

MAKE it WORK!

ANCIENT
EGYPT

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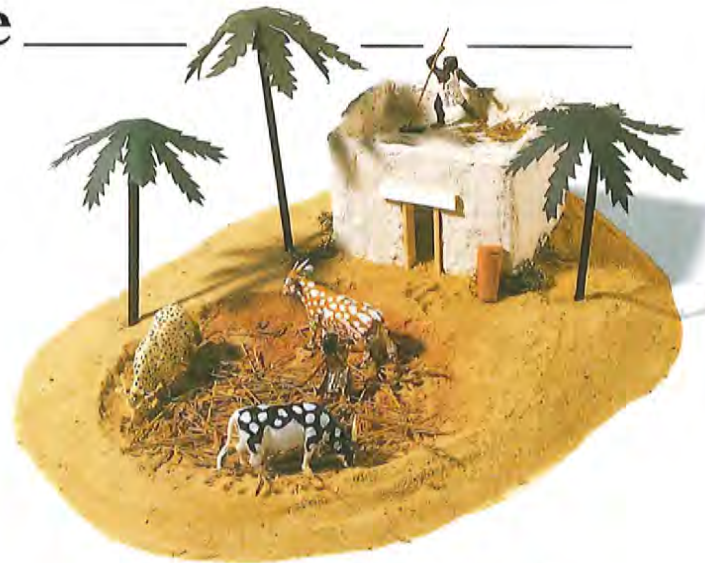
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Words marked in **bold** in the text can be found in the glossary.

Studying Egyptian Life

All human beings need food and shelter to survive. They also need things to look forward to that give their lives hope and meaning. Throughout history, different groups of people around the world have come up with their own ways of meeting these basic needs. Studying past **civilizations** can tell us how people used the resources around them to build shelters, how they farmed or found food, and how they met their spiritual needs and hopes for a better future.



∇ This map shows modern-day Egypt and its neighbors, some of which were of major importance to ancient Egypt.



△ Simple farming methods involving oxen trampling grain were used by the Egyptians.

IN THE COURSE OF HISTORY civilizations have risen and eventually fallen because of internal troubles or pressures from outside. The story of the ancient Egyptian civilization is a very long one. It lasted for over 2,000 years. The Roman Empire rose and fell in half that time, and the ancient Greek civilization lasted less than 1,000 years.

TO HELP people make sense of this vast stretch of time, the greatest period of Egyptian history is usually divided into three periods, or kingdoms. In this book we have given each kingdom a symbol, which is used purely as a guide, when information relates to that time.

KEY FOR SYMBOLS

- ☪ Old Kingdom 2686 B.C. – 2181 B.C.
- 🐎 Middle Kingdom 2055 B.C. – 1650 B.C.
- 👤 New Kingdom 1550 B.C. – 1069 B.C.

EGYPT'S GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION plays a vital part in understanding its development as a civilization. During the period covered in this book, foreign trade and travel grew with the discovery of valuable raw materials from abroad.

THE EGYPTIANS traveled to nearby countries by sea or over land. As the wealthiest country of the ancient world, Egypt had much to offer its neighbors, such as gold from the Eastern Desert, in exchange for what it lacked. This made for good trading relations at first, but later led to invasion by foreign countries eager to exploit Egypt's fine natural resources.

EGYPT'S LEGACY to the world lies in the most spectacular monuments ever built. The **pyramids** at Giza, the Great Sphinx, and magnificent temples are all wonderful technological achievements. In fact, experts are still trying to understand how the Egyptians were able to build such massive constructions with very simple tools.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS AND ANTHROPOLOGISTS have, however, been able to explain a lot about the daily life of the ancient Egyptians by the wall paintings, documents, treasures, personal possessions, and household items that have been discovered in the remains of tombs and temples.



△ The magnificent temple at Abu Simbel was carved out of sandstone cliffs in the Nubian Desert on the orders of Ramses II.

