

# EGYPT

THE GIFT OF THE NILE



**Egyptian civilization emerged in the Nile River Valley**

**The Nile is the longest river in the world, 4,000 miles long**

**The Nile flows from Lake Victoria, located in east central Africa, northward to the Mediterranean Sea**

**Three main regions of the Nile river are Upper Egypt, Lower Egypt, and the Nile Delta**

**The Nile Delta is important because the richest and most fertile soil found anywhere in Africa is found in the Nile Delta**

**Water from the Nile was used for irrigation (farming), drinking, bathing, transportation**

**Yearly flooding left silt which made rich soil and was**

# GEOGRAPHY Starting Points



**\*Interactive**  
**THE NILE VALLEY**



A series of cataracts, or stretches of rapids, makes sailing the length of the Nile impossible.



Along the Nile's banks, Egypt is lush and fertile. Beyond the banks is harsh desert.

**Egypt is known as the Bread Basket of the Mediterranean**  
**Egypt had natural barriers that gave protection from invaders and a sense of security**

- **1. Deserts to the east and west (especially the Sahara)**
- **2. Red Sea to the east**
- **3. Mediterranean Sea to the north**
- **4. Cataracts on the southern part of the Nile**

**Egyptian history is divided into three major periods which are characterized by long-term prosperity and strong leadership**

- **Old Kingdom**
- **Middle Kingdom**
- **New Kingdom**

**Between these periods were times of chaos and invasion known as intermediate periods**

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# Old Kingdom 2700 - 2200 BC

Pharaoh was the title for the powerful rulers of Egypt

– Belief that the pharaoh was a god in human form

– Kingship was a divine institution and pharaohs had absolute power

– Egypt was a theocracy, a state ruled by a religious figure

– Surrounded by a well-established bureaucracy

– Bureaucracy = a highly structured organization, often governmental, managed by officials

Pyramids were first built during the Old Kingdom

– Pyramids were tombs for dead pharaohs

– The Great Pyramid was constructed at Giza by King Khufu

– Took 100,000 Egyptians 20 years to build it

– The Great Sphinx guards the Great Pyramid  
– Most pharaohs started building their pyramid as soon as they began their rule

– Workers built the pyramids from the inside out

– Most of the workers were peasants, not slaves, who were required to work for the government one month out of the year and they were paid with grain and beer

# Old Kingdom Pyramids

The famous pyramids of Egypt were built during the Old Kingdom. Mostly located along the lower Nile, the pyramids were built as tombs for kings.



Tunnels through the Great Pyramid led to the inner chamber where the king's body was placed.

Rotating groups of laborers, mostly peasants, built the pyramids. Each group worked for one month of the year.

