Ancient Egypt and Kush

Section 2

**MAIN IDEAS**

1. In early Egyptian society, pharaohs ruled as gods and were at the top of the social structure.
2. Religion shaped Egyptian life.
3. The pyramids of Egypt were built as tombs for the pharaohs.

**Key Terms and People**

- **Old Kingdom** the third Egyptian dynasty, which lasted nearly 500 years
- **Khufu** the most famous pharaoh of the Old Kingdom
- **nobles** people from rich and powerful families
- **afterlife** life after death, a widely held ancient Egyptian belief
- **mummies** the Egyptian method of preserving dead bodies by wrapping them in cloth
- **elite** people of wealth and power
- **pyramids** huge stone tombs with four triangle-shaped walls that meet at a top point
- **engineering** the application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes

**Academic Vocabulary**

- **method** a way of doing something

**Section Summary**

**EARLY EGYPTIAN SOCIETY**

Around 2700 BC the third dynasty, or **Old Kingdom**, came to power in Egypt. During the next 500 years, the Egyptians developed a political system based on the belief that the pharaoh was both a king and a god. The most famous pharaoh of the Old Kingdom was **Khufu**, in whose honor the largest of the pyramids was built.

Although the pharaoh owned everything, he was also held responsible if anything went wrong. He was expected to make trade profitable and to prevent war. To manage these duties, he appointed government officials, mostly from his family. Social

On what belief did the Egyptians base their political system?

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classes developed, with the pharaoh at the top and nobles from rich and powerful families making up the upper class. The middle class included some government officials, the scribes, and rich craftspeople. Most people, including farmers, belonged to the lower class. The pharaoh often used people from the lower class as a source of labor.

During the time of the Old Kingdom, trade between Egypt and other areas developed. Traders sailed the Mediterranean Sea, south on the Nile River, and on the Red Sea to acquire gold, copper, ivory, slaves, wood, incense, and myrrh.

RELIGION AND EGYPTIAN LIFE
The Old Kingdom formalized a religious structure that everyone was expected to follow. Over time certain cities built temples and were associated with particular gods.

Much of Egyptian religion focused on the afterlife. Each person’s ka (KAH), or life force, existed after death but remained linked to the body. To keep the ka from suffering, the Egyptians developed a method called embalming to preserve bodies. The bodies were preserved as mummies, specially treated bodies wrapped in cloth. Only royalty and other members of the elite could afford to have mummies made.

THE PYRAMIDS
Pyramids, spectacular stone monuments, were built to house dead rulers. Many pyramids are still standing today, amazing reminders of Egyptian engineering.

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY
Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences Is the way the ancient Egyptians viewed the pharaoh different or the same as the way we view the U.S. president? Write a brief essay explaining your answer.
DIRECTIONS Write two adjectives or descriptive phrases that describe the term.

1. afterlife __________________________________________________________
2. elite _____________________________________________________________
3. engineering _______________________________________________________
4. Khufu ____________________________________________________________
5. mummies _________________________________________________________
6. nobles ___________________________________________________________
7. Old Kingdom _____________________________________________________
8. pyramids _________________________________________________________
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