Queen Hatshepsut and Ramses the Great
Great Pharaohs of the New Kingdom

California Standard 6.2.7: Understand the significance of Queen Hatshepsut and Ramses the Great.

California Standard 6.2.3: Understand the relationship between religion and the social and political order in Mesopotamia and Egypt.

California Standard 1.0, 1.1, 1.4, and 1.7 Listening and Speaking:
Students deliver focused, coherent presentations that convey ideas clearly and relate to the background and interests of the audience. Relate the speaker’s verbal communication (e.g. pitch, feeling, tone) to nonverbal message (e.g. posture, gesture). Select an organizational structure and point of view, matching the purpose, message, occasion, and vocal modulation to the audience. Use effective rate, volume, pitch, and tone and align nonverbal elements to sustain audience interest and attention.

Purpose: Students will learn the importance of the two pharaohs, Queen Hatshepsut and Ramses the Great in Egyptian history.

Objectives:
- Students will read about the role of pharaohs in Egypt.
- Students will read about the backgrounds of Queen Hatshepsut and Ramses the Great.
- Students will take notes from teacher lectures on Queen Hatshepsut and Ramses the Great.
- Students will write questions and answers for a mock interview with either Queen Hatshepsut or Ramses the Great. They will work in partners.
  - Honors class may research other pharaohs for this project.
- Students will present a mock interview in costume for the class.

Procedure:
- Day 1: Read pgs. 199-202 in A Message of Ancient Days for background information on pharaohs.
- Day 2: Students will take notes from a teacher lecture on Queen Hatshepsut. Lecture will include pictures from the Internet.
- Day 3: Students will take notes from a teacher lecture on Ramses the Great. Lecture will include pictures from the Internet.
- Day 4: Students will read about other pharaohs and complete a data sheet on each one. Then they will evaluate which pharaoh they felt was the best and which one was the worst.
- Day 5: In partners students will write questions and answers for a mock interview
with either Queen Hatshepsut or Ramses the Great in order to understand their importance in Egyptian history.

- Honors students may pick other pharaohs to interview.
  - Day 6: Practice the interviews.
  - Day 7-8: Present the interviews in costume for the class. Interviews can be videotaped.

**Evaluation:**

Students will deliver a focused, coherent well organized presentation that conveys clear ideas and background on either Queen Hatshepsut or Ramses the Great. The interview will be graded on a rubric.

**Note:** Some classes may take longer to do these activities.
THE WAR CHARIOTS OF THE HYKSOS: THE END OF THE MIDDLE KINGDOM

Only the far-off land of Punt produced the valuable frankincense and myrrh so necessary to Egyptian religious ceremonies. Yet Punt was located on the east coast of Africa, probably near present-day Somalia, far from the Nile River Valley. To reach it, traders had to plan an eight-day trek across the blistering eastern desert to the Red Sea. Once they arrived at the coast, they re-assembled a boat that they had carried. From here they sailed down to Punt. After returning with the cargo, they began the arduous journey back across the desert to the Nile.

Punt wasn’t the only foreign land visited by the Egyptians of the Middle Kingdom. Traders also traveled to Nubia in the south to bring back gold. In the northeast, Egyptian ships sailed to Byblos on the coast of Lebanon to bring back cedar logs. From the island of Crete across the Mediterranean came olive oil. Imported products were necessary for many aspects of Egyptian life.

Clothing was an important sign of status. The nobles adorned themselves in long pleated fabric and heavy bracelets and necklaces made of gold, turquoise, and lapis lazuli. Egyptian women used a wide range of products for cosmetics. They wore wigs made of human hair kept in place by beeswax and perfumed by cones of hippopotamus fat. For eye shadow they used green malachite, and for rouge and fingernail polish they used red ocher.

The Middle Kingdom pharaohs were interested not only in improving Egyptian life through foreign trade, but they also hoped to avoid some of the problems that had led to the collapse of the Old Kingdom. The powerful provincial governors who had defied the Old Kingdom pharaohs were weakened. Also, a gigantic irrigation project moved water from the Nile to a natural depression called Lake Faiyum where it could be stored for use during the dry season.