## Skills Focus

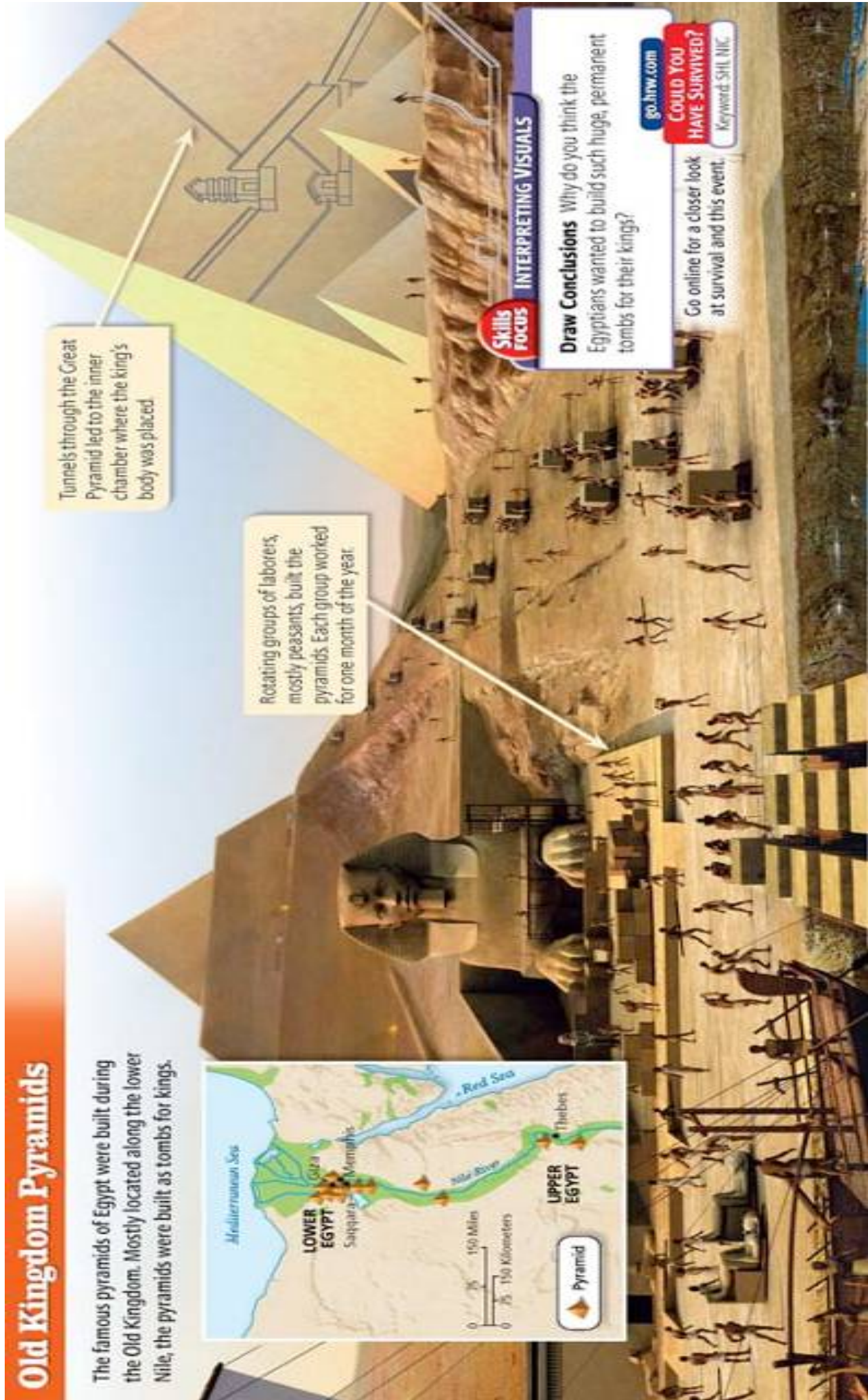
### INTERPRETING VISUALS

**Draw Conclusions** Why do you think the Egyptians wanted to build such huge, permanent tombs for their kings?

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**COULD YOU HAVE SURVIVED?**  
Keyword: SHL, MIC

Go online for a closer look at survival and this event.





# Nile Civilizations

## THE BIG PICTURE

The Nile is the longest river in the world. In addition to this geographic distinction, it is also known as the site of one of the world's earliest civilizations—ancient Egypt. Egypt, the land of pyramids and pharaohs, is certainly the most famous civilization of the Nile, but it was not the only one. South of Egypt, in the region called Nubia, other civilizations grew and made great cultural advances of their own.

## Theme **Belief Systems**

The belief systems of the ancient Egyptians shaped many elements of their culture. In this chapter, you will learn about Egyptian beliefs and how they led the Egyptians to build pyramids as tombs for their rulers.



