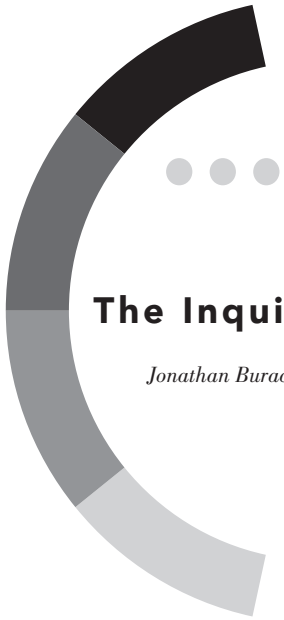


Early Civilizations



The Inquiry Arc in U.S. History

Jonathan Burack

The Nile

MindSparks®

CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

HS11101E v1.0

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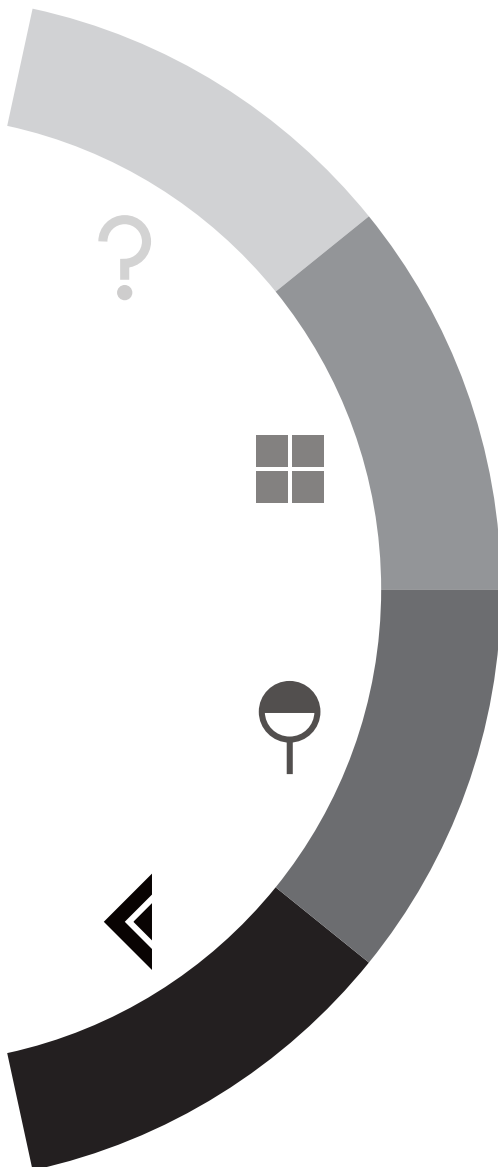
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C3 Framework

This book is based primarily on the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies Standards. This C3 Framework is an effective tool offering guidance and support for rigorous student learning. The assignments encourage students to be active participants in learning and to explore the parts of history that they find most compelling. Central to the C3 Framework and our use of it is its Inquiry Arc—a set of four interrelated dimensions of informed inquiry in social studies. The lessons in this book are based on all four dimensions of the C3 Inquiry Arc. While the C3 Framework analyzes each of the four dimensions separately, they are not entirely separable in practice—they each interact in dynamic ways. As a result, the lessons combine some or all of the dimensions in various ways.



Four Dimensions of the Inquiry Arc

1 Developing compelling and supporting questions and planning inquiries

Questions shape social studies inquiries, giving them broader meaning and motivating students to master content and engage actively in the learning process.

2 Applying disciplinary concepts and tools

These are the concepts and central ideas needed to address the compelling and supporting questions students pose. The C3 Framework stresses four subject fields: history, civics, economics, and geography. Each lesson addresses all of these disciplines.

3 Evaluating sources and using evidence

The purpose of using primary and secondary sources as evidence is to support claims and counterclaims. By assessing the validity and usefulness of sources, including those that conflict with one another, students are able to construct evidence-based explanations and arguments.

4 Communicating conclusions and taking informed action

While this may take the form of individual essays and other writing assignments, these lessons stress other kinds of individual and collaborative forms of communication, including debates, policy analyses, video productions, diary entries, and interviews. Meaningful forms of individual or collaborative civic action are also incorporated into each lesson.

How to Use This Book

This book offers you the chance to implement the entire C3 Inquiry Arc in brief, carefully structured lessons on important topics in U.S. history. Each lesson is driven by a central compelling question, and disciplinary supporting questions are provided. Each lesson asks students to apply understandings from all of the C3 disciplines—history, civics, economics, and geography—and includes individual and group tasks in an integrated way.

Each lesson includes an introductory essay, detailed teaching instructions, a set of primary sources, and the handouts needed to implement the lesson’s assignments. Rubrics for student evaluation and sources for further study are also provided. The teaching instructions suggest a time frame for completion of each lesson, but the assessments can easily be adapted to fit into any lesson plan.

Each lesson is aligned with several C3 Framework standards and Common Core State Standards. The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Literacy emphasize the reading of information texts, making these lessons ideal for integration into English Language Arts instruction.



C3 Disciplines



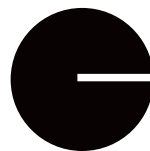
History



Civics



Economics



Geography



The Nile

How Did It Make Ancient Egypt Great?

