

Egyptian Treasures

art of the pharaohs

This teachers' supplement is to be used with Project Pullout #39, which is found in issue 92 of DMAG. Students will learn about ancient Egypt, its art and culture.

This supplement encourages students to:

- Learn that art is a means of recording history
- Experiment with different art forms
- Think about maths with regards to scale
- Appreciate that people have different beliefs
- Experiment with the science of 'mummification'

History and Art

Tell the class that they'll be investigating the ancient Egyptians. Ask them what they know about them and write some of the things up on the board. Tell them that the ancient Egyptian civilisation lasted from 3150 BC to 31 BC. Discuss what BC (Before Christ) and BCE (Before Common Era) mean (they are interchangeable in terms of times, BCE is not religious).

Ask the students to think about living 5000 years ago. How do we know what life was like back then? What sort of things would last 5000 years? Plants? Food? Clothes? What about things made of timber and stone? If you were to write on paper would it last? What about writing or painting on timber or stone? What about something that is engraved in stone – would it last?

See the real treasures!

The Egyptian Treasures: art of the pharaohs exhibition is now on at the Australian Museum in Sydney. It closes 6/12/09. To book call 02 9320 6163 or see www.australianmuseum.net.au.



Explain that we are very lucky that the ancient Egyptians recorded many things and that is why we know a lot about how they lived.

As a class, read the project pull-out in DMAG on *Egyptian Treasures: art of the pharaohs*. Discuss some of the items pictured. There are many types of art that has survived thousands of years. Discuss the different types (eg. carvings, paintings, sculptures, jewellery).

Visual Arts and Design

After doing the above, tell the class that they'll be designing a mural for a class wall depicting some scenes from their life. The mural is to be in the style of the ancient Egyptians. Break the class into small groups and ask each to design a scene on paper. Ask each student to complete the exercise 'Draw like an Egyptian' on the student work sheet. Use the same methodology to transpose each group's small drawing to the large wall.

Additional areas for students to research: colours and their



© Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

meanings, the use of size to denote power in drawings and symbolism.

Note: See <http://australianmuseum.net.au/document/Draw-and-paint-like-an-Egyptian/> and <http://australianmuseum.net.au/document/Egyptian-Art-Ideas/> for more art activities

Maths: Scale

Once the students have completed the student work sheet, ask if anyone was able to work out the answer to the "Bonus Points 2" task in "Draw like an Egyptian." The large rectangle is exactly twice the size of the small rectangle.

Thus students know the scale of the small drawing compared to the large one, it's 1:2.

If the large rectangle were 4 times bigger, the scale would be 1:4.

Egyptian Treasures

art of the pharaohs

Ask students to work out the scale that they'll be making their mural on the class wall. Will it be 1:10?

Explain that things can be scaled bigger or smaller. Talk about the use of 'scale' on maps and investigate some maps in an atlas. One centimetre in an atlas could represent 1 kilometre, 1000 kilometres or more. Maps aren't the only things that are drawn to scale. All things can be drawn to scale.

If students are visiting the *Egyptian Treasures: art of the pharaohs* exhibition, ask them to draw one object at a scale of 1:1 (it will obviously have to be a small object like a ring) and one object at a scale of 1:10 (maybe a statue, so one centimetre on paper would be 10cm in real life).

HSIE: People's beliefs

Discuss the various gods and goddesses the ancient Egyptians had. Ask each student to choose a different god/goddess, research them and do a brief presentation on them.

Discuss the ancient Egyptians' belief in the afterlife and how they prepared for their death. Read *DMAG* and look at the pictures. Break the class into pairs to research the afterlife or tomb-architecture and decoration.

English

Tell the students that many tombs became lost and remained hidden for thousands of years. Some were buried due to natural processes, or were destroyed and looted. Finding a tomb was an exciting experience for an archaeologist. Usually it occurred after years of hard work. Ask each child to write a short story, imagining that they're an archaeologist who has discovered a tomb. How do they feel? Was it hard to get into the tomb? What was in the tomb?

Science

Read the section in *DMAG* about mummies and tell the class they'll be 'mummifying' something too. They will be doing a basic experiment. Details about the exact amounts of each ingredient required can be found at <http://australianmuseum.net.au/document/Mummify-an-apple-experiment/>

You will need:

- 2 apples
- Table salt
- Peeler
- 2 ice cream containers
- Scales



- 1) Peel both the apples and place each into their own container.
- 2) Weigh each container, with its apple, and record the weights.
- 3) Surround one of the apples with salt. Leave the other as is.
- 4) Leave both apples in the direct sunlight for a week.
- 5) Brush all the salt off the salted apple and clean it, without using any liquid.
- 6) Reweigh both containers with their apples.

What has happened to each apple? Discuss. Salt absorbs the water from the apple and this helps stop decay and bacteria, thus helping to preserve or mummify the body. As a class, investigate the mummification process in more detail, in light of the experiment just completed.

About DMAG

These Teachers' Notes have been written by the staff at *DMAG* and sponsored by the Australian Museum. They may be reproduced for use in school classrooms. To subscribe to the magazine they refer to, call 1300 887 795 (Australia) or 612 8296 5413 (int.).