THESE FINDINGS also reveal much about the Egyptians' religious faith and their views on death and what followed. Experts have been able to work out a lot about their belief in the **afterlife** from the discovery of tomb models buried with the dead, coffins covered with written spells to protect against danger, and **mummies**—perfectly preserved bodies for burial.

◁ This wall painting shows the type of boats the ancient Egyptians used, the birds found on the banks of the Nile, and the tools that noblemen used for hunting.

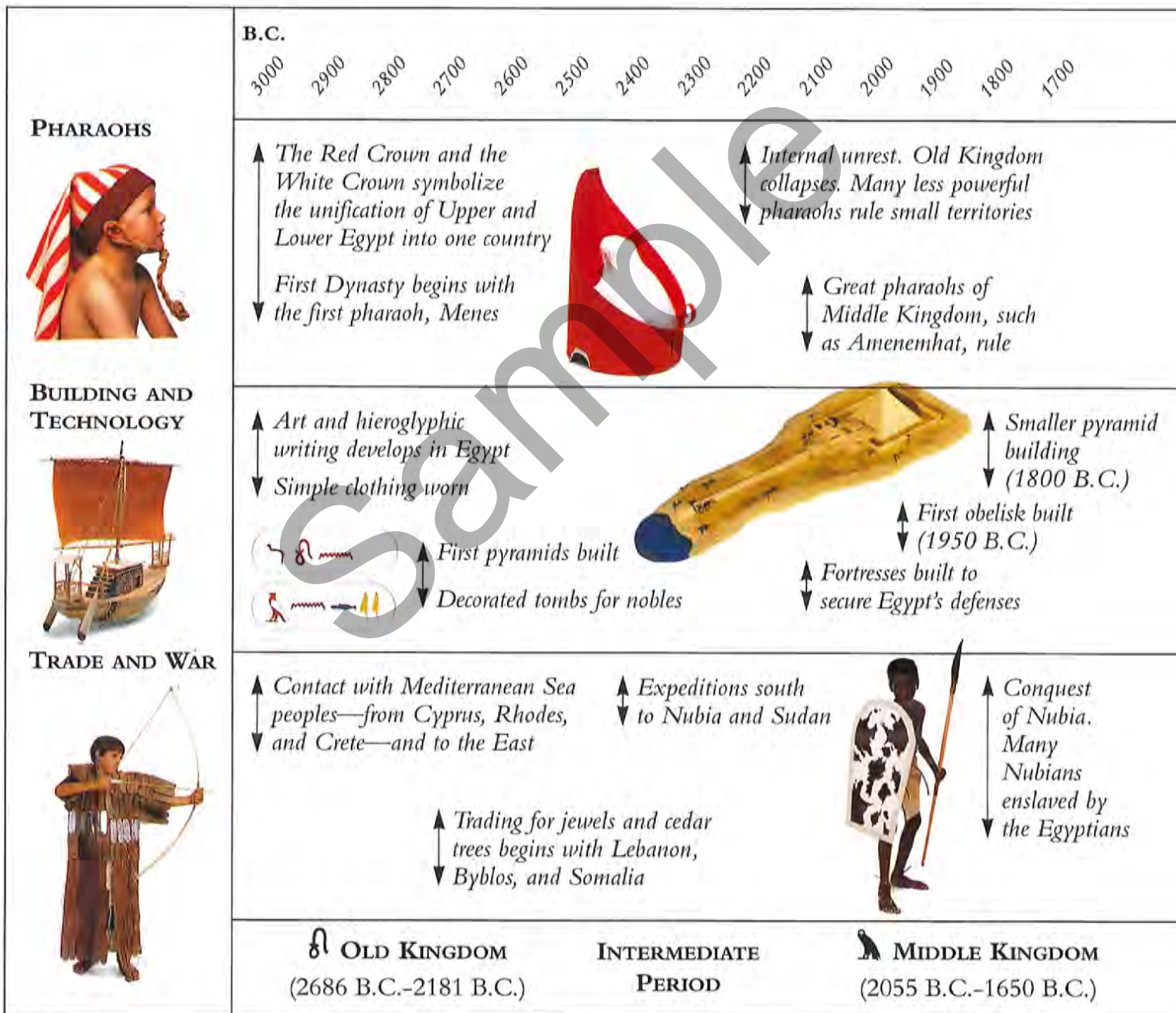


THE MAKE IT WORK! way of looking at history is to ask questions about the past and to find the answers by making the things people