Overview

Introduction

The Nile River arises as the White Nile in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa. It flows north for more than 4,000 miles. It is joined along the way by the Blue Nile. It finally branches out into a huge delta and empties into the Mediterranean Sea. Starting more than 5,000 years ago, a remarkable civilization arose along the Nile's banks—the civilization of ancient Egypt. Ancient Egypt is famous for its amazing artistic, architectural, religious, and cultural achievements. Another remarkable aspect of its past is its long-lasting stability. Century after century, its artistic styles, religious beliefs, language, buildings, and governments all remained quite similar. Of course, it is easy to exaggerate this stability. There were periods of war and civil war, empire and invasion. But these times of trouble were fairly brief compared to much longer times of unity. Year after year, life must have seemed unchanging to many Egyptians. What did the Nile River have to do with the achievements and stability of ancient Egyptian society? This lesson will focus on that compelling question. Students will work with ten sources. These sources form the core content for a set of tasks that will help them answer the lesson's compelling question.

Objectives

Students will work individually and in small groups to respond in a meaningful way to a compelling question about the Nile and ancient Egypt. They will apply discipline-specific background knowledge, use scaffolding, and engage in instructional activities to interpret primary sources before presenting their ideas to the class.

C3 Standards Addressed by This Lesson

- ◆ **D1.4.6-8.** Explain how the relationship between supporting questions and compelling questions is mutually reinforcing.
- ◆ **D1.5.6-8.** Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources.
- ◆ **D2.His.5.6-8.** Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.
- ◆ **D2.His.11.6-8.** Use other historical sources to infer a plausible maker, date, place of origin, and intended audience for historical sources where this information is not easily identified.
- ◆ **D2.His.12.6-8.** Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.
- ◆ **D2.His.16.6-8.** Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.
- ◆ **D2.Civ.8.6-8.** Analyze ideas and principles contained in the founding documents of the United States, and explain how they influence the social and political system.
- ◆ **D2.Eco.7.6-8.** Analyze the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in a market economy.
- ◆ **D2.Geo.5.6-8.** Analyze the combinations of cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar to and different from other places.
- ◆ **D2.Geo.6.6-8.** Explain how the physical and human characteristics of places and regions are connected to human identities and cultures.
- ◆ **D3.1.6-8.** Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.
- ◆ **D3.2.6-8.** Evaluate the credibility of a source by determining its relevance and intended use.

- ◆ **D3.3.6-8.** Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to support claims, noting evidentiary limitations.
- ◆ **D3.4.6-8.** Develop claims and counterclaims while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.
- ◆ **D4.1.6-8.** Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments.
- ◆ **D4.3.6-8.** Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).
- ◆ **D4.6.6-8.** Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.

Common Core Anchor Standards Addressed by This Lesson

- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1.** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2.** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6.** Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9.** Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7.** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1.** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Teaching Instructions

Compelling Question

How did the Nile River make ancient Egypt great?

Preparation

Provide all students with a copy of the Introductory Essay. Assign this reading as homework. In addition, assign all relevant parts of your course textbook or other basic reading material. Remind students to keep the compelling question for the lesson in mind as they read.



Asking Questions about the Nile

This part of the task stresses Dimensions 1 and 2 of the C3 Framework

Day One

1. Briefly discuss the Introductory Essay in class and address any initial questions students may have.
2. Distribute the How to Analyze a Primary Source handout. Review each suggestion with the class, and remind students to refer back to the handout as they read the sources in this lesson.
3. Divide the class into four small groups. Each group will focus its work on one of the four basic disciplines identified in Dimension 2 of the C3 Framework—history, civics, geography, or economics. As they work, the groups should keep in mind the lesson's overall compelling question. However, for Day One and Day Two, each group will work mainly with a second compelling question—one related specifically to its assigned discipline.
4. Provide each group with one copy of its discipline-specific Assignment Sheet. Give each student a copy of all the sources for this lesson. Each group may share a primary source packet, if necessary.
5. Have students complete the Day One section of their Assignment Sheets. The objective for Day One is for groups to study three sources, and then formulate one supporting question about each of those sources. The supporting questions should be recorded in the spaces provided on the Assignment Sheet.



Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Evaluating Sources and Evidence

This part of the task stresses Dimensions 2 and 3 of the C3 Framework

Day Two

1. Students will return to their previously assigned groups and formulate a claim addressing their group's compelling question. After studying the remaining seven sources, they will select one that supports their claim.

2. Using the evidence gathered from sources, each group will then prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation about the Nile from their group's disciplinary perspective. The presentation can be in the form of an oral report, a debate among group members, a PowerPoint, or related type of presentation. Allow time for students to prepare by discussing and debating topics among themselves.

Day Three

1. Each group will deliver its presentation. Allow time for class discussion following each presentation, and for a final effort to answer the central compelling question for the lesson.



Communicating Results and Taking Action

This part of the task stresses Dimension 4 of the C3 Framework

Students will complete a final project that expresses an understanding of the topic and responds clearly to the lesson's central compelling question. The project may be completed in groups, but students should be evaluated individually.

Distribute the Communicating Results and Taking Action handout, and decide whether you will assign the projects or allow students to form groups and choose tasks on their own. Set a reasonable deadline. Students should review the Nile Rubric so they can understand how their performance will be evaluated. The projects are summarized below.