# **Intermediate Period**

- **Period of chaos that lasted a 150 years**
- **Powerful nobles began to assert their own authority as rivals of the pharaoh**
- **The Old Kingdom finally collapsed**
- **Time of famine, invasions, and civil wars**

# Middle Kingdom 2050 – 1650 BC

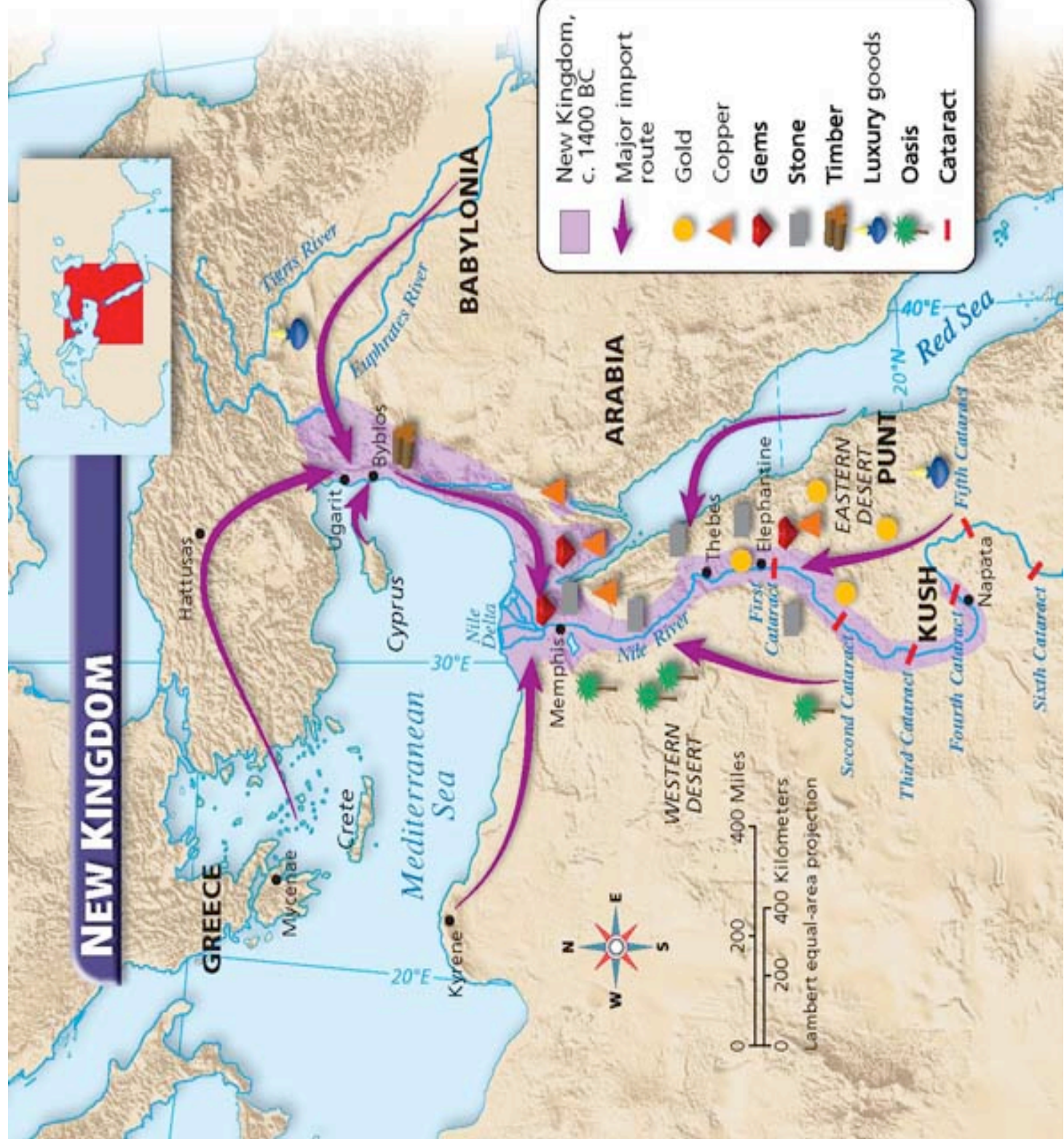
- Period of conquest
- **Conquered Nubia as far south as the second cataract**
- **Fortresses were built along the border of the Nile**
- **New concern of the pharaohs for the people**

