Document A: Herodotus

They said that Egypt until the time of King Rhampsinitus was altogether well-governed and prospered greatly, but that Kheops, who was the next king, brought the people to utter misery. For first he closed all the temples, so that no one could sacrifice there; and next, he compelled all the Egyptians to work for him. To some, he assigned the task of dragging stones from the quarries in the Arabian mountains to the Nile; and after the stones were ferried across the river in boats, he organized others to receive and drag them to the mountains called Libyan. They worked in gangs of a hundred thousand men, each gang for three months. For ten years the people wore themselves out building the road over which the stones were dragged, work which was in my opinion not much lighter at all than the building of the pyramid (for the road is nearly a mile long and twenty yards wide, and elevated at its highest to a height of sixteen yards, and it is all of stone polished and carved with figures). The aforesaid ten years went to the building of this road and of the underground chambers in the hill where the pyramids stand; these, the king meant to be burial-places for himself, and surrounded them with water, bringing in a channel from the Nile. The pyramid itself was twenty years in the making. Its base is square, each side eight hundred feet long, and its height is the same; the whole is of stone polished and most exactly fitted; there is no block of less than thirty feet in length.

This pyramid was made like stairs, which some call steps and others, tiers. When this, its first form, was completed, the workmen used short wooden logs as levers to raise the rest of the stone; they heaved up the blocks from the ground onto the first tier of steps; when the stone had been raised, it was set on another lever that stood on the first tier, and the lever again used to lift it from this tier to the next. It may be that there was a new lever on each tier of steps, or perhaps there was only one lever, quite portable, which they carried up to each tier in turn; I leave this uncertain, as both possibilities were mentioned. But this is certain, that the upper part of the pyramid was finished off first, then the next below it, and last of all the base and the lowest part. There are writings on the pyramid in Egyptian characters indicating how much was spent on radishes and onions and garlic for the workmen; and I am sure that, when he read me the writing, the interpreter said that sixteen hundred talents of silver had been paid. Now if that is so, how much must have been spent on the iron with which they worked, and the workmen's food and clothing, considering that the time aforesaid was spent in building, while hewing and carrying the stone and digging out the underground parts was, as I suppose, a business of long duration.

*Source:* The Histories*, written by the Greek historian Herodotus in 440 BCE.*

Document B:

This is an excerpt from a high school history textbook titled *Our World Through the Ages*. It was published in 1959:

At Giza stands the Great Pyramid. It has stood there for five thousand years. It covers thirteen acres and stands nearly five hundred feet high. It contains over two million blocks, most of which weigh about two tons. One hundred thousand lash-driven men poured out their sweat and blood for twenty years to complete this resting place which King Khufu considered fit for his royal remains.

Documents A and B Corroboration Questions:

1. According to both the textbook and Herodotus, who built the Great pyramid?
2. How long did it take?
3. How many people worked on the Great Pyramid?