

Unit 2

Lesson 4

Student's Book pages 21

READING

4 Read the article about emeralds in Egypt.
Which Ancient Egyptian queen loved emeralds?



Emeralds in Egypt

The value of emeralds has been known for centuries and even in ancient times. The Aztecs in Mexico and the Incas in Peru held them in high regard. However, the oldest emeralds were found in Egypt, near the Red Sea. Many Egyptian pharaohs took emeralds from the mines there. The mines were actually known as 'Cleopatra's mines' because Cleopatra liked to wear the stones. She

wore jewellery made from emeralds and decorated many ornaments with the jewel. Cleopatra presented noble visitors with carved emerald sculptures that looked like the Queen.

The Ancient Egyptians believed that emeralds were not only beautiful but were also able to cure disease. Historians know that these emeralds were a lighter colour green than many emeralds found today, but they were highly valued in Ancient Egypt.

There were many emeralds in these mines. In later times, the Romans and the Turks took emeralds from these mines, so overall the 'Cleopatra mines' were in use for over 1,500 years! When these mines were found again in the early nineteenth century, there were no emeralds left. There are now no more emeralds left in Egypt, but the Ancient Egyptian era represents the beginning of the jewel's long history. Now, the majority of the world's emeralds can be found in Colombia.

Answers

Queen Cleopatra

COMPREHENSION

5 Now read the text again and answer the questions.

1 Which two civilisations in Ancient America valued emeralds?

The Aztecs in Mexico and the Incas in Peru valued emeralds.

2 How did Cleopatra use emeralds?

3 Why did the Ancient Egyptians value emeralds?

4 What colour were the emeralds found in Egypt?

5 How long were emeralds mined for in Egypt?

6 Do you think Colombia will also use up all its emeralds like in Egypt? Explain.

Answers

1 The Aztecs in Mexico and the Incas in Peru valued emeralds.

2 She wore jewellery made from emeralds and decorated many ornaments with the jewel. Some say that Cleopatra presented noble visitors with carved emerald sculptures that looked like the Queen.

3 The Ancient Egyptians believed that emeralds were not only beautiful but were also able to cure disease.

4 These emeralds were a lighter colour green than many emeralds found today.

5 They were mined for more than 1,500.

6 Students' own answers

SPEAKING AND WRITING

6 Imagine that you have found one of the precious stones in exercise 2 on page 18. Work in groups. Describe it to your group members. Then listen to the other members and write notes. Decide whether their stones are rare and/or expensive or not, with reasons.

Suggested answers

A: I have found a red stone. It has a very bright colour and it sparkles when you rub it.

B: I think you have found a ruby.

C: How big is the stone?

A: Quite big.

B: I have found a green stone.

D: Does it shine when you rub it?

B: No, it doesn't.

A: Does it sparkle?

B: No, it doesn't.

D: I don't think your stone is rare or expensive.

7 Choose one of the precious stones that were described in your group. Describe it to the class. Explain why you think their stone is rare and/ or expensive, or not. Does the class agree with you?

Students' own answers

8 Use your notes from exercise 6 to write a short description of your group's precious stone.

Students' own answers

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