

# Classroom activities

This section gives ideas for activities that your students can do in the classroom or back at home. You may have to adapt the activities to suit the levels of your students.

The activities link to the curriculum areas indicated in the table below. Only the strongest links are indicated – there may be others.

## Curriculum links

	Social Studies	The Arts	Technology	Science	English
1. Death in ancient Egypt	✓				
2. Beliefs around the world	✓				
3. Egyptian gods	✓				
4. Mummy mystery	✓		✓	✓	
5. Tomb treasures	✓				
6. Creation stories	✓				✓
7. Nile now and then	✓		✓		
8. Cast a spell					✓
9. Hieroglyphic secrets	✓	✓			✓
10. Make a funeral mural	✓	✓			
11. Judgment day	✓	✓			
12. Print it!		✓			
13. Make Egyptian paper		✓	✓		
14. Make a Canopic jar	✓	✓			
15. Make Egyptian sculptures		✓			
16. Make an offering bowl		✓			
17. Make a mask		✓			
18. Make Egyptian jewellery		✓			
19. Make a model boat		✓	✓		
20. Make an apple mummy				✓	

## Activities

### 1. Death in ancient Egypt

Research one or more of the following areas. Write a report or create a display to show your findings.

- Why did the ancient Egyptians prepare for death?
- How did they prepare for death?
- What happened to the body after death?

### 2. Beliefs around the world

Compare ancient Egyptian beliefs about death with those of other cultures or groups – for example, the beliefs of Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Aboriginal, or Māori people. You could use different headings for the comparisons, for example, 'Belief in an afterlife', 'Gods', 'Burial', and so on. Display your findings in the way you prefer.

### 3. Egyptian gods

Choose an Egyptian god (for example, Amun-Re, Osiris, Anubis, Horus, Ma'at, Bes, or Thoth) and find out as much information as you can about them. Present your findings as a report or speech. Include details of:

- how people showed the god in carvings and pictures
- the animal that the god was associated with
- the god's special powers
- other fascinating facts about the god.

### 4. Mummy mystery

Research how the ancient Egyptians made mummies. Then write a procedure or create a flow chart that explains the process. As an extension activity, compare the process with how people are embalmed today.

### 5. Tomb treasures

Make a list of special items that you would include in your tomb and give reasons for your choices. Compare your list with a friend's.

- In what ways are your lists similar or different?
- Do you think someone from another culture would choose the same sorts of items? Why or why not?  
You could discuss this as a group.

### 6. Creation stories

Find and read an Egyptian creation myth and compare it to one of the Māori creation stories. As an extension activity, write your own creation story.

### 7. Nile now and then

- Locate the Nile River on a map. Have a look at where it starts, how it changes, and where it ends.
- Investigate how the Nile is used today compared to the way it was used in the past. Has its importance changed?

## **8. Cast a spell**

Write your own spell to protect yourself from a danger (perhaps too much homework) or to help you in some other way (perhaps to help your team win at sport).

## **9. Hieroglyphic secrets**

Use hieroglyphs to write secret messages, tell stories, or make classroom signs. (See the section of this guide entitled Hieroglyphs.)

## **10. Make a funeral mural**

Create a mural of a funeral procession on your classroom wall. Draw or paint a picture of Keku. Then draw other Egyptian figures dressed for a funeral. Cut out the shape of a funeral boat with a coffin in the centre as it crosses the Nile. Add palms and sand hills to complete the scene.

## **11. Judgment day**

As a class, discuss the Declaration of Innocence ceremony and what it involved. Then draw a picture of one of the forty-two judges involved in the ceremony – for example, Doubly Evil, White of Teeth, Double Lion, Bone Breaker, Blood Eater, Nosey, or Fiery Eyes.

## **12. Print it!**

Carve Egyptian symbols (such as the ankh) into potato halves and print them onto cotton squares. Fray the edges of the squares and soak them in coffee to mimic the look of old papyrus.

## **13. Make Egyptian paper**

Make paper in the ancient Egyptian way by weaving together thin strips of papyrus reed, clamping them, and then drying them. (See [www.hethert.org/papyrus.html](http://www.hethert.org/papyrus.html) for more information.) Experiment with making paper from other materials, for example, cloth strips mixed with paper strips.

