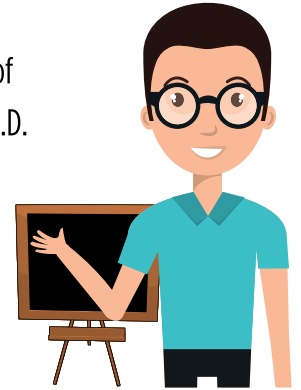


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Introduction to Kingdoms of Egypt

Professors teach students at colleges and universities. They also specialize in a specific area of research. For example, some professors teach physics or non-fiction writing. Professors typically have a Ph.D. in their area of research. Ph.D. stands for “Doctor of Philosophy.” It is the highest degree you can earn. People who have a Ph.D. are considered experts in their field. To earn this degree, people take classes, do research, and write. This can take many years!

Today, you will imagine that you are a professor who studies Ancient Egypt, also known as a Professor of Egyptology. Follow the steps below.



## Step 1: Learn About the Kingdoms of Ancient Egypt

Read the passage below about the Three Kingdoms in Ancient Egypt. Then, answer the questions.

The history of Ancient Egypt consists of many different time periods. Historians break down these periods into three primary kingdoms: the Old Kingdom (c. 2649 - 2150 B.C.E.), the Middle Kingdom (c. 2030 - 1640 BCE), and the New Kingdom (c. 1550 - 1070 BC.) It is important to note that historians debate about the exact dates of each period. This is because there isn't a single or specific event used to date the kingdoms.



The time periods between each kingdom are known as intermediate periods. Together, all of the different time periods span approximately 3,000 years of Egyptian history.

During each era of the Three Kingdoms, Egypt was ruled by dynasties. Dynasties are rulers from the same family. This means that power is passed on from one family member to another. 31 dynasties held power during the Three Kingdoms. The most powerful person in the kingdom was the pharaoh. Pharaohs were the political and religious head of the country. Egyptians believed that the pharaoh was a descendant from the gods and a god himself.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Introduction to Kingdoms of Egypt

## Old Kingdom

The Old Kingdom was known as the “Age of the Pyramids.” Pyramids were built as temples to the Egyptian gods and as tombs for rulers. The tombs were prepared with items that Egyptian rulers would need in their afterlife.

Historians remain amazed at the construction of the pyramids. Thousands of workers built the pyramids across many years. Obtaining supplies and organized workers required a lot of money, time, and coordination. One reason that the pyramids were able to be built was because Egypt had a centralized government. Under the centralized government, the pharaoh was in charge. The pharaoh elected officials, called nomarchs, to oversee different regions in Egypt. These officials were similar to governors in the United States. The pharaoh and nomarchs made sure that there were enough workers to build the giant pyramids to honor the gods and pharaohs.

A historian named Dr. Van de Mieroop explains that “Most of the 20-some kings compelled thousands of laborers to quarry, transport, put in place, and decorate vast quantities of stone in order to construct royal mortuary monuments.”

The collapse of the Old Kingdom occurred for several reasons. A series of weak pharaohs meant that the central government was weakened. The nomarchs saw an opportunity to take control of the government because the pharaohs were losing control. There was also a terrible famine that broke out because there were fewer floodings of the Nile River, causing crops to fail. These power struggles and natural disasters eventually split the country into two parts.



The Great Pyramid at Giza took 20 years to build and over 100,000 workers. More than 2 million stones were needed to build it.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Introduction to Kingdoms of Egypt

## The Middle Kingdom

The Middle Kingdom began under the leadership of Pharaoh Mentuhotep II. Mentuhotep II reunified the two parts of Egypt after they had split during the Old Kingdom. The Middle Kingdom also saw changes in government structure so that the pharaohs could prevent the nomarchs from becoming too powerful and taking over the government.

For example, Pharaoh Amenemhat I, one of the rulers during the Middle Kingdom, created the first standing army in Egypt that was directly under his control. Prior to this, the nomarchs controlled the armies in their regions, which gave them a lot of power. In addition, government agencies were created in different regions. The agencies were in charge of things such as taxes and road construction. By establishing agencies, the pharaoh was able to maintain tighter control of the regions to prevent one region becoming more powerful than others.