# Intermediate

• Around 1650 raiders from Syria called Hyksos invaded the Nile Delta and conquered Lower Egypt

# **New Kingdom 1567 – 1085 BC**

- Decide to create an empire to keep foreign people from ever taking Egypt over again**
- Create an empire and becomes the most powerful state in Southwest Asia**
- More wealth = impressive new temples**



**NEW KINGDOM**

**New Kingdom, c. 1400 BC**

**Major import route**

**Gold**

**Copper**

**Gems**

**Stone**

**Timber**

**Luxury goods**

**Oasis**

**Cataract**

0 200 400 Miles  
0 200 400 Kilometers  
Lambert equal-area projection



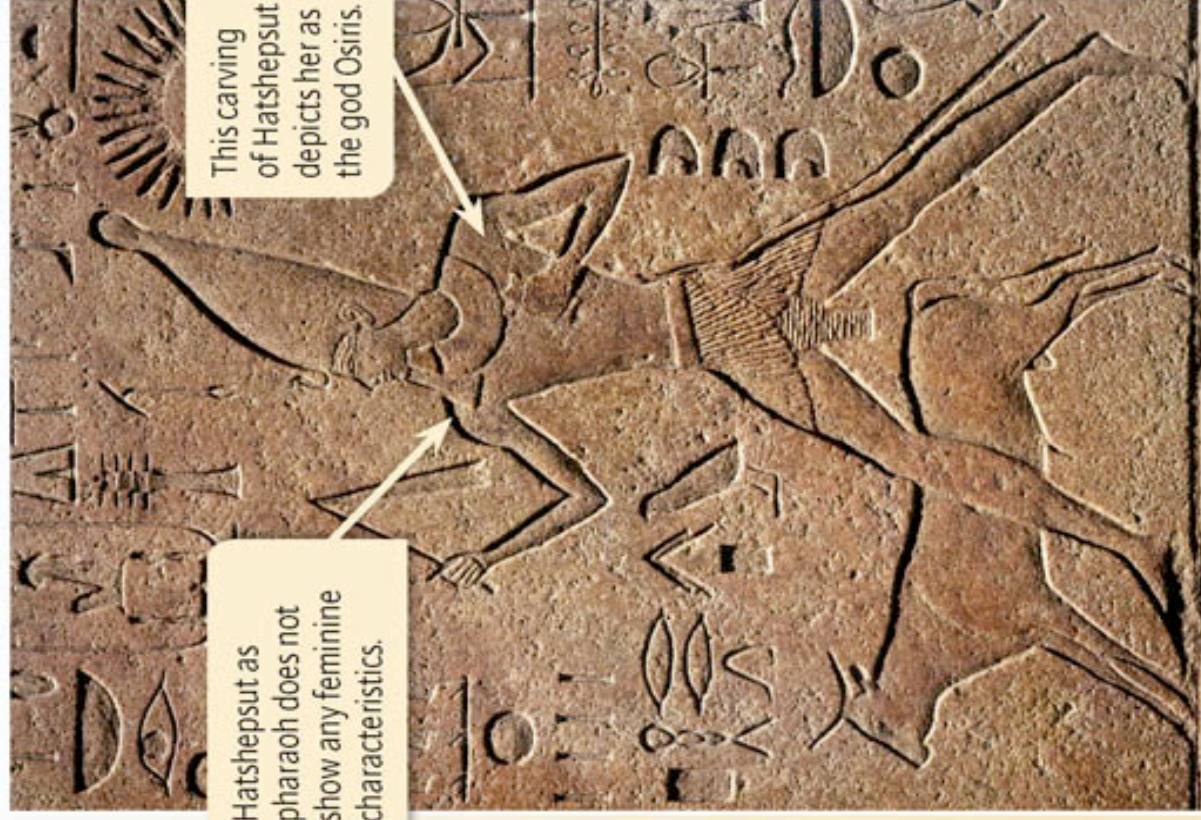
# FAMOUS PHARAOHS

- Hatshepsut
- Proclaimed herself as pharaoh, the first woman to do so (she was the first female pharaoh)
- She dressed like a man and wore a false beard
- All statues of her made her out to be a man
- She did this because at the time only men were allowed to be pharaoh so she had to give an outward appearance as a man



Hatshepsut's face was used as the model for this statue of a sphinx, a creature that was part human and part lion.

