

## A Core Curriculum State Standards Aligned Curriculum Guide

### *The Eyes of Pharaoh*

Written by Chris Eboch

1177 BC: During the reign of Pharaoh Ramses the Third, Seshta, a 13-year-old dancer in the Temple of Hathor, dreams of becoming a famous entertainer. Horus, the brother of her heart, is content as a toymaker's apprentice. Reya, at 16, has joined Egypt's army with hopes of becoming a hero. Despite their different paths, nothing can break the bonds of their friendship. Yet when Reya hints that Egypt is in danger from foreign nomads, Seshta and Horus don't take him seriously. How could anyone challenge Egypt?

Then Reya disappears. Seshta and Horus set out to find him—and discover a darker plot than they ever imagined. To save their friend, Seshta and Horus spy on merchants, soldiers, and royalty, and start to suspect even The Eyes of Pharaoh, the powerful head of the secret police. Will Seshta and Horus escape the traps set for them, rescue Reya, and stop the plot against Egypt in time?

Set in ancient Egypt, this story of drama and intrigue brings an ancient world to life. The ideas in this book echo in the international politics of today, while the power of friendship will touch hearts both young and old.

"I teach a gifted class of fourth and fifth graders. Using this historical fiction has been a window into Ancient Egypt—its people, culture, and beliefs. My class enjoyed doing research on Egyptian gods and goddesses, and hieroglyphs. Projects extended their knowledge of this fascinating time and place. I also highly recommend it for its fast-paced plot, interesting and 'real' characters, and excellent writing." — Suzanne Borchers

Age Level: 9 – 12; Grade Level: 3 – 6

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Chris Eboch is the author of over 40 books for children, including nonfiction and fiction, early reader through teen. Chris Eboch's novels for ages nine and up include *The Well of Sacrifice*, a Mayan adventure used in many schools, and *The Genie's Gift*, a middle eastern fantasy. The Haunted series, about kids who travel with a ghost hunter TV show, starts with *The Ghost on the Stairs*.

*Jesse Owens: Young Record Breaker* and *Milton Hershey: Young Chocolatier* are inspirational biographies in Simon & Schuster's Childhood of Famous Americans series, written under the name M.M. Eboch. Jesse Owens will appeal to young athletes, while Milton Hershey's story will resonate with kids who struggle in school, as Milton did.

These are full-length books at a middle grade interest level, but written at a third-grade reading level.

Chris's writing craft books include *You Can Write for Children: How to Write Great Stories, Articles, and Books for Kids and Teenagers*, and *Advanced Plotting*.

Learn more at [www.chriseboch.com](http://www.chriseboch.com) or [her Amazon page](#).

Chris lives in New Mexico, where she enjoys hiking, rock climbing, and watching the sunset from her patio. Her home office looks out on nature, complete with distracting wildlife such as roadrunners and foxes. She and her husband are parents to a changing number of ferrets.

## Discussion Questions

*Sometimes being a temple dancer hardly seemed worth the trouble, with the tedious rituals and the other girls' petty gossip. But after the contest Pharaoh himself would know she was the best in the land (12).*

- Explain why being a temple dancer is important to Seshta.
- Why is Sit-Hathor in conflict with Seshta?
- Compare Seshta and Sit-Hathor. Consider ways that the two are similar.
- Contrast the girls. Describe how Seshta and Sit-Hathor are different.

*"Friends of Reya, eh?" General Kha'i made that, too, sound like an insult. He smiled, but it wasn't friendly. "Reya is not here. Nor should you be. This is no safe place for little girls." He took a quick step sideways so he could see Horus, who shied back like a skittish horse. "And young men should never come to the barracks unless they are ready to volunteer! (33)"*

- Consider the character of General Kha'i. Is he to be trusted? Tell why or why not.
- Describe Horus' character. Tell why his behavior has been compared to being a like a skittish horse.
- Tell why the General made the reference of friendship with Reya to sound like an insult.