Communicating Results

- ◆ Have students study all the sources for this lesson. Ask them to choose three to use in a brief presentation to another group of students titled The Nile and Ancient Egypt. Have each student prepare a five-minute presentation that makes use of all three sources. In the presentation, students should make it clear why they chose the particular sources used.
- ◆ Separate students into three small groups. Assign one of the following rivers to each group: The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in ancient Mesopotamia, the Indus River in Pakistan, or the Huang He (Yellow River) in China. Each group should learn more about its river and its importance in the history of the ancient civilization that developed along it. Have each group make a map showing its river and the important geographical features of the land around it (e.g., deserts, fertile lands, mountains, jungles, other rivers). Have each group use its maps in a brief presentation about the river and its importance to its early civilization. Each group should conclude by comparing its river to the Nile and the Nile's role in Egyptian civilization.
- ◆ Separate students into several small groups. Ask each group to study a map of ancient Egypt that shows important religious, political, or economic locations along the Nile. Many websites on ancient civilizations will have such maps. Each group should create a map of their own. It should include illustrations, photos, and brief written explanations of the five locations the group chose. The locations should be chosen to help illustrate themes stressed in this lesson. Ask each group to present its map in class and explain why they chose the locations they have included on the map.

Taking Action

- ◆ Today, rivers are still of crucial importance to the societies located along them. Have the class choose one river of importance today. It should be a large river such as the Amazon in South America, the Mississippi in the United States, the Ganges in India, or the Mekong in Southeast Asia. Collect maps, photos, and articles about significant economic, political, religious, or environmental aspects of the river and its problems today. Have students use these materials to prepare a PowerPoint or other presentation on this river. In the presentation, students should compare the role of the river to that of the Nile in ancient Egypt, highlight both similarities and differences, and make the audience aware of crucial problems related to the river.
- ◆ Based on the work in the previous assignment, have students use social media and the internet to share their PowerPoint and urge others to offer feedback on the presentation and its importance to them.

Introductory Essay

The Nile and Ancient Egypt

Large rivers played a major role in the rise of the world's earliest complex societies. These are societies we often label "ancient civilizations." Ancient Egypt, Sumer, China, and the Indus Valley civilization all arose along such rivers. In such places, farming was productive enough to support many other activities. Crafts workers, priests, soldiers, and administrators could invent, create, and manage the activities of such societies.



The Nile River

However, rivers also contained dangers. China's Huang He (the Yellow River) could flood catastrophically. Its floods at times changed the river's entire course. Millions could be uprooted or drowned in such disasters. In Mesopotamia ("the land between the rivers") early civilizations developed along the Tigris and Euphrates. Each year, these rivers flooded, carrying silt from the nearby mountains. This kept the land extremely fertile, but the flat topography meant that floods could bring vast destruction as well as fertile new soil. Only with a system of levees and canals could the waters be controlled and the land put to use. Cities often battled over how best to control these waters. Life was uncertain, and a sense of fear or gloom was common among people in this region.

One river seems not to have instilled such fears—at least not nearly as much. That river is the Nile. It arises as the White Nile in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa. It flows north for more than 4,000 miles. It is joined along the way by the Blue Nile. It branches out into a huge delta and empties into the Mediterranean Sea. Starting more than 5,000 years ago, a remarkable civilization arose along the Nile's banks—the civilization of ancient Egypt.



Saharan rock art

Among the remarkable things about ancient Egypt were its impressive art, architecture, religion, and other cultural achievements. From the pyramids to the huge statues to the tomb of Tutankhamun, its architecture still amazes and inspires awe. Its written hieroglyphics are one of the world's first writing systems. Its imaginative and complex religious mythology still fascinates people.

Another remarkable thing about ancient Egypt was its long-lasting stability. Century after century, its artistic styles, religious beliefs, language, buildings, and governments all remained quite similar. From around 3100 BCE on, the ideal was for Egypt to be united under an all-powerful ruler called a pharaoh. Two thousand years later, one of the most powerful pharaohs, Ramses II, still carried on that tradition. Of course, it is easy to exaggerate this stability. There were periods of war and civil war, empire and invasion. But these times of trouble were fairly brief compared to much longer times of unity. Year after year, life must have seemed unchanging to many Egyptians.

What did the Nile River have to do with the achievements and stability of ancient Egyptian society? One major aspect of the Nile was its annual flood. Each year, rains far to the south flood the river all the way to the Mediterranean Sea. The ancient Egyptians looked forward to these floods each year. They usually arrived on time. Their strength was often easy to predict. Each year's flood left behind a new layer of rich soil. This meant the same lands could be farmed year after year, for many centuries—and they would never wear out. Century after century, Egypt's villages thrived and provided the surplus needed to support a great civilization.

Not far from the rich soil watered by the Nile lay vast deserts. These also aided Egypt's survival and stability. In some places, the desert is very close to the river. These desert lands stretch far away from the Nile for tens or hundreds of miles. These deserts were a natural barrier, protecting Egypt against attacks from enemies. For this reason, ancient Egypt was usually a safe and very comfortable world for the people living in it. Meanwhile, the river itself was a natural roadway. Villages could trade with one another easily up and down the river. Going downstream, boats could float with the current. Winds generally blew from the Mediterranean in a southerly direction, so it was fairly easy to sail up the Nile as well. The first cataract (a set of rapids) is reached about 700 miles up the river (that is going south). This and other cataracts further upstream also acted as barriers to anyone coming down the Nile to attack Egypt.

These are some of the ways the Nile helped to make ancient Egypt great. The sources provided with this lesson should help you evaluate these factors and discuss other possible ways in which the geography of the Nile affected economic, social, and civic life in ancient Egypt.

Image Sources: Jacques Descloitres, *Nile River and Delta from Orbit*, August 2004. NASA, Visible Earth. Available online from NASA at <https://visibleearth.nasa.gov/view.php?id=71790>.

Linus Wolf, *Petroglyph Depicting a Possibly Sleeping Antelope, Located at Tin Taghirt on the Tassili n'Ajjer in Southern Algeria*, January 2011. CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons.



GROUP MEMBERS:

The Nile

Your group's task is to explore history issues related to the Nile River in ancient Egypt. A disciplinary compelling question is provided, and you will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary and secondary sources. Follow the steps to complete the task.

1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us to answer a compelling question.
2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

For more than 2,000 years, ancient Egyptian society did not change all that much. How did the Nile contribute to making it so stable over so much of its long history?

3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 1.3 and 1.7, and Secondary Source 1.6.
4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

The regularity of the Nile's flood helps explain Egypt's long, stable way of life. The Nile was a dependable basis for life along its course. Nevertheless, people still had to build dikes to hold back flood waters from towns. They built basins to store water during dry periods, and they dug ditches and canals to carry water to the fields. Farms and villages upstream had to work closely with those downstream. It took a strong government made up of thousands of officials to ensure that all this was done correctly. A wealthy upper class of such officials developed, along with others who were not farmers, such as priests, architects, craftsmen, doctors, and soldiers. For the most part, Egyptians accept the value of this upper class because the Nile made it possible year after year to produce the large surplus crop needed to feed them all.

Egyptians expected life in the next world to be the same in many ways as life in this world. Their religious ideas seem to suggest they saw life in this world as satisfying enough. Egyptians believed in a great many gods.

They were seen as regulating various natural processes, including those that helped the Nile in its beneficial work year after year.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the secondary source above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, choose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 1.3

Secondary Source 1.6

Primary Source 1.7

Day Two

1. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can support with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

For more than 2,000 years, ancient Egyptian society did not change all that much. How did the Nile contribute to making it so stable over so much of its long history?

State your group's claim here:

2. From the remaining seven sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can help support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

3. Prepare a brief five- to ten-minute presentation. Summarize the sources you have used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.



GROUP MEMBERS:

The Nile

Your group's task is to explore the civics issues related to the Nile River in ancient Egypt. A compelling question is provided, and you will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow these steps to complete the task.

Day One

1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us to answer a compelling question.
2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

Ancient Egypt was usually united under an all-powerful pharaoh. How did the Nile help the pharaohs to remain such powerful figures in Egypt's political life?

3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 1.8, 1.9, and 1.10.
4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

Along the Nile, Egyptian merchants, tax collectors, other officials, armies, and more could pass with ease. The fertile lands along the river were always within easy reach. The wealth they produced helped support a powerful government led by a single ruler, the pharaoh. The pharaohs were all-powerful. Their relationship to the Nile is expressed in the idea that they united the two lands it flowed through. They are often shown wearing the *Pschent*, a double crown. Its two parts stand for Upper Egypt (up river, to the south) and Lower Egypt (down river, to the north, where it empties into the Mediterranean Sea).

The pharaoh's power was not just of this world. He was often called a "god-king." After death, the pharaoh supposedly became one with Egypt's main gods. The pyramids were the tombs of early pharaohs. Later pharaohs had their tombs buried deep in cliffs to keep robbers out. These tombs ensured the dead pharaoh an easy passage to the next life. This was important not only to the pharaoh, but to all of Egypt. The pharaohs

were the link between the natural world and the spiritual realm of the gods. Without them, disorder would spread everywhere. Naturally, this view of the pharaoh greatly added to his and his government's power and importance.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the primary sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the secondary source above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, choose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 1.8

Primary Source 1.9

Primary Source 1.10

Day Two

1. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can support with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

Ancient Egypt was usually united under an all-powerful pharaoh. How did the Nile help the pharaohs to remain such powerful figures in Egypt's political life?

State your group's claim here:

2. From the remaining seven sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can help support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

3. Prepare a brief five- to ten-minute presentation. Summarize the sources you have used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.



GROUP MEMBERS:

The Nile

Your group's task is to explore the economics issues related to the Nile River in ancient Egypt. A compelling question is provided, and you will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow these steps to complete the task.

Day One

1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us to answer a compelling question.
2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

How did the Nile River help to keep ancient Egypt's economy strong?

3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 1.4, 1.5, and 1.7.
4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

Wheat and barley were the two biggest crops in Egypt. They were mainly used to make bread and beer. Vegetables were often raised in small household gardens. Reeds grew naturally. They were used in a great many ways: to make baskets, rope, rafts, and papyrus (an early kind of paper). Peasants labored for wealthy landowners on large estates, where cattle and other livestock might also graze. But many smaller farms also existed. During the regular flood season (around September through January), the government could demand that rural workers help out on huge projects, such as building pyramids or temples. This work pattern added to Egypt's wealth in many ways.

