

# The Egypt Game

Recommended for Grades 6-8

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## **Book Summary: The Egypt Game**

April reluctantly moves to California when her mother leaves her with her grandmother. One day she comes across an antiques shop that peaks her interest in Egypt. When she makes friends with Melanie, they both decide to build their own Egyptian world in an abandoned lot behind the antique store. As the game progresses, they gain four more Egyptians. For them, Egypt becomes a wonderful secret that only the six of them keep and the game grows into an entire imaginary world where they are priests and priestesses and perform rituals to the Egyptian gods.

The game is almost put to a stop when a girl nearby is killed suddenly, but April and Melanie convince their parents to allow them outside together. One of the practices began by the Egyptians is the Oracle, which they ask questions. When the questions begin being answered mysteriously and the Egyptians feel they are being watched, Egypt starts to become darker and less welcoming.

### **[Spoiler]**

Toby, one of the Egyptians, confesses to have written some of the oracle answers. The others puzzle who could've written the other one. One night, April ventures into Egypt at night and is grabbed by the murderer. The owner of the antique shop, who has been watching them all this time, calls for help and the murderer is arrested.

Afterwards, the six Egyptians are given keys back into Egypt by the owner, but April and Melanie decide they are done with Egypt and ready to begin a new game.

## **Author Biography: Zilpha Keatley Snyder**

Zilpha Keatley Snyder was born May 11, 1927 in Lemoore, California. She grew up loving to read and playing games, which would influence some of her later books. She attended Whittier College in southern California and then worked as a teacher. Her experience as an elementary teacher would go on to influence some of her books including *The Egypt Game*, which was based on real places and events. Over the course of her life, she wrote over fifty books, won three Newbery Honor awards and traveled across the world with her husband, Larry.

She died October 7, 2014 from a stroke at the age of 87. She is survived by her three children.



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## Discussion Questions: The Egypt Game

1. April comes to live with her grandma while her mother is touring. Why do you think she is fascinated by Egypt? How do you think her mother's career influences April's attitude?
2. Why is Melanie initially surprised by April? How do they become friends?
3. How did the Egypt game start? Why do you think Melanie and April found it so compelling? Why do kids play imaginary games? At what age do you think kids should stop playing them? Why?
4. While the girls play their Egypt game, the professor observes them from his shop. Why do you think he never interfered in their game? What part do you think he had in the game?
5. When April goes to school, Melanie tries to keep her from playing her Hollywood act. Was Melanie a good friend to do this? Why or why not? Have you ever tried to change one of your friends? What happened?
6. When April is given a nickname by the kids, why did Melanie know it was going to be okay? Are some kinds of teasing good? Why or why not?
7. Although April pretends to be mature, Melanie is often smarter than her. Why?
8. How do each of the girls benefit from playing the Egypt game?
9. When Keith and Toby find out about the game, Elizabeth offers to let them join the game if they promise not to tell. Was this a good idea? Why or why not?
10. How does the game improve when the boys join? How are games more interesting when more people are involved?
11. After the Ceremony of the Dead, why did the Egyptian players become more careless about the secrecy of their game? Why was this dangerous?
12. How did Marshall come to not needing Security as much anymore?
13. When April's mother finally asks her to visit, April decides to stay with her grandma. What do you think changed her mind about staying and why?
14. Why do you think the girls find Egypt boring at the end of the story? Should they go back to it anyway? Why or why not? How did playing Egypt change their lives?



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