

Pyramid Builders

During the Old and Middle Kingdoms, pyramids were built to house the pharaohs' bodies after death. Some were 40 stories high, constructed of stone blocks that weighed three tons or more each. The Egyptians' only tools were ropes, levers, wedges, and a few stone and copper hand tools. They lacked the wheel or any hoisting equipment to move the stone. How did they do it? They did it the hard way, with muscle power. For three or four months each year, while the Nile flooded, the pharaoh put farmers and laborers to work on building projects. The largest of these projects was the pyramids.

BECAUSE A PYRAMID took decades to complete, a pharaoh had workers start on his long before he expected to die. Here, artists are laying out the decorations for the walls of the tomb chapel. Masons and basket-boys are at work on a passageway.



▲ **THE FIRST PYRAMID** was built for King Zoser in the desert at Saqqara around 2630 B.C. Called a step pyramid, its shape suggests a giant stairway by which the king's spirit could join the sun god.



1. To quarry limestone for the pyramids, workers put wooden wedges into grooves cut in the quarry walls. Soaked

with water, the wedges expanded and split off blocks of stone.



2. Using ramps and levers, workers put the blocks on sledges.



3. Sledges were hauled from the quarry over a path of rolling logs. The last log was moved to the front as the sledges rolled.

4. They traveled on barges along the Nile River.



5. At the pyramid building site, workers dragged the stones up earthen ramps



along the sides of the pyramid and put them into place. Water was poured onto the ramps to reduce friction.



▼ **THE GREAT**
Pyramid of King
Khufu at Giza is
the world's largest

stone structure
and Egypt's most
famous pyramid.
Its more than 2.5

million stone
blocks weigh
on average three
tons each, and
the pyramid covers
over 12 acres.
It took 20 years
and more than
four thousand
workers to build
the Great
Pyramid.



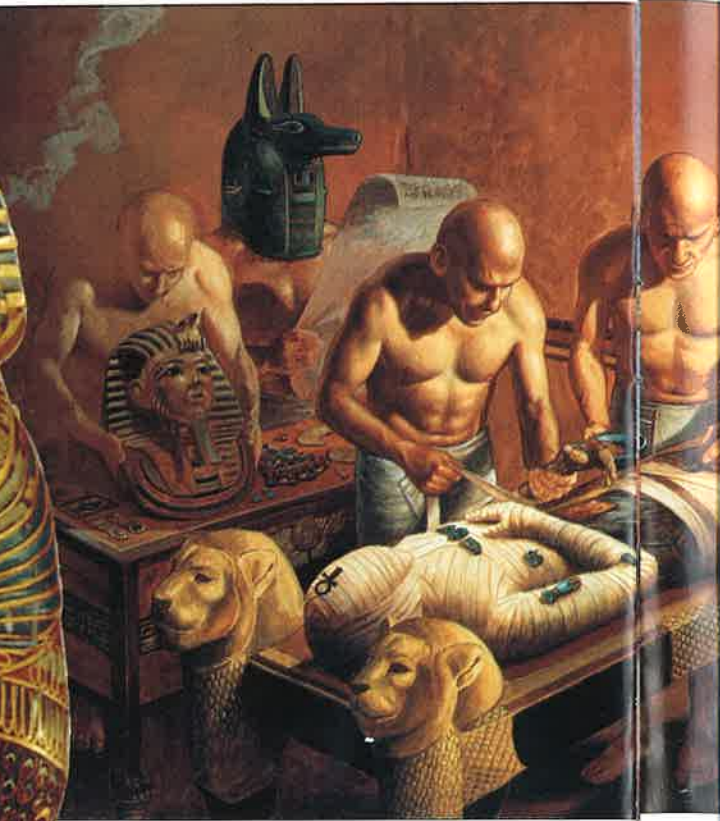
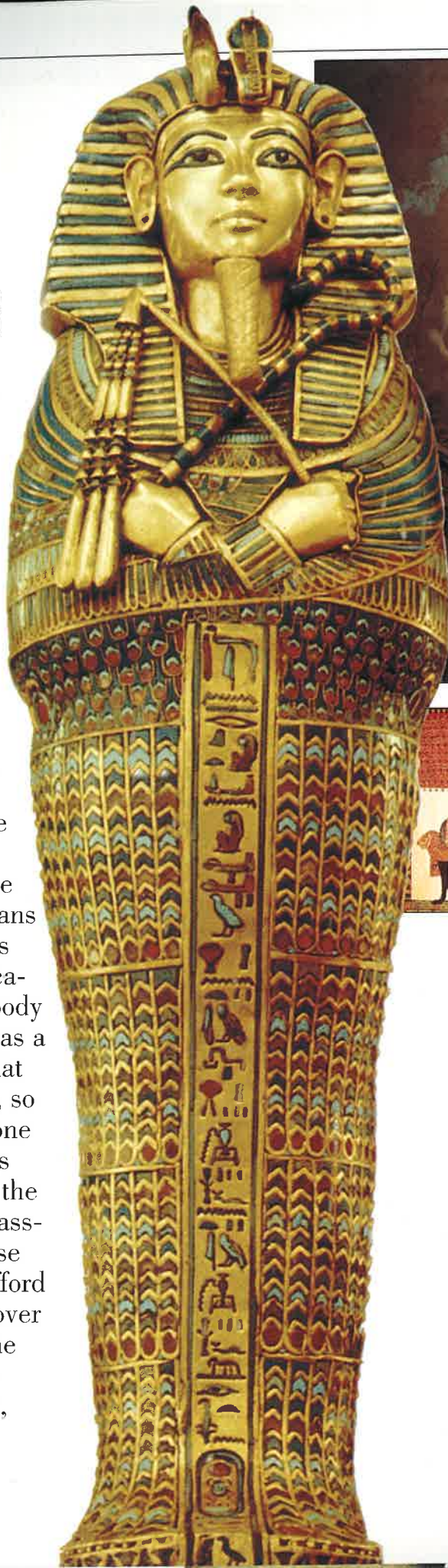
◀ **WHEN A PHAROAH**
was buried, gold,
jewels, and other
precious items
were buried with
him. To prevent
robbers from
breaking into their
tombs, New King-
dom pharaohs
had hidden tombs

cut into the cliffs
near Thebes.
Despite this, tomb
robbing was com-
mon. This gold
leopard head is
from King Tutan-
khamen's tomb,
one of very few
that thieves never
found.



Mummy Makers and the Afterlife

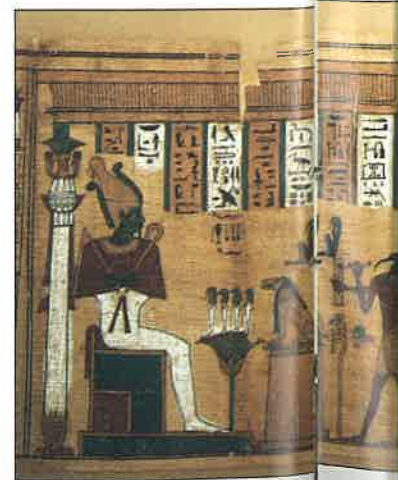
The Egyptian religion was one of the first to stress life after death. To get to the afterlife, a dead person needed his or her body. If the body was properly preserved, its spirit would reenter it and bring it to life in the next world. To make sure the spirit could find and recognize the body, the Egyptians created a process called mummification. Turning a body into a mummy was a costly process that took a long time, so it was usually done only for pharaohs and members of the highest social classes. But even those who could not afford a mummy makeover hoped to go to the afterlife, a place much like Egypt, where the dead lived forever.

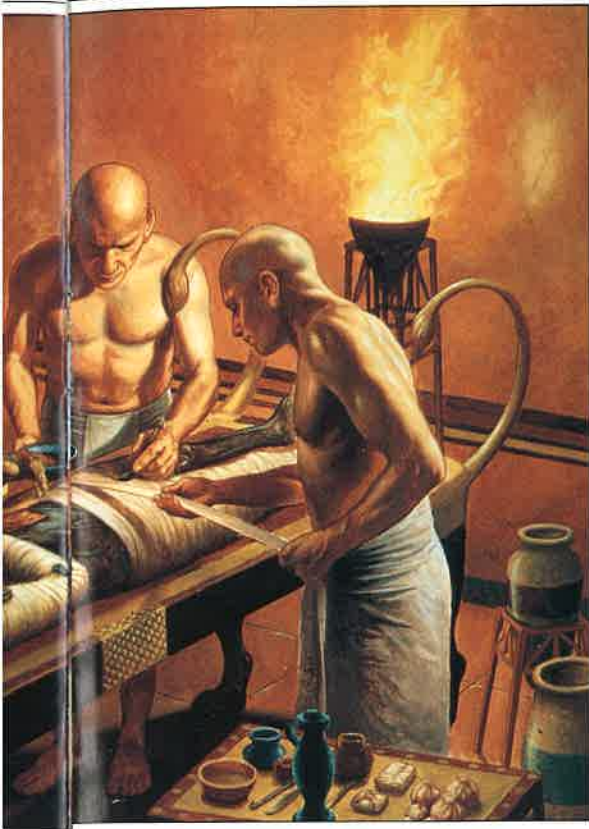


▲ **THE EMBALMER** removed the intestines, stomach, liver, and lungs and pulled the brain out through the nose. Only the heart was left in place, because the dead needed their hearts to get into the next life.