The facial features of the sphinx are obviously feminine.



This carving of Hatshepsut depicts her as the god Osiris.

Hatshepsut as pharaoh does not show any feminine characteristics.



## **Amenhotep IV**

- Took the name Akhenaten
- Tried to make Egyptians monotheistic by only worshipping one god, Aton the sun god
- Banned the worship of all other gods and goddesses

## **Tutankhamun**

- Son of Amenhotep, restored the worship of Egypt's traditional gods

## **Ramses II the Great**

- Great military leader, ruled for 60 years and brought much wealth to Egypt
- Most admired pharaoh



# Religion

- Egyptians were **polytheistic**, had many important gods and goddesses
- Key god was the god of the sun = Re or Amon-Re (Father of the pharaohs)
- Believed that gods controlled all natural events
- Priests performed rituals to fulfill the needs of the gods
- Believed that the rituals refreshed the gods and kept them alive
- In return the gods would grant the pharaohs immortality and bring prosperity to Egypt

## Egyptian Gods

The ancient Egyptians worshipped hundreds of gods. Most gods were worshipped only in small areas within Egypt, but a few were honored throughout the kingdom. A few major gods are listed below.



▶ **Isis** was the sister and wife of Osiris. She was worshipped as a goddess of nature and the protector of women. She was usually drawn with a throne on her head.



▶ Like Osiris, **Anubis** was a judge of the dead and the protector of cemeteries and of mummy-makers. Images of Anubis had the head of a jackal.



▶ **Osiris** became the king and judge of the dead after he had been killed by Seth and restored to life by Isis. In art, he was portrayed as a green-skinned mummy.



▶ **Horus**, the son of Osiris and Isis, was the god of the sky. Pharaohs were thought to be human forms of Horus, who was usually depicted with a falcon's head.

# Mummification

- Practice of mummification = slowly drying a dead body to preserve it and stop it from rotting
- Central belief of the Egyptians was a belief in the afterlife
- Discovered after early Egyptians buried their dead in the desert, found that the bodies were being preserved, unfortunately jackals were eating the dead bodies

## **Steps of mummification**

– **Remove all internal organs**

– **Brain was liquored and drawn out the nose**

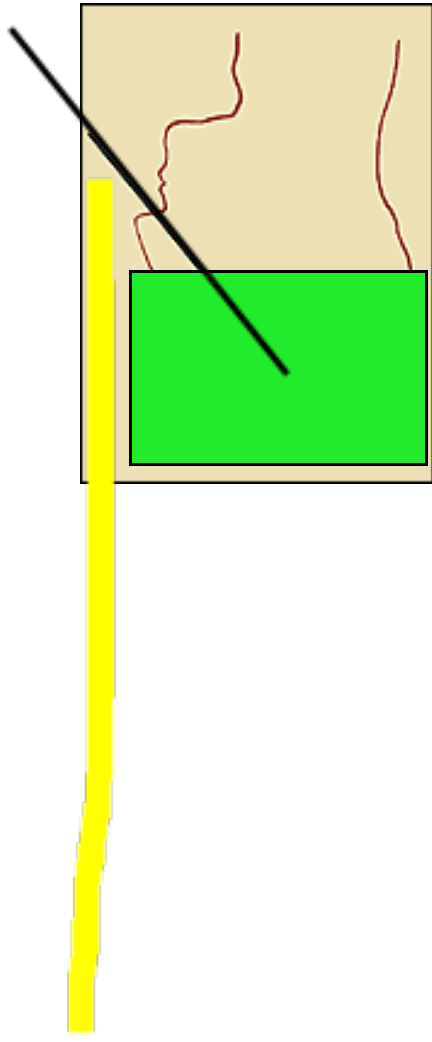
– **The heart was left inside – controlled emotions and intelligence**

