

CHAPTER

2

SECTION 4

Note Taking Study Guide

EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION

Focus Question: How did religion and learning play important roles in ancient Egyptian civilization?

As you read this section in your textbook, complete the chart below to record the main idea about Egyptian civilization under each heading. Include at least two supporting details for each main idea.

Egyptian Civilization	Supporting Detail					
	Supporting Detail					
	Main Idea					
	Red Heading					

CHAPTER

2

SECTION 4

Section Summary

EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION

READING CHECK

How did French scholar Jean Champollion use the Rosetta Stone to decipher the meaning of hieroglyphs?

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

What is the meaning of the word *radical* in the underlined sentence? Look for words or phrases in the surrounding sentences that help you figure out the meaning of the word.

READING SKILL

Identify Supporting Details

Identify two details from this Summary that support the main idea that Egyptian civilization made lasting contributions.

Ancient Egyptians made lasting contributions to civilization in many fields. Their religion, written language, art, science, and literature have fascinated people for thousands of years.

During the Old Kingdom, the chief god was the sun god, Re. By the Middle Kingdom, Egyptians called the supreme god **Amon-Re**. Then, around 1380 B.C., pharaoh Amenhotep IV replaced Amon-Re with a minor god, Aton. He then changed his own name to **Akhenaton**, meaning "he who serves Aton." However, priests, nobles, and peasants resisted Akhenaton's revolutionary changes, and his radical ideas failed. Most Egyptians related to the god **Osiris**, who ruled the dead. They also worshipped the goddess **Isis**, who promised life after death. People believed the afterlife was much like life on Earth, so they buried people's possessions with them. The Egyptians also learned to preserve bodies by **mummification**, or embalming and wrapping in cloth, so that the soul could return to the body.

Ancient Egyptians made advances in learning. Their first writing system, **hieroglyphics**, used symbols. Symbols were originally carved in stone. They used a simpler script called hieratic for everyday use. Later, they developed a similar script called demotic. They also developed material to write on, made from **papyrus** plants.

Egyptian civilization eventually declined, yet its written records survived. No one understood them until the early 1800s, when a French scholar, Jean Champollion, **deciphered**, or figured out meanings for, carvings on the **Rosetta Stone**. On this stone, the same passage was written in three ways: hieroglyphics, demotic, and Greek. By comparing these, Champollion decoded the hieroglyphs, allowing later scholars to read thousands of surviving records and inscriptions.

Egyptians also made advances in medicine, astronomy, and mathematics. Egyptian physicians diagnosed illnesses, performed surgeries, and prescribed medicines, some of which are still used today. Priest-astronomers mapped constellations, charted planets, and created a 12-month calendar that became the basis of the modern one. Mathematicians developed basic geometry.

Egyptian artwork has endured for thousands of years. It includes monuments, statues, wall paintings, temple carvings, jewelry, furniture, and other objects. Ancient Egyptian literature includes hymns, practical advice, love poems, and folk tales.

Review Questions

1. What did Egyptians do to prepare for the afterlife?

2. What contributions did ancient Egyptians make to science?
