

Information Text:

Non-Chronological Report

The Pyramids of Ancient Egypt

The pyramids were tombs¹ that were built for the pharaohs – the kings². The size of the pyramid is believed to signify³ the level of importance⁴ of the person entombed¹ inside. Due to their belief that a mummified person would live forever,⁵ the ancient⁶ Egyptians built these tombs¹ to keep their bodies safe when they departed⁷ from the world.

It is not known how many men it took to build a pyramid, with estimates ranging from 2000 to 100,000! Pyramid building would always⁸ happen when the Nile was flooded which is thought⁹ to be because the water was used to transport the stone.¹⁰

The Tomb

From the outside, the pyramids looked quite simple but inside were various passages and chambers, some with secret entrances and trapdoors.¹

The mummified body of the pharaoh would be placed in a sarcophagus (a large stone coffin)², which was then surrounded by other chambers containing precious¹¹ items that were thought⁹ to be needed in the afterlife. Other chambers might be used for family members.

Hieroglyphics

The chambers and passages were intricately decorated with pictures and hieroglyphics. At the Pyramid of Unas, many hieroglyphics were found – they are believed to tell stories of the King, religious tales, requests for help from the gods in the journey to the afterlife and serve as a warning to grave robbers!

Key

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| 1. Words with 'silent' letters. | 10. relative clauses beginning with who, which, where, when, whose, that, or an omitted relative pronoun. |
| 2. Brackets, dashes or commas to indicate parenthesis. | 11. Endings which sound like /ʃəs/ spelt -cious or -tious. |
| 3. Converting nouns or adjectives into verbs using suffixes (e.g. -ate, -ise, -ify). | 12. Homophones and other words that are often confused. |
| 4. Words ending in -ant, -ance/-ancy, -ent, -ence/-ency. | 13. Linking ideas across paragraphs using adverbials of time (for example, later), place (for example, nearby) and number (for example, secondly) or tense choices (for example, he had seen her before). |
| 5. Use of commas to clarify meaning or avoid ambiguity. | 14. Words ending in -able and -ible. |
| 6. The correct spelling of a common exception word. | 15. Devices to build cohesion within a paragraph (for example, then, after that, this, firstly). |
| 7. verb prefixes (e.g. dis-, de-, mis-, over- and re-). | 16. Use of the hyphen. |
| 8. indicating degrees of possibility using adverbs (for example, perhaps, surely) or modal verbs (for example, might, should, will, must). | 17. Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words ending in -fer. |
| 9. Words containing the letter-string ough. | |

The Sphinx

The sphinx is a mythical creature with a Pharaoh's head, the body of a lion and sometimes the wings of a large bird. The word means 'father¹² of dread' or 'the terrifying one'. Made of limestone, it sits near the Pyramids of Giza and is the largest stone statue in the world, at over 73m long, 19m wide and 20m high. It was believed¹³ to have been built during the reign of Khafra with the face made in his likeness. In mythology, the sphinx is believed to have asked impossible¹⁴ riddles and eaten anyone who answered incorrectly.

Which Is the Oldest Pyramid?

Over 130 pyramids have been found in Egypt. The oldest, the Pyramid of Djoser, was built over 4000 years ago in Saqqara, south of Cairo. It was designed by the architect, Imhotep, and built during the third dynasty. This¹⁵ is thought⁹ to be the oldest monumental structure in the world made from cut stone.

Where Are the Most Famous Pyramids?

The most famous pyramids are those in Giza. The largest of these pyramids is known as the 'Great Pyramid of Giza' and was built for Pharaoh Khufu. It took over 20 years to build and stood over 140 meters high, with many smaller pyramids surrounding it. Because the outer layer of stone has worn down, the pyramid now has a rough⁹, rocky surface. However, when the pyramid was originally built, it would have had an outer layer of stone with a smooth appearance³. This pyramid is one of the 'Seven Wonders of the Ancient World'; in fact, it is the only one still standing. Built over 4500 years ago, this pyramid was the tallest man-made¹⁶ structure in the world until the 1300s. Approximately 2,300,000 limestone blocks were used, each weighing on average 2.5 tons.

The Khufu pyramid complex included five boat pits containing ships. It is not known whether these vessels ever touched water, were intended for the King's use in the afterlife,² or perhaps⁸ transferred¹⁷ the King's body along the Nile to his tomb⁶.

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Nearby,¹³ stands the pyramid of Kafre, who was the son of Khufu and ruled between 2558 and 2532 BC10. His pyramid was slightly smaller than that of his father but the two entrances have led some to believe that it was originally planned to be bigger.

Pyramids are fascinating but there is still much that we don't know about them; archaeologists continue their work in an attempt to discover more about the ancient world.

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