▲ **TO PREVENT THE** body from decaying, the embalmer packed it in natron for 40 days to dry it out. Then he wrapped it tightly in long ribbons of resin-soaked linen and returned it to the family for burial. Above, Anubis, the god of mummification, prepares a body for burial.

◀ **PUTTING THE BODY** into a coffin was the last step in the embalming process. The rich had elaborate coffins.





► **SERVANTS CARRIED** items for the dead person into the underground tomb. The family laid food, drink, tools, jewelry, clothes, and anything else that the person might need in the after-life in the tomb with the coffin.

▼ **THE MUMMIFIED** body traveled under the canopy of a funerary barge as it made its way through the underworld.



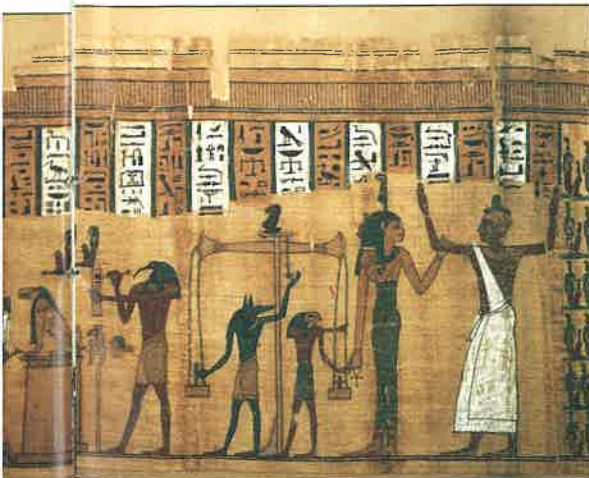
▲ **FAMILIES HIRED** women mourners to follow the coffin. They tore at their clothes, poured dirt in their hair, and wept. Their noise kept evil spirits away.



▼ **THE MOST DANGEROUS** part of the journey occurred in the Hall of the Two Truths. Here, the dead person's heart, which bore a record of his

past deeds, was weighed on a scale against the feather of truth. Anubis served as judge. He threw the hearts of those deemed

unworthy to the Devourer of the Dead, who gobbled them up. Those judged fit moved on to the kingdom of Osiris.



◀ **MANY COFFINS** held a Book of the Dead. It contained magical spells to help the person pass through the underworld, a dangerous place filled with poisonous snakes, lakes of fire, and scary creatures. To pass through unharmed, a person had to recite the spells correctly.



Ancient Wisdom

Fill in the blank spaces with the correct words.

