

Grades: 9-12

Nova, “Decoding the Great Pyramid”

Stunning new archaeological evidence provides clues about the Egyptians who built the Great Pyramid of Giza -- and how they did it. Join researchers as they delve into the logbook of a work crew and discover how the massive project transformed Egypt.

After watching this episode, choose from the following questions and/or tasks to extend your learning

Question Box 1

- What is the central message in this program? Explain?
- What are the program’s supporting claims that support the central message?
- What evidence does the TV show director give to support his or her central idea?
- What is this program “saying”? Cite evidence to support your analysis.
- What are the program’s supporting claims that support the central message?
- What stunning new archaeological evidence provides clues about the Egyptians?
- Who does the program say built the Great Pyramid of Giza?
- How did they build the pyramid?
- How did NOVA’s massive project transform Egypt?

Question Box 2

- If someone else were looking at this program, what might they learn?
- What is one thing I would like to add to this topic?
- What would you change about this program?
- If a part 2 of this program was created, what you like them to focus on?
- What would you like to research for extra credit? Why?

Box 3 (Tasks)

- In the Nova experiment, 12 men pulled 186 stones using just an iron cable and a winch. How many stones and man hours did that take (assuming a 10-hour workday)?
- 340 stones per day would be needed to complete the Khufu Pyramid in 20 years. How many men would be needed?
- What type of pyramid could have been built using 186 stones? Assume they were all cubes. Describe how you arrived at your answer using mathematics.
- Describe the new evidence and how it helped discover how the pyramids were built.
- Make a timeline from start to finish of the building of the Great Pyramid of Giza.

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Box 4 (Enrichment)

- Compare and contrast the manner in which other ancient civilizations moved enormous materials in the building of their temples
- Research and describe the materials necessary to build the pyramids and how they were obtained.

Box 5 (Extend/Real-Life)

- Compare and contrast the building of contemporary skyscrapers to the building of the Great Pyramid of Giza.