Ancient Egypt Worksheet

Grade 5 – 6 social studies · early civilizations

Name: Date: Score: / 26

A country shaped by one river

Egypt is mostly desert. Almost all of its people, then and now, live in a narrow green strip along the **Nile**. Without the river there would have been no farming, and without farming there would have been no cities, no writing and no pyramids.

Every summer the Nile flooded. When the water pulled back it left a layer of dark, rich **silt** across the fields. That soil grew wheat and barley reliably enough to feed far more people than the farmers themselves, which freed others to become builders, priests, soldiers and **scribes**.

The flood also shaped how Egypt was governed. Officials measured the height of the water each year, predicted the harvest from it, and set taxes accordingly. A high flood meant plenty; a low one meant hunger. The whole state was organised around a river doing the same thing every year.

Part A — Vocabulary match each term to its meaning (8 marks)

1. Pharaoh	_____	A. To preserve a body so it would last into the afterlife
2. Silt	_____	B. A stone tomb built to hold a pharaoh and their belongings
3. Hieroglyphs	_____	C. The fan of fertile land where a river splits before the sea
4. Scribe	_____	D. A writing system using pictures and symbols
5. Pyramid	_____	E. Fine, dark soil left behind on the fields by a flood
6. Delta	_____	F. A trained writer who kept records for the government
7. Papyrus	_____	G. A reed used to make an early kind of paper
8. Mummify	_____	H. The ruler of ancient Egypt, treated as both king and god

Part B — Fill in the blanks (8 marks)

1. The Nile flooded every _____, which is why Egyptians called the flood season the start of their year.

2. When the water went down it left behind _____, which made the soil rich.

3. Egypt is often called the gift of the _____.

4. A ruler of Egypt was called a _____.

5. Most Egyptians lived close to the river because the land beyond it was _____.

6. Egyptians wrote using _____, a system of pictures and symbols.

7. The huge stone tombs built for pharaohs are called _____.

8. Reeds from the riverbank were pressed into _____ to write on.

Part C — Put the events in order number them 1 to 4, earliest first (4 marks)

Upper and Lower Egypt united
c. 3100 BCE

c. 2600 BCE
Pyramid building begins

Egypt at its largest
c. 1500 BCE

c. 30 BCE
Egypt becomes a Roman province

Event	Order
Pyramid building begins	
Egypt becomes a Roman province	
Upper and Lower Egypt united	
Egypt at its largest	

Part D — Read the source (4 marks)

HYMN TO THE NILE, WRITTEN DOWN AROUND 2100 BCE

Hail to you, O Nile, who comes forth from the earth and gives life to Egypt. If his flood is low, then everyone is poor, and the grain is small. If he rises, the land is in joy and every mouth laughs.

— an ancient Egyptian hymn

1. According to the hymn, what happens when the flood is low?

2. The hymn speaks to the Nile as if it were a person. What does that tell you about how Egyptians saw the river?

Part E — Think it through (2 marks)

1. Explain why a surplus of grain allowed some Egyptians to do jobs that had nothing to do with food.

Ancient Egypt Worksheet — Answer Key

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Part A — Vocabulary

1. **Pharaoh** → H
2. **Silt** → E
3. **Hieroglyphs** → D
4. **Scribe** → F
5. **Pyramid** → B
6. **Delta** → C
7. **Papyrus** → G
8. **Mummify** → A

Part B — Fill in the blanks

1. **summer**
2. **silt**
3. **Nile**
4. **pharaoh**
5. **desert**
6. **hieroglyphs**
7. **pyramids**
8. **papyrus**

Part C — Order of events

1. Pyramid building begins → **2**
2. Egypt becomes a Roman province → **4**
3. Upper and Lower Egypt united → **1**
4. Egypt at its largest → **3**

Watch for: BCE dates count backwards, so 3100 BCE is earlier than 1500 BCE. Students who sort them as ordinary numbers get the order reversed.

Part D — The source

1. **Everyone is poor and the grain is small — the harvest fails and people go hungry.**
2. **They saw the river as a living god who could be generous or withholding.**
   Accept any answer noting that the Nile is addressed directly, praised, and treated as choosing whether to flood.

Part E — Think it through

1. **When farmers grow more food than they need, not everyone has to farm.**
   The extra grain fed people who built, wrote, prayed and fought instead. That division of work is what turns a farming village into a civilization.