*She had to ignore all the distractions, overcome the obstacles and keep her heart on what really mattered. Her heart slowed (61).*

- Tell how distractions and obstacles differ.
- List Seshta's distractions and obstacles.
- At this point in the story, what matters more to her, saving Reya or becoming a temple dancer? Explain your answer.

*She heard a confused sound of footsteps and murmuring. Then a booming voice announced the newcomers. "The honorable Lord Uben-Ra, the Eyes and Ears of Pharaoh, with three of his men. (87)"*

- Tell why the introduction of Miw's father at this point of the story adds complexity to the plot.
- Do you think that Lord Uben-Ra is an honorable man? How so?
- What of General Kha'i, Prince Penno, and the Pharaoh himself? Tell of the honor or lack of honor each character demonstrated.
- Tell how Seshta honored the bond of true friendship.
- Which character served as the true Eyes of Pharaoh? Explain your answer.

## The Mind Map Instructions

**Objective:** To describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

**Materials:**

- The Mind Map Graphic organizers (pg. 6 to 9)
- Pencil
- *The Eyes of Pharaoh*

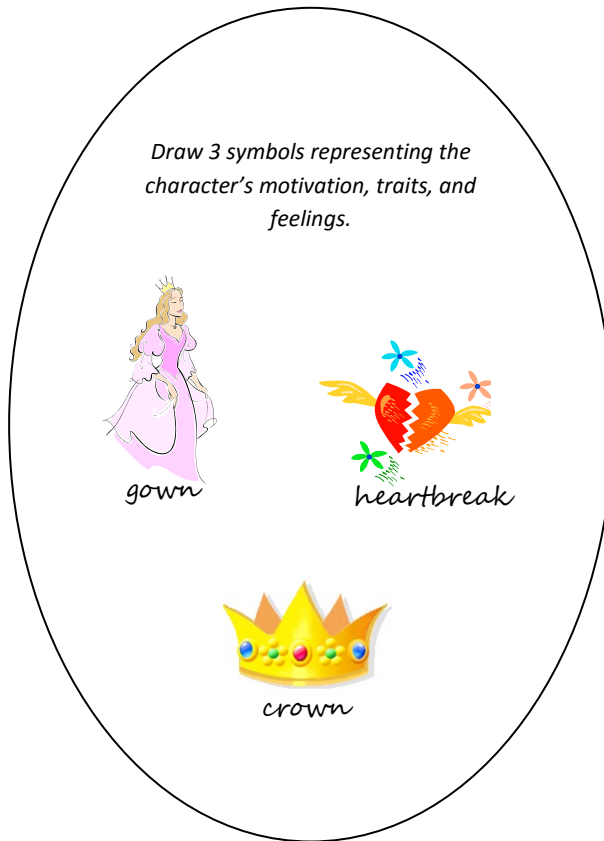
**Procedure:**

- Read and discuss the quotation at the top of the graphic organizer.
- Locate the citation in the book. Reread the passages surrounding the quote.
- Visualize the internal and emotional reaction to the particular moment in the story in which the quotation was cited.
- The oval represents the character's head. Inside the character's head draw three symbols that represent the character's reaction to the events taking place at this point in the story. A symbol can be any one object or item that relates to the character's role in the story – an eye, a tree, an animal, etc.
  - One symbol represents the character's desire. What do they really want?
  - One symbol represents their emotional reaction to the events taking place.
  - Suggestions for other symbols might be to represent their fear, concern, and/or joy.
- Explain the meaning behind the symbols in the spaces provided at the right of the character's head.
- In the boxes at the bottom of the page, list three important words that pertain to the character's role in the story at the point of the citation. Tell why these words describe the character's role in the story.
- Share your work with your classmates. Comparing and contrast your interpretation of the character's traits, motivations, and/or feelings at a particular place in the story.

**Reference:** Allen, Cindy. *The Book Club Companion: Fostering Strategic Readers in the Secondary Classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2006.

