

ANCIENT
CIVILIZATIONS

ANCIENT

EGYPT



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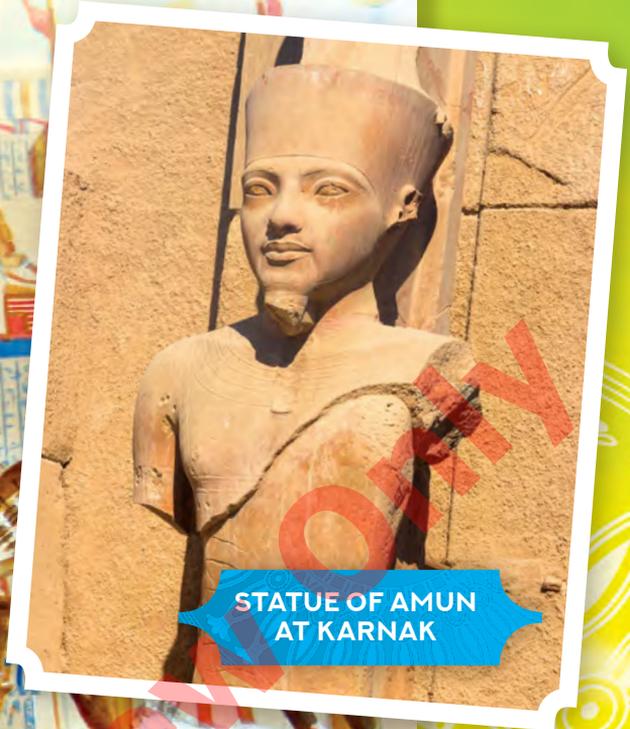
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THE OPET FESTIVAL

OPET FESTIVAL
AT KARNAK IN
THEBES, EGYPT

A brother and sister squeeze through a crowd in Thebes. They stand at the edge of an empty road. The sister hears chanting in the distance. She grins at her brother. She has been looking forward to the Opet Festival for a year.



STATUE OF AMUN
AT KARNAK

Soon, a **procession** passes. Priests carry boats on their shoulders. Sitting in them are statues of gods, including Amun, protector of Thebes. Behind the priests are dancers and **acrobats**. It is an exciting day in ancient Egypt!

WHO WERE THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS?

NILE RIVER, EGYPT

UPPER AND LOWER EGYPT

Early on, ancient Egypt was divided into Upper and Lower Egypt. Lower Egypt was actually north of Upper Egypt! It got its name because it was downstream of the Nile River from Upper Egypt.

Ancient Egypt was a powerful civilization in northern Africa. It grew up along the banks of the world's longest river, the Nile. Ancient Egypt lasted for more than 3,000 years, from about 3100 to 30 BCE.

The civilization's peak of power came during a period known as the New Kingdom. Egypt's territory spread into today's Syria, Israel, and Jordan. It also reached Libya, Sudan, and Eritrea. As many as 3 million people may have lived within Egypt's borders.

ANCIENT EGYPT DURING THE NEW KINGDOM



Vast deserts bounded ancient Egypt on three sides. But the Nile River gave Egypt life. It allowed communication and trade between regions. It also provided rich soil for farming. The river's yearly flood left behind thick, dark mud filled with **nutrients**.

「 PAPYRUS 」

The papyrus plant was an important part of everyday life in ancient Egypt. This river plant was used to make many items, including sandals, small boats, and even a paper-like writing material. The English word "paper" likely comes from the word papyrus!



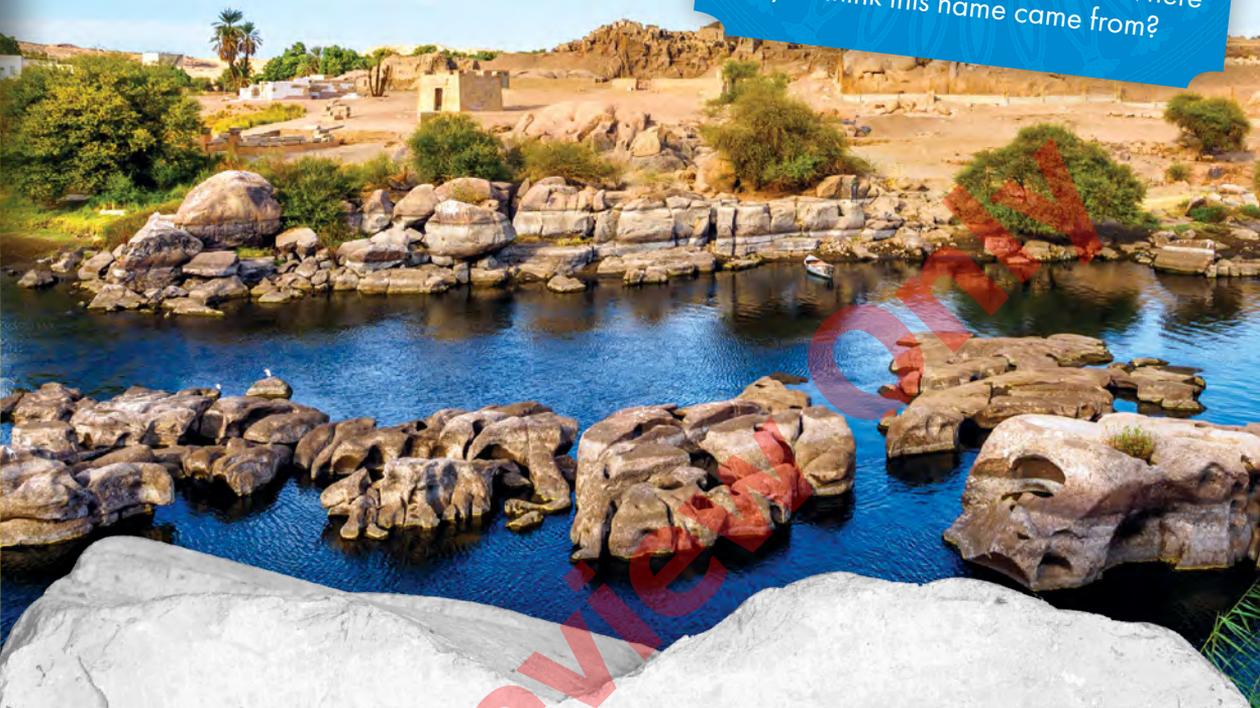
HOW PAPYRUS HELPED ANCIENT EGYPT GROW

- ✓ as a writing material, helped people record information about Egypt's history, medicine, education, religion, and government
- ✓ valuable trade item with other civilizations, such as Greece and Rome
- ✓ papyrus boats allowed for transportation and trade
- ✓ strong papyrus rope pulled heavy stones for large monuments
- ✓ often provided food for Egyptians living outside cities



THINK ABOUT IT

Ancient Egyptians often called their country *Kemet*, or “black soil.” Where do you think this name came from?



Much of Egypt’s wealth came from agriculture. The Nile’s floods allowed farmers to grow enough grain to feed many people. **Irrigation** widened their farmable land. Long **canals** drew water to fields beyond the Nile’s **floodplain**. Egyptians stored extra food for future years or for trade.