



The Sphinx

9

✓ Lesson Objectives

Core Content Objectives

Students will:

- ✓ Locate Egypt on a world map or globe and identify it as a part of Africa
- ✓ Explain that much of Egypt is the Sahara Desert
- ✓ Describe how the pyramids were built
- ✓ Identify the Sphinx and explain its significance in ancient Egypt

Language Arts Objectives

The following language arts objectives are addressed in this lesson. Objectives aligning with the Common Core State Standards are noted with the corresponding standard in parentheses. Refer to the Alignment Chart for additional standards addressed in all lessons in this domain.

Students will:

- ✓ Compare and contrast the Great Sphinx and the Great Pyramid (RI.1.9)
- ✓ With assistance, categorize and organize facts and information from “The Sphinx” to answer questions (W.1.8)
- ✓ Ask and answer *what* questions orally, requiring literal recall and understanding of the details or facts of “The Sphinx” (SL.1.2)
- ✓ Prior to listening to “The Sphinx,” make predictions orally about what will happen next in the story, and then compare the actual outcomes to predictions
- ✓ Use personal pronouns orally

Core Vocabulary

base, *n.* The lowest or bottom part of something

Example: While waiting at the base of the mountain, the climbers looked up and watched their teammates climb higher and higher.

Variation(s): bases

Sphinx, *n.* An imaginary creature with the body of a lion and head of a human

Example: She had seen many pictures of the Sphinx in books about Egypt.

Variation(s): none

tugged, *v.* Pulled hard on something


Example: Her little brother always tugged on her hair when they were in the car.

Variation(s): tug, tugs, tugging

visible, *adj.* Able to be seen

Example: The stars were visible because it was a clear night.

Variation(s): none

<i>At a Glance</i>	Exercise	Materials	Minutes
<i>Introducing the Read-Aloud</i>	Where Are We?	world map or globe	10
	Making Predictions About the Read-Aloud		
	Purpose for Listening		
<i>Presenting the Read-Aloud</i>	The Sphinx		15
<i>Discussing the Read-Aloud</i>	Comprehension Questions		10
	Word Work: Visible		5
 Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day			
<i>Extensions</i>	Pyramids and the Sphinx	Image Cards 11, 12	20
	Syntactic Awareness Activity: Subject Pronouns <i>I, you, he, she, we, they</i>		



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Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

Where Are We?

Choose a different student each day to locate Egypt on a world map or globe and identify it as part of Africa.

Making Predictions About the Read-Aloud

Tell students that they are going to listen to the next part of the story of Setna and Ahweru traveling to see the Great Pyramid. Setna and Ahweru also see another famous Egyptian structure.

Have students review what has happened so far by showing them the following images and guiding them in retelling the story of Djoser's first pyramid.



◀ Show image 8A-3: Djoser in royal bed

- How does the story of Djoser begin? (He is asleep in his bed; he has a dream.)
- What is Djoser told in the dream? (to build a special place for his body once he has died)
- When he wakes up, what does Djoser do? (He asks his friend Imhotep to design a building.)



◀ Show image 8A-4: Djoser's pyramid

- What does Imhotep design?

Have students predict what they think will happen in the next part of the story.

Purpose for Listening

Explain to students that the story they are about to hear continues with the characters from the previous read-aloud, Setna and Ahweru. Tell students to listen carefully to the read-aloud to find out whether or not their predictions were correct.



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◀ Show image 9A-1: Three pyramids

1 More and more of the pyramid could be seen.

The next morning, as their boat sailed closer and closer, Ahweru kept thinking, “Surely this must be all of it. There cannot be any more.” But more and more of the pyramid became **visible** to them.¹ Soon Ahweru could see other pyramids near the great one, too. She was sure they must be very large, but they looked tiny compared to that of Khufu’s pyramid. Ahweru could not take her eyes off that one.

No wonder she was amazed. Even today, when we have skyscrapers reaching over one hundred stories into the air, the Great Pyramid is one of the world’s most thrilling sights. However, part of the pointed top is gone now. Later, people took the stone to build other things and kept the gold for themselves. Also, the smooth, white stone has worn away from the sides, revealing enormous blocks of tan limestone that the white stone originally covered.



◀ Show image 9A-2: Workers pulling stones

2 The word *pounds* here refers to the measurement of how much something weighs. The word *pounds* also means to hit against something.