## **14. Make a Canopic jar**

With clay, make a ceramic jar like the ones the ancient Egyptians used in mummification. Use a slab to build the cylinder. Shape the top to look like jackal-headed Duamutef (keeper of the stomach), falcon-headed Qebehsenuf (keeper of the intestines), baboon-headed Hapy (keeper of the lungs), human-headed Imsety (keeper of the liver), or another Egyptian god. Carve patterns and hieroglyphs onto the sides.

## **15. Make Egyptian sculptures**

- With clay or modelling medium, make shabtis (small funerary statues), ba birds, or amulets (lucky charms). Decorate them with paints or glazes before firing. Experiment with different finishes. Try using a dry brush and rubbing back the paint to create the impression of age.
- Alternatively make a plaster slab and, when it has just set but is still soft, carve an Egyptian picture into it – for example, a hieroglyph, jewellery pattern, or other scene.

## **16. Make an offering bowl**

Use a hebel block, rasps, and sandpaper to shape a bowl like the ones the Egyptians used to make offerings to the gods. (Hebel blocks are aerated concrete blocks that can be cut into sections and then shaped using basic woodworking tools.)

## **17. Make a mask**

Use plaster bandage to make a full face mask or use papier-mâché on a balloon and decorate in the style of a funerary mask.

## **18. Make Egyptian jewellery**

Make beads from clay or from triangular strips of paper rolled up tight. Decorate them in bright colours to look like gemstones. Spray with lacquer for a shiny finish, and thread them together to make necklaces and other jewellery.

## 19. Make a model boat

The Nile was ancient Egypt's highway, and boats were the major form of transport. Early Egyptian boats were made from reeds or papyrus and were commonly used in the shallow marshy water. They were called feluccas. Here's how to make a model felucca.

### What you need

bunch of straw cut to 30 cm lengths

string

glue

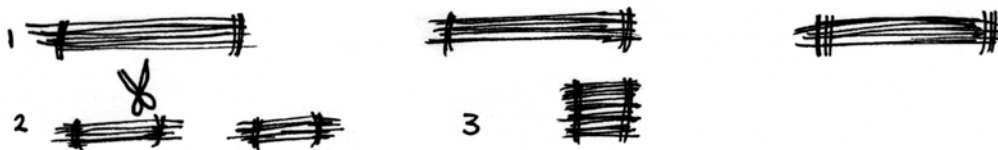
bamboo skewers

square of linen or canvas (optional)

modelling clay or plasticine.

### What you do

1. Make up three bundles of straw 2 cm thick. Tie each bundle at both ends.
2. Cut one bundle in half so you have two 15 cm lengths. Tie the loose ends together.
3. Place the shorter bundles firmly together and tie at the top and the bottom again. These will become the base of the boat.



4. Take the two long bundles and tie them together at one end. Wedge the shorter bundles between the longer ones, pushing them firmly together.
5. Put ties across the boat at 2 cm intervals, doing so all the way to the end to hold it securely.



6. Attach a string to one end of the boat. Thread it through the middle tie and loop it around the other end.
7. Pull the string to make your boat curve. When you have the shape you want, secure the other end.



8. To make an oar, cut a bamboo skewer in half and add a blob of plasticine or modelling clay to the end.



9. Construct rigging with bamboo skewers. For the sail, glue a square of linen or canvas to the skewers.
10. Model figures to steer or sit in your boat.

## 20. Make an apple mummy

Work out which salt compound best mummifies an apple.

### What you need

5 apples	sharp knife
5 one-litre ice-cream containers	scales
large drum of table salt	measuring cup
large box of Epsom salts	large mixing bowl
large box of baking soda (bicarbonate of soda)	sticky labels

### What you do

1. Label each ice-cream container 1 to 5.
2. Place a peeled and cored apple into each container.
3. Use the scales to weigh each container and apple.
4. Record the starting weight in the results table at the bottom of this page.
5. Read the table below and add the different salt compounds to each container. Make sure that each apple is completely covered with the salt compound.

Container	Salt compound	Amount to add
1	table salt	1 measuring cup
2	Epsom salts	1 measuring cup
3	baking soda	1 measuring cup
4	table salt, Epsom salts, and baking soda	1/3 measuring cup of each
5	nothing	none

1. Place the containers and their contents out of direct sunlight.
2. Leave them for a few days.
3. After a few days, take each apple out of its container and brush off as much of the salt compound as you can. Do not wash the apple as this will add water and make it heavier.
4. Reweigh each apple.
5. Record the final weight in the results table.

### Results table

Container	Starting weight	Final weight
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		