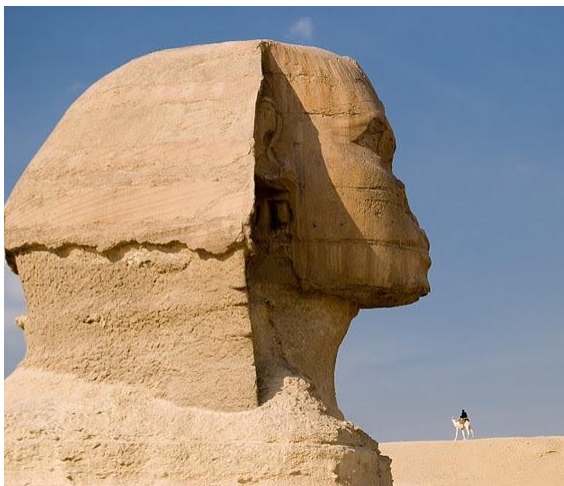




**A FUTURISTIC LOOK
THROUGH ANCIENT
LENSES:
A SYMPOSIUM ON ANCIENT EGYPT**

**Contrasting
Experiences of
Ancient Egyptian
Children & Parenting
With Contemporary
Families**



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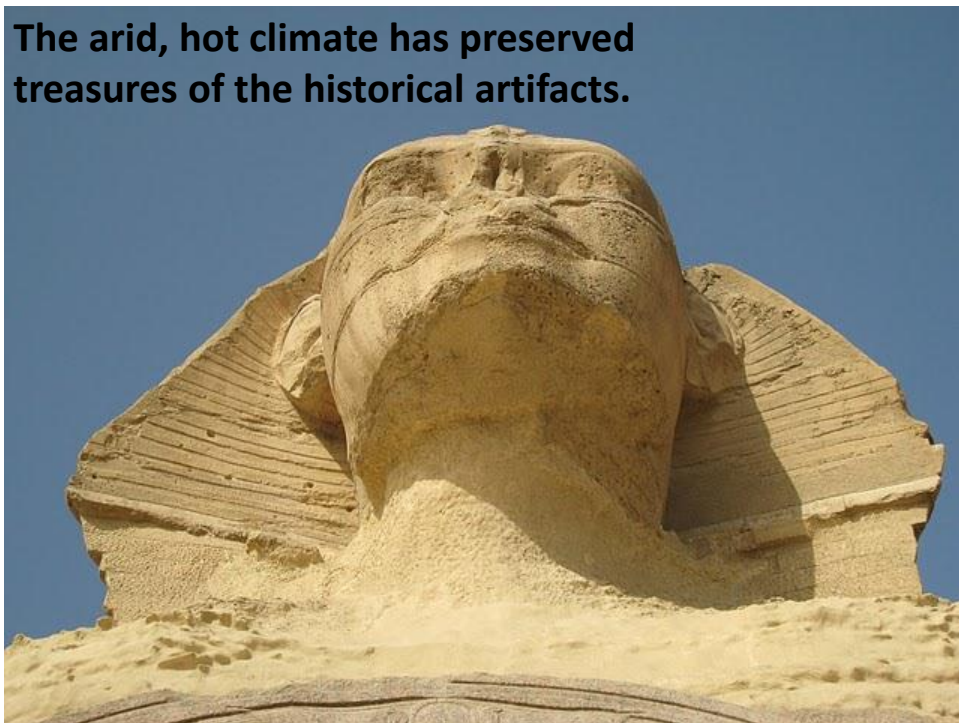
LICK OF COLOUR Wildlife scenes graced palace walls. This is from Malqata, royal residence

We know about ancient Egypt because they

- WROTE prolifically;
- DREW providing art to represent their intentions for the afterlife;
- DESIGNED AND CONSTRUCTED huge monuments over generations of time