made as close as possible to the way they made them. You do not have to make everything in the book to understand the ancient Egyptians' way of life—in fact, just by looking at the step-by-step instructions, you will be able to see how they put things together and made them work efficiently.

Timeline

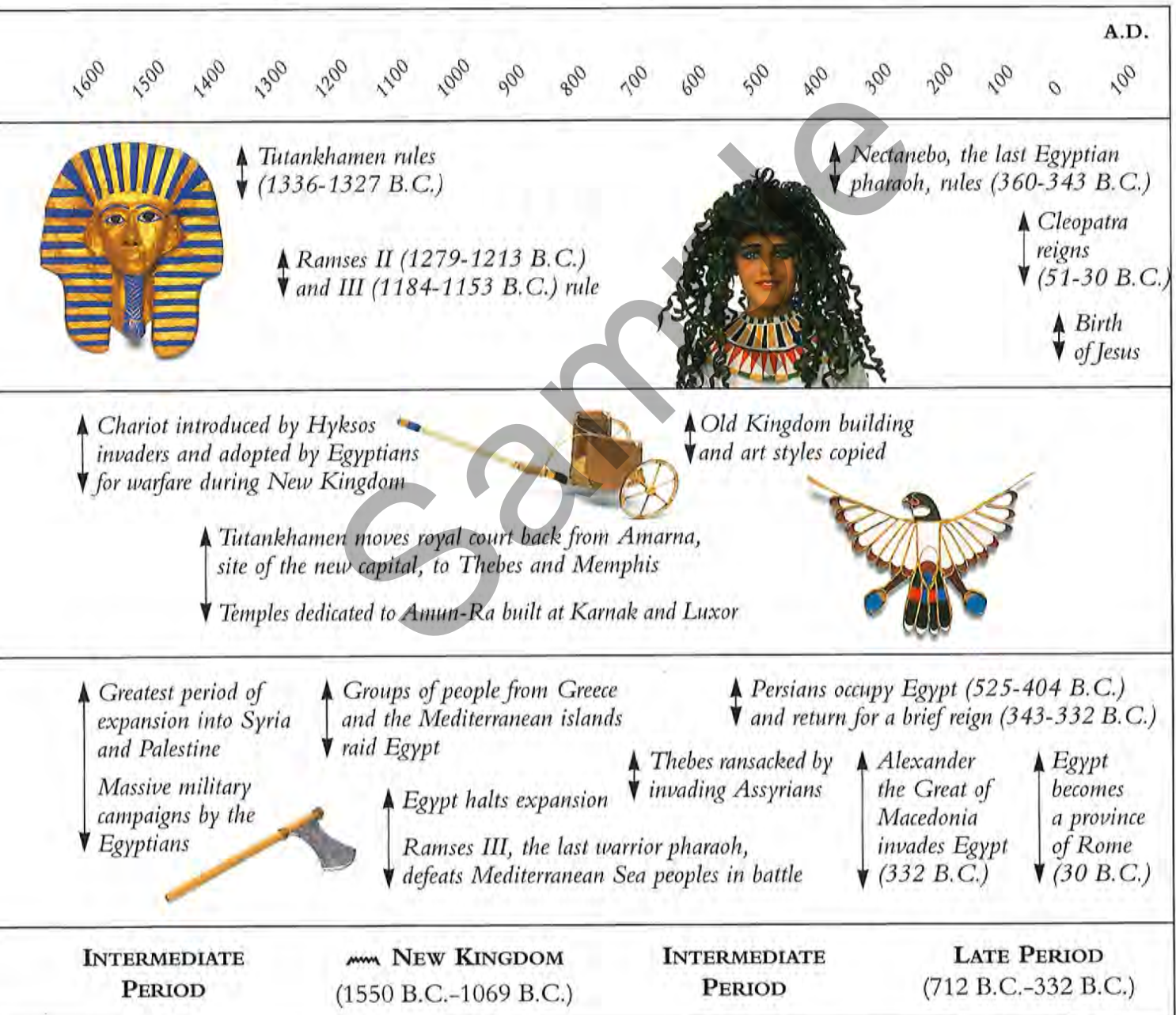
In this book we look at history by finding out how ancient Egyptians lived. Another way to look at history is to study the events and political changes that occurred over time. You can see from this chart, for instance, which dynasty of **pharaohs**, or kings, was on the throne, when Egypt started trading with other countries and when foreign invaders arrived.

