

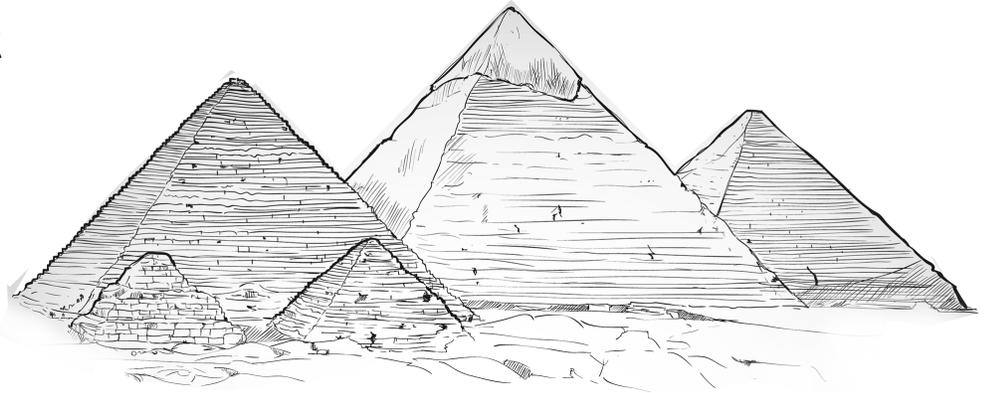
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Pyramids of Egypt

Egypt was the birth place of one of the world's first civilizations, about 5,000 years ago. The ancient Egyptians made outstanding contributions to the world, including basic forms of arithmetic, a 365-day calendar, picture writing called



hieroglyphics, and *papyrus*, a writing material made from plants. However, the best-known achievements of the ancient Egyptians are the pyramids, gigantic stone structures that remain in the desert. They are spectacular reminders of the glory of ancient Egypt!

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Find It!

Use the World Book search tool to find the answers to the questions below. Since this activity is about Egyptian pyramids, it is recommended you start by searching for the key words "Pyramid" and "Egypt." Write or circle the correct answer in the space provided.

1. Pyramids have _____ shaped bases and _____ shaped sides.
2. Ancient peoples used pyramids as: (Choose all that apply.)
 - A. Grain warehouses
 - B. Tombs
 - C. Temples
 - D. Theaters
3. *True or false?* The most famous pyramids were built for Egyptian kings about 2,500 years ago.
4. Why did the ancient Egyptians believe a person's body had to be preserved?
5. From about 2700 to 1700 B.C., Egyptian kings were buried in secret chambers filled with _____.

***Users of the *Advanced* database can find extension activities at the end of this webquest.**

6. *True or false?* Many scholars think the pyramid shape may have reminded Egyptians of their social structure, with the king at the top and many common people at the bottom.
7. Most pyramids had two _____ that were connected by a long stone passageway.
8. Sometimes a smaller pyramid for the body of the _____ stood near the king's pyramid.
9. What are *mastabas*?



10. Who built the first known pyramid?

- A. Zoser
- B. Imhotep
- C. Saqqarah
- D. Khufu

11. Were Egyptian pyramids built with smooth sides or sides that looked like steps?

12. List three locations where pyramids from the period called the Old Kingdom can be seen.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

13. The Pyramids of Giza stand on the west bank of the _____ River.

14. For whom was the largest pyramid at Giza built?

15. A huge statue called the Great Sphinx probably was built for _____ .
(For pictures of the Great Sphinx, see the World Book article "Sphinx.")

16. How many stone blocks does the Great Pyramid at Giza contain?

17. *True or false?* The Great Pyramid is now shorter than it originally was.

