Egypt

Geography

Egypt is located in the northeast region of Africa. The Egyptian civilization developed about the same time as the Mesopotamians and had a similar climate—dry with very little rain. This area is often called the Gift of the Nile because it is an oasis in the middle of the desert. The Nile River was the life line of the people, providing them with water, food, and transportation. The Nile is the longest river in the world and flows in a northern direction. The river is shaped like a lotus flower with a blossom at the end. It splits into several streams that empty into the Mediterranean Sea. This area is called the delta. The land here was very fertile and as a result, most of the population lived in the delta region of Lower Egypt.

Diagram:
Every spring the Nile would flood leaving behind rich dark soil called silt. The dark soil was ideal for farming and the Egyptians praised the gods for providing the annual flood. The Egyptians called this land the Black Land and the surrounding desert the Red Land. The Egyptians had the advantage over the Mesopotamians because they knew when the river would flood and they could plan accordingly. They worked together and used irrigation techniques to control the Nile. Life revolved around the Nile flood. There were three seasons, the flood season, the planting season and the harvest season. Since farmers could not farm during the flood season, they would build monuments and temples for the pharaoh. The farmers worked together on the farms and shared the workload. Since they used cooperation and knew when the Nile would flood, they could farm easier so their cities developed faster and more elaborate than other ancient civilizations.