The Middle Kingdom is also known for its literature. One of the best-known stories is the “Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor.” On a voyage to Punt, an Egyptian official is shipwrecked on a magical island ruled over by a serpent. The serpent turns out to be the only survivor of a mysterious object from the heavens that crashed into the earth. After loading the shipwrecked sailor down with gifts, the serpent predicts that the sailor will soon be rescued.
The Middle Kingdom, however, was severely weakened by excessive flooding of the Nile. At the same time, the ruling family of the pharaohs died out. As a result, the question of who was to sit on the throne became a source of conflict between provincial governors. Egypt again split into two kingdoms, each trying to dominate the other. Egypt was left weakened as it faced a new danger from beyond its borders, the Hyksos.

Around 1800 B.C. these mysterious invaders began to sweep across the border into Egypt from Syria and Palestine. The Egyptian armies were no match for them. The invaders brought new weapons that enabled them to easily defeat the Egyptians. While the Egyptians went to war lightly clad and armed with javelins and simple bows, the Hyksos faced them in chain mail and helmets. They also used a composite bow made of wood, horn, and animal tendons that could shoot much farther than the Egyptian bows. Most terrifying of all, the Hyksos rode in a war machine not seen before in Egypt, the horse-drawn chariot.

After burning cities and destroying temples, the Hyksos leaders established themselves as pharaohs. Thus began the period in Egyptian history known as the Second Intermediate Period (1674–1558 B.C.).

An Egyptian pharaoh still ruled in Upper Egypt but was under the control of the Hyksos pharaoh in Lower Egypt. The Hyksos pharaohs ruled wisely. Instead of imposing their own ways, they adapted and borrowed from the Egyptians. Much of the administration remained in Egyptian hands. Hyksos kings also built temples to Egyptian gods, adopted Egyptian hieroglyphics, and copied Middle Kingdom styles of sculpture.

At first the Egyptians and Hyksos lived together without difficulty. Eventually, however, the Egyptian pharaoh in Upper Egypt grew strong enough to challenge the invaders for control of Egypt. They soon discovered that the Hyksos would not leave without a fight.
THE WARRIOR PHARAOHS OF THE NEW KINGDOM

The nobleman, Amosis, son of Ebana, was pleased with himself. He had been fighting the Hyksos invaders for several years under the leadership of the pharaoh. He had always been a good soldier. In the siege of Avaris, a Hyksos town, Amosis had carried off one man and three women as prisoners. Because of his courage, the pharaoh awarded him with the gold of valor and his prisoners as slaves. After a three-year siege, the town of Sharuhen finally fell, and once again Amosis carried off two women. Again they were given to him as slaves, and again the pharaoh gave him the gold of valor. The gold enabled Amosis to add to his lands, enlarge his palace, and begin to build and equip his tomb. The slaves supplied much-needed help to his wife, who managed Amosis’s growing household and estates. Now returning from the latest victory of the new pharaoh, Thutmose I, Amosis felt that he had reached the pinnacle of his career as an army officer. During the battle, while the pharaoh watched, Amosis had been able to capture a chariot, its horse, and its charioteer. The chariot had been one of the secret weapons that had enabled the Hyksos to overrun Egypt years before. Now, however, the Egyptians used them and were driving the Hyksos beyond the border. Amosis gleefully anticipated more rewards for his latest capture.

After Egyptians like Amosis defeated and expelled the Hyksos, the pharaoh began to put the new weapons like the chariot and the composite bow to use in conquering an empire. For the first time in Egyptian history, the pharaoh had a professional standing army. A career in the army became a way for men of talent to move up the ladder of success. In the Old and Middle Kingdoms, only noblemen could hold high office. In the New Kingdom, men like Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu, who started life as a simple scribe in the army, could work their way up to be the pharaoh’s chief advisors. Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu was eventually worshipped as a god.

The term historians use to describe this period of warlike expansion is the New Kingdom (1558–1085 B.C.E.). Under Thutmose III, the Egyptian Empire spread into Syria and Palestine, where Egyptian armies clashed with rival empires for control of the Middle East. Thutmose III fought 17 military campaigns during his reign. To administer his empire he brought nobles from the conquered territories to Egypt where he educated and trained them. Then they returned to their homelands and governed them as loyal servants of the pharaoh. The chief rivals of the Egyptians were the Hittites. The two empires faced off in the epic battle
of Kadesh. Here 2,500 Hittite chariots of King Muwatalli clashed with a smaller number of Egyptian chariots led by Ramses II. The large three-man chariots of the Hittites easily drove the light two-man Egyptian chariots before them. For a time, it seemed that the Egyptian army would be routed and all would be lost. Ramses found himself surrounded by enemy chariots. In desperation, he prayed to the god Amon-Re and reminded him of all the temples he had built in his honor. The Hittites eventually broke off the battle to raid the Egyptian camp. When they did, the Egyptians counter-attacked and scattered the Hittite army. Many more years of warfare followed before the two sides finally decided upon peace. To finalize the agreement, Ramses even married a Hittite princess.