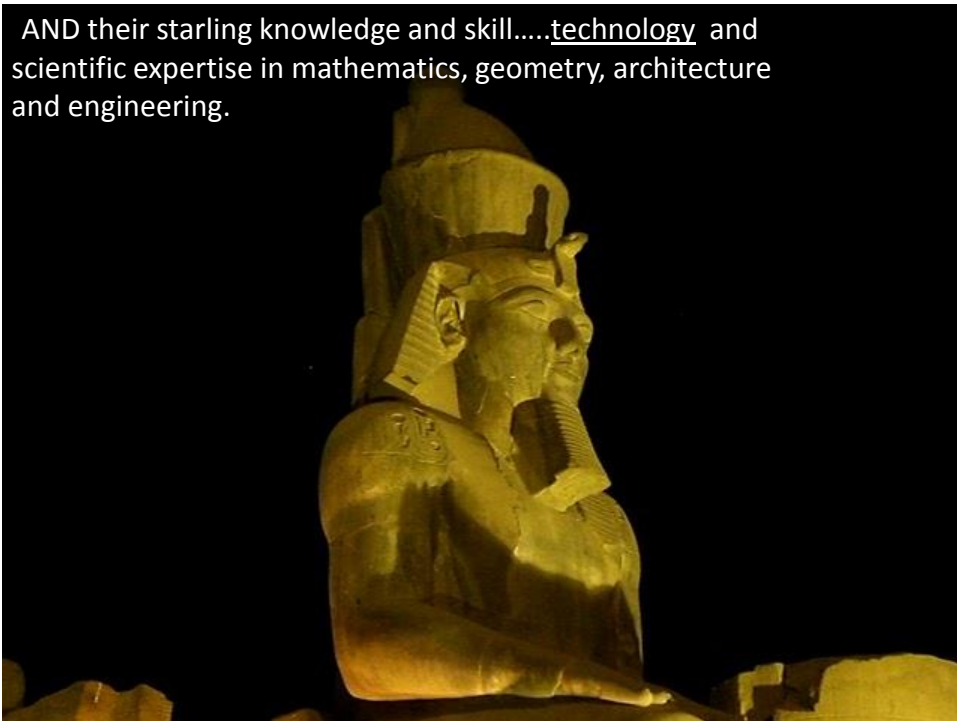
The arid, hot climate has preserved treasures of the historical artifacts.



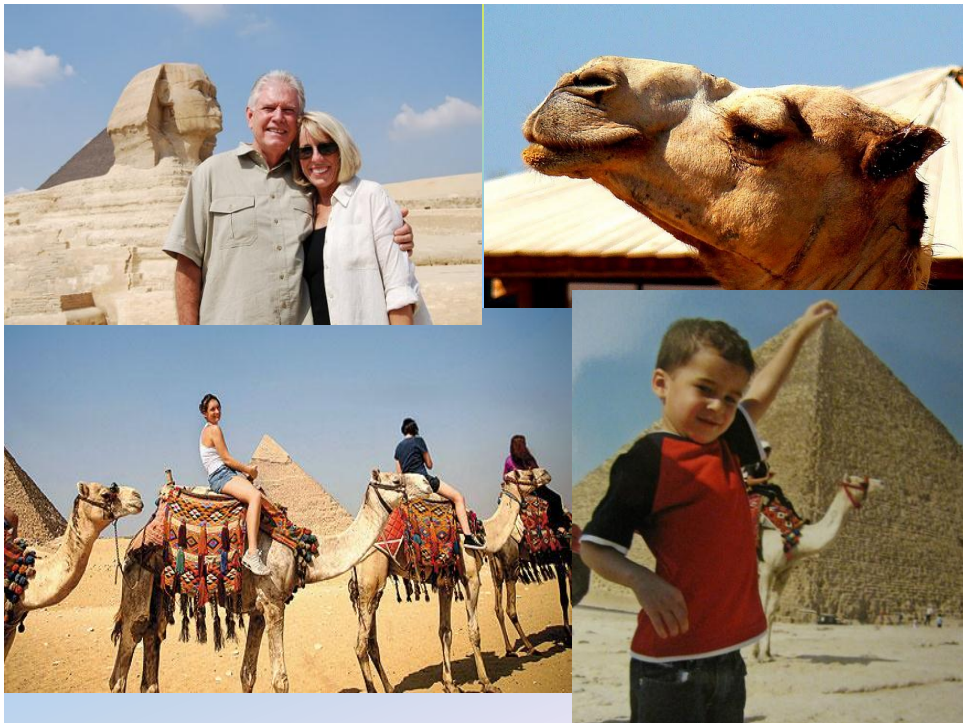
We may be fascinated by ancient Egypt because of the wealth, grandeur, and sheer size of its monuments. Seeing samples of Egyptian treasure in museums and traveling exhibits piques our interest.



AND their startling knowledge and skill.....technology and scientific expertise in mathematics, geometry, architecture and engineering.



