

Introduction to the Nile River

Hunters and gatherers settled along Egypt's fertile Nile valley around 7000 years ago. These people eventually became farmers and founded small villages that later formed two kingdoms known as Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt which were both along the Nile River. Around 3100BC the two kingdoms became one great kingdom ruled by a pharaoh.

The Nile River made it possible for people to live in Egypt's hot, dry climate. Herodotus, a famous ancient writer said the Nile was a "gift" to the Egyptians. It is because of the Nile River, Egypt became one of the greatest ancient civilisations in history. The Nile is one of the longest rivers in the world and flows 6500km from the mountains in Africa to its delta (the mouth of river that flows into the sea). The Nile provided many necessities for the ancient Egyptians such as food, water, rich soils to grow crops, animals to hunt, a river for transport and papyrus reeds a plant that grows in water which can be used to make boats, rope and paper.

The Nile River is the most important geographic feature of Egypt. This is because Egypt is a hot, dry country that receives little rainfall and is mostly desert but has many useful resources such as gold, limestone, copper and granite. The only fertile land (to grow food) in Egypt is found along the narrow strips beside the Nile and within the delta. The ancient Egyptians called the hot, dry, desert areas of their country the "Red Lands". The fertile strips of land on each side of the Nile were called the "Black Lands".

Annually, every June to September the Nile would flood, bringing a new layer of rich mud which the farmers would use to grow their crops. After the flood waters retreated (dried up) the farmers would use the Nile to irrigate (water) their crops. The flood height of the Nile was very important to the Egyptians as it had to be around eight meters. If the flood was any higher than eight meters it would have destroyed their homes. If the flood was lower than eight meters then there would be no thick rich, black mud meaning the soil would be too poor to produce food and the people would starve.

The Nile was the main transport route in ancient Egypt as it allowed fast and easy access between towns along the Nile. The Nile was used for leisure and trade, Egyptians would go fishing and sailing for fun while traders would ship grain to sell & transport stone blocks to build the pyramids.

Task 1: Answer the following questions:

1. List two reasons why the Nile was important to the Ancient Egyptians
2. When does the Nile flood?
3. Why was it important for the flood of the Nile to be around eight meters?

Task 2: Fill in the missing word from the word bank. (Hint: The answers are in the page you just read)

- 1) Egypt was settled around _____ years ago by hunters and gatherers.
- 2) The two kingdoms that formed Egypt were called _____ & _____
- 3) The river running through Egypt is called the _____
- 4) _____ said the Nile was a _____ to the Egyptians.
- 5) The _____ River is one of the _____ rivers in the world that flows _____ km from the _____ in Africa to its _____.
- 6) The _____ River provided many necessities for ancient Egyptians such as _____ & _____
- 7) The ancient Egyptians called the _____, _____ desert areas of their country the _____.
- 8) The _____ were the fertile strips of land on each side of the Nile River.
- 9) The _____ would bring a new layer of _____ which the farmers would use to grow their crops.
- 10) The Nile was the main _____ route in ancient Egypt as it allowed _____ & _____ access between towns in the Nile.
- 11) The Nile was also used for _____ and _____.
- 12) Egyptians would go _____ or _____ for fun while traders would ship _____ or transport stone blocks to build the _____.

Word bank

Nile	Mountains	Pyramids.
Food	Water	Herodotus
Gift	Hot	Nile
Sailing	Delta	Dry
Red Lands	Black Lands	Annual Flood
Upper Egypt	Lower Egypt	Grain
7000	Transport	Nile
Fast	Leisure	Easy
Fishing	Rich Mud	Trade
6500	Food	Longest

Answers

Task 1

- 1) Any two of the following: Water, food, farming, transport, leisure, papyrus
- 2) Annually every June to September
- 3) Too high it would destroy their homes, too low the soil quality is poor and they would not grow sufficient crops and people would starve.

Task 2

- 1) Egypt was settled around **7000** years ago by hunters and gatherers.
- 2) The two kingdoms that formed Egypt were called **Upper Egypt & Lower Egypt**.
- 3) The river running through Egypt is called the **Nile**.
- 4) **Herodotus** said the Nile was a **Gift** to the Egyptians.
- 5) The **Nile** River is one of the **Longest** Rivers in the world that flows **6500**km from the **Mountains** in Africa to the **Delta**.
- 6) The **Nile** River provided many necessities for ancient Egyptians such as **Food & Water**
- 7) The ancient Egyptians called the **Hot, Dry** desert areas of their country the **Red Lands**.
- 8) The **Black lands** were the fertile strips of land on each side of the Nile river according to the Egyptians.
- 9) The **Annual** flood would bring a new layer of **Rich Mud** which the farmers would use to grow their crops.
- 10) The Nile was the main **Transport** route in ancient Egypt as it allowed **Fast & Easy** access between towns in the Nile.
- 11) The Nile was also used for **Leisure & Trade**.
- 12) Egyptians would go **Fishing & Sailing** for fun while traders would ship **Grain &** transport stone blocks to build the **Pyramids**.

To conclude can anyone tell me why Ancient Egyptians wanted to live on a great river like the Nile?