– **Organs were placed in canopic jars to be buried with the mummy**

– **Body was packed with various materials to help keep its shape**

– **Salts were placed on the body to dry it out**

– **Finally the body was wrapped in strips of linen**





Dead Egyptians were buried with their material possessions and sometimes loved ones or pets and servants

Rooms were stocked with supplies and material goods for the return of the ka

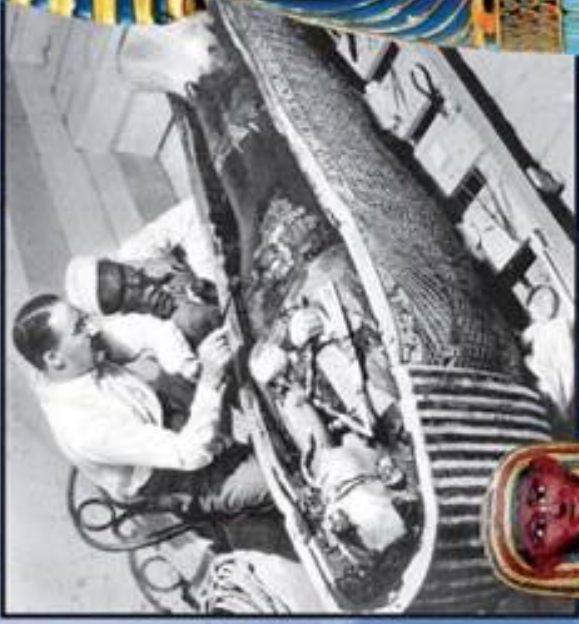
– Also believed that people in paintings on the wall would come to life as well



## Egyptian Burial Practices

The tomb of pharaoh Tutankhamon, or King Tut, was one of the richest archaeological discoveries ever made. The tomb contained a wealth of treasures, including a magnificent golden coffin that held Tut's mummy. The tomb also held hundreds of items for the pharaoh to enjoy in the afterlife. *Why were such riches buried with the pharaoh?*

▼ King Tut's mummy (below) was buried in the magnificent coffin shown at right.



▶ Jars like these held the pharaoh's organs.

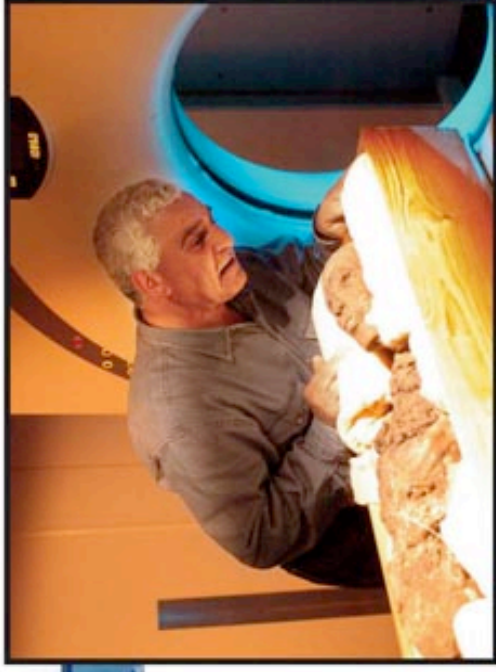
# FORENSICS in History

## What Can We Learn from Mummies?

People have been fascinated by mummies for centuries. Since the first mummies were uncovered in tombs and placed in museums, they have been among the most popular images of ancient Egypt. Recently, however, scientists have begun to ask whether mummies can be used as more than museum exhibits. Can we learn from them? The answer, they have discovered, is yes.