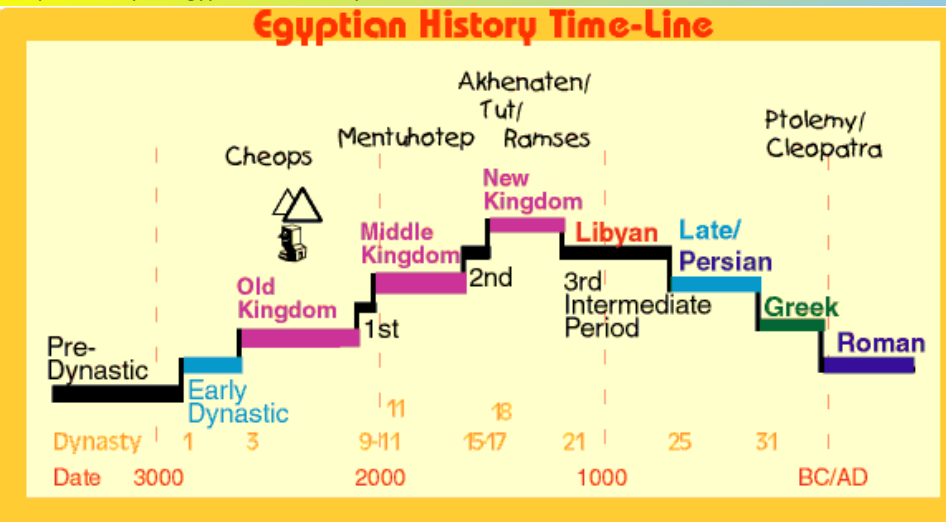
Visiting Egypt is an experience of a lifetime!!!



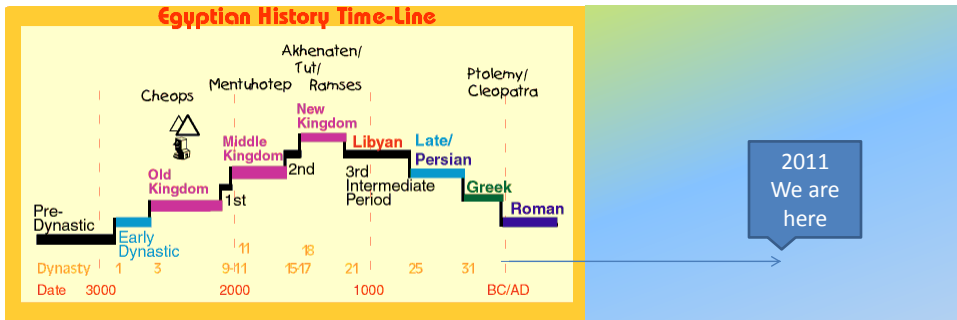


Some of us are aware of historical Egypt because Egypt figures significantly within the Jewish and Christian religious traditions. Here a painting shows a 2-year old Jesus nursing from his red haired/pale-skinned mother as his little family flees Herod's wrath to find safety in Egypt, as Joseph was directed in a dream. The scenery looks a little more verdant than I would expect.

<http://www.youregypt.com/ehistory/timeline/>



If we look forward and backward from the BC/AD time marker, we would have to project almost 1000 MORE years in order to mirror the beginning of Egypt.



The vast expanse of their civilization is the longest of any on earth. Physically being in Egypt and seeing the monuments to their history challenges the limits of our/my U.S. "historical" mindset.

"Old" books, coins and stamps – things that you know someone touched who is gone from the earth, makes us consider our own mortality. I think this is one of the things that captivates our imagination about ancient Egypt.



parent and child

The scribe Ani instructed that children repay the devotion of Egyptian mothers:

"Repay your mother for all her care. Give her as much bread as she needs, and carry her as she carried you, for you were a heavy burden to her. When you were finally born, she still carried you on her neck and for three years she suckled you and kept you clean."

Childbirth was discussed and pictured in ancient texts and drawing. The religious beliefs which impacted daily life figured heavily in ways to alleviate pain and bring a successful conclusion to labor. For lower status women, assistance came from women in the family and community. Men were excluded.



A squatting woman giving birth, assisted by two goddesses (Hathor and Taweret),

"The Irreducible Needs of Children" by Brazelton and Greenspan (2000)

The authors identify the following as essentials for children. Ancient Egypt held these values as essential for their children also:

LOVE - Ongoing Nurturing Relationships

SAFETY - Physical Protection, Safety, and Regulation

'VILLAGE' MEMBERSHIP - Stable, Supportive Communities and Cultural Continuity



A woman reaches for a fig while supporting a child with her left hand

**Ancient Egypt demonstrated these values,
similar to contemporary U.S. culture:**

- **LOVE**

- Caring for children was a personal and/or a service task for women
- Naming, seeking protection from deities



**Ancient Egypt demonstrated these values,
similar to contemporary U.S. culture:**

SAFETY - Physical Protection, Safety, and Regulation

The desert and river valley terrain in Egypt was a landscape with life-threatening hazards which required supervision and care of children from the dangers of the environment

YIKES___a scorpion!!



Ancient Egypt demonstrated these values,
similar to contemporary U.S. culture:

'Village' Membership

Adoption was not uncommon in Egypt. It provided care for children who were abandoned and whose families were too poverty-stricken to care for additional children.

It is said that the Greeks were surprised at the humane care given to infants in contrast to their own willingness to abandon infants to the elements.



Moses, "drawn from the water"

Ancient Egypt demonstrated these values,
similar to contemporary U.S. culture:

'Village' Membership

Female children were taught skills:

- mistress of household
- entertainment skills
- beauty skills (cosmetics, hair, clothing)

- domestic servant

- wife; mother (skills according to class)



**Ancient Egypt demonstrated these values,
similar to contemporary U.S. culture:**

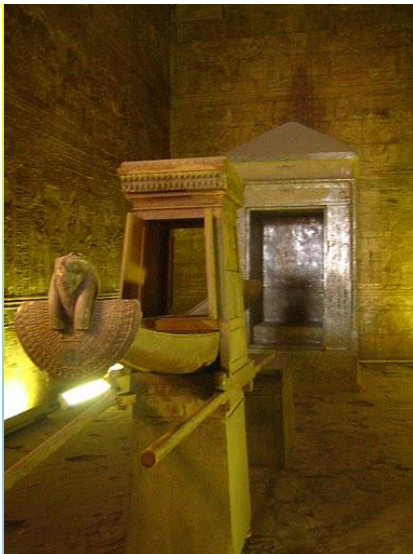
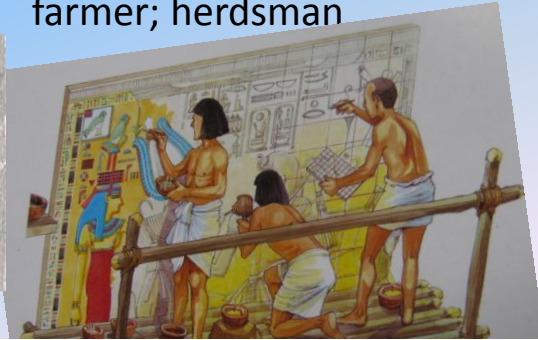
‘Village’ Membership

Male children were trained:

scribe; bureaucrat;
military service;
tradesman; artisan;
farmer; herdsman



Schools in Ancient Egypt



Class Distinctions

were a fact of life which dictated how family life was conducted and time was spent. Lower classes provided the goods, services and labor to uphold the opulent living of royalty and the upper class. The vast majority of artifacts memorialize the life and times of the wealthy, not the majority of ancient Egyptians.

The majority class filled the needs for the upperclass



Transportation – along the Nile River by boat and in the city

- Beauty regimens – depended on the skills of servants and the products of craftsmen
- Household management and food preparation - see the pictograph 'story' from the British Museum which contrasts a day in the life of a nobleman and a common man.

<http://www.ancientegypt.co.uk/life/home.html>

The majority class filled the needs for the upper class.



“The life of this servant would have been very hard and it was easy for her to get hurt. The skeletons of many ordinary ancient Egyptian women have damaged neck bones, as a result of carrying heavy loads on their heads. Men's skeletons never show this kind of injury.”

- British Museum website



http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/young_explorers/discr/ancient_egypt/daily_life/a_female_servant.aspx

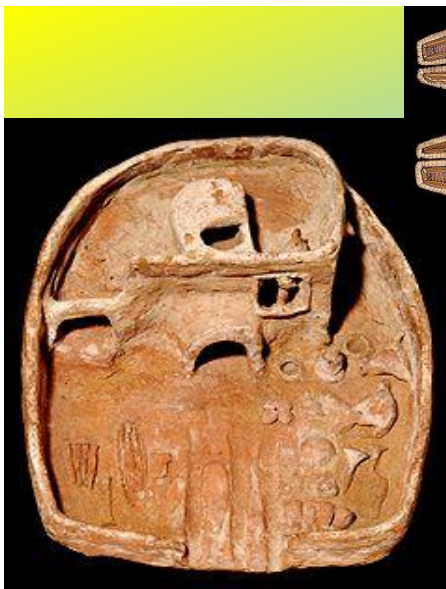


Daily life in ancient Egypt revolved around the Nile and the fertile land along its banks. The yearly flooding of the Nile enriched the soil and brought good harvests and wealth to the land.

