

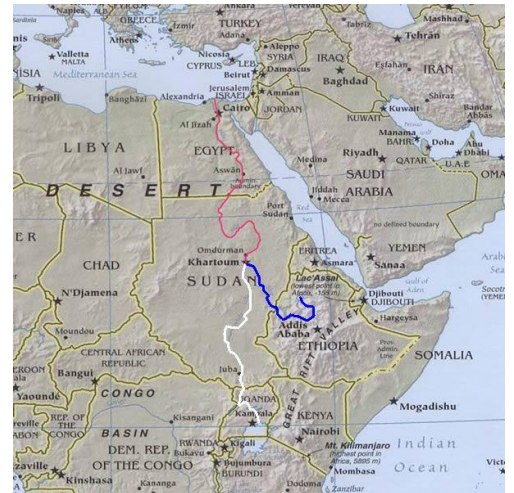
The Nile River is the longest river in the world. It **flows** northward from the lakes of Central Africa to the **Mediterranean Sea**. **However**, the Nile carries less water than many other rivers because it **flows** through the Sahara desert in the north. 97% of Egypt's population lives in the river's **valley**.

Africa's biggest river **drains** about 10 percent of the continent. It **flows** through many countries of eastern and northern Africa.

The Nile consists of two **tributaries**. The White Nile starts near Lake Victoria and **flows** through **steep** canyons and **mountainous landscapes** of tropical Africa. The Blue Nile begins its **journey** on a high plateau in Ethiopia. It is shorter but carries more water and **flows** much faster than the White Nile. It also brings along **fertile mud** and **causes** most of the **flooding** in the north. The rivers got their names from the water that they carry with them. The Blue Nile starts out as a bright blue **stream** and turns black as it takes **sediment** with it. The White Nile carries whitish grey **sediments** from the tropical regions.

The two rivers **join** at Khartoum in Sudan. From here the Nile River **winds** its way through northern Sudan and Egypt to the **Mediterranean Sea**. North of Cairo it **spreads** out into a delta and divides itself into **separate channels**. This area is made up of salty land and **fertile soil**.

In the deserts between Khartoum and southern Egypt the Nile flows through a **series** of **rapids** called **cataracts**.



## THE NILE AND ANCIENT EGYPT

**Ancient** Egypt could never have **developed** into one of the world's greatest civilizations without the help of the Nile River. For **centuries** people bathed in the Nile, drank its water, told legends about it and built **tombs** and temples and even great pyramids near its **banks**.

Farming in **ancient** Egypt **depended** on the Nile River. The year was divided into three seasons. The big **floods** came between June and September.

From October to February farmers **ploughed** and **planted crops** in the **fertile mud** that came from the **floods**. They built **ditches** and canals so that the river's water could **spread** to the crops. **Harvest** season was from March to May.



## THE ASWAN HIGH DAM

In the 1960s the Aswan High Dam was **constructed** near the **border** between Egypt and Sudan. Behind it the water of the Nile forms an **artificial** body of water called Lake Nasser. Because of the dam much of the **mud** that once **spread** across the Nile **valley** today gets caught in the lake. As a result farmers must use

**fertilizers** to grow **crops**, but the good side is that **irrigation** can be controlled and farming can be done the whole year round. The dam also produces electricity for most of Egypt.

## **PLANTS AND ANIMALS**

The Nile flows through many climatic regions. **Grasslands accompany** the banks of the river south of Khartoum. To the north it **winds** its way on a green band of **fertile** land through northern Africa. **Apart** from **crops** like **wheat** and corn, **papyrus** is one of the traditional plants found on the **banks** of the Nile. It is a **reed** that the **ancient** Egyptians used to write on.

Many types of fish can be found in the waters of the river. Crocodiles, snakes and **hippopotamuses** live in the **habitat** around the Nile River.

**WORDS**

- **accompany** = to go or move with
- **ancient** = old
- **apart** = except
- **artificial** = not made by natural things
- **bank** = land on the side of a river
- **border** = line between two countries
- **cataract** = a large waterfall
- **cause** = is the reason for
- **century** = a hundred years
- **channel** = part of a river
- **construct** = build
- **crop** = a plant like wheat or rice that farmers grow for food
- **depend** = if you need something very much
- **develop** = grow
- **ditch** = a long hole that you dig to let in or let out water
- **drain** = to make water flow away
- **fertile** = good farming land
- **fertilizer** = material that you put into the soil to make plants grow
- **flood** = to cover land with water
- **flow** = run
- **grassland** = a large area covered with wild grass
- **habitat** = place where animals or plants live
- **harvest** = to gather the crops from the field
- **hippopotamus** = large grey African animal with a large head and mouth that lives near lakes and rivers
- **however** = but
- **irrigation** = to put water on land
- **join** = to get together
- **journey** = trip
- **landscape** = scenery, countryside
- **Mediterranean Sea** = sea between Europe and Africa
- **mountainous** = with a lot of hills and mountains
- **mud** = wet earth that is soft and sticky
- **papyrus** = a plant like grass that grows in the water
- **plant** = to put crops into the ground so that they can grow
- **plough** = to turn the earth over so that you can plant seeds
- **rapids** = part of a river where the water looks white because it is moving so quickly
- **reed** = a tall plant that grows in wet places
- **sediment** = the material that rivers carry with it
- **separate** = divide
- **series** = more than one
- **soil** = the top part of the earth on which plants can grow
- **spread** = move from one place to another
- **steep** = not flat
- **stream** = a very small river
- **tomb** = a stone structure where a dead person is buried
- **tributary** = a river that flows into a larger river
- **valley** = the lower land between two hills or mountains; usually a river flows through it
- **wheat** = the grain that you make white bread out of
- **wind** = twist; move in curves