1. Symbol that protected ancient Egyptians against illness

_____ 3 _____ 10 _____ 9

2. Device to bring water from river to canals

5 11 _____ 1 4 _____

3. Ruler of ancient Egypt

29 _____ 18 _____ 15 36

4. Ancient Egyptian picture writing

_____ 7 _____ 34 25 27 20 14

5. Simple lifting device helpful in building pyramids

24 _____ 22 32 _____

6. Oval-shaped frame placed around name of a royal family member

8 12 _____ 13 2 16 _____ 23

7. Ruler who required people to worship one god

33 _____ 26 _____ 6 31

8. Tomb of Egyptian royalty

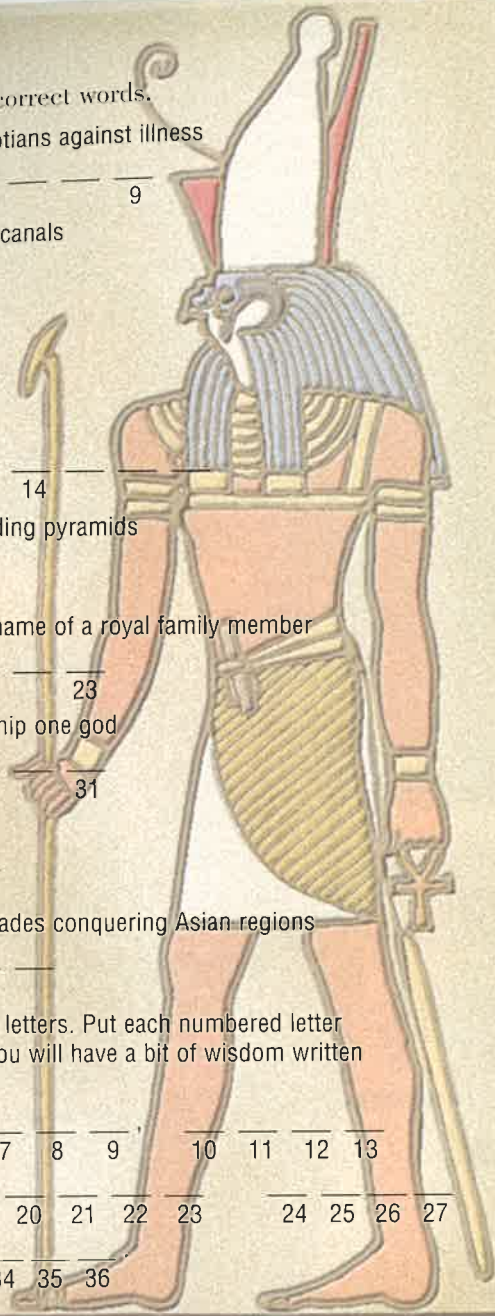
_____ 19 _____ 17 21

9. Egyptian leader who spent two decades conquering Asian regions

35 _____ 28 _____ 30

Numbers are underneath some of the letters. Put each numbered letter in the blank with the same number. You will have a bit of wisdom written by an Egyptian king for his son.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36					



MORE ON ANCIENT EGYPT

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

- Aiki, *Mummies Made in Egypt*, 1985.
- Tony Allan, *Pharaohs and Pyramids*, Usborne, 1998.
- Joanna Defrates, *What Do We Know About the Egyptians?*, Peter Bedrick Books, 1997.
- George Hart, editor, *Ancient Egypt, The Nature Company Discoveries Library*, 1995.
- David Macaulay, *Pyramid*, Houghton Mifflin, 1982.
- Jacqueline Morley, *How Would You Survive as an Ancient Egyptian?*, Franklin Watts, 1996.
- Diane Stanley, *Cleopatra*, Morrow, 1998.
- Scott Steedman, *The Egyptian News*, Candlewick, 1997.

BOOKS FOR ADULTS

- Peter Clayton, *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, Thames & Hudson, 1994.
- C. N. Reeves, *The Complete Valley of the Kings*, Thames & Hudson, 1996.
- Ian Shaw, *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, 2000.
- David Silverman, *Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, 1997.
- David Warburton, *Life and Death in Ancient Egypt*, Cornell University Press, 2000.

Egyptian Match-up

Match each name with the correct description.

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. KHUFU | A. ENTOMBED IN THE GREAT PYRAMID AT GIZA |
| _____ 2. CLEOPATRA | B. ONE CONQUEROR OF EGYPT |
| _____ 3. HATSHEPSUT | C. BUILDER OF TEMPLES AT KARNAK AND LUXOR |
| _____ 4. AMENHOTEP III | D. INHABITANT OF FIRST PYRAMID |
| _____ 5. TUTANKHAMEN | E. ONE OF EGYPT'S MOST FAMOUS FEMALE RULERS |
| _____ 6. ALEXANDER THE GREAT | F. BURIED IN ONE OF FEW TOMBS NOT FOUND BY GRAVE ROBBERS |
| _____ 7. ZOSER | G. WIFE OF THUTMOSE II AND LATER PHAROAH |





COOKING WITH BARLEY

Barley, a staple of the ancient Egyptian diet, is still a popular grain today. Here are some recipes.

BARLEY SALAD

- 1 cup pearl barley
- 2 large tomatoes, chopped into chunks
- 1 green pepper, diced
- 3 or 4 scallions, sliced
- 1 16-oz. can of kernel corn, drained
- ½ cup olive or canola oil
- 5 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- salt to taste

Cook barley in boiling water for 20 minutes until it is tender. Drain and rinse with cold water. Mix all ingredients together and refrigerate. Serve chilled.

BARLEY PUDDING

- 1 package instant vanilla pudding mix milk (amount called for in pudding directions)
- 2¼ cups cooked barley (leftover barley from Barley Water recipe will be enough)
- 1 can mandarin orange segments, drained

Make pudding according to directions on package. Stir in cooked barley and mandarin orange segments.

MUSHROOM-BARLEY SOUP

- 1 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 2 bouillon cubes (beef, chicken, or vegetable)
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 whole cloves
- ¼ teaspoon dried thyme
- ¾ cup pearl barley
- 1 cup diced carrots
- 1 large onion, chopped
- ½ bunch fresh parsley
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

Put all the ingredients into a large pot, add water to cover them, and bring to a boil. Turn down the heat and simmer about one hour, or until the vegetables and barley are tender.

BARLEY WATER

This mild and refreshing drink was popular in Victorian England.

- ½ cup pearl barley
- 8 cups water
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 4 teaspoons sugar or honey (or more)

Bring water and barley to a boil. Simmer at low heat for about two hours. Strain barley. Cool liquid slightly. Add lemon juice and sugar or honey. Serve as a hot drink or chill and serve cold.

CONNECT THE DOTS

Connect the dots in numerical order to see a picture of the Sphinx, an ancient Egyptian statue with the body of a lion and the head of a man.