The New Kingdom pharaohs were also great builders. Ramses II, the greatest of the builders, ordered the huge temple of Abu Simbel to be cut from the rock of a cliff overlooking the Nile. The Egyptians removed an estimated 365,000 tons of rock to create the structure. It was designed in such a way that on two mornings each year, 30 days before the spring equinox and 30 days after the autumnal equinox, the Sun’s rays could penetrate the 200 feet of darkness to light up the statues deep in the temple’s interior. On either side of the doorway, four 67-foot statues of a seated Ramses were to guard the entrance. In the 1960s this temple, along with others, was threatened by the construction of the Aswan High Dam, which was intended to control the flooding of the Nile and give the modern Egyptians hydroelectric power. To save it for future generations, an international team of engineers cut the gigantic temple into blocks and moved it 200 feet above the original site.

Ramses II also made Thebes into an impressive monumental capital city. He expanded the already huge temple to Amon-Re at Karnak to an area that covers 6,000 square yards. It is big enough to accommodate the entire cathedral of Notre Dame. It was probably the largest religious structure ever built and ranks as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.
QUEEN HATSHEPSUT: THE WOMAN WHO WAS PHARAOH

Because Egyptian pharaohs were considered divine, it was important for them to find divine wives. Since the only other divine beings in Egypt were in the royal family, pharaohs often married their sisters. One such sister and wife of a pharaoh was Hatshepsut. She, however, broke with tradition when her husband died and ruled as pharaoh in the place of her son, Thutmose III. She took on the official title "she who embraces Amun, the foremost of women."

Throughout Egyptian history, many of the pharaohs' queens wielded equal power with their husbands, but none had been able to seize the throne and become pharaoh themselves. Not only was she the first woman to become pharaoh, but she was also the most successful until Cleopatra 1,400 years later. As is true for most of the New Kingdom pharaohs, she could be warlike. She led Egyptian armies in person against Nubia in the south.

Hatshepsut is better known for her building program that included a huge and beautiful terraced mortuary temple at Deir-el-Bahri. Unlike most temples, it is open to the Sun so that a visitor can study the 190 statues and carvings in the full light of day. The mummy, however, was not to rest here. Aware of the fact that the tombs of the Old and Middle Kingdoms had almost all been robbed, Hatshepsut, like the rest of the New Kingdom pharaohs, had a hidden tomb cut in the rock of the Valley of the Kings. Her tomb features a long corridor that ends in a large burial chamber. Like the above-ground tombs of the previous kingdoms, the walls were decorated with inscriptions and scenes of the afterlife painted in brilliant colors. Here, it was hoped, the mummy, surrounded by unbelievable amounts of riches, would be hidden forever.

The architect of this beautiful temple was Hatshepsut's trusted assistant, Senmut. In order to get himself a share of the queen's eternal life, he secretly sneaked carvings of his own image onto some unobtrusive walls of the temple. When Hatshepsut discovered what he had done, she ordered wreckers to destroy his tomb and deface most of the hidden images that he had placed in her temple.

Hatshepsut is also famous for restoring Egypt to its former wealth by renewing foreign commerce. For example, in the ninth year of her reign, she sent five large cargo ships on a trading expedition to the land of Punt. Modern historians believe that Punt may have been where modern Somalia is now. According to the pictures that decorate her mortuary temple, the expedition was met by the local prince and his wife. After a great feast, the Egyptian captains began to trade for the many wonders of Punt. They loaded their ships with
myrrh trees used for incense, beautiful black ebony wood, ivory, gold, and eye cosmetics. The Egyptians were also interested in the many exotic animals found in Punt. On the return journey, one of the Egyptian ships must have looked like Noah's Ark. On it the Egyptians loaded giraffes, hippopotami, apes, monkeys, and greyhounds.