The Nile also gave ancient Egypt a natural roadway. Villages could trade with one another easily up and down the river. Boats going downstream (north) floated with the current. Going upstream (south), they could use sails. Winds generally blew from the Mediterranean in a southerly direction, so it was fairly easy to sail up the Nile. After about 700 miles, boats would reach the first cataract, or set of rapids. It was harder to travel

beyond the cataracts. But these also acted as barriers to anyone coming down the Nile to attack Egypt.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the primary sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the secondary source above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, choose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 1.4

Primary Source 1.5

Primary Source 1.7

Day Two

1. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can support with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

How did the Nile River help to keep ancient Egypt's economy strong?

State your group's claim here:

2. From the remaining seven sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can help support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

3. Prepare a brief five- to ten-minute presentation. Summarize the sources you have used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.



Geography Group

GROUP MEMBERS:

The Nile

Your group's task is to explore geography issues related to the Nile River in ancient Egypt. A compelling question is provided, and you will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow these steps to complete the task.

Day One

1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us to answer a compelling question.
2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

How did the Nile's geographical location help it to become such a strong force for stability and prosperity in ancient Egypt?

3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 1.1, 1.2, and 1.4.
4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

Right after the end of the last ice age (about 12,000 years ago) the Sahara was a dry region just as it is today. However, about 2,000 years later, the climate became wetter and warmer. Many fertile areas existed, attracting animals and human communities. This mild period lasted about 4,000 years. By 6,000 years ago the rains were diminishing and the land was drying up again. As it did, humans migrated in growing numbers to the fertile lands along the Nile. It was this that led to the rise of ancient Egyptian civilization there.

In the summer, monsoon rains pour down on the Ethiopian Highlands. The Blue Nile carries much of this water to where it joins the White Nile, some 1,400 miles from the sea. Along the Nile's banks, the rich soil washed down by the floods helped villages to thrive. But not far from the rich soil watered by the Nile lay vast deserts. In most places, they stretch away from the Nile for hundreds of miles. These desert lands were very hard to cross. This helped to keep out invaders from either the east or the west. The Nile Delta and Mediterranean Sea were barriers to attacks from the

north, across the sea. Finally, several Nile cataracts (river rapids) helped protect ancient Egypt from invaders from the south.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the primary sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the secondary source above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, choose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 1.1

Primary Source 1.2

Primary Source 1.4

Day Two

1. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can support with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

How did the Nile's geographical location help it to become such a strong force for stability and prosperity in ancient Egypt?

State your group's claim here:

2. From the remaining seven sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can help support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

3. Prepare a brief five- to ten-minute presentation. Summarize the sources you have used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.

How to Analyze a Primary Source

For this lesson, you will be studying several primary source documents. This handout offers suggestions for how best to read and analyze historical primary sources. Studying such sources is challenging. They were created in a different time and place. Their language and use of certain key terms often differs from ours. They assume things we might not accept. They arise out of historical circumstances and settings that differ greatly from our own times. To use such sources as evidence, you need to apply some special historical thinking skills and habits. Here are some guidelines to help you do this.

◆ *Question the source.*

No primary source was written with you and your interests in mind, so you need to be clear about what you are looking for when you examine a source. You need to stay in charge of the investigation. Act like a detective, and ask questions. Above all, keep your own most important compelling questions in mind as you read and think about a source.

◆ *Consider the source's origins.*

This is often simply called "sourcing." It means asking who created the source, when and where the source was created, and why. If you know the source's purpose, you will be more likely to see how it is shaped by its creator's point of view. Among other things, sourcing can also help you decide how reliable or typical a source might be.

◆ *Contextualize the source.*

"Context" here means the broader historical setting for the source. Sources are always a part of a larger historical context. You need to consider how this context helps clarify the meaning of the source. You also need to decide which context is most important. Sources might be understood best in connection with a local context or a recent event. Alternatively, they might be understood better within a national or international context, or as part of a long-term trend in society at large. Your guiding questions should help you decide which context is most important.

◆ *Corroborate the source.*

This means you must think about your source in relation to other sources. Does the source agree with or support those other sources, or does it seem to be at odds with the other sources? Might there be additional sources, which have not been provided to you, that could support or conflict with your source?

◆ *Above all, read the source carefully.*

Look at language closely. Pay attention to images, emotional language, metaphors, and other literary devices. Think about what is implied, not merely what is stated or claimed in so many words. Think about what is left out as well as what is included. Make inferences based on your close reading. This will help you get more out of your source than even the source's creator might have seen in it.

PRIMARY SOURCE ►

I.I

Saharan Rock Art

This rock carving of a sleeping antelope was located in the Sahara Desert in what is today Algeria. It is one of thousands of cave paintings and carvings found there and in many other parts of the Sahara. These are evidence of a time when the Sahara was a wetter and more fertile than it is today. Most date from 10,000 to 6,000 years ago. After that, drier climate conditions turned the Sahara into the desert we know today. As this happened, people living in the Sahara migrated to what remaining fertile regions they could find. These migrations led many to the Nile River valley.



Image Source: Linus Wolf, photograph of a petroglyph depicting a possibly sleeping antelope, located at Tin Taghirt on the Tassili n'Ajjer in southern Algeria, January 2011. CC BY-SA 3.0.

