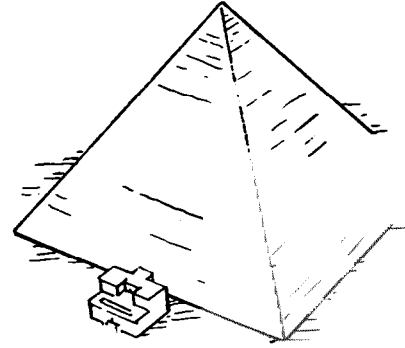


# Egyptian Contributions

The ancient Egyptians contributed a great deal to other civilizations which came after them. Their achievements include the building of the pyramids, the development of a calendar, and much more.

The ancient Egyptians' greatest achievements were in the fields of engineering and architecture. They were the first builders to use columns effectively for framing large openings and supporting massive roofs. Their knowledge of arithmetic and geometry enabled them to construct imposing temples and pyramids. The largest pyramid ever built was that of the Pharaoh Khufu. It stands more than 450 feet high and is the length of two city blocks at the base of each of its sides. More than eighty thousand workers labored for twenty-five years to build this huge structure at Giza. The fact that the Great Pyramid contains over two million limestone blocks weighing  $2\frac{1}{2}$  tons each attests to the engineering skill of the ancient Egyptians.



The ancient Egyptians developed hieroglyphics, a system of writing using pictures. Each picture at first stood for an idea, but eventually evolved into a word. The Egyptians wrote on papyrus, a kind of paper made from a river reed.

The ancient Egyptians also made outstanding contributions in science and medicine. Their calendar, though not precise, was much more accurate than a calendar based on the moon. In the field of medicine, Egyptian doctors classified and prescribed treatments for almost fifty diseases. They knew how to set broken bones and even performed simple surgery.

The ancient Egyptians were traders who sailed their ships on the Mediterranean, Aegean, and Red seas. They passed aspects of their civilization on to the peoples with whom they came in contact during their travels.

1. Which ancient Egyptian contribution do you think had the greatest impact on later civilizations? Give reasons for your answer.

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2. Some people believe the pyramids represent the greatest architectural achievement of the ancient world. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

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