18. To build the pyramids, the Egyptians used:

- A. Iron tools
- B. Copper chisels
- C. Cranes
- D. Ramps

19. The pyramid's blocks are made of what kind of stone?

20. From a distance, why did the pyramids appear to have been cut out of a single stone?

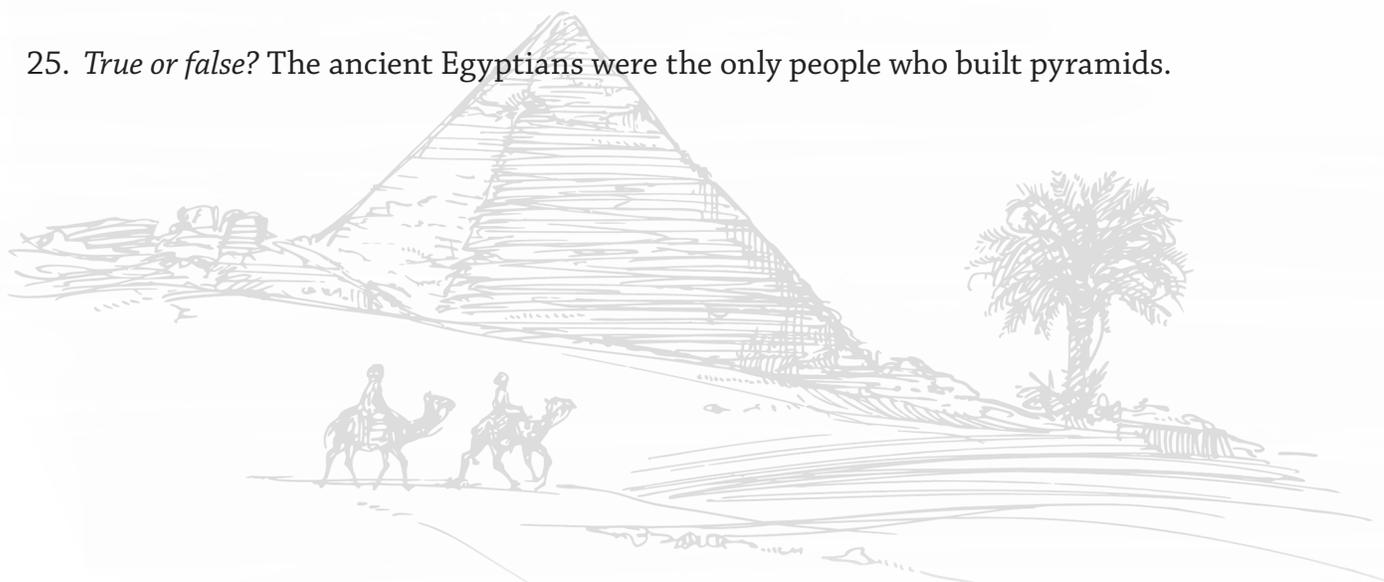
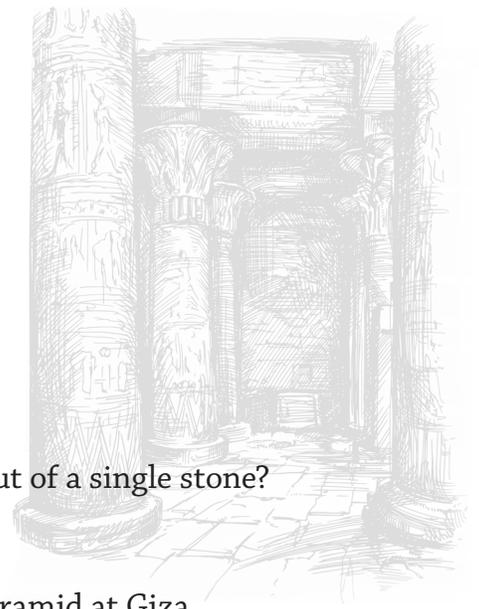
21. *True or false?* No one knows how long it took to build the Great Pyramid at Giza.

22. Scholars believe that about _____ men worked on the pyramids for several months each year.

23. Farm laborers built the pyramids. How did they have time to do this?

24. What happened to the contents of most of the pyramids, prompting later rulers to build secret tombs in cliffs?

25. *True or false?* The ancient Egyptians were the only people who built pyramids.



