

A Word Game about Egypt

Lesson Plan

Grade Level: 3-5

Curriculum Focus: Ancient History

Lesson Duration: 2-3 class periods

Student Objectives

- Review important facts and concepts about ancient Egyptian civilization.
- Identify important vocabulary and names pertaining to ancient Egypt.
- Create a “Wheel of Fortune” style word puzzle game

Materials

- Discovery School video on *unitedstreaming: Great Egyptians*
Search for this video by using the video title (or a portion of it) as the keyword.

Selected clips that support this lesson plan:

- Cleopatra: Last of the Pharaohs
 - Hatshepsut: The Queen Who Became King
 - Hatshepsut Becomes Ruler of Egypt and Begins Major Buildings
 - Tutankhamen: Mystery of the Boy King
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- *Great Egyptians* video and VCR, or DVD and DVD player
 - Online, electronic, video, and print reference materials about ancient Egypt
 - For the word and phrase lists: paper and pencils
 - For the puzzle boards: chart paper, easel and markers, Post-it notes
 - For the wheel: poster board and cardboard at least 10" x 10" (can be as large as 15" x 15"), a black marker, and a brass paper fastener
 - For winnings: play money in increments of \$100

Procedures

1. After learning about ancient Egyptian civilization and its rulers, students will enjoy playing Wheel of Pharaoh, adapted from the popular television game show "Wheel of Fortune." The object of this game is to solve a word puzzle by correctly guessing all the letters that spell a word or phrase relating to ancient Egypt. Have pairs or small groups of students work cooperatively to list five important words or phrases having to do with ancient Egyptian rulers, people, places, monuments, everyday objects, events, or any other aspect of ancient Egyptian civilization. Remind students to use dictionaries and other information sources to check spelling.
2. Distribute five pieces of chart paper and markers to each group. Each group then creates a puzzle board for each of their words or phrases, each one on a separate piece of chart paper. The word or phrase is "spelled" out in a series of dashes, one dash for each letter, with a space separating each word in a phrase. For example, the phrase "Queen Cleopatra" would appear like this: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
3. Students should print each correctly spelled word or phrase on a Post-it note and affix it to the back of the corresponding puzzle board for the host's use during the game.
4. Create a simple wheel spinner from a piece of poster board. Cut a circle (10 to 15 inches in diameter) from the poster board. Draw four quadrants in the circle, and divide each quadrant into four equal sections labeled \$100, \$200, \$300, and Bankrupt. (If your students can add larger numbers, some of the sections may have larger denominations.) For the wheel backing, cut a piece of cardboard that is slightly larger than the circle. Use a paper fastener to mount the circle on a cardboard backing. At the top of the cardboard, draw a red arrow pointing to the wheel.
5. To play the game, the teacher serves as host, selects three students to be the first round of contestants, presents the first puzzle board, and removes and refers to the Post-it note for reference. Contestant 1 spins the wheel and guesses a consonant. The host fills in that letter in the puzzle as many times as it appears in the word or phrase. Depending on what dollar amount the contestant has spun on the wheel, the host (with the help of the "audience") calculates the score for that spin and keeps score on a blank area of the puzzle board. That contestant continues spinning and guessing a letter until he or she guesses incorrectly or spins "Bankrupt" on the wheel. (If the student spins "Bankrupt," he or she loses all points won up to that point.) The host keeps track of incorrectly guessed letters on a blank area of the puzzle board. The game continues, proceeding to contestants 2, 3, back to 1, and so on.
6. At any time during his or her turn, a contestant may guess a vowel instead of a consonant, but no money is won for a correct vowel guess.
7. At any time after a correct guess, a contestant may try solving the puzzle. If correct, the student then defines the word. If the student's definition is correct, he or she is the winner and gets to keep the "money" earned. If the student guesses the wrong word, play continues to the next contestant. If the word is correct, but the definition is incorrect, the next contestant tries to define the word. At the end of the game, the two non-winning contestants each earn \$100 for their efforts.

8. When a puzzle has been solved, the host picks three new contestants to play the next game.
9. After all students have had a chance to play Wheel of Pharaoh, the student who won the most amount of money is the overall winner.

Discussion Questions

1. The famous Tutankhamen (“King Tut”) ruled from the time he was a boy. Compare the priorities a child ruler might have with those of an adult ruler.
2. Cleopatra, the last of the pharaohs, aligned herself with powerful men as part of her strategy to keep control of her land. How would that strategy be judged by today’s standards?
3. Hatshepsut, the Egyptian woman who ruled in the guise of a man, built many temples, sculptures, and obelisks as monuments to herself. Other Egyptian pharaohs did the same. Analyze this tradition of rulers celebrating their own greatness. Why do you think they felt it necessary? How would such a practice be viewed today? What kinds of things do leaders in today’s society leave behind as their legacy?

Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- 3 points: Students came up with five correctly-spelled words or phrases relating to ancient Egypt; showed strong understanding of ancient Egyptian words and their meanings; participated actively in class discussions and activity.
- 2 points: Students came up with five words or phrases related to ancient Egypt, with some misspelled; showed satisfactory understanding of ancient Egyptian words and their meanings; participated in class discussions and activity.
- 1 point: Students came up with three or fewer words or phrases related to ancient Egypt, with some misspelled; showed weak understanding of ancient Egyptian words and their meanings; was not engaged in class discussions and activity.

Vocabulary

archaeologist

Definition: Scientists who study material remains (as fossil relics, artifacts, and monuments) of past human life and activities.

Context: Archaeologists have dug up coins and wall inscriptions that help us understand the physical features and characteristics of ancient rulers.

artifacts

Definition: An object remaining from a particular period.

Context: Artifacts left behind by ancient civilizations give us hints about how people lived in those times.

civilization

Definition: The way of life of a people; a relatively high level of cultural, social, and technological development.

Context: After Cleopatra died, the ancient Egyptian civilization eventually faded away and the Roman Empire became dominant.

heir

Definition: One who inherits or is entitled to inherit property.

Context: After Hatshepsut's father and brother died, she was the only pure royal heir to the throne.

obelisk

Definition: An upright, four-sided pillar, usually monolithic, that gradