

Ancient Egypt - The Pyramids

by ReadWorks

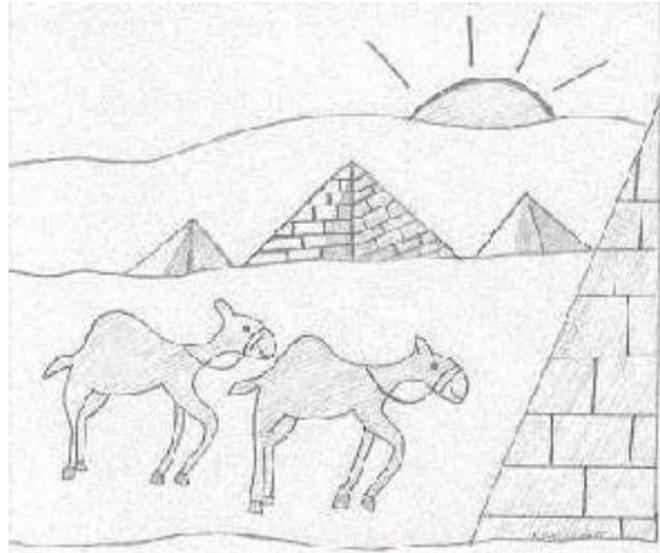


Illustration by Rebekah Hanousek-Monge

You may have seen pictures of the three pyramids of Giza in Egypt. Experts believe that these pyramids were built for ancient pharaohs, or Egyptian kings. The pyramids served as enormous and elaborate tombs.

Imagine building structures so big and heavy without modern construction equipment! The Great Pyramid of Khufu is the largest of the three pyramids in Giza. The Great Pyramid was built out of over 2 million stone blocks. Most of the blocks weighed about 2.5 tons each. It is amazing that all of these blocks were so skillfully put together.

One thing has always puzzled archaeologists. How did the ancient Egyptians move the blocks? Opinions vary. Many experts think the blocks were moved with ramps and sleds. However, no one knows for sure.

It took many workers to cut the blocks. It took many more to move them. It took even more men to place the blocks on the pyramid. Archaeologists estimate that over 20,000 men worked on the Great Pyramid. Building the pyramid took many years. Today, visitors still come to marvel at this amazing structure.

The pyramids of Giza make up one of the "Seven Wonders of the Ancient World." It is the only wonder of the ancient world that is still around today.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. How were the pyramids built?

- A. By using strings and sticks.
- B. By using giant construction cranes.
- C. Nobody knows for sure.
- D. By using thousands of camels.

2. The purpose of this passage is to

- A. inform
- B. amuse
- C. persuade
- D. entertain

3. Based on this passage, why are the pyramids one of the "Seven Wonders of the Ancient World?"

- A. They are the largest things ever made by human beings.
- B. They are amazing structures and it is unknown how they were built.
- C. There were seven pyramids and the pharaohs controlled the whole world.
- D. They were among the first seven buildings ever constructed.

4. Read the following sentence: "It is amazing that all of these blocks were so **skillfully** put together."

The word **skillfully** most nearly means

- A. easily
- B. dangerously
- C. lazily
- D. expertly

5. This passage is mostly about

- A. why the pyramids were located in Egypt
- B. the pyramids and how they may have been built
- C. why some people think aliens helped build the pyramids
- D. how ancient Egyptians buried their pharaohs in pyramids

6. What do many experts believe about how ancient Egyptians moved the blocks used to build the Great Pyramid?

7. Why is it especially impressive that the pyramids were built a long time ago?

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

Around 20,000 people worked on the Great Pyramid _____ it was built.

- A. sometimes
- B. although
- C. while
- D. after

9. **Vocabulary Word:** vary: to change from something else, or to be different from other things.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: