



Government of **Western Australia**
School Curriculum and Standards Authority



ANCIENT HISTORY

GENERAL COURSE

Externally set task Source booklet

Old Kingdom Egypt, Dynasty 3–6 c. 2686–c. 2181 BC

Sample 2016

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Ancient History

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SOURCE 1



The Dynasty 5 pyramids of Khufu (Cheops), Khafre, (Chephren) and Menkare (Mycerinas), with the pyramids of Menkare's queens in the foreground

SOURCE 2

To build and maintain the pyramids, an enormous support system must have existed. Production facilities for food, pottery, building materials and supplies, storage depots, and housing for the workmen and those responsible for servicing the pyramid temples were necessary. This is perhaps where we see the true power of the pyramid: as the centre of a vast engine of production and a key element of the redistributive economy that bound people to the king and kept Egyptian civilisation alive for a very long time. Since the reign of Snefru, an entire town was associated with each pyramid, full of people employed to maintain the king's afterlife. New villages and agricultural estates were founded in the hinterlands specifically for supplying the pyramid cult and those who worked for it. This flow of resources from the peripheries to the pyramid, and thus to the very centre of the state, was in large part responsible for making Egypt into the most powerful centralized nation of its time. The organisational skills each pyramid represents are phenomenal. While skilled craftsmen and management staff worked year round, farmers would come from the provinces during the inundation period to do the heavy work. It is estimated that in all, some 200 000 people took part in the construction of a pyramid.

Davies and Friedman (1998), 82–84.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Source 1** Liberato, R. (2006). *All Giza pyramids in one shot* [Image]. Retrieved January, 2014, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:All_Gizah_Pyramids.jpg
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- Source 2** Davies, V. & Friedman, R. (1998). *Egypt*. London: British Museum Press. p. 82.