

## Explore More—The Relationship between Egypt and the Kingdom of Kush

**Directions:** Listen to your teacher talk about the cultural relations between Egypt and the Kingdom of Kush. Refer to the maps in your Explore Geography Picture Dictionary to locate the places your teacher mentions. Circle any words you don't understand. Underline or highlight important ideas in the text. Write notes in the margins to help you understand key points. Then answer the questions in your own words.

### The Kingdom of Kush

Like its neighbor Egypt, the Kingdom of Kush developed along the Nile River. Because of its location in northeastern Africa, Kush became the most important trade route between Africa and the world to the north.

*Point out Africa on your world map.*

Kush's capital city of Meroë was located along the Nile River, south of Egypt. Six tall waterfalls, called cataracts, provided natural boundaries along the Nile River. The First Cataract, which was about 100 miles south of the Egyptian city of Luxor, was the boundary between Egypt and Kush.

### Political and Commercial Relations with Egypt

During Egypt's New Kingdom, pharaohs took control of Kush. Later, when Egyptian leaders became less powerful, armies from Kush conquered and ruled Egypt. After a short time, however, a group of people from the region of the Tigris River drove the Kushites from Egypt. The leaders of Kush moved their capital south to Meroë. The Kingdom of Kush was at its height from 300 B.C. to A.D. 400.

*Point to this date on your class time line.*

During this time, the pharaohs of Egypt wanted exotic goods from Kush. Merchants from Egypt traveled to Meroë to buy animal skins, ebony, ivory, ostrich eggs, and other materials. In return, Kushite merchants traded raw materials for manufactured goods from Egypt. These were mostly luxury items such as glassware, jewelry, bronze lamps, and honey.

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## **Cultural Relations with Egypt**

Graves in Meroë are one example of Egypt's cultural influence on Kush. Like the Egyptians, Kushites believed in an afterlife. Kushites mummified their dead and buried them in tombs. The graves of leaders had an Egyptian-style brick pyramid on top. Ordinary people were buried in simpler tombs. Kushites also worshiped some of the same gods as the Egyptians. The Kushites built a temple in Meroë in honor of the Egyptian god Amon. Kushites also worshiped gods that combined Egyptian and African traditions. The Kushite lion-god of war, for example, was similar to the Egyptian goddess of war, who also was represented as a lion. In addition, Kushites' early writing used Egyptian hieroglyphics. ❖

## YOUR TURN!

Write your answers to the following questions.

1. Describe the location of the Kingdom of Kush. Where was it located in terms of Egypt?

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2. Describe the commercial and political relations between Egypt and the Kingdom of Kush.

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3. Describe the cultural relations between Egypt and the Kingdom of Kush.

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**Questions for further discussion:**

- What would you like to know more about in terms of the commercial, political, and cultural relations between Egypt and the Kingdom of Kush? Frame questions that you can answer by historical study and research. Conduct this research and discuss your findings.
- What role do you think chance played in the development of the Kingdom of Kush and its relationship with Egypt?
- What were the economic and political benefits of Kush's location? What were the consequences?