**What facts do we have?** By running tests such as CT scans on a body, forensic scientists can learn a great deal about a person's life. By running these same tests on a 3,000-year-old mummy, they can put together a clear image of Egyptian life.

For example, forensic scientists have learned about many diseases that were common in ancient Egypt. These diseases range from deadly conditions, such as smallpox and tuberculosis, to nonfatal ones like arthritis. Neither heart disease nor cancer appears to have been common in ancient Egypt.



► A scientist performs a CT scan on the mummy of Tutankhamon.

Studies of teeth from mummies have shed light on the Egyptians' diet. The teeth studied were greatly worn down, suggesting that the Egyptians ate coarse flour that had not been well ground. Scientists have also concluded that bread in Egypt included large amounts of sand that had gotten mixed in with the flour. Similar wear can be seen in teeth from members of all classes, from peasants to pharaohs, which suggests that everyone had a similar diet.

Forensics has even helped scientists learn about people's postures. By studying how people's bones grew, they can tell that scribes spent much of their time sitting with their legs crossed and that farmers were often hunched over. All of these discoveries have generated great interest and excitement among historians who study Egypt.

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**Draw Conclusions** Why might historians be excited about the findings of forensic scientists?

# Hieroglyphics

- Hieroglyphics was the main writing system of the Egyptians
- Used picture symbols to represent objects, sounds, and ideas
- Carved into stone and written on papyrus
- Developed in 3200 BC, considered one of the world's first writing systems
- Only Sumerian cuneiform is older
- In 1799 a French soldier found a granite slab, now called the Rosetta Stone, which enabled historians to read hieroglyphics

















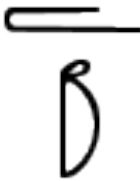
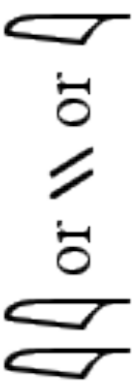




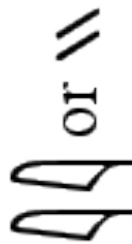







## Egyptian Writing

The ancient Egyptians used three distinct forms of writing. The passage to the right from the sacred *Book of the Dead* is in hieroglyphics. The passage below is written in demotic.



# Advancements

- Used math to **build monuments** and could calculate volume and area
- Developed an accurate **365 day calendar**

A		H		N		U	
B		I		O		V	
C	 or 	J		P		W	
D		K		Q		X	
E	 or  or 	L		R		Y	
F		M		S		Z	
G		T		SH			

**EGYPT****Location**

- Along the lower stretches of the Nile and in the Nile delta

**Government**

- Ruled by pharaohs aided by a bureaucracy

**Culture**

- Polytheistic religion with emphasis on the afterlife
- Mummification and extravagant burials
- Hieroglyphic writing system
- Distinctive forms of art and sculpture
- Major advances in science and medicine

**Nile Civilizations****KUSH****Location**

- South of Egypt along the Nile

**Government**

- Ruled by kings who adopted Egyptian customs

**Culture**

- Religion borrowed from Egypt
- Pyramids built in Egyptian style
- As yet untranslated writing system
- Egyptian-influenced art and sculpture
- Powerful trading culture

**Major Periods in Egyptian and Kushite History****Early Egypt**

- Upper and Lower Egypt develop.
- Menes unifies all of Egypt.

**Old Kingdom**

- The first pyramids are built.
- Pharaohs take charge of Egypt.
- Egyptian bureaucracy forms.

**Middle Kingdom**

- Egypt conquers Kush.
- Trade increases.
- The Hyksos conquer Egypt.

**New Kingdom**

- Egypt builds an empire.
- Hatshepsut promotes trade.
- Akhenaten introduces monotheism.
- Ramses the Great builds monuments.

**Early Kush**

- Kush conquers Egypt.
- Kushites adopt Egyptian customs.

**Later Kush**

- The capital of Kush moves.
- Kush develops an iron industry.
- A new Kushite culture forms.