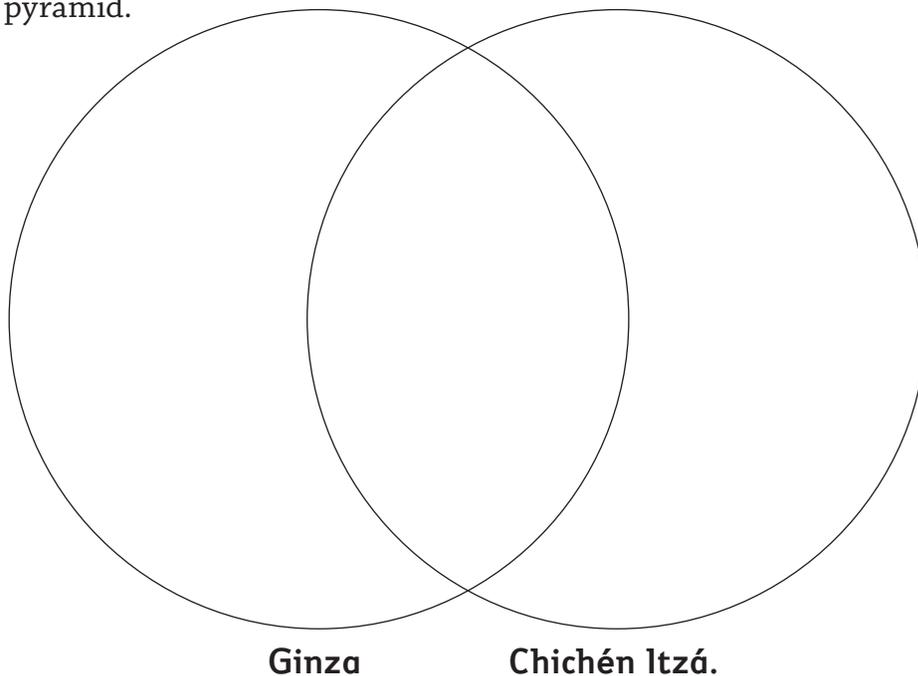
See it!

Within the World Book article “Pyramids” (and in the “Images, Videos, and Audio” tab), you will find the picture titled “Pyramids at Giza, Egypt.” Study the picture and answer the following questions.

26. Why do you think the pyramids are not all exactly the same size? What are a couple of possible reasons?

27. Compare the Giza pyramids with the pyramid at Chichén Itzá in Mexico. You can find the pictures by scrolling down to the end of the “Pyramids” article to see the picture titled “Chichén Itzá” or clicking on the “Images, Videos, and Audio” tab at the top of the page.

Consider the pyramids’ appearance and purpose. Write at least four similarities and two differences for each pyramid.



Find the illustration titled “Cross section of the Great Pyramid” and answer the following question.

28. Why did the Great Pyramid require workers’ escape passages?

Find the map titled “Pyramids of Giza in Egypt” and answer the following questions.

29. In what part of modern Egypt is Giza located?

30. Find the “Boat pits” near the Great Pyramid. These large pits in the ground held buried ships. Read the caption and explain why the Egyptians buried ships near their kings.

Extension activities

Extension activity 1: Design your own tomb

The ancient Egyptians had a strong belief in an enjoyable afterlife. As a result, they *mummified** (embalmed and dried) the dead and filled their tombs with items for use in the afterlife.

Imagine that you are an Egyptian living in ancient times and that you are designing your own tomb.

Perhaps you are a king and you will have a pyramid. Or perhaps you are an ordinary citizen and will have a more modest tomb. In either case, describe what you will put inside your tomb for use in the afterlife. What do you think you will need? What do you think you will want to bring to make your afterlife more enjoyable? You can find more information about how ancient Egyptians prepared for the afterlife in the World Book article titled “Egypt, Ancient.”

*If you would like to learn more about how the ancient Egyptians created mummies, go to the article “Egypt, Ancient” and watch the video titled “How ancient Egyptians made a mummy.”

Extension activity 2: Diary of a pyramid construction worker

Building the pyramids was a huge project taken on by farm workers in ancient Egypt. It took thousands of people to construct them. Imagine that you are a farm worker in ancient Egypt and it is flood season. The fields are covered in water, so you cannot do any farming for a while. You take a job as a member of the crew building a pyramid and have just arrived home with time to write about your experiences.

Write three days’ worth of diary entries about your daily life at work, so future generations have a clear picture of your experiences. You want them to know all about what it was like to work on the pyramids. Don’t worry; you don’t have to write the entries on papyrus with hieroglyphics! You can use your computer, or a plain old pen and paper.

- What jobs were available?
- What tasks did you perform that day?
- Did you enjoy your job?
- Was it easy or difficult?
- Describe the working conditions.

Consider such factors as the local climate and ancient technology. (You can read a little about Egypt’s climate and geography in the “Egypt” article.)

Read more about Egyptian Pyramids in World Book’s eBook collection:

Ancient Egyptians. Chicago: World Book, 2013. Early Peoples. *World eBook*. Web. 11 Dec. 2015.

<<http://www.worldbookonline.com/wb/ebooks/mall/instt/catalog/urn:ISBN:978-0-7166-2331-1/detail.do>>.

Teacher Page

Answers:

1. Pyramids have square shaped bases and triangle shaped sides.
2. Ancient peoples used pyramids as:
 - B. Tombs
 - C. Temples
3. *False*. The most famous pyramids were built for Egyptian kings about 4,500 years ago.
4. The ancient Egyptians thought a person's body had to be preserved so the soul could live forever.
5. From about 2700 to 1700 B.C., Egyptian kings were buried in secret chambers filled with treasures of gold and precious objects.
6. *False*. Scholars think the pyramid shape may have reminded Egyptians of the slanting rays of the sun.
7. Most pyramids had two temples that were connected by a long stone passageway.
8. Sometimes a smaller pyramid for the body of the queen stood near the king's pyramid.
9. *Mastabas* are tombs where the king's relatives and officials were buried.
10. Who built the first known pyramid?
 - B. Imhotep
11. Egyptian pyramids were built with both smooth *and* stepped sides.
12. List three locations where pyramids from the Old Kingdom can be seen.
 1. Medum
 2. Abusir
 3. Dashur
13. The Pyramids of Giza stand on the west bank of the Nile River.
14. The largest pyramid at Giza was built for King Khufu.
15. A huge statue called the Great Sphinx probably was built for King Khafre.
16. The Great Pyramid at Giza contains more than 2 million stone blocks.
17. *True*. The Great Pyramid is now shorter than it originally was. Some of its upper stones are now gone.

18. To build the pyramids, the Egyptians used:
 - B. Copper chisels
 - D. Ramps
19. The blocks are made of limestone.
20. From a distance, the pyramids appeared to have been cut out of a single stone because their builders carefully covered them with outer casing stones.
21. *True*. No one knows how long it took to build the Great Pyramid at Giza.
22. Scholars believe that about 100,000 men worked on the pyramids for several months each year.
23. Farm laborers built the pyramids during periods when floodwaters covered their fields and made farming impossible.
24. The contents of most of the pyramids were stolen or destroyed by thieves.
25. *False*. Indians of Central and South America also built pyramids.
26. Answers will vary. Answers may include: Smaller pyramids were built for queens and as memorial monuments for kings.
27. Answers will vary.
28. The Great Pyramid required workers' escape passages because sealing plugs that were slid into place after the burial blocked the main exits.
29. Giza is in the northeastern part of modern Egypt, on the west side of the Nile, across the river from Cairo.
30. The ancient Egyptians possibly intended for the king to use the ships in the afterlife.