



## A Lesson on Egypt by Shannon King

**Grade Level:** Grade 4

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts

**Lesson Length:** 2 hours

**Lesson Keywords:** Reading; writing; Egypt; history; culture; critical thinking

**Lesson Description:** The goal of this lesson is to introduce students to the history and modern day culture of Egypt through close reading of the below passage. This lesson also serves to strengthen vocabulary and expand critical thinking in response to questions on ideas presented in the text.

### Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.10: By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 4-5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1a: Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2c: Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.4a: Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

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## Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

**Instructions:** Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

### Egypt by

**Content:** Egypt is a country in Africa. It is at the north part of the continent. The north side of Egypt borders the Mediterranean. East of it is the Red Sea, Sudan to the south and Libya to the west. Other countries are on its other sides. It is in a very special location. It is a place that is close to Asia.

The capital of Egypt is Cairo. That is a really great city. It has been an important city for a long time. It is the largest city in Africa. If you visit that city, you will find a very modern place. You will see many cars. You will see many businesses, schools, and homes.

About 82 million people live in Egypt. They have a rich history. Long ago, Egyptians made this the greatest place in the world. They built pyramids. These very smart people invented ways to farm.

Long ago, Egyptians were wonderful leaders. They built great buildings. They set up schools. They invented a special way of writing. That was called hieroglyphics. They looked like pictures instead of alphabet letters.

You will still see hieroglyphics in Egypt today. But they are not used to read and write. They are a part of history. Egypt has a long history. It has been a leader for a long time. If you read Egypt's history, you will know how great this country has been.

Today most Egyptians live near the banks of the Nile River. This is where the only good land to farm is. It's a great place to live. There are other parts that are difficult to live in; they are deserts. So not many people live there.

About half of Egypt's residents live in cities. Those big cities are in the area of the Nile River. If you go to Cairo, the biggest city, you will find millions of people.

Egypt has had some problems. There have been wars. There have been problems of poverty. Poor people in the cities need jobs. They need homes. Egypt is working to solve those problems.

Egypt is making its schools better. The school leaders are making plans to help students learn more. They are planning ways to help parents help their children learn more, too.

Egypt is a great country. It has a wonderful history. It will have a great future because people are working hard. They are working together to get more jobs and homes.

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## Task 1: Vocabulary

**Instructions:** Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

**Q: 1 WordPhrase:** Continent **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** The second sentence of the story states that Egypt "is at the north part of the continent." What does the word "continent" mean?

- A:** A continent is the same as a country.
- B:** A continent is a bunch of cities.
- C:** A continent is a land mass of many countries.
- D:** A continent is like an island.

**Question:** Which of the sentences below uses the word "continent" correctly?

- A:** My brother is a continent source of annoyance.
- B:** We live on the continent called North America.
- C:** The continents of my fridge are cold.
- D:** Old ladies are sometimes in continent.

**Q: 2 WordPhrase:** Banks **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** The sixth paragraph of the passage states that "Today most Egyptians live near the banks of the Nile River." What does the word "banks" mean in this context?

- A:** A place to deposit and withdraw money.
- B:** A beach next to a lake or ocean.
- C:** An area of land next to a waterway.
- D:** A building with a drive-thru where they give out lollipops.

**Question:** Which sentence below uses the word "banks" correctly?

- A:** My pet hamster banks his food in his cheeks.
- B:** The banks of the bathtub keep the water from splashing out.
- C:** Most people keep their money at banks or credit unions.
- D:** My father likes to go fishing along the banks of the creek.

**Q: 3 WordPhrase:** Capital **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** In the second paragraph we learned that "The capital of Egypt is Cairo." What does the word "capital" mean in this sentence?

- A:** The first letter in a sentence.
- B:** The big letter at the beginning of a name.
- C:** The main city in a state or country.
- D:** The most important person in a story.

**Question:** Which of the sentences below uses the word "capital" correctly?

- A:** Tallahassee is the capital of Florida.
- B:** Mom is the capital of our family.
- C:** That's a capital idea, my dear Watson.
- D:** Capital letters are bigger than lowercase letters.

**Q: 4 WordPhrase:** Hieroglyphics **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** The passage talks about Egyptians using hieroglyphics. What does the word "hieroglyphics" mean in this context?

- A:** Photographs that the Egyptians took.
- B:** Letters the Egyptians wrote to each other.
- C:** The language ancient Egyptians spoke.
- D:** A type of alphabet made up of pictures.

**Question:** Which of the sentences below correctly uses the word "hieroglyphics"?

- A:** Ancient Egyptians used hieroglyphics instead of our modern day alphabet.
- B:** Sometimes my mom speaks in hieroglyphics.
- C:** If you get low blood sugar sometimes you might have hieroglyphics.
- D:** Numbers are the same as hieroglyphics.

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## Task 2: Forum Discussion

**Instructions:** This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

### 1 - Why do most people live by the Nile?

In the passage it states that most of the people in Egypt live near the banks of the Nile River, rather than in the desert. Why do you think this might be?

### 2 - Why do Egyptians no longer use hieroglyphics?

Paragraph five explains that although you might still see hieroglyphics in Egypt, they are no longer used to read and write. Why do you think they are no longer used?

### 3 - What is special about Egypt's location?

The first paragraph of this passage talks about Egypt's location and says that it is very special. What do you think makes its location important?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

**Instructions:** The passage talks about Egypt's rich history and its modern day struggles. Write a 300 word essay describing some ways Egypt might draw from its long history to help solve the current problems.

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