

# hands on! Art

## paint a mural the egyptian way

Meets Illinois State Goals: 5, 7, 9, 16, 25, 26, 27 (Subject Areas: Cooperative Learning, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Math)

### Background Information for Teachers

Wall murals were a common form of decoration in ancient Egyptian buildings. They usually depicted scenes from Egyptian life or religious imagery. To produce large-scale wall art, Egyptian artisans worked in teams. Each person specialized in one step of the process, as opposed to the modern custom of individual artists producing works single-handedly. (This process is described in detail in the Oriental Institute "Life in Ancient Egypt" curriculum guide, in which this lesson, and many others appear).

### Objectives

Compare customs and traditions of ancient and modern cultures  
 Recognize that occupations change over time  
 Understand the role of teamwork in ancient Egyptian workshops  
 Make and use measurements

### Materials

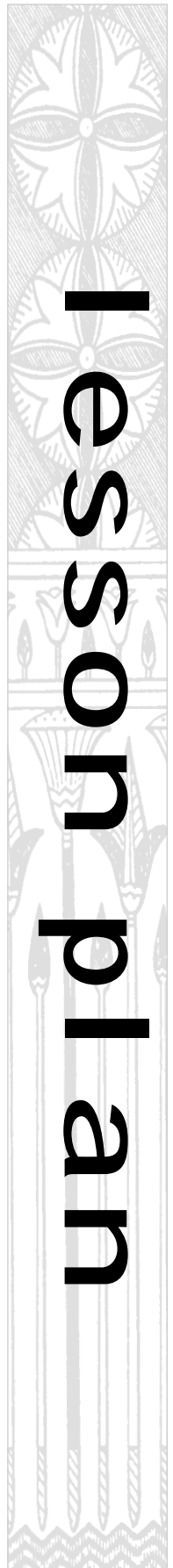
Copies of **Student Stuff** hand-out: "How to Paint a Mural the Egyptian Way"  
 Brown Kraft paper, 3 ft x 6 ft.  
 Tape  
 Red and black colored pencils  
 String  
 Ruler  
 Paint, brushes, and water jars  
 Small container for red paint

### Time Needed

Three class periods

### Suggested Procedure

- 1) Have a discussion about Egyptian artists and their workshops, describing in detail the teamwork and steps involved in creating large figurative wall art. Compare this way of making art to the modern custom of individual artists making and signing their works.
- 3) Divide students into groups of four and tell them that each group will work together like artists in Egyptian workshops. Hand out art supplies and copies of the **Student Stuff** sheet: "How to Paint a Mural the Egyptian Way."

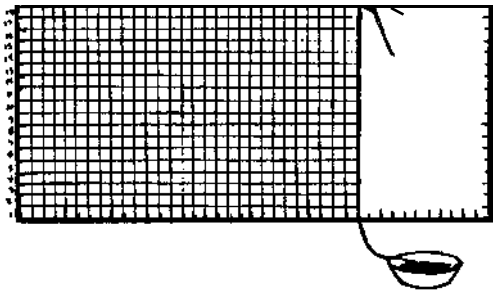


# how to paint a mural the egyptian way

## JOBBS

*Worker #1 draws the grid.  
Worker #2 outlines the figures.  
Worker #3 corrects the drawn figures.  
Worker #4 paints the mural (along with other workers, if needed).*

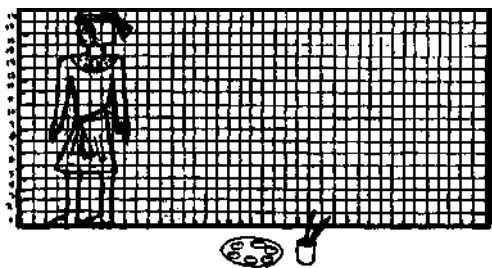
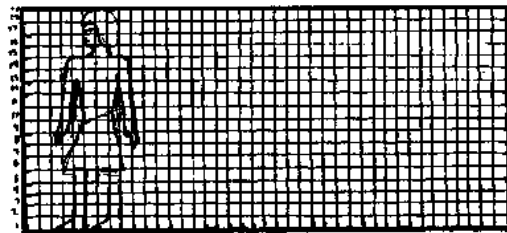
- 1) First, each member of the group needs to select a specialized job to do as part of making the mural.



- 2) Worker #1: Tape your mural paper onto the wall. Measure a grid with 2" squares around the edges of the paper, marking the measurements with pencil ticks. Next, mix some red paint in a container and dip the string in it. Lay the painted string across the paper where the pencil ticks are, creating a grid with the red paint.

- 3) Worker #2: Take a red colored pencil and begin drawing the figures. (Make a small-scale drawing to work out the composition first, if that is helpful.) To draw figures the way the Egyptians did, you'll need to follow a strict set of rules:

- a) Standing figures should be 18 grid squares high, the ankles 1 square high, the knees 5 squares, the waist 11 squares, and the shoulders 16 squares high. The feet should be 3 squares wide and the shoulders 6 squares wide.
- b) The head must be shown from the side, and the eye from the front.
- c) The shoulders must be drawn from the front and be six squares across.
- d) The lower body must be drawn from the side.



- 4) Worker #3: With a black pencil, make corrections and add details to Worker #2's red pencil drawing. Go over the rules listed above to make sure that the figures are drawn the Egyptian way.

- 5) Worker #4: Paint the mural, with help from the other workers, if necessary.