

Finding out about Ancient Egypt from artefacts

Objectives

- To know about characteristic features of the period studied.
- To find out about the events, people and changes studied from artefacts.

Vocabulary

artefact, replica

Resources

Art materials and paper; variety of pictures and replica Egyptian artefacts (artefacts can often be obtained from the local museum service if ordered well in advance and the British Museum Compass website at www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass has a good selection of photographs).

Links

NLS Y3 T2 Text 17: to make clear notes.
NC Art and design KS2: (1a) to record from experience and imagination, to select and record from first-hand observation and to explore ideas for different purposes.

Background

Children can learn a great deal from working with real objects from the past. The objects need to be explained within a meaningful context, however, so that the child is more able to relate to them and see their function. In addition to learning new information and knowledge about the period studied, the use of artefacts as 'clues' about the past can also help develop children's skills in asking historical questions. It can promote their ability to think, to make inferences and deductions, as well as encouraging them to rely on their own interpretations and to be critical of the sources they use. All these skills and qualities will be useful for their future intellectual development.

Introduction

- Tell the class that they are going to try to answer the following question: *What do objects tell us about Ancient Egypt?*

Main teaching activity

- Provide the children with a variety of pictures and replica artefacts.
- Discuss with the class what the children think they were probably used for, what they were made from and who might have used them.
- Go on to explain what they actually are and what they tell us about the Ancient Egyptians. The children might also find it interesting to consider where they were found.
- Give out art materials and, making sure all the children have a clear view of one or more of the artefacts, ask the class to make detailed observational drawings of an Ancient Egyptian artefact.

Plenary

- Together with the class, make a display the children's drawings and information notes. Ask for volunteers to point out their drawing and to describe to the rest of the class what the picture shows and what their artefact would have been used for.

Differentiation

More able children can write a brief description of their artefact in the form of a museum notice, including comments on what it tells us about life in Ancient Egypt. Less able children may need extra support in the observational drawing activity.

