Egypt Study Guide

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Hour: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Where is Egypt located? (86)

Northeast Africa.

1. Why would Egypt be considered the gift of the Nile? (86)

The Nile brought life to Egypt. The river was so important to people in the region that the Greek Historian Herodotus called Egypt the gift of the Nile.

1. Why is Upper Egypt located in the southern part of the empire of Egypt? (86)

It was so named because it was located upriver in relation to the Nile’s flow. Lower Egypt, the northern region, was located downriver.

1. Why was the delta important for Egypt? (87)

The Nile divided into several branches that fanned out and flowed into the Mediterranean Sea. These branches formed a delta (a triangle-shaped area of land made of soil deposited by a river. Some two-thirds of Egypt’s fertile farmland was located in the Nile Delta.

1. Why are the floods in Egypt a positive and a negative thing? (87)

One positive thing about the flooding was that the water from the flooding would coat the land around the river with a rich silt, ideal for farming. The river’s floods were a life-giving miracle for Ancient Egyptians.

1. Who was Menes? What did he do? (89)

Menes was a leader who wanted to unify Upper and Lower Egypt around 3100 BC. The armies of Menes invaded and took control of Lower Egypt, and then united the two kingdoms. He married a princess from Lower Egypt to strengthen his control over the unified country. He is considered Egypt’s first pharaoh. He also founded Egypt’s first dynasty (capital was later named Memphis).

1. What was the role of the pharaoh in Ancient Egypt? (90)

Pharaoh’s were believed to be both a king and a god. He/she had absolute power over all then land and people of Egypt. People blamed him if crops did not grow well or if disease struck.

1. What was the Old Kingdom? What occurs during the old kingdom? (90)

The Old Kingdom was a period in Egyptian history that lasted about 2700 BC to 2200 BC. This was the Third Dynasty that rose to power. During the Old Kingdom, the Egyptians continued to develop their political system. This system was based on the belief that the pharaoh was both a king and god.

1. Describe the social structure of ancient Egypt in the space below? (91)

The social structure of ancient Egypt was a class based system that has the Pharaoh at the top. Below the pharaoh were the “upper class” that consisted of priest and key government officials. Many of these people were nobles, or people from rich and powerful families. Below the nobels were the “middle class,” which consisted of lesser government officials, scribes, craftspeople, and merchants. Finally, at the bottom were the “lower class,” which about 80% of the population belonged to, they mainly consisted of farmers. Below the farmers were the slaves and servants.

1. Who was Khufu? What is he known for? (91)

Khufu was the most famous pharaoh of the Old Kingdom. He ruled in the 2500s BC. Egyptian legend says that he was a cruel leader, but historical records tell us that the people who worked for him were well fed. He is best known for the monuments that were built to him.

1. Why was the afterlife important in ancient Egypt? (92)

The Egyptians believed that the afterlife was a happy place. Their belief was that in the afterlife stemmed from their idea of Ka, or a person’s life force. When a person died, his or her ka left the body and became a spirit. The ka, however, remained linked to the body and count not leave its burial site. The ka had all the same needs that the person had when he or she was living. To fulfill the ka’s needs, people filled tombs with objects for the afterlife.

1. Why was mummification important in ancient Egypt? (93)

Mummification was important to ancient Egyptians because they believed it was to keep the “ka” from suffering. So they developed a method called “embalming.” Embalming bodies allowed bodies to be preserved for many, many years as mummies. A body that was not embalmed would decay quickly.

1. What was Hammurabi’s Code? What did it do?

Hammurabi’s Code was a set of 282 laws that dealt with almost every part of daily life. There were laws on everything from trade, loans, and theft to marriage, injury, and murder. It contained some ideas that are still found in laws today. Specific crimes brought specific penalties. The Code was important not only for how thorough it was, but also because it was written down for all to see. People all over the empire could read exactly what was against the law.

1. What was the purpose of the pyramids? Why are they considered an impressive feat? (94)

The Egyptians began to build pyramids during the Old Kingdom. The Egyptians believed that burial sites, especially royal tombs, were very important. As a result, they built spectacular monuments in which to bury their rulers. The most spectacular of all were the pyramids. Burial in a pyramid demonstrated a pharaoh’s importance. They are such an impressive feat because historians are still not sure exactly how the Egyptians built them. They are amazing feasts of engineering, the application of science knowledge for practical purposes.

1. What happened during the Middle Kingdom? (96)

Egypt regained control under Mentuhotep and created a period of order and stability that lasted until 1750 BC. Eventually invasions from the Hyksos eroded away at the empire and the Egyptians lost control

1. What happened during the New Kingdom? (97)

During this period the Egyptians reached the height of their power and glory. During this time trade and conquest brought great wealth to the pharaohs and tribute from conquests also contributed to their wealth. Eventually invasions from the Hittites, the Tehenu, and the Sea People ended their empire.

1. Who was Hatshepsut? Why was she considered a unique pharaoh? (97,98)

Hatshepsut was the pharaoh that began her reign as the regent for Thutmose III, but she seized power and ruled as a true pharaoh until her death. She was unique in the ancient world because she was a woman who had absolute power and built a number of impressive monuments and temples.

1. Who was Ramses the Great? What did he do? (98)

Ramses was one of the longest reigning pharaohs in history. He fought the Hittites and the Tehenu and strengthened the defense of Egypt during his reign. He also increased the overall size of Egypt and built a number of impressive monuments during his reign.

1. What are hieroglyphs? Why are they considered important to us today? (102)

They are picture symbols that make up the Egyptian writing system. They are important because they allow us to read about the history of Egypt that was written during their time.

1. What is papyrus? How is papyrus similar to clay in Mesopotamia? (102)

Papyrus is a paper-like material made from pressed reeds. This is similar to clay because the Egyptians used it to write records just like the Mesopotamians did on their clay tablets.

1. Why is the Rosetta stone an important discovery for us? (103)

The Rosetta stone allowed us to use the Demotic Greek script on the tablet to understand what the actual meaning of the hieroglyph symbols were. Without the Rosetta stone we would not know what the hieroglyphs said.

1. What sort of building projects did the Egyptians create? (104)

Egypt is known for their temple, tomb, and art creation. They built temples surrounded by sphinxes and obelisks and the insides were filled with characteristic art.

1. Where were the Kushite people located? (107)

The people of Kush were located South of Egypt

1. How did the cataracts impact the people of Kush and Egypt? (108)

The cataracts acted as a barrier between Egypt and Kush and prevented invasion by either empire.

1. What was the relationship like between Egypt and Kush? (109)

They were neighbors that lived in peace most of the time, but they also occasionally acted as invaders and at different points in history they ruled each other.

1. Who was Piankhi? What did he do? (110)

Painkhi was one of the most effective military leaders in history in Kush. He conquered much of Egypt and controlled the area found in the Nile River delta.

1. What happened to Kush? (111)

Kush eventually declined because of overgrazing and lack of forests near Meroe. They were eventually conquered and most of the leaders converted to Christianity.