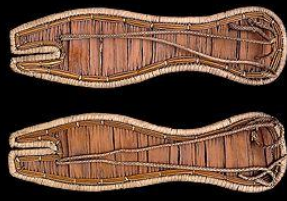
-British Museum website

Class Distinctions:

- Peasants and farmers had property rights
- Servants could inherit their masters possessions when they died childless



Terra cotta house model of a working class family



Reed sandals made and worn by working class; upper class wore leather.

Artisans:

- owned property and land
- could freely buy and sell their products in the market



The technology that developed and prevailed in ancient Egypt was available to and appropriate for the nobility.

garden with pool



mirror



razor

Ancient Egyptian technology is amazing, even today in terms of mathematics, geometry, architecture and chemistry. Evidence of their accomplishments lasting these thousands of years is proof of their expertise.

This fragile light bulb and ragged wire seem out of place (and completely inadequate) to light the way in a pyramid passageway. **Our contemporary technology (electricity) seems incongruent with their ancient structures of almost incalculable weight.**



Single light bulb on a length of wire used to light a Passageway in a pyramid..

Pull the plug

In order to comprehend what life was like in AE compared to contemporary U.S. life, we could “pull the plug” on everything in our environment that is operated by electricity, batteries, natural gas and petroleum.

Manual labor (including animals), water power, fire, tools, and mechanical devices would be the sources of maintaining daily life, work, communication and protection from elements.



Contemporary U.S. society is overwhelmed by technology

Technology.....

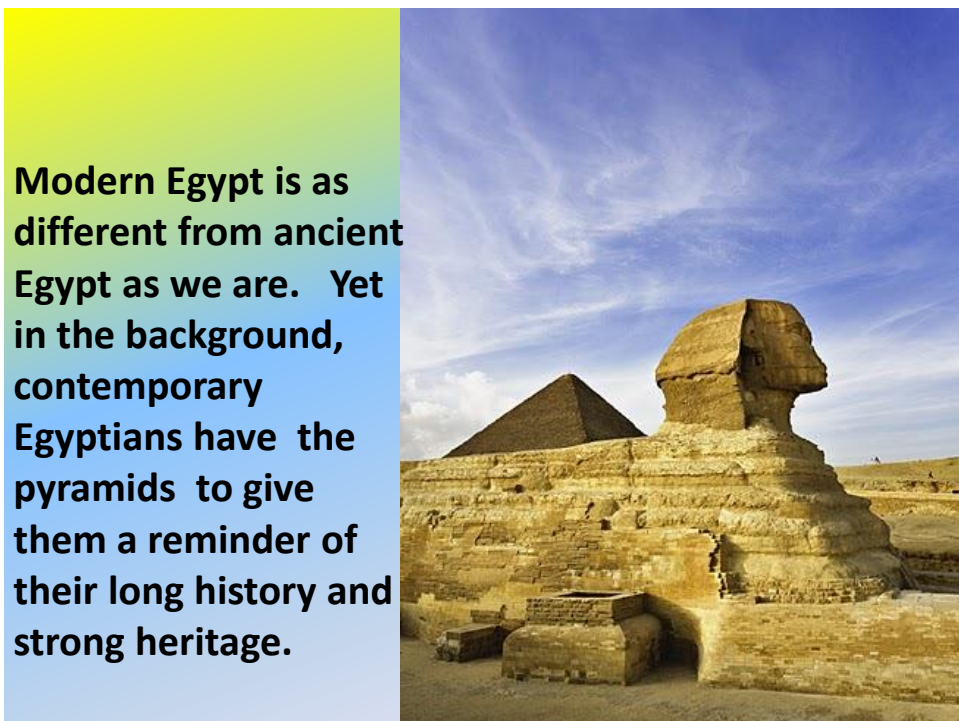
- Impacts use of time in the family
- determines family interaction
- transmits the culture to children
- provides a wider view of and access to the larger world
- confronts families with issues of regulation

Recommendations for Use of Technology in Contemporary Families

- Assess ALL screen time
 - computers, television, hand-held media
- Monitor purpose of programs used
 - “edutainment” abounds
 - comparable to passive television viewing
 - rote learning not productive
- Avoid unattended use
 - locate in center part of home
- Use only to represent what can’t be represented in real-life materials



The beauty and majesty of this people and this land remains to interest and inspire us.



Modern Egypt is as different from ancient Egypt as we are. Yet in the background, contemporary Egyptians have the pyramids to give them a reminder of their long history and strong heritage.

Now it is the turn of contemporary Egyptians to carve out and realize their aspirations for the future.

