

# Civilizations of the Nile Test

## Study Guide



1. The Ancient Egyptians were polytheistic, believing that their pharaohs were gods, and given a 'divine right' to rule (meaning that the gods willed it). They also believe in an afterlife where earthly things are needed to help the person who has died. Therefore they would bury possessions with the body.
2. All river valley civilizations developed because of the fertility of the land around the river. Fertile land was created from silt left as the flood waters receded back into its banks. The purpose of irrigating was to bring water to crops that may not be close enough to fresh water.
3. Ancient Egyptians relied on farming and trading as foundations of their economy.
4. In Ancient Egypt, as in Mesopotamia, civilizations – towns and cities grew because a surplus of food allowed some people to work non-farming jobs.
5. The Egyptians mummified some of their dead. In order to do this, doctors needed a good understanding of human anatomy.
6. The largest social class in Ancient Egypt was the farmers, laborers, and slaves. Peasants fell into this class also, but they could *not* own the land that they worked on, unlike ordinary farmers. Someone could become a slave by committing a crime, being captured in battle, or owing a debt to someone that they could not pay.
7. Some geographic features, like mountains and deserts, can be a barrier to trade, travel, and communication.
8. Like Mesopotamia, the Egyptians created a writing system. Mesopotamia – cuneiform, Egypt – hieroglyphics.
9. The Nile River, the longest in the world, flows from south to north toward the Mediterranean Sea. Just before the Sea, there is the Nile Delta, triangle shaped land which is low and fertile.
10. Ancient Egypt was governed by 31 different dynasties, or families of rulers (father to son). One reason for this large number is that they often could not agree on who would be their leader, creating conflict.
11. The Kush is also a civilization along the Nile River. Over time, they were becoming stronger, and Egypt was afraid of being overthrown by Kush, so Egypt attacked and overthrew them first. Then as the Egyptian pharaohs became weaker, Kush was able to throw off their Egyptian rulers and become independent again. Eventually, Kush overthrew Egypt creating the 25<sup>th</sup> Kushite Dynasty. Through all of this, the Kush continued more and more to adopt Egyptian culture for themselves.