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# How To Teach A Great Unit on Ancient Egypt

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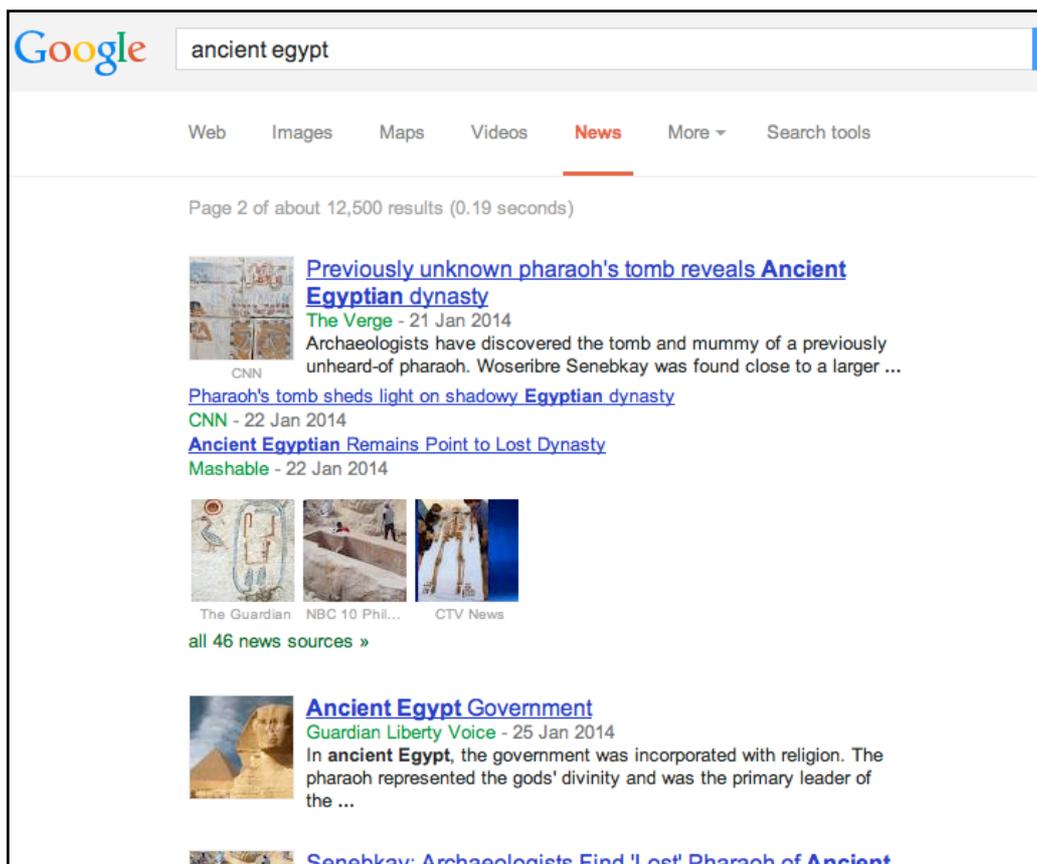
## Engaging Students:

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### • Why are we interested in Ancient Egypt:

Ancient Egypt has been one of the most fascinating ancient cultures to modern society since archaeologists, historians and novelists began to write extensively about it in the 19th century. What draws us to Ancient Egypt? Watch through this slideshow with students and ask them to write down as many reasons as possible that people are interested in Ancient Egypt: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KdtgX9ORiW4>

Ancient Egyptian civilization lasted for thousands of years. Much of its culture is still buried or hidden and remains to be discovered. We can engage students through letting them explore recent news about archaeological discoveries in Egypt. Students can simply do a Google search for 'Ancient Egypt' - however, instead of choosing the 'web' tab for search results (which is the default tab), students can select the 'news' tab - which searches news headlines for the search terms entered.



### • How ancient is ancient?

One of the aspects of Ancient Egyptian culture that is most interesting to our modern society is the pyramids. How were they built? We still don't really know. We can get students curious about this by looking at the attached 'buildings timeline'. This timeline shows different structures built by

different civilizations. Ask students to draw the pyramids somewhere along this timeline as a way of getting them to think about when the ancient Egyptians existed.

Another way students can process the relative length of Ancient Egyptian civilisation is to put the dates of its existence into a bar graph. Students can use these dates to work out how long each civilisation has lasted for:

- Europeans have been settled in Australia since 1788.
- First successful English settlement of America 1607.
- The Roman Empire lasts from 27 BCE to 395 CE.
- China is ruled by an emperor 2100 BCE to 1912 CE.
- Ancient Egyptian civilisation lasts from 3050 BCE to the point it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 BCE.

A follow up to this activity can be for students to summarise the graph in writing. When getting students to summarise information in writing, giving them words and phrases to help with their summarisation can greatly improve their efforts. Below is a list of words and phrases students can use to help them put the information from their bar graph into words:

- longest
- after this
- comparatively short
- enduring
- next
- modern

Finally, two excellent video resources for providing an overview of Ancient Egyptian history exist in - *Crash Course in Ancient Egypt*: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3Wvw6BivVI> and *Horrible Histories Pharaoh Report*: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7ukJSmlazc&feature=related>

• **Geography:**

Australian Curriculum descriptor: The physical features of ancient Egypt (such as the River Nile) and how they influenced the civilisation that developed there

Why tell students what they can work out for themselves? The physical terrain of a country had an overwhelming impact on the people who occupied it before the advent of technology such as machines which meant we could shape the landscape for ourselves. This was very true of Ancient Egypt.

Ask students to look at a map of Egypt in their atlases and compare it to a map of Australia (students should look at maps which provide good visual information about the geographical terrain). Students should create a table such as this one in their books:

	Egypt	Australia
Similarities		
Differences		