

Lesson Plan

Year Group: **Y3-Y6** Subject: **Literacy/History** Topic: **The ancient Egyptian afterlife**

Learning Objective: **I can explain the 'Weighing of the Heart' ceremony**

Outcome/Purpose: **Explanation presentation**

Audience: **Other archaeologists (the rest of the class)**

Curriculum links:

HISTORY:

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

Knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past

2a. About characteristic features of the periods and societies studied, including the ideas, beliefs, attitudes and experiences of men, women and children in the past.

Historical interpretation

3. Pupils should be taught to recognise that the past is represented and interpreted in different ways, and to give reasons for this.

Historical enquiry

4a. How to find out about the events, people and changes studied from an appropriate range of sources of information.

4b. To ask and answer questions, and to select and record information relevant to the focus of the enquiry.

Organisation and communication

5a. Recall, select and organise historical information.

5c. Communicate their knowledge and understanding of history in a variety of ways.

ART AND DESIGN

Knowledge and understanding

4. Pupils should be taught about visual and tactile elements, including colour, pattern and texture, line and tone, shape, form and space, and how these elements can be combined and organised for different purposes

Breadth of study

5d. Investigating art, craft and design in the locality and in a variety of genres, styles and traditions.

Curriculum links:

LITERACY

En 1 Speaking and listening

Knowledge, skills and understanding

Speaking

1. To speak with confidence in a range of contexts, adapting their speech for a range of purposes and audiences, pupils should be taught to:

a. Use vocabulary and syntax that enables them to communicate more complex meanings.

b. Gain and maintain the interest and response of different audiences [for example, by exaggeration, humour, varying pace and using persuasive language to achieve particular effects].

c. Choose material that is relevant to the topic and to the listeners.

d. Show clear shape and organisation with an introduction and an ending.

e. Speak audibly and clearly, using spoken standard English in formal contexts.

f. Evaluate their speech and reflect on how it varies.

Artefact: Book of the Dead 'Weighing of the Heart' papyrus

Artefact notes

What is it?

'The Book of Dead' is the name we use nowadays for the ancient Egyptian text for funerals. It is a description of the ancient Egyptian idea of the afterlife. It contains a collection of hymns, spells, and instructions to allow the dead to overcome obstacles in the afterlife. The Book of the Dead was usually written on a papyrus scroll and placed in the coffin or burial chamber of the dead person.

What does the tableau show?

To begin with, Hunefer, the deceased person on this papyrus stands at the side on the left, while Anubis checks the balance, and Thoth (the god of writing) stands by ready to write down the result of the weighing. The twelve gods are seated above to act as witnesses and ensure a fair trial. A strange creature named Ammit waits nearby. Ammit is part crocodile, part hippopotamus, and part big cat. 'Ammit' means 'she who gobbles down'. She will eat anyone unworthy of entering the Field of Reeds (the Egyptian afterlife). Hunefer's heart sits in one of the trays on the balance scales. His heart will be weighed against an ostrich feather. The ostrich feather represents Maat, who is the goddess of truth, order, wisdom and righteousness. If the dead person's heart was judged to be 'heavy with sin', and therefore heavier than Maat's feather, then Ammit would be able to gobble it down. Without a heart, the dead person would have no afterlife.

Fortunately, in this case, Hunefer passes the test and is then presented by Horus to the shrine of Osiris, the god of the underworld and the dead, his wife Isis and also Nephthys.



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Teaching/Learning:

1. Vocabulary/Glossary: Talks through the meanings of the important words.

2. Investigate the Book of the Dead 'Weighing of the Heart' papyrus artefact:

What does it look like?

What does it feel like?

How was it made?

What was it made for?

Is it well designed?

What is it worth?

3. Read through the explanation (Artefact notes)

What is it?

What does the tableau show?

Task:

Imagine you are an archaeologist and you have been asked to give a presentation to an archaeological conference about the 'Weighing of the Heart' ceremony. Your task is to prepare and deliver a presentation which explains as many of the images on the papyrus as possible.

Success Criteria:

*Use adjectives (e.g. golden, incredible, glittering).

*Use prepositional phrases (e.g. above the scales, next to Anubis, on the throne).

*Use a range of conjunctions (e.g. and, but, so, because, if).

Differentiation:

Less able:

Write a simple description of The Book of the Dead papyrus scene.

More able:

Create a diary entry from beyond the grave from the perspective of Hunefer.

Plenary:

Presentations to be given to the class.

Comment on how good they are with reference to the Success Criteria:

*Which adjectives were used?

*Which prepositional phrases were used?

*Which conjunctions were used?

Vocabulary/Glossary:

papyrus: a thick material similar to paper made from the papyrus plant which grows along the River Nile.

tableau: a scene of a group of people.

Hunefer: a scribe (or writer) based in Thebes.

Anubis: the Egyptian god of tombs and the ruler of the underworld, usually shown as a man with the head of a jackal.

Thoth: the Ibis-headed god of magic, writing, science and judging the dead.

Ammit: a creature important in the 'Weighing of the Heart' ceremony, who is crocodile or dog-headed, the front part of her body is a lioness or leopard, and her hind quarters are in the form of a hippopotamus. She would eat the hearts of those who were heavy with wrongdoing!

righteousness: being pure or holy.

Osiris: the ancient Egyptian god of the Afterlife.

Isis: the wife of Osiris and the goddess of nature and magic.

Nephthys: The sister of Isis and the 'useful' goddess.

Possible follow up activities:

ART: Draw a scene of what you imagine 'The Fields of Reeds' (The Egyptian afterlife) to be like in the same style as the papyrus.