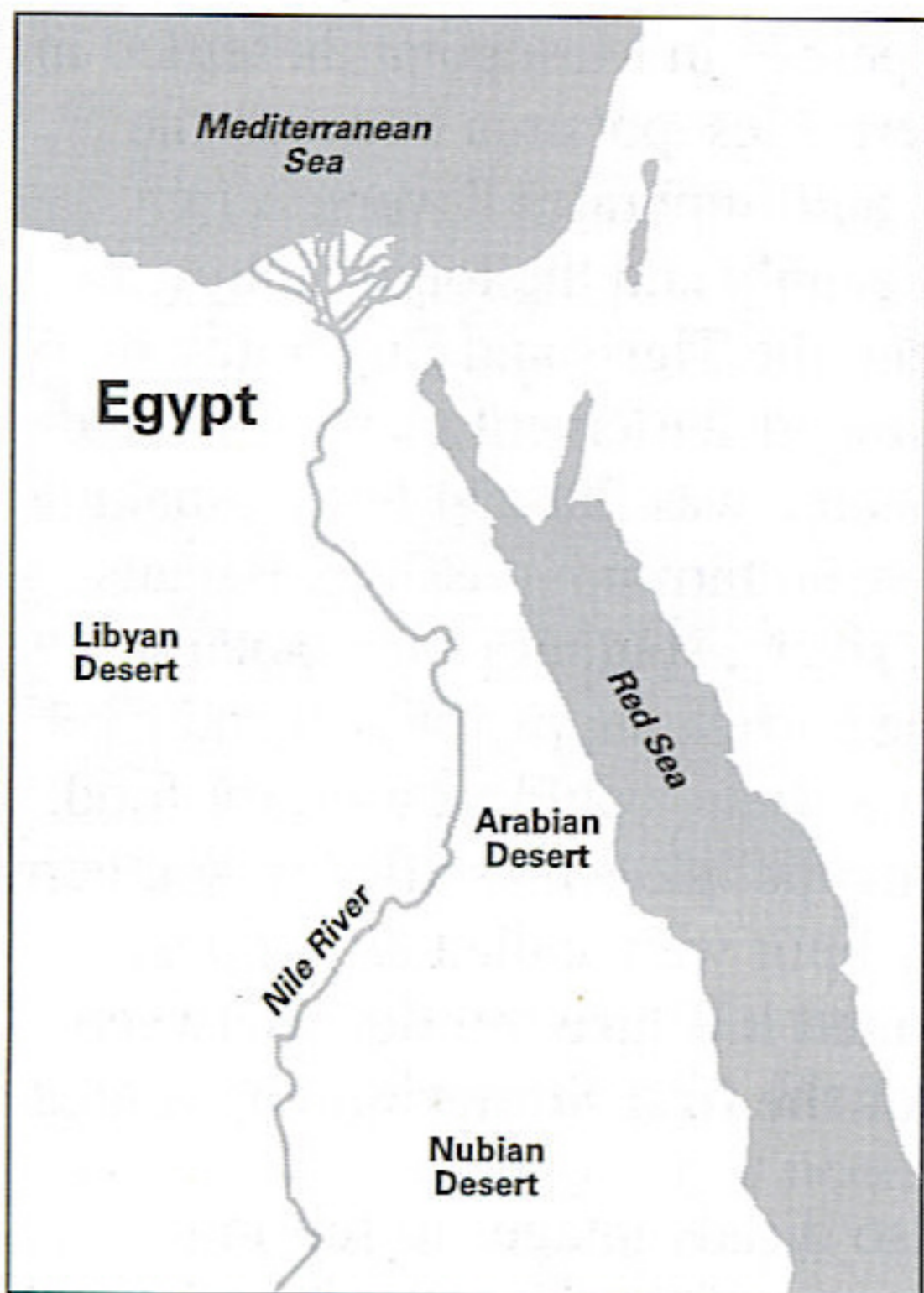


Information About Settlement in Egypt



Most people in ancient Egypt settled along the Nile River. The water and topography of the Nile encouraged settlement along its banks. Beginning in 5500 B.C.E., settlers came to Egypt from Canaan, the Arabian Desert, and the Nubian Desert in search of water supplies. As they settled along the banks of the Nile, they noticed that the river had a predictable cycle of flooding. Every July, floodwaters overflowed the Nile's banks and soaked the dry ground. The flood lasted several weeks and left behind a thin ribbon of rich soil ideal for farming. **On the map, shade in the areas along the Nile where annual flooding left rich soil.**

Besides soil and water, the Nile was also a rich source of animal life and vegetation. Fish, ducks, geese, and other edible waterbirds were found in the delta area. Papyrus, a reedlike plant, was

harvested and made into baskets, paper, and sandals. Referring to the many ways the Nile affected daily life, one ancient historian called the land of Egypt "the gift of the Nile." **On the map, draw visuals on one side of the Nile representing several resources that the river provided.**

The Nile's regular flood cycle promoted stability and peace in ancient Egypt. After the flooding went down, Egyptian farmers used a device called a *shaduf* to raise water from the Nile to irrigate their fields. The *shaduf* consisted of a counterweighted bucket on a pole that could easily be operated by one person. By using freshwater from the Nile for irrigation, Egyptian farmers prevented salt from building up and destroying the fertility of their fields. This freed the Egyptians from continually having to search for new areas with fertile soil. As a result, Egyptian settlements were less likely to move and thereby set off boundary disputes like those in Mesopotamia. **On the map, draw a visual on one side of the Nile of a farmer using a *shaduf* to irrigate his field.**

Ancient Egypt's topography also promoted peace and stability. The Nile valley was protected by three deserts—the Libyan, Arabian, and Nubian. These deserts acted as natural barriers and made it difficult for foreign invaders to disrupt life along the Nile. Because the Egyptians did not have to worry about fighting enemies, they did not devote a lot of resources to developing military technology as did the Mesopotamians. **On the map, circle the names of the deserts that discouraged outsiders from attacking ancient Egypt.**