

LIFE IN ANCIENT EGYPT: Art

You're the Detective! Investigating Ancient Egyptian Tomb Fragments

A Classroom and Museum Activity

Subject Areas: Social Studies, Language Arts, Mathematics, Fine Arts

Created By: John Cusick, William H. Ray Elementary School, Chicago, IL.

For Grade Level: Grade 6

Meets Illinois State Goals: 1, 3, 5, 7, 16, 17, 18, 25, 26, 27

Time Needed: Several class sessions

Objectives:

Students will choose and carefully observe a tomb fragment in the Egyptian Gallery of the Oriental Institute Museum.

Students will make connections between the tomb scene and the ideas or beliefs that it represents.

Students will work in groups to design and paint their own tomb scene.

Students will write a short essay connecting the tomb fragments that they observed in the gallery and the tomb scenes that they painted.

Materials:

A copy of the "Egyptian Gallery Archaeology Project" hand-out for each student.

A copy for each student of "How to Paint a Mural the Egyptian Way," which comes from the Life in Ancient Egypt curriculum guide by the Oriental Institute Museum.

Materials listed in "Paint a Mural the Egyptian Way."

Suggested Procedure:

1. In class, the teacher will give background information on ancient Egyptian tombs.
 - a) That tombs are repositories for what we know about ancient life in Egypt.
 - b) That they included representations of favorite foods to sustain the deceased in the afterlife.
 - c) That tomb scenes included depictions of the deceased participating in everyday activities.
 - d) That tomb scenes included images of everyday items which would be needed in the afterlife.
 - e) That these scenes also depicted the deceased being judged by the god Osiris.
 - f) That information written in hieroglyphs described the life of the deceased.

The Oriental Institute Museum at the University of Chicago

1155 E. 58th Street, Chicago, IL. 60637 (773) 702-9507

http://www.oi.uchicago.edu/OI/MUS/ED/TRC/trc_home.html

2. Students will visit the Egyptian Gallery of the Oriental Institute Museum where they will select a tomb fragment and analyse it using the hand-out “Egyptian Gallery Archaeology Project.”
3. Back in class, students will discuss their findings. The teacher will ask such questions as:
 - a) What is the scene depicted on the tomb fragment?
 - b) What is the date of this artifact?
 - c) What material is it made out of?
 - d) Who do the characters in the scene appear to be?
 - e) What are these characters doing in the scene?
 - f) Why do you think they are they doing this?
 - g) How was this artifact used?
 - h) What was the significance of this artifact to the ancient Egyptians?
 - i) What does this tell you about ancient Egyptian life and culture?
4. During the discussion the teacher will summarize and write common themes on chart paper to hang up in the classroom so that students may refer to the chart.
5. The class will then brainstorm about tomb scenes that they might create about their own lives, addressing the following:
 - a) What would they like to be remembered for?
 - b) What are their favorite foods?
 - c) How would Osiris judge them?
 - d) What everyday objects would they include in their tomb scene?
 - e) What everyday activities would they be doing in their tomb scene?
6. The students will be divided into groups to paint their mural (tomb scene) following the directions on the “Student Stuff” hand-out “Paint a Mural the Egyptian Way.”
- 7) When the murals are dry, hang them around the room.

Evaluation:

Students will write a brief essay comparing and contrasting the mural that they created with the scene from the tomb fragment that they observed. Students will be evaluated on how fully they discuss how the murals reflect the differences and similarities between their own lives and those of the ancient Egyptians.

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Egyptian Gallery Archaeology Project

Name: _____ Group: _____ Date: _____

Date of the tomb fragment:	What scene is depicted on the fragment?
What material is the artifact made of?	Who are the characters in the scene?
What are the characters doing?	Why do you think they are doing this?
How was this artifact used?	How do you think this scene fits into the economic life of the ancient Egyptians? (jobs and how people got the products and money they needed)
What was the significance of this object to the Egyptians?	What does this tomb scene tell you about Egyptian life and culture?

Draw the scene from your tomb fragment on the back of this paper.



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 "Life in Ancient Egypt" curriculum guide).

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

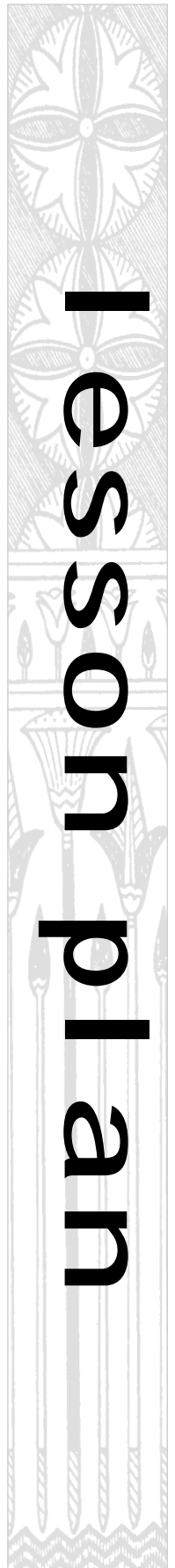
Copies of **Student Stuff** hand-out: "How to Paint a Mural the Egyptian Way"
 Brown Kraft paper, 3 ft x 6 ft.
 Tape
 Red and black colored pencils
 String
 Ruler
 Paint, brushes, and water jars
 Small container for red paint

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."

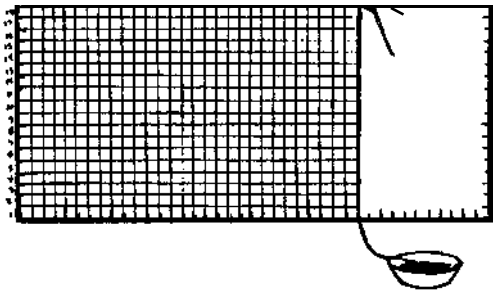


how to paint a mural the egyptian way

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).*

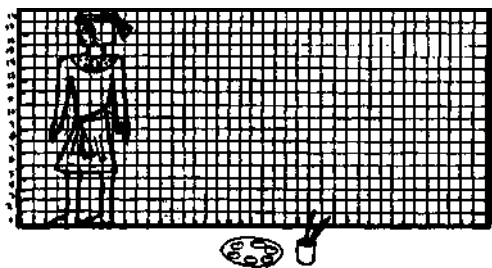
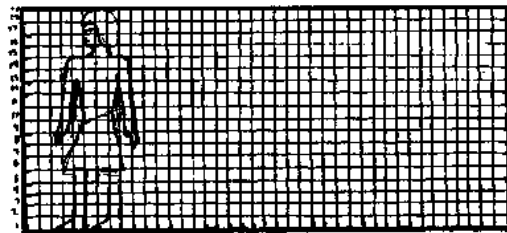
- 1) First, each member of the group needs to select a specialized job to do as part of making the mural.



- 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.