Hatshepsut proved to be an able ruler for 20 years. By avoiding war where she could, she gave Egypt a breathing space in which it could recover its strength. Yet her position on the throne was not secure. As a woman, Egyptian law said that she technically could not rule as pharaoh. She tried to encourage her people to believe that she was a legitimate pharaoh by disguising her gender. She adopted the ceremonial false beard and masculine dress of male pharaohs. In some of her inscriptions she even calls herself "His Majesty." As Thutmose III, who had been declared pharaoh before Hatshepsut seized the throne, grew into manhood, his impatience and resentment toward the strong-willed woman increased. Finally, he gathered the supporters that he needed and overthrew the queen. We do not know the details of this event, but it is likely that Hatshepsut was killed as a result.

Thutmose III tried to undo all that his mother had accomplished. He abandoned peaceful relations with neighboring countries and launched attacks into Nubia and Palestine. He also destroyed Hatshepsut's statues and erased her name from all the temples and monuments that she had constructed during her reign.
AKHENATON THE BIZARRE

One of the most extraordinary and mysterious pharaohs in Egyptian history is Amenhotep IV. His statues show a grotesque figure with a huge, narrow head perched on top of a very long, thin neck, a potbelly like a pregnant woman, along with womanly hips, all somehow held up by tiny slender shins. Archaeologists have come up with many possible explanations for Amenhotep’s remarkable physical characteristics. Some say that he suffered from a glandular disorder that deformed his body. Others say that he wanted to emphasize his closeness with a creator god, so he had himself portrayed with both male and female characteristics.

Early in his reign he clashed with the powerful priests of the god Amon-Re. He was often known as the king of the gods and was portrayed with many different forms. Amon-Re had become the chief god of the New Kingdom, and his priests had been awarded wealth to rival even the pharaoh. Amenhotep IV was determined to restore the power of the pharaoh. He reacted to the Amon-Re priests by forbidding worship of their god and erasing his name from monuments. Amenhotep IV replaced Amon-Re with a different god called Aton, the solar disk. The pharaoh even changed his name from Amenhotep, which honored Amon-Re, to Akhenaton, which meant “pleasant to Aton.”

Historians refer to Akhenaton’s reign as the Amarna period. It is named after the pharaoh’s new city located at Amarna on the edge of the desert. The new city saw fascinating times. By piecing together surviving fragments of literature and sculpture from the period, archaeologists have come to believe that Akhenaton was motivated by more than just jealousy of the priests of Amon-Re. The fragments show an intense devotion to Aton as a benevolent god of all nations, not just Egypt. Worship of all other gods was discouraged. Because of this Akhenaton is often called the first monotheist in history. A monotheist is someone who worships only one god. In fact, it was more complicated than that. Akhenaton himself was worshipped as a god, and the Egyptian people could only worship Aton through the pharaoh.

The Amarna period is also known for more realistic art forms than before. Graffiti by Akhenaton’s chief sculptor, Bek, says that it was the pharaoh himself who taught the artists the new way of looking at life. As we have already noted, Akhenaton’s distinctive human characteristics are portrayed in his portraits. In other ways Egyptian artists for the first time tried to create more natural and life-like images. Artists painted ordinary scenes of plants
and animals seen along the Nile. Akhenaton ordered the court sculptors to break with tradition on how they portrayed the pharaoh. Instead of the expressionless and remote, god-like image of earlier pharaohs, Akhenaton is often shown with his wife, Nefertiti, and their children. In one relief sculpture, Akhenaton is shown kissing one of his daughters, while the other two play in the lap of their mother. Also, a famous, life-like portrait bust of Nefertiti survives that shows a beautiful woman whose makeup and hairstyle would make her look at home in any modern woman's fashion magazine.

The writings of the time also show a new creativity. Akhenaton introduced everyday language and idiomatic expressions into literature. Egyptian poets experimented with new expressions and ideas.

Despite Akhenaton's efforts, he ultimately failed. His veneration of Aton did not survive him. When he died, the priests of Amon-Re quickly re-established control. The name of Akhenaton and his god Aton were hammered out. His city was abandoned to the desert. Also, so distracted was he by his religious reforms that he ignored the pleas for help from his borders. Enemy Hittite warriors overran the Egyptian possessions in Syria and Palestine. During his reign local government was allowed to become corrupt. Seizures of lands belonging to the priests of Amon-Re disrupted the economy. Finally, the construction of the new capital left an exhausted treasury. To the next pharaoh, Akhenaton left a very weakened and confused Egypt.