## A Mind Map Example – Cinderella's Plight

*Cinderella sighed. Her shoulders slumped. "Look at all the work I have to do – the scrubbing, the sweeping, the mending, the dusting. I'll never be finished in time for the ball."*



Define Symbol 1—Character's desire:

*The gown symbolizes Cinderella's desire to attend the ball.*

Define Symbol 2—Emotional reaction:

*The broken heart symbolizes Cinderella's reaction to her cruel situation.*

Define Symbol 3: *The crown symbolizes the happily-ever-after reward she received in the end.*

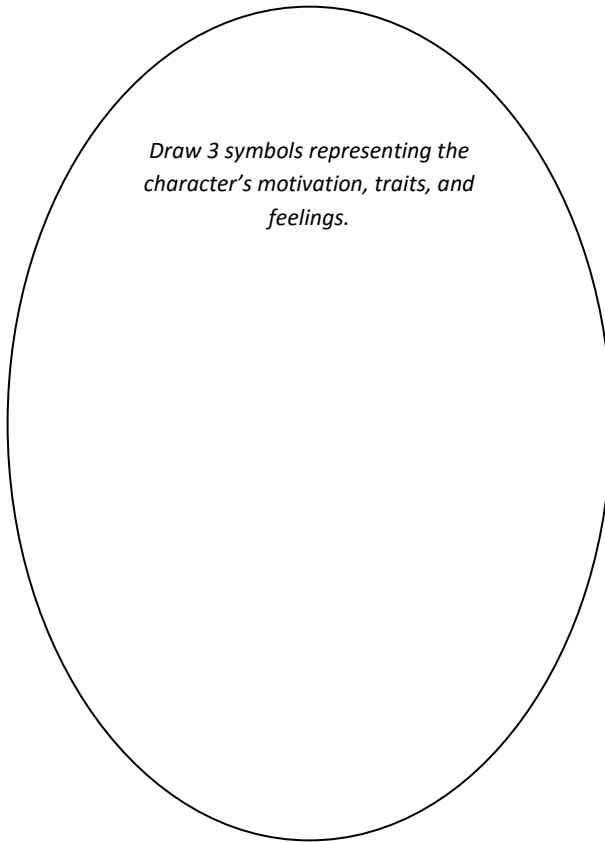
Important word and why: **Hope** because Cinderella desired something other than the miserable life she led at home with her step-mother and step-sisters.

Important word and why: **Kindness** because her fairy-godmother treated her kindly and granted Cinderella her heart's desire by giving her all she needed to attend the ball.

Important word and why: **Destiny** because true love won in the end. Despite all of the cruelty she endured, Cinderella was destined to marry the Prince and live happily ever after.

## A Mind Map – Seshta Begins Her Quest

*Seshta wasn't sure if the sweat drenching her sides was due to the heat or her anxiety – her fear of finding out that something terrible had happened to Reya, her fear of finding out nothing at all (28).*



Define Symbol 1—Character's desire:

Define Symbol 2—Emotional reaction:

Define Symbol 3:

Important word and why:

Important word and why:

Important word and why:

## A Mind Map – Horus’ Dilemma

*Horus shook his head. “Doesn’t anything scare you? (54)”*

*Draw 3 symbols representing the character’s motivation, traits, and feelings.*

Define Symbol 1—Character’s desire:

Define Symbol 2—Emotional reaction:

Define Symbol 3:

Important word and why:

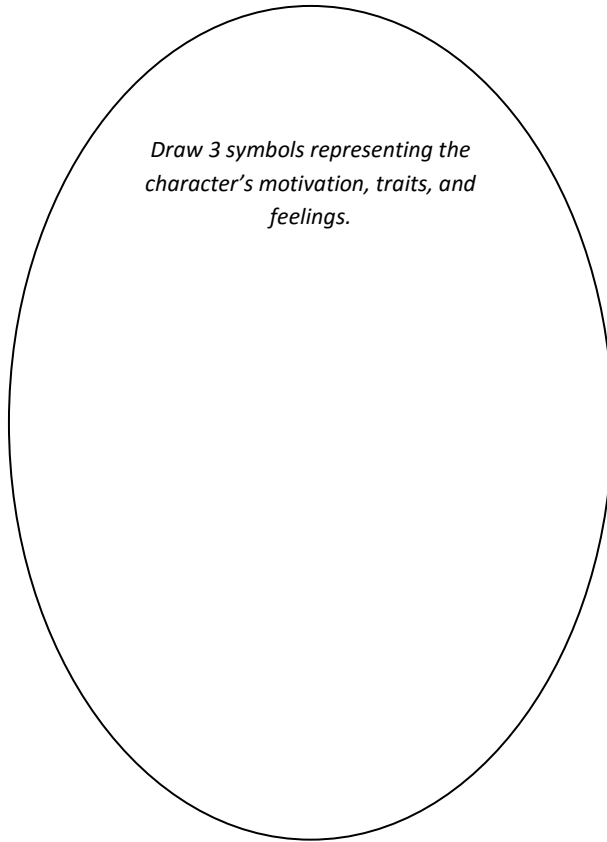
Important word and why:

Important word and why:



## A Mind Map – Ker’s Surprise

*“Alas, I am not here as a guest, like yourself, but in my official capacity as a translator. Others from my country will attend tonight. I would be happy to introduce them to you, so that you may further your knowledge of our people. (81)”*



Define Symbol 1—Character’s desire:

Define Symbol 2—Emotional reaction:

Define Symbol 3:

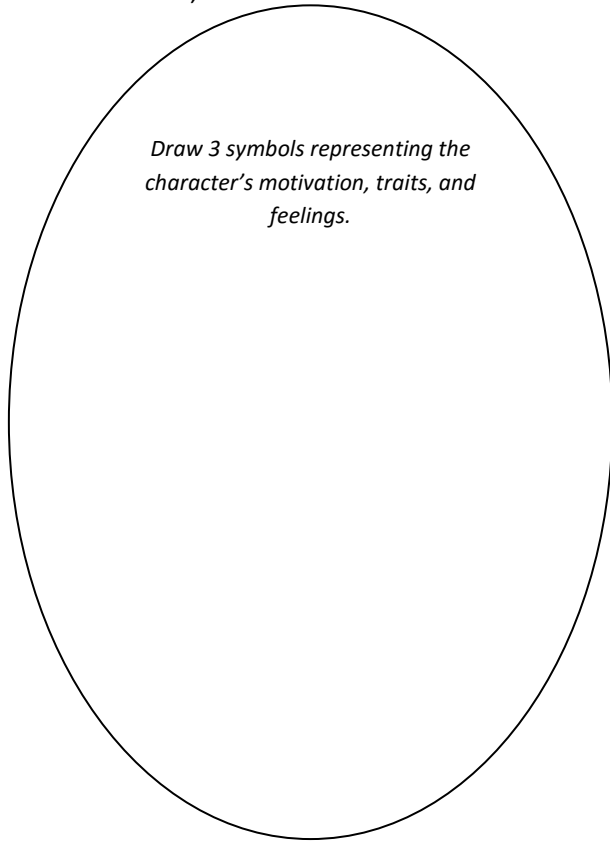
Important word and why:

Important word and why:

Important word and why:

## A Mind Map – Prince Penno’s Plan

“That hardly seems necessary,” the prince said. “I’m sure the two who suffered this unfortunate... accident... would much prefer a chance to refresh themselves. My servants will take them to the house, bathe them, and find suitable clothes. The other young ladies may continue to enjoy the party. (96)”



Define Symbol 1—Character’s desire:

Define Symbol 2—Emotional reaction:

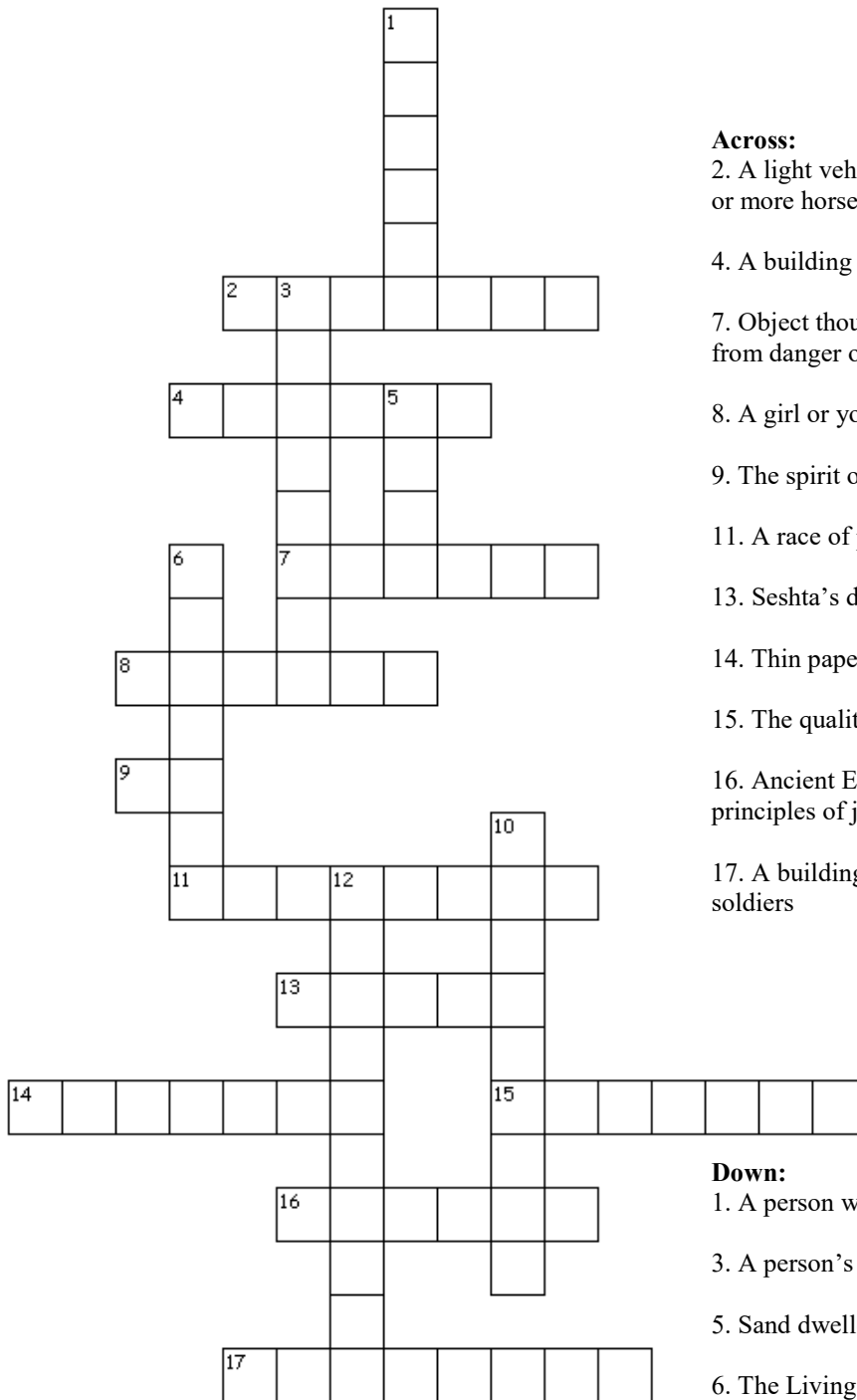
Define Symbol 3:

Important word and why:

Important word and why:

Important word and why:

## The Eyes of Pharaoh Crossword Puzzle



### Across:

2. A light vehicle, usually on two wheels, drawn by one or more horses, often carrying two standing persons

4. A building devoted to worship

7. Object thought to possess power to protect its owner from danger or harm

8. A girl or young woman, especially an unmarried one

9. The spirit of a soul

11. A race of people, some of whom are Egyptian slaves

13. Seshta's deepest desire

14. Thin paper-like material

15. The quality of being loyal to someone or something

16. Ancient Egyptian goddess who personified the principles of joy, feminine love, and motherhood

17. A building or group of buildings used to house soldiers

### Down:

1. A person who buys and sells goods

3. A person's or a people's native land

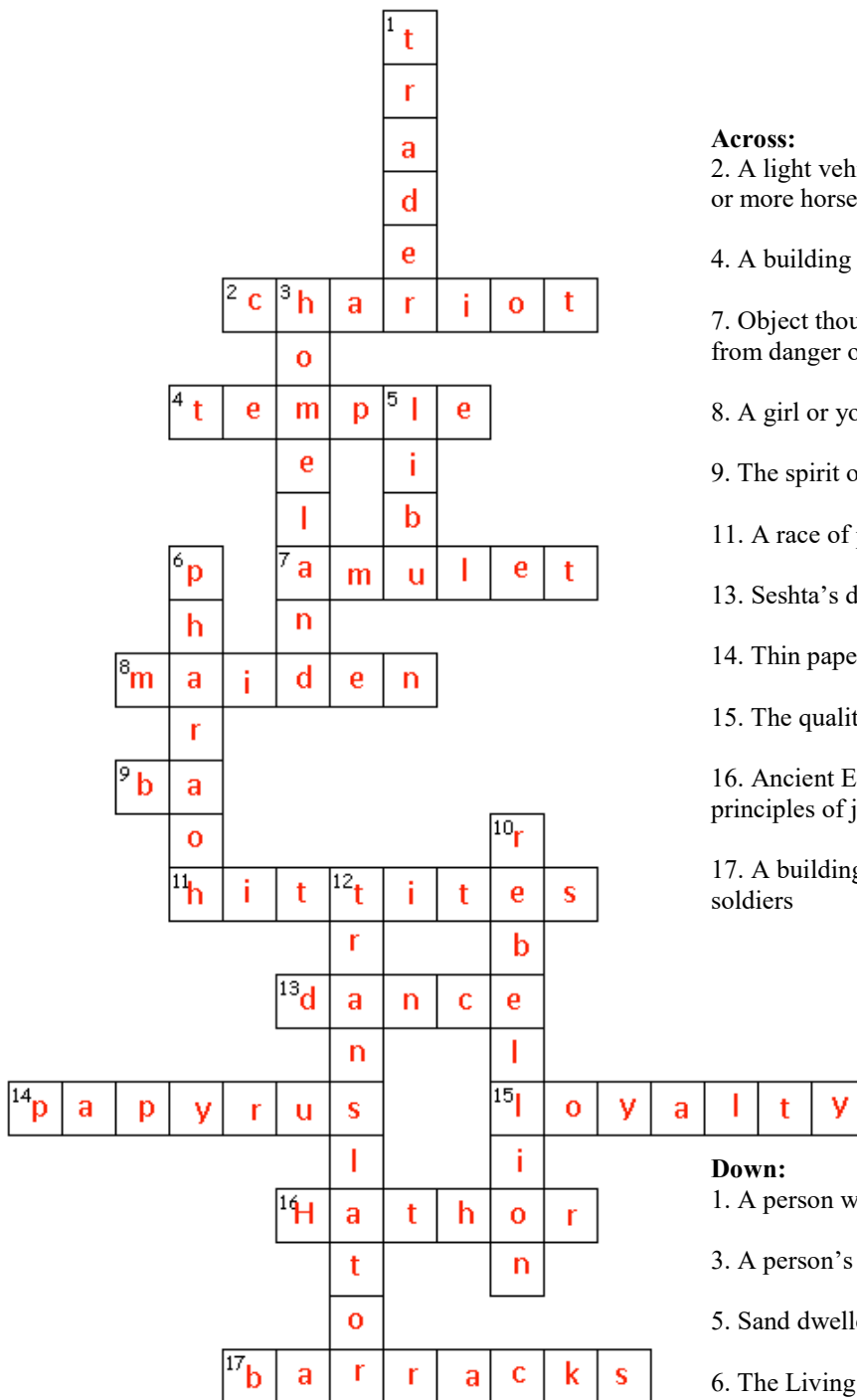
5. Sand dwellers, desert nomads, wandering cow-herders