EGYPTIANS WERE RULED by pharaohs and the throne was passed down through the family from generation to generation. A dynasty, or family line, continued until the male line died out and an outsider, possibly with the support of the army or court, married the queen or heiress. There was rarely a struggle. Each dynasty had its own traditions and character. Some built monuments, some encouraged the arts, some were weak and lazy, and others financed powerful armies which carried out impressive military campaigns.



EACH KINGDOM—Old, Middle, and New—witnessed a succession of ruling dynasties. Between the kingdoms themselves there were periods of chaos and conflict. This was because of political unrest within Egypt, with a number of different rulers fighting for control of the country, and foreign invasion. After the New Kingdom ended, there were only brief periods of calm and prosperity as repeated raids from Sudan, Persia, and Macedonia became increasingly threatening and disruptive.

EGYPT FINALLY FELL to the Greeks in 332 B.C. For the next 300 years the Ptolemy family ruled the country, and important people adopted Greek **culture** and learned to speak Greek. By 30 B.C., Egypt had become a province of Rome. Over the next several hundred years the gradual erosion of Egyptian culture and religion continued. An Arab invasion of A.D. 7 saw the arrival of Islam and in A.D. 324, Egypt officially turned to Christianity replacing all the country's temples with **Coptic** churches and monasteries.



Clothing

The clothes worn by the ancient Egyptians were light and cool. They were made from fine, undyed linen cloth and needed very little stitching as they were simply draped around the body. Color and decoration came in the form of elaborate jewelry, wigs, and makeup. No one wore underwear, and because it was so hot for most of the year, children often wore nothing at all.

OLD KINGDOM WOMEN wore a simple tube dress made from a rectangle of linen sewn down one side, with straps attached to the top edge. This simple dress style did not change, although during the Middle Kingdom colorful, patterned collars started being worn by both the rich and poor. New Kingdom fashion was more elegant, with a pleated, fringed robe worn over the tube dress.

MEN WORE SHORT KILTS to the knee during the Old Kingdom. The linen cloth was pleated and fastened at the waist, either with a knot or buckle. In the Middle Kingdom, the style of kilts changed to become straight and longer for all. Full-length cloaks kept winter chills at bay.



△ *This pleated dress is possibly the oldest existing garment in the world. It dates from the period of the first pharaoh, which was around 3000 B.C.*

By the New Kingdom, fringing and pleating became popular, adorning the sashes and aprons that men now wore.

MAKE A TUNIC



You will need: needle and thread, felt-tip pen, scissors, safety pin, fabric (5 x 3 ft.)

1 Wrap the fabric around the person you are making the tunic for, from under the arms to the knees.

2 Allow an overlap of at least half the width again. Mark the fabric and cut it. Use the leftover material to make two straps.

3 Use a safety pin to hold the tube together, by pinning it carefully at the top of the back (so that you can take it off and put it on).