View of the tomb of Cyrus the Great in Pasargadae, Iran.
Make a Mini Pyramid

The Great Pyramid of Giza is one of the most famous monuments in the world! Built as a tomb for the pharaoh Khufu around 2560 BC, the pyramid contains many rooms and passageways that are mostly empty today. Archaeologists believe that this pyramid would have once housed great treasures of the pharaoh, but that they were all stolen by tomb robbers in ancient times. Use this template to make your own mini pyramid to fill with your own treasures—just watch out for those pesky tomb robbers!

Print out this page, preferably on a sturdy paper like cardstock.
Decorate the shape. This will be the outside of your pyramid.
Cut the pyramid out along the solid lines.
Fold the pyramid on the dotted lines.
Put glue on the flaps labeled “glue here,” and glue them in place to form your pyramid.
Fill your pyramid with treasures!
Relief of Nefermaat and Itet

E9002, on display in the Joseph and Mary Grimshaw Egyptian Gallery

This relief comes from the tomb of an Old Kingdom vizier, Nefermaat, and his wife, Itet. In ancient Egypt, the most important and expensive thing a person could purchase was their tomb. A tomb would protect a person’s body after they died and would ensure that their memory and thus their afterlife continued forever.

Ancient Egyptians feared that their tombs’ decorations, including images and hieroglyphs, would be damaged—by tomb robbers, personal enemies, or even people looking to steal the tomb for their own use. Hieroglyphs could be chiseled out of a wall, and new ones could even be written in their place! To prevent this damage, the vizier Nefermaat took a unique approach. He had the images and hieroglyphs in his tomb carved deep into the surface of the walls and then filled with a colored paste. The hieroglyphs in this relief refer to this process: “He is one who made his gods in writing that cannot be erased.” In this case, “gods” does not mean images of gods, but the literal meaning of the ancient Egyptian word for “god,” which means “symbol” or “image.” Unfortunately, the paste could still fall out of the carvings, and the process took a lot of work, so it was not repeated.