GIFT OF THE NILE

ALL UNDERLINED INFORMATION WILL BE YOUR NOTES.

THE LONGEST RIVER

The Nile is 4,160 miles long – the world’s longest river. It begins near the equator in Africa and flows north to the Mediterranean Sea. In the south it churns with waterfalls called cataracts. Near the sea the Nile branches into a delta. The Nile Delta is the river’s mouth where the river deposits silt, making the land very fertile.

The Nile flooded at the same time every year.

GROUP DISCUSSION: What effect would the knowledge of consistent flooding have on the ancient Egyptian people?

http://safeshare.tv/w/ijfeXSNMnN
RED LAND, BLACK LAND

The ancient Egyptians lived in narrow bands of land on each side of the Nile called the black land.

The black land was where the Nile flooded depositing the rich silt.

The red land was the regions outside of the fertile soil which was mostly barren desert.

The weather in Egypt was very consistent with eight months of sunny hot weather and four months of a cooler but sunny winter.

Most of the region only received an inch of rain every year.

ISOLATION

The harsh desert was a barrier that kept out enemies.

GROUP DISCUSSION: What observations can you make by looking at the image above?
By about 2400 B.C., farmers used technology to expand their farmland. Working together, they dug irrigation canals that carried river water to dry areas. Then they used a tool called a shaduf to spread the water across the fields. These innovated, or new, techniques gave them more farmland.

EGYPTIAN CROPS

Egyptians in the ancient world grew a variety of food. Egyptians were the first to grind wheat into flour. They mixed the flour with yeast to create bread. They grew lettuce, radishes, asparagus, and cucumbers, along with dates, figs, grapes, and watermelon.

Egyptians were also able to create clothing out of crops they grew. Ancient Egyptians were the first to weave fibers from flax plants into a fabric called linen. The linen was light and perfect for the hot, Egyptian weather.
EGYPTIAN HOUSES

Egyptians built houses using bricks made of mud from the Nile mixed with chopped straw. They placed narrow windows high in the walls to reduce sunlight. Often, walls were painted white to reflect heat. Most people slept on mats covered with linen sheets.

Wealthier Egyptians had fancier houses with courtyards and pools that were filled with fish.
EGYPTIAN LIFE

Egypt's economy depended on farming. However, the natural resources of the area allowed other economic activities to develop too.

MINING

The Egyptians wanted valuable metals that were not found in the black land. Ancient Egyptians sought out such metals as copper, iron, gold, and turquoise and lapis lazuli.

Egyptians began mining for copper to make tools but later discovered iron to be much stronger.

Egyptians sought gold for its bright beauty. The Egyptian word for gold was “nub”. Nubia was a region along the upper Nile that had the richest gold mines in Africa.

Turquoise and lapis lazuli were used in Egyptian jewelry.

FISHING AND HUNTING

Using lightweight rafts with bound reeds, Egyptians fished the plentiful waters of the Nile. They used nets and harpoons to catch the wildlife found within the river.

Some Egyptian fishermen even went after hippos and crocodiles.

TRANSPORTATION AND TRADE

Eventually Egyptians attached sails to their boats and used oars. The Nile became a highway of trade and transportation, with Egyptians traveling along the vast river and trading with one another.