6. The Living God

10. An act of violent or open resistance to an established government or ruler

12. A person who translates from one language into another

## The Eyes of Pharaoh Crossword Puzzle – Answers



### Across:

2. A light vehicle, usually on two wheels, drawn by one or more horses, often carrying two standing persons

4. A building devoted to worship

7. Object thought to possess power to protect its owner from danger or harm

8. A girl or young woman, especially an unmarried one

9. The spirit of a soul

11. A race of people, some of whom are Egyptian slaves

13. Seshta's deepest desire

14. Thin paper-like material

15. The quality of being loyal to someone or something

16. Ancient Egyptian goddess who personified the principles of joy, feminine love, and motherhood

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### Down:

1. A person who buys and sells goods

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5. Sand dwellers, desert nomads, wandering cow-herders

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## Core Curriculum State Standards Alignment

English Language Arts  
Standards » Reading:  
Literature

		Discussion Questions	Mind Maps	Crossword Puzzle
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.1	Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	▲	▲	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.3	Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events	▲	▲	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.			▲
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 2-3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.	▲	▲	▲
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	▲	▲	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.3	Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions)	▲	▲	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grades 4-5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	▲	▲	▲
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.3	Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).	▲		
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 4-5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.	▲	▲	▲

English Language Arts  
Standards » Speaking &  
Listening

		Discussion Questions	Mind Maps	Crossword Puzzle
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 3 topics and texts</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.	▲	▲	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.4	Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.		▲	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 4 topics and texts</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.	▲	▲	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.4	Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace		▲	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 5 topics and texts</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.	▲	▲	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.2	Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.	▲	▲	

## Additional Lesson Plans for *The Eyes of Pharaoh*

### **Persuasive Letter Project using *The Eyes of Pharaoh***

Take on the role of either Seshta or Horus. Write a persuasive letter in the voice of that character. You have just left the party at Prince Penno's house. You must convince the authorities to take action against Meryey. Present your evidence in the most convincing way.

As an alternative, you may take on the role of Reya and write a letter in his voice. You can choose to write based on what he knew at the start of the book, or you can write a letter from after he was imprisoned.

### **Persuasive Speech Projects using *The Eyes of Pharaoh***

Imagine that you are one of the temple girls following Seshta. She has gone into her family compound. You must convince the guard at the gate to let you past. What would you tell him?

Imagine that you are trying to convince General Kha'i to give you information about your friend who has disappeared. How will you persuade him?

Imagine that you are trying to get information about spying techniques from Miw, daughter of The Eyes and Ears of Pharaoh. You don't want her to know why you're asking. How do you ask her? (The teacher or a second student can take on the role of Miw.)

Imagine that you are either Seshta, Reya, or Horus at the end of the book when they are brought before Pharaoh. You believe Pharaoh may punish you. In one sentence, make a case for why he should not.

### **Theater Projects using *The Eyes of Pharaoh***

Seshta, Reya, and Horus lived during the New Kingdom, the golden age of Egypt. At that time, the great pyramids were already a thousand years old. Imagine that you are a tour guide during the New Kingdom and take your friends on a tour of the pyramids.

Act out the scene where Seshta, Reya, and Horus are trapped in the stables. Some students can take on the role of the guards or even the horses.

### **Art Projects using *The Eyes of Pharaoh***

1. Using watercolors, markers, or colored pencils, draw the docks and river as they are described in Chapters 1 and 2, Seshta's dream from the beginning of chapter 2, the army barracks in chapter 5, or Prince Penno's estate from Chapter 13.
2. The Egyptians worshiped many gods and goddesses. Learn about some of them and choose one to draw.
3. Draw the costumes of Seshta and the temple dancers (see chapter 13) or of the Pharaoh (see chapter 25). Use other books on ancient Egypt if you need more information.
4. Study the descriptions of a market on the opening page, and in chapters 9 and 10. Find pictures of some of the items mentioned (try the encyclopedia or books on ancient Egypt). Design a mail order catalog that features Egyptian trade goods. Draw pictures of the items and write descriptions of them to tempt people to buy.
5. Draw a comic based on a scene from *The Eyes of Pharaoh*.
6. Pharaoh is draped in gold (see chapter 25) so he looks more important and godlike. Design a costume to make someone look important today.
7. Do an online search for "Hieroglyphics Translator" and find a site that will translate your name into Egyptian hieroglyphics. Draw your hieroglyphic name or make it out of colored paper.