This period of Egyptian history is also described as Egypt's "Classical Age." During this period, Ancient Egyptian culture flourished and great works of art and literature were produced. Before this era, art and literature typically focused on rulers. During the Middle Kingdom, art and literature often focused on daily life and common people. For example, paintings of people fishing or walking were created. One famous piece of literature from this period was called the "Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor." In addition, Egyptians also created a new type of memorial statue called the "block statue." These statues consisted of a man squatting with his knees drawn up to his chest and his arms folded on top of his knees. This statue was typically made to honor individuals who were important to Egyptian society but were not royal.

Similar to the Old Kingdom, the Middle Kingdom weakened when the pharaoh lost power, and Egypt split apart again. This allowed for the Hyksos to invade Egypt and rule it for almost a century. The Hyksos were a group of people who most likely came from Western Asia.



Block statues were made out of a single piece of stone.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Introduction to Kingdoms of Egypt

## The New Kingdom

The New Kingdom was characterized by multiple powerful pharaohs. The era began under the leadership of Ahmose I. Ahmose I organized armies to defeat the Hyskos. He also reestablished trade with Syria that had been previously disrupted during the Middle Kingdom. In addition, he rebuilt temples that were neglected or damaged.

Another powerful pharaoh during this era was Queen Hatsheptut, who was the first woman to become pharaoh. She wanted to make Egypt richer and expand the empire by both trading and waging war on other civilizations.

Another important ruler during this time period was King Tutankhamen, or King Tut. Although Tut's reign was short, he reopened temples and allowed religious festivals that had been banned by previous pharaohs.

Another ruler during this period was Ramses II, also known as Ramses the Great. During his rule, Egypt expanded its territory south to the African kingdom of Nubia. He also negotiated the first peace treaty in the world with the Hittite kingdom, which was located along the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea. The peace treaty was written in hieroglyphics and said that each country would support each other in case of an attack.

Ramses II also built the Abu Simbel Temple in his own honor.



The Abu Simbel Temple was located near the Nile River and guarded by statues that were as tall as a six-story building.

After the death of Ramses II in 1213 BCE, the central government was in turmoil as different groups fought to gain control. BY 1070 BCE, Egypt faced new threats from foreign powers. For example, the Sea Peoples, a mysterious group of warriors, attacked the country around 1170 BCE. In 782 BCE, the Nubians attacked Egypt. Over the next century, the Assyrians and Persians also dominated Egypt.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Introduction to Kingdoms of Egypt

## Similarities of the Three Kingdoms

Even though each era was ruled by different dynasties and pharaohs, there were many similarities among the Three Kingdoms. For example, Ancient Egypt experienced periods of growth during each era. Economic growth occurred because of the expansion of trade. Cultural growth occurred because the Egyptians developed new art forms, celebrations, and ways of communicating.

The Three Kingdoms were also similar because they all experienced periods of upheaval. These periods of unrest typically occurred when Egypt lacked a strong ruler and central government. The power struggles and civil wars disrupted trade, which hurt the economy and caused social disorder.

## Answer the questions below based on what you read.

What was the purpose of building a pyramid?

Which kingdom is known for producing large amounts of art and literature?

Give one example of a piece of art that came out of this age.

Which ruler of the New Kingdom do you think improved life for the Egyptians the most? Why?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Introduction to Kingdoms of Egypt

Why was it important for the pharaoh to have a centralized government?

How would the government in the United States be different if it was ruled by a dynasty instead of democracy?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Introduction to Kingdoms of Egypt

## Step 2: Sharing Your Research

Did you know that many professors have social media accounts? Professors post on Twitter, TikTok, and Instagram to teach the public about their research. Professors also share their personal opinions and thoughts on current events.

Imagine that you want to share what you learned about the Three Kingdoms on Twitter. Write three tweets based on what you read in the passage. Read the requirements for your tweets and write your tweets below.



### Tweet Requirements

- Each tweet must be 2-5 sentences long.
- Each tweet must have at least one hashtag.
- One tweet must make a claim about what led to the collapse of the kingdoms.
- One tweet must talk about a comparison between how the kingdoms were ruled in Ancient Egypt and how the United States is ruled today.
- One tweet must be from a pharaoh's point of view about a challenge he or she is facing and the hardest part of being a ruler.

Tweet #1:

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Tweet #2:

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Tweet #3:

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