PRIMARY SOURCE ▶

I.2

The Nile and Its Delta

This satellite photo shows the rich, green lands along the Nile and in its delta, as well as the dry, relatively unsettled desert regions around it. The Nile flows northward through its fertile valley and empties into the Mediterranean Sea. In ancient times, these northern portions of the river and the delta were called Lower Egypt. The southern portions of the river, which are upstream, were Upper Egypt. The city of Cairo can be seen as a gray smudge right where the river widens into its broad fan-shaped delta.



Image Source: Jacques Descloitres, *Nile River and Delta from Orbit*, August 2004. NASA, Visible Earth.
Available online from NASA at <https://visibleearth.nasa.gov/view.php?id=71790>.

PRIMARY SOURCE ▶

1.3

The Nile Flood

This illustration depicts the Nile River's annual flood, which occurred in a regular way that actually made life pleasant for people living along the river. In most years, the Nile flood came right on time and left behind a new layer of rich soil. This meant the land would not wear out even as it was farmed regularly over many centuries. A huge surplus of grain, livestock, and other basic goods could be produced.



Image Source: James Webster, *Travels through the Crimea, Turkey and Egypt; Performed during the Years 1825–28, Including Particulars of the Last Illness and Death of the Emperor Alexander, and of the Russian Conspiracy in 1825.* (Memoir of Mr. J. W.), vol 2, (London, 1830), 11.

PRIMARY SOURCE ▶

I.4

The Fertile Land and the Desert

This 2014 photograph shows a hot-air balloon festival over the Nile River valley near Luxor, Egypt. It makes clear how the highly fertile lands on either side of the huge river suddenly turn to desert. In some places, this change is so sudden that a person can place one foot on fertile soil and the other on the barren desert sands. As a result, the rich farmland along the river supported many villages and cities, while the deserts on either side acted as a natural barrier, protecting Egypt against attacks from enemies.



Image Source: Fanny Schertzer, photograph of a crop limit in the Nile Valley near Luxor, Egypt, December 2014. CC BY-SA 4.0.

PRIMARY SOURCE ▶

1.5

Fruits of the Nile's Fertile Fields

This artwork from an ancient Egyptian tomb shows agricultural scenes of threshing, grain store, harvesting with sickles, digging, tree cutting, and ploughing. Wheat and barley were the two biggest crops in Egypt. They were mainly used to make bread and beer. Vegetables were often raised in small household gardens. Reeds grew naturally along the Nile. They were used in a great many ways: to make baskets, rope, rafts, and papyrus (an early kind of paper). Peasants labored for wealthy landowners on large estates, where cattle and other livestock might also graze. But many smaller farms also existed.



Image Source: Norman de Garis Davies and Nina Davies, "Agricultural Scenes Of Threshing, A Grain Store, Harvesting With Sickles, Digging, Tree-Cutting And Ploughing From The Tomb Of Nakht, 18th Dynasty Thebes," in *Das Grab des Nacht : Kunst und Geschichte eines Beamtengrabes der 18. Dynastie in Theben-West*, by Abdel Ghaffar Shedid and Matthias Seidel (Mainz am Rhein: Von Zabern, 1991).

SECONDARY SOURCE ▶

I.6

Hapi, the Dual God of the Nile's Flood

Hapi was the ancient Egyptian god of the Nile and its flood. He is shown as two figures, expressing the idea that Egypt is two lands united into one. The lotus on the left side symbolizes Upper Egypt; the papyrus on the right side symbolizes Lower Egypt. Hapi's blue skin calls attention to the Nile's water. He is typically surrounded by vegetation. He also combines male and female characteristics. These features all stress the Nile's central role in keeping the land fertile. A group of priests far up the Nile River in Elephantine was in charge of Hapi's cult. Their rituals were meant to ensure a steady and regular annual flood.

