Lesson 3: Nubia and Egypt

Lands South of Egypt
Nubia was a kingdom south of Egypt. Part of Nubia now makes up the African country of Sudan. Archaeologists believe people have been living in Nubia since about 3200 B.C. Unlike in Egypt, tall cliffs of granite rock surrounded parts of the Nile in Nubia. The soil in Nubia was rockier than in Egypt. Like the Egyptians, the Nubians built irrigation canals to get water from the Nile to their crops. The written Nubian language was called Meroitic. It was much like Egyptian hieroglyphics. People today are still unable to read Meroitic. Most of what we know about Nubia comes from Egyptian writings. Both the Nubians and the Egyptians believed in many gods. The Nubians may have also worshipped Egyptian gods. Nubians believed in an afterlife and built pyramids. Nubian pyramids were smaller and shaped differently than Egyptian pyramids.

Interaction
By about 2575 B.C., the Egyptians invaded Nubia. They were looking for resources. Egypt depended on Nubia for trade goods such as gold, ivory, cattle, and granite. Egypt set up trading centers and forts to protect its trade routes in Nubia. In the 1800s B.C., Egypt took over land in northern Nubia. This land included Kush, a Nubian kingdom. In about 1650 B.C., during the Hyksos rule of Egypt, Kush became independent, or free. In the 1400s B.C., Egypt took over Nubia again. At the end of the New Kingdom, Egypt became weak and Kush again became independent. Kush began to take over all of Egypt by about 750 B.C. The Kushite kings then became pharaohs of Egypt.

Kush Rises
Many groups tried to take Egypt from the Kushite kings. In about 670 B.C., the Assyrians attacked Egypt. The Kushites moved south to their capital at Nepata. After 600 B.C., the Egyptians regained power and destroyed Nepata. The Kushites founded a new capital at Meroë and trade grew. Meroë was rich in iron. Traders from other lands wanted tools and weapons made out of iron. Egyptians used bronze tools when they built pyramids. Women in Kush became queens as they did in Egypt. Egypt grew weaker and influenced Kush less. Meroë remained a great trade center until A.D. 350.
Lesson 3 Review

1. **Summarize** Fill in the missing detail in the blank box.

   The Egyptians and Nubians shared some aspects of culture. __________

   __________ invaded Nubia and set up trade and military posts to protect resources.

   The Nubians and Egyptians interacted.

2. How was the geography of Nubia different from Egypt?

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3. Why did the ancient Egyptians and Nubians interact?

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4. Why did other groups of people want to conquer Egypt? What impact did this have on Nubia?

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5. **Critical Thinking: Make Inferences** Why do you think that the peaceful relationship between the Egyptians and Nubians changed over time?

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