### Team Projects using *The Eyes of Pharaoh*

1. Work in small groups. You are anthropologists, looking for data about the Egyptian world. First brainstorm a list of topics.

#### Sample list of topics:

Foods and food preparation

Local animals and birds

Egyptian names

Art and decorative items

Clothing and jewelry

Religious rituals

Funeral customs

Rules of war

Egyptian social divisions (royalty, nobility, merchants, artisans, peasants)

Trade items and practices

Then make lists of items for each topic, using *The Eyes of Pharaoh* and other books about ancient Egypt.

2. Ramses the Third ruled during the New Kingdom, the golden age of Egypt. At that time, the great pyramids were already a thousand years old. Make a timeline of Egyptian civilization.

3. Work in small groups. Ramses the Third ruled from about 1184 to 1153 BC. What other cultures had advanced civilizations at that time? Hint: check on Troy, Babylon, Assyria, Greece, Israel, and China. How were these civilizations similar to or different from ancient Egypt?

### Journal Questions using *The Eyes of Pharaoh*

Why doesn't Seshta ask anyone besides Horus for help finding Reya? Do you think that was a good or bad decision? What would you do in her place?

Using color photographs of Egyptian ruins, be a tour guide or travel writer and describe the ruins.

The ancient Egyptians believed in life after death. They thought people would need many of the things they needed in life, so they buried their dead with food, clothing, household goods, and even statues to serve as servants. What would you want to take with you to the afterlife?

Pretend you are reviewing *The Eyes of Pharaoh* for your local newspaper. Write a description of the book and explain why people should or should not read the book.

Read several stories about ancient Egypt. Then write a short story set in ancient Egypt. If you wish, you may take a modern story or a folktale and rewrite it set in ancient Egypt.

### **Additional Discussion Questions for *The Eyes of Pharaoh***

Critique *The Eyes of Pharaoh*. What did you like about it? What did you dislike? What would you have changed? Who were your favorite characters?

What is historical fiction? Is it a useful way to learn history? Why or why not? Which parts of the book are most likely true, and which parts are made up? How can you tell?

In ancient times, Egypt struggled with immigration issues because it was seen as a land of plenty. How does this relate to the situation in America today? Do foreigners have a right to immigrate in order to have an opportunity for a better life? Or do residents of a country have a right to keep foreigners out? Why? Is there a difference between people who want to immigrate in order to have better opportunities for school and work, and those who are escaping danger?

“Those who do not study history are condemned to repeat it.” What does this mean? What can we learn from the immigration challenges in ancient Egypt that are important lessons today?

In ancient Egypt, Pharaoh was considered all-powerful. He didn’t have to get approval from anyone else in order to reward or punish someone. Do you think that’s a good idea or not? How does that differ from our justice system?

Compare the Egyptian burial customs to those of other ancient cultures, such as Greek, Roman, Chinese, and Maya. For insight into the burial customs of the ancient Mayan, see *The Well of Sacrifice* by Chris Eboch. Compare Egyptian burial customs to modern funeral practices.

### **Suggestions?**

If you have any suggestions for activities that could be added, or if you have tried something with your class that you’d like to share, contact the author at [chriseboch@members.authorsguild.net](mailto:chriseboch@members.authorsguild.net).

You can also download lesson plans for some of the author’s other books at her website, on the “for teachers” page: <http://www.chriseboch.com/events.htm>.

Lesson plans are available for *The Well of Sacrifice* and *The Genie’s Gift*. This page also has information about school visits by the author

Sign up for the Spellbound River Press e-mail list to receive periodic updates on Spellbound River books, authors, promotions, and special events: <http://spellboundriver.com/email-list/>

Chris Eboch has several other books suitable for ages nine and up. Learn more at [www.chriseboch.com](http://www.chriseboch.com) or sign up for her newsletter: <http://eepurl.com/8MQmX>