But even without the top, the Great Pyramid is 450 feet tall. That’s about thirty-six stories high. While we have much taller buildings today, remember that the stone blocks the Egyptians moved—with just sheer muscle power—weighed thousands of pounds each.² That’s more than several large automobiles put together. They cut the stone blocks from mountains farther up the Nile and floated them downstream to Giza on flat-topped boats. Then they threw ropes around the blocks, gathered dozens of workers to pull the ropes, and dragged the blocks across rows of smooth, heavy logs to the pyramid. Then more workers **tugged** and tugged, or pulled hard, on the ropes to pull the blocks up big ramps and into place.



3 The Sphinx has the head of a man on the body of a lion.

← **Show image 9A-3: Setna and Ahweru approaching the Sphinx**

As Ahweru stepped off the ship and approached the Great Pyramid, something else caught her eye. Ahead of her, rising out of the sand, lay a giant statue with the body of a lion and the head of a man. She said, “Father, is that . . .”

“Yes,” said Setna, “that is the Great **Sphinx**.³ It is nearly as famous as the pyramid of Pharaoh Khufu, though nowhere near as big.”

“Did Pharaoh Khufu build the Sphinx, too? Or did one of the gods do that?”

“It was a pharaoh . . .”

Ahweru interrupted, “Then I was right: it was Khufu.”

“Actually, it was his son, the Pharaoh Khafre (*KAHF*-rey). I suppose, like his father, he wanted to be remembered for something. But he knew that the people of Egypt had spent twenty years building his father’s pyramid and that it had cost an unbelievable amount of gold to do it. Perhaps Khafre did not wish to spend that much time and money, so he built the second largest pyramid—that one over there.”



← **Show image 9A-4: Setna pointing to pyramid**

He stopped and pointed, and Ahweru said, “When we were on the boat, that one looked bigger than the Great Pyramid. But now I see it is smaller. Why is that, Father?”

“It is built on higher ground, Ahweru, so as you approach, the second pyramid seems to be the bigger of the two. Once you reach this place, however, with both of them right in front of you, it is clear which is truly the greatest. At any rate, while Khafre knew he could not match his father’s pyramid, he must have wondered what he could do, so that he, too, would be remembered forever. I suppose that was one reason for building the Great Sphinx. Look at the face, my daughter; it is the face of Pharaoh Khafre himself.”



← **Show image 9A-5: Setna and Ahweru looking at the Sphinx**

“The Sphinx’s face is made to look like the pharaoh’s face? Why?”

“We do not know for certain, for the years have not been kind to the Great Sphinx. Twice since it was built, the sands of the desert have swallowed it up, covering it almost completely. I think there may once have been writing around the **base**, but the sand rubbed that away.⁴ Maybe the writing told why the pharaoh put his own face on it, but if so, those words are gone.

“However, an old story says that the lion was given the pharaoh’s face to show that Khafre was as fierce and powerful as a lion. The story adds that he set it in front of the pyramids to protect them.”

“That makes sense to me. After all, there are smaller sphinxes up near the temple at Karnak to help guard it magically.”⁵

“Yes. This one is certainly not the only sphinx in Egypt, nor the only statue set up to guard a place. But because this one is the biggest and most beautiful, it is called ‘great.’ And today we Egyptians say that the Great Sphinx is a form of the sun god. And now, my daughter, it is time to begin our long journey home.”⁶

Ahweru stood and looked at the huge statue for a moment. Then she said, “I am glad that I was able to see the Great Pyramid and the Sphinx. Thank you for bringing me, Father.”

← **Show image 9A-6: Setna and Ahweru walking away from the Sphinx**

“You are welcome,” Setna replied. And father and daughter returned to the boat to begin their journey home.



4 The base is the part at the bottom.

5 At least, that is what many ancient Egyptians believed.

6 What’s a journey?

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

1. *Evaluative* Were your predictions about what you thought would happen in this part of the story correct? Why or why not? (Answers may vary.)
2. *Evaluative* How do you think Ahweru felt when she finally saw the Great Pyramid? (excited, happy, etc.)
3. *Literal* What was the pyramid made of back then? (gold and stones)
4. *Inferential* How was the pyramid built? (by floating blocks down the Nile; by many people dragging the stones to be put in place; etc.)
5. *Evaluative* Do you think it was harder or easier to build something like a pyramid in ancient times than it is to build a tall building today? (It was harder in ancient times because they did not have the machines that we now have.)
6. *Inferential* How would you describe the Great Sphinx to someone? (a statue with the body of a lion and the head of a man)
7. *Inferential* Why do you think the pharaoh Khafre decided to have the Great Sphinx built? (He wanted to show how powerful he was; he thought it would protect the pyramid; etc.)
8. *Inferential* Why is the Sphinx that Ahweru and Setna saw called the Great Sphinx? (There are other sphinxes that are smaller.)

