

Egypt

Economy & Social Class



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Delta

- Nile is the longest river in the world.
- Triangle where the river meets the Mediterranean Sea is known as the Nile delta
- From July to October, rain caused the Nile to flood providing rich farmland. 
- Also supplied water for grazing pastures.
- Papyrus grew in the river's marshes and was used to make paper and boats for fishing.



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Agriculture

- Grew wheat, barley, peas, beans, onions, garlic, leeks, cucumbers, grapes, melons, pomegranates, figs, and dates
- Used the Nile's water to irrigate dry land and had irrigation canals
- During harvest time everyone helped.
- Surplus seeds and grain were bartered for other goods with peoples to the south.



River Floods

- Nile River flooded every summer.
- Built dikes to keep the river from flooding villages.
- Big catch basins were built to trap water as the floods receded.
- Workers dug canals leading from these basins so the water could be used in fields located farther away. 
- By law, every citizen had to maintain the irrigation system.
- Used a tool called a shaduf to lift water from the Nile to irrigate canals near fields.



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Trade

- Ships made of reed, papyrus, and wood sailed the Nile, carrying goods for trade.
- Egyptians traded objects crafted from gold and papyrus for writing.
- There were no coins or money so they used the barter system. 
- Traded for wine and oil from the island of Crete.
- Timber, tin, and horses were purchased from the eastern part of the Egyptian Empire.
- Copper for making tools came from Sinai.



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Trade

- Salt, dates, reeds, and cattle came from the desert oases.
- Gold, copper, amethyst, and cattle came from Nubia.



Sailing

- Merchants, fishers, traders, stone haulers, and nobles all used the Nile to do their business.
- Constructed reed rafts for going through narrow canals and 200-foot long barges for hauling obelisks.
- Built boats to ferry people across the river.
- Freighters carried grain up and down the river.



Society and Trade

As Egypt's population grew, social classes appeared. Egyptians believed that a well-ordered society would keep their kingdom strong.



Pharaoh

Egypt's ruler, also considered to be a god



Nobles

Officials and priests, many **nobles**, people from rich and powerful families



Middle Class

Lesser government officials, scribes, and rich craftspeople



Lower Class

Farmers, servants, and slaves



As society developed, trade grew as Egypt traded with neighbors for gold, copper, ivory, slaves, stone, and wood.



Egyptian Society

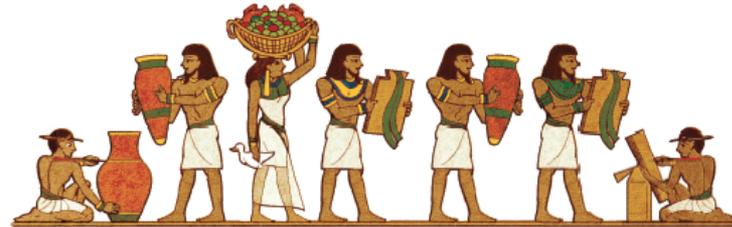
Pharaoh
The pharaoh ruled Egypt as a god.



Nobles
Officials and priests helped run the government and temples.



Scribes and Craftspeople
Scribes and craftspeople wrote and produced goods.



Farmers, Servants, and Slaves

Most Egyptians were farmers, servants, or slaves.



ANALYSIS SKILL

ANALYZING VISUALS

Which group helped run the government and temples?



Main Idea 3: Work and daily life differed among Egypt's social classes.

A complex society requires people to take on different jobs. In Egypt, these jobs were often passed on within families.

Scribes

- Worked for the government and the temples
- Kept records and accounts, wrote and copied religious and literary texts



Artisans

- Worked for the government and the temples
- Sculptors, builders, carpenters, jewelers, metalworkers, and leatherworkers



Architects and Artists

- Designed the temples and royal tombs
- Artists worked for the state and temples, and painted the walls of the pharaohs' tombs



Merchants, Soldiers, Peasants, and Slaves

Merchants

- Small group of Egyptians were traders
- Usually accompanied by soldiers, scribes, and laborers



Soldiers

- Professional army
- Received land as payment, kept captured treasure, promotion to officer possible



Farmers and Peasants

- Vast majority of Egypt's population
- Paid crops as taxes; worked on special projects for the pharaoh



Slaves

- Worked farms, projects, workshops, and homes
- Had some legal rights
- Could earn their freedom



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