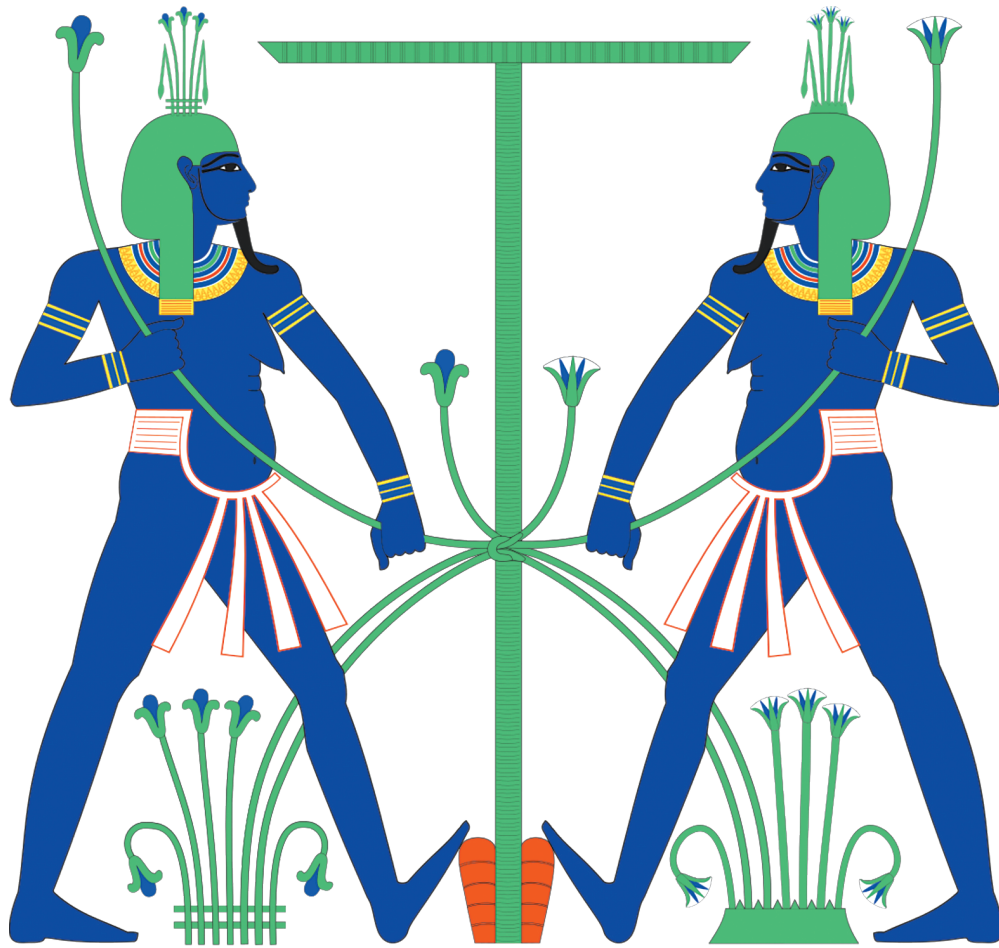


Image Source: Jeff Dahl, image of Hapi, the ancient Egyptian god of the Nile and its flood, January 2008. CC BY-SA 4.0.

PRIMARY SOURCE ►

I.7

The Song of the Nile

The Nile's importance to ancient Egyptians is expressed by the "Hymn to the Nile." No one knows who wrote it or exactly when. From the style, some historians date it to the Middle Kingdom (from around 1975–1640 BCE). The Egyptian gods named in the passage are the sun god Re; the earth god Seb; the god of grain Nepera; and Ptah, creator god and god of craftsmanship.

Original Document

Hail to thee, O Nile! Who manifests thyself over this land, and comes to give life to Egypt! Mysterious is thy issuing forth from the darkness, on this day whereon it is celebrated! Watering the orchards created by Re, to cause all the cattle to live, you give the earth to drink, inexhaustible one! Path that descends from the sky, loving the bread of Seb and the first-fruits of Nepera, You cause the workshops of Ptah to prosper!

Lord of the fish, during the inundation, no bird alights on the crops. You create the grain, you bring forth the barley, assuring perpetuity to the temples. If you cease your toil and your work, then all that exists is in anguish. If the gods suffer in heaven, then the faces of men waste away.

Original Document Source: Oliver J. Thatcher, ed., *The Library of Original Sources* (Milwaukee: University Research Extension Co., 1907), Vol. I: The Ancient World, 79–83. Available online at http://www.reshafim.org.il/ad/egypt/texts/hymn_to_the_nile.htm.

PRIMARY SOURCE ▶

I.8

Egypt Unified—The Narmer Palette

Compact agricultural settlements and ease of travel on the Nile made a unified state easier to create. One early piece of evidence of this is the Narmer Palette, shown here. This tablet is dated to around 3000 BCE. That was very early in the history of ancient Egypt. Many historians believe the Narmer Palette depicts the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt under King Narmer. On the left side, King Narmer wears the bulbed White Crown of Upper Egypt—that is, southern Egypt. He is depicted as a conqueror who appears ready to execute a defeated enemy. The close-up of the other side shows Narmer wearing the Red Crown of Lower Egypt (northern Egypt, including the delta.)



Image Source: The Narmer Palette. Public domain.

PRIMARY SOURCE ▶

I.9

Time Line of Ancient Egypt

Times of division, disorder, and warfare among Egyptians did occur. However, much longer eras of unity under the pharaohs and their administrators were common. This time line of Egyptian history shows the long periods when a unified state existed (the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms). It also shows intermediate times when ancient Egypt was not united. The time line's dates are only approximate.

Original Document

Time Line of Egyptian History	
2950–2575 BCE	Early Dynastic Period: Egypt is unified for the first time
2575–2150 BCE	Old Kingdom: The largest pyramids are built
2150–1975 BCE	First Intermediate Period: A time of disunity
1975–1640 BCE	Middle Kingdom: Egypt is reunified
1640–1540 BCE	Second Intermediate Period: A time of disunity and invasion by outsiders
1540–1075 BCE	New Kingdom: Egypt is reunified. Pharaohs build tombs into the Valley of Kings mountainside
1075–715 BCE	Third Intermediate Period

Original Document Source: Christopher Scarre, *The Human Past: World Prehistory and the Development of Human Societies* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2009).

PRIMARY SOURCE ▶

I.IO

Egypt Unified—Ramses II

These statues are part of one of the rock-cut Abu Simbel temples of Ramses II located along the Nile in Nubia, near the borders of what is today Sudan. All four statues are of Ramses II, who reigned 1279–1213 BCE. The second statue on the left is broken. Ramses II was also known as Ramses the Great, and some see him as the greatest and most powerful of all Egyptian pharaohs. These statues of Ramses II are more than 60 feet high. Compare this statue with the Narmer Palette (Primary Source 8). Depictions of Egyptian pharaohs as colossal figures were common throughout much of ancient Egypt's long history.