[Please continue to model the *Question? Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

9. *What? Pair Share:* Asking questions after a read-aloud is one way to see how much everyone has learned. Think of a question you can ask your neighbor about the read-aloud that starts with the word *what*. For example, you could ask, “What events do you remember from today’s story that Setna told about the Great Sphinx?” Turn to your neighbor and ask

your *what* question. Listen to your neighbor's response. Then your neighbor will ask a new *what* question, and you will get a chance to respond. I will call on several of you to share your questions with the class.

10. After hearing today's read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these questions.]

Word Work: Visible

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, "But more and more of the pyramid became *visible* to them."
2. Say the word *visible* with me.
3. If something is visible, it can be seen.
4. The sun is visible on a clear day.
5. What things are visible in the classroom? Try to use the word *visible* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students' responses: "The chalkboard is visible."]
6. What's the word we've been talking about?

Use a *Discussion* activity for follow-up, and show image 9A-1. Directions: Describe what things in this image are visible. [Remind students to use the word *visible* in their responses.]

If time permits, you may want to teach students about the antonym—*invisible*.



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



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Extensions

20 minutes

Pyramids and the Sphinx

Show students Image Card 12 (Sphinx). Have students identify the picture, talk about the Image Card, and share what they learned from the read-aloud about the Great Sphinx. Ask students how the Great Sphinx is similar to the pyramids. (They were both built by ancient Egyptians, etc.) Show Image Card 11 (Pyramid) and ask students how the Great Sphinx is different from the pyramids. (The Great Sphinx was not a burial place; the pharaoh built the Great Sphinx to protect the pyramid.)

↔ Syntactic Awareness Activity: Subject pronouns *I, you, he, she, we, they*

The purpose of these syntactic activities is to help students understand the direct connection between grammatical structures and the meaning of text. These syntactic activities should be used in conjunction with the complex text presented in the read-alouds.

Note: There may be variations in the sentences created by your class. Allow for these variations and restate students' sentences so that they are grammatical.

Teacher Model and Group Practice

1. We use subject pronouns to replace words that stand for people. [Whenever you see a person's name in brackets, please replace that name with the name of a student or co-teacher in your class.]
 2. When I want to talk about myself, I use the word ***I*** and can point to myself, as in "***I*** am so happy to be your teacher."
- Now try with your neighbor: Use the word ***I*** and point to yourself when you describe how you are feeling today. Use this sentence starter to help you begin, "***I*** feel . . ."

3. When I am talking face-to-face with someone else, I use the word **you** to talk directly to them. Listen as I talk to [Luis] and say something nice to him. “**You** are very helpful during art time.”
 - Now you try with your neighbor: Use the word **you** and point to your neighbor as you say something nice about him or her. Use this sentence starter to help you begin, “**You** are . . . ”
4. When I am talking about a boy or a girl, I use the word **he** to talk about a boy and **she** to talk about a girl. Listen as I say something nice about a girl and a boy in our class. “[Gema] is happy. **She** always has a smile on her face. [Dorian] is kind. **He** always helps his classmates.”
 - Now you try with your neighbor: Use the words **she** and **he** to say something nice about another student who is not your neighbor. Use this sentence starter to help you begin, “**He** is . . . ” or “**She** is . . . ”
5. When I am talking about myself and another person, I use the word **we** to talk about us. Listen as I talk about myself and [Ms. Cueva]. “**We** love teaching this class.”
 - Now you try with your neighbor: Use the word **we** and point to yourself and your neighbor when you make up a sentence about something you and your neighbor do together. Use this sentence starter to help you begin, “**We** have fun when we . . . ”
6. When I am talking about other people, I use the word **they** to talk about them. Listen as I talk about two students in our classroom, [Isaac] and [Kenny]. “**They** are sitting in the front of the classroom.”
 - Now you try with your neighbor: Use the word **they** and point to multiple students who are not in your group to say something nice about them. Use this sentence starter to help you begin, “**They** are nice when they . . . ”

Authentic Text-Based Practice

I am going to read a part of the read-aloud that contains many of the words we just practiced. Please stand up or raise your hand when you hear me say one of those words. Remember, the words

we just practiced are *I, you, he, she, we, and they*. [Acknowledge students for correctly identifying the subject pronouns in the read-aloud.]

The next morning, as their boat sailed closer and closer, Ahweru kept thinking, “Surely this must be all of it. There cannot be any more.” But more and more of the pyramid became visible to them. Soon Ahweru could see other pyramids near the great one, too. She was sure they must be very large, but they looked tiny compared to that of Khufu’s pyramid. Ahweru could not take her eyes off that one.

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