.
- What was the name of Akhenaten’s new capital city? What does it mean?
- Why do you think Akhenaten’s religious reforms were so short-lived?
- “Ramses entered into several marriages for diplomatic purposes.” What does this mean and why do you think it became an accepted practice in ancient Egypt? Is it one today?
- Describe the main incidents in the Battle of Kadesh. What role did Ramses play in the battle? How do we know this?
- Read the article “Ozymandias” on page 20, and then the poem on page 21. Look at the photo on page 21. What ideas and feelings do you think the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley was trying to express? (Have students support their statements by referring to specific words and lines in the poem.) Did he succeed? Do you think he was right?
- How many official names did an Egyptian king have? Why so many?
- Describe the five crowns worn by the king of Egypt and the significance of each.
- What forces threaten to destroy the monuments built by the ancient Egyptians?

Writing Workout

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Have students write their interpretation of Ptah-Hotep’s advice as found on page 2.
- Every civilization has customs honoring its dead. Have students write an essay comparing funeral and burial customs their families practice with those of the ancient Egyptians.
- Akhenaten encouraged a new style of art. Have students compare the images on pages 9, 18, 19, and 20 with those from Akhenaten’s reign on pages 12, 14, and 15.

- Khufu, Pepi, Akhenaten, and Ramses all undertook great construction projects. In essay form, explain the type of projects they encouraged and why you think they chose to do so.
- Write an essay explaining what Ptah-Hotep meant when he wrote: “Activity produces riches, but riches do not continue when activity slows down.” (page 2)
- Explain what is meant by “the curse of the pharaohs.”

Viewpoints

Burial places are sacred areas in every civilization. Why? Should ancient burial places be excavated? What if they are the only means to learning more about the civilization they represent?

Then and Now

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Have students think of four people in positions of power. Ask the students to list any monuments or memorials built in their honor. Have these four people ordered any monuments built to honor themselves personally? Ask students to consider if any of these monuments might be expected to survive for 4,000 years. Let the students consider and discuss what their answers to these questions tell us about the ancient Egyptians and about modern society.
- Have students read “Ozymandias” on pages 20–21. Then have them look about their city or town for a house, statue, building, or bridge that has fallen into disrepair. Ask them to write an essay or poem about the “modern ruin.”
- After reading “What’s in a Name” on pages 26–27, have students find the proper manner of addressing the president, governors, mayors, and Supreme Court justices.

Get Into Art

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Read “Two Tales” on pages 22–25. Choose one and illustrate it using crayons, markers, or paint. Or make a collage. Label each character in the illustration.
- Using the five royal names given Egyptian kings as your model, create five names for yourself. Write them on a paper and explain the significance of each.
- Make two charts. On one chart list the symbols of a pharaoh’s power, with a drawing (or cutout) of the symbol and its significance. On the other chart list the symbols of the U.S. president’s power, with a drawing (or cutout) of the symbol and its significance.

Working With Words

Turn to pages 28–29. Write a sentence with each word or expression. Make sure the sentence clearly illustrates the definition of the word, as well as its roots.

Just for Fun

Students may complete one or both of the following activities:

- Gather all the supplies suggested on page 30 and make an amulet. Show your amulet to the class and explain the significance of your symbol of power.
- Carefully study the hieroglyphs on page 33. Use them to write a message. Exchange messages with a classmate. See how quickly each of you can decipher the other’s message.

Science and Technology

Have students research how scientists are using technology to preserve the Great Sphinx.

Follow These Footsteps

Khufu	Imhotep	Ramses the Great
Khafre	Harkhuf	Hordedef
Menkaure	Akhenaten	Reddedet
Pepi II	Nefertiti	Donald P. Ryan