Image Source: Than217 at English Wikipedia, photograph of Abu Simbel Temple of Ramesses II, 2007. Public domain.

Communicating Results and Taking Action

Communicating Results

- ◆ Study all the primary sources for this lesson. Choose three you would most want to use in a brief presentation to another group of students titled The Nile and Ancient Egypt. Prepare a five-minute presentation that makes use of all three sources. In the presentation, make it clear why you chose the particular sources used.
- ◆ Your teacher will assign your group one of the following rivers: the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in ancient Mesopotamia, the Indus River in Pakistan, or the Huang He (Yellow River) in China. Your group should learn more about its river and its importance in the history of the ancient civilization that grew up along it. Make a map showing your river and the important geographical features of the land around it (e.g., deserts, fertile lands, mountains, jungles, other rivers). Use your maps in a brief presentation about the river and its importance to its early civilization. Conclude by comparing your river to the Nile and the Nile's role in Egyptian civilization.
- ◆ In your group, study a map of ancient Egypt that shows important religious, political, or economic locations along the Nile. Many websites on ancient civilizations will have such maps. Then, your group should create a map of its own. Your map should include illustrations, photos, and brief written explanations of the five locations your group chose. The locations should be chosen to help illustrate themes stressed in this lesson. Your group will present its map in class and explain why you chose the locations included on the map.

Taking Action

- ◆ Today, rivers are still of crucial importance to the societies located along them. Your class will choose one river of importance today. It should be a large river such as the Amazon in South America, the Mississippi in the United States, the Ganges in India, or the Mekong River in Southeast Asia. Collect maps, photos, and articles about significant economic, political, religious, or environmental aspects of the river and its problems today. Use these materials to prepare a presentation on this river. In the presentation, compare the role of the river to that of the Nile in ancient Egypt. Highlight both similarities and differences. Make the audience aware of crucial problems related to the river.
- ◆ Based on the work in the previous assignment, use social media and the internet to share your presentation. Urge others to offer feedback on the presentation and its importance to them.

The Nile Rubric

Criteria	Unacceptable	Developing	Proficient	Excellent
Focus	Tries to respond to task instructions but lacks clear focus on a central idea or thesis	Addresses the task instructions adequately but focus on a central idea or thesis is uneven	Responds to the task instructions appropriately and convincingly; has a consistent focus on a central idea or thesis	Responds to all task instructions convincingly; has a clear and strong focus on a well-developed central idea or thesis
Research	Refers to some sources but fails to connect these in a relevant way to the task instructions	Refers to relevant sources well but does not always connect these clearly to the task instructions	Refers to relevant sources accurately and usually connects these to the task instructions and a central idea	Refers to relevant sources accurately and in great detail and connects these clearly to the task instructions and a central idea
Development and Use of Evidence	Uses some details and evidence from sources but does not make clear the relevance to the task purpose or instructions	Uses details and evidence from sources generally but not always in support of a clear focus relevant to the task purpose or instructions	Uses details and evidence from sources in a way that effectively supports a focus relevant to the task purpose or instructions	Uses details and evidence from sources along with clear explanations demonstrating deep understanding of the task purpose or instructions
Content	Refers to disciplinary content without clearly understanding it or while using it in an irrelevant or inaccurate manner	Refers to disciplinary content with some understanding but not always with a clear idea of its relation to the overall task	Accurately uses disciplinary content and demonstrates a clear idea of its relation to the overall task	Uses disciplinary content effectively and explains thoroughly and in-depth its relation to the overall task
Conventions	Demonstrates only limited control of standard English conventions with many errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and other conventions	Demonstrates some command of standard English conventions with limited errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and other conventions	Demonstrates adequate command of standard English conventions with few errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and other conventions	Demonstrates a well-developed command of standard English conventions with few errors and a use of language appropriate to the audience and the purpose of the task

Primary and Secondary Source Bibliography

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- 1.2: Descloîtres, Jacques. *Nile River and Delta from Orbit*, August 2004. NASA, Visible Earth. Available online from NASA at <https://visibleearth.nasa.gov/view.php?id=71790>.
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- 1.4: Schertzer, Fanny. Photograph of crop limit in the Nile Valley near Luxor, Egypt. December 2014. Photograph, CC BY-SA 4.0.
- 1.5: Davies, Norman de Garis, and Nina Davies. “Agricultural Scenes of Threshing, a Grain Store, Harvesting with Sickles, Digging, Tree-Cutting and Ploughing from the Tomb of Nakht, 18th Dynasty Thebes,” in *Das Grab des Nacht: Kunst und Geschichte eines Beamtengrabes der 18. Dynastie in Theben-West*, by Abdel Ghaffar Shedid and Matthias Seidel. Mainz am Rhein: Von Zabern, 1991.
- 1.6: Dahl, Jeff. Image of Hapy, the ancient Egyptian God of the Nile and its flood. January 2008. CC BY-SA 4.0.
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- 1.8: The Narmer Palette. Public domain.
- 1.9: Scarre, Christopher, ed. *The Human Past: World Prehistory and the Development of Human Societies*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2009.
- 1.10: Than217 at English Wikipedia. Photograph of Abu Simbel Temple of Ramesses II. 2007. Public domain.

Sources for Further Study

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