Main Ideas

1. The Middle Kingdom was a period of stable government between periods of disorder.
2. In the New Kingdom, Egyptian trade and military power reached their peak, but Egypt’s greatness did not last.
3. Work and daily life were different for each of Egypt’s social classes.

Key Terms and People

Middle Kingdom  period of stability and order in ancient Egypt between about 2050 and 1750 BC
New Kingdom  the height of Egypt’s power and glory, between 1550 and 1050 BC
Trade routes  paths followed by traders
Queen Hatshepsut  New Kingdom ruler renowned for expanding Egyptian trade
Ramses the Great  important New Kingdom pharaoh who defended Egypt from invaders and strengthened defenses

Academic Vocabulary

Contracts  binding legal agreements

Section Summary

The Middle Kingdom

The Old Kingdom ended with the pharaohs in debt. Nobles serving in government positions took power from the pharaohs and ruled Egypt for nearly 160 years. Finally, a powerful pharaoh regained control of Egypt around 2050 BC and started a peaceful period of rule. This era was called the Middle Kingdom and lasted until Southwest Asian invaders conquered Lower Egypt around 1750 BC.

The New Kingdom

When an Egyptian named Ahmose (AHM-ohs) drove away the invaders and declared himself king of Egypt in 1550 BC, he ushered in Egypt’s eighteenth dynasty and the start of the New Kingdom.
Responding to invasions, Egypt took control of the invasion routes and became the leading military power in the region. Egypt’s empire extended from the Euphrates River in the northeast to Nubia in the south. These conquests made Egypt rich through gifts and vastly expanded trade routes. One of Egypt’s rulers in particular, Queen Hatshepsut, was active in expanding trade.

Despite the strong leadership of Ramses the Great, invasions from Southwest Asia and from the west eventually reduced Egypt to chaos.

WORK AND DAILY LIFE
During the Middle and New Kingdoms, Egypt’s population continued to grow and became more complex. Professional and skilled workers like scribes, artisans, artists, and architects were honored. These roles in society were usually passed on in families, with young boys learning a trade from their father.

For farmers and peasants, who made up the vast majority of the population, life never changed. In addition to hard work on the land, they were required to pay taxes and were subject to special labor duty at any time. Only slaves were beneath them in social status.

Most Egyptian families lived in their own homes. Boys were expected to marry young and start their own families. Women worked in the home, but many also had jobs outside the home. Egyptian women had the legal rights to own property, make contracts, and divorce their husbands.

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY
Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences In a structured society, such as Egypt’s Middle Kingdom, what are the advantages and disadvantages of young people learning a trade from their fathers? Write a brief essay explaining your answer.
DIRECTIONS  Read each sentence and choose the correct term from the word bank to replace the underlined phrase. Write the term in the space provided and then define the term in your own words.

1. In the 1200s BC the pharaoh Queen Hatshepsut came to power in Egypt.

   Queen Hatshepsut

   Your definition: _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________

2. Mentuhotep’s rule began the New Kingdom.

   New Kingdom

   Your definition: _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________

3. One ruler who worked to increase Egyptian trade was Ramses the Great.

   Ramses the Great

   Your definition: _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________

4. Paths followed by traders are Middle Kingdoms.

   Middle Kingdoms

   Your definition: _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________

5. The period during which Egypt reached the height of its power and glory is called the trade routes.

   trade routes

   Your definition: _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________
True/False
1. F; Deltas are triangle-shaped areas of land made of soil that is deposited by a river.
2. F; Cataracts are steep rapids that made sailing portions of rivers such as the Nile very difficult.
3. T
4. T
5. T
6. T

SECTION 2
Summary (First Page) that the pharaoh was both a king and a god
(Second Page) the lower class; the life force; to house dead rulers

Challenge Activity
Students should respond that it is different because Americans do not believe the President is a king or a god. Students should also note that presidents are elected and have more limited powers than pharaohs.

Descriptive Phrases
Answers will vary. Sample answers:
1. life after death
2. wealthy, powerful
3. using practical scientific knowledge
4. most famous pharaoh of the Old Kingdom
5. preserved dead bodies wrapped in cloth
6. wealthy, powerful
7. the third dynasty
8. triangle-shaped tombs

SECTION 3
Summary (First Page) from Southwest Asia
(Second Page) south; architects; farmers and peasants

Challenge Activity
Answers will vary. Student essays should include reasonable statements about any advantages or disadvantages.

Vocabulary
1. Ramses the Great; a pharaoh of the New Kingdom
2. Middle Kingdom; a period of peace in Egypt
3. Queen Hatshepsut; a New Kingdom ruler who expanded trade
4. trade routes; routes used by traders
5. New Kingdom; the height of Egypt’s power and glory

SECTION 4
Summary (First Page) Greek
(Second Page) sphinxes and obelisks; kings, priests, and other important people; because it is one of the few Egyptian tombs left untouched by tomb raiders

Challenge Activity
Student messages will vary but should be able to be translated.

Fill in the Blank
1. Papyrus
2. hieroglyphics
3. King Tutankhamen
4. Rosetta Stone
5. Sphinxes
6. obelisk

SECTION 5
Summary (First Page) fertile soil, gold, copper, stone
(Second Page) about 450 years; the iron industry; Women were active in society, and some rose to positions of authority; Students should circle the name and kingdom: King Ezana and Aksum

Challenge Activity
Student essays will vary but should include an explanation for the defeat of Egypt.

Vocabulary Terms
1. b
2. a
3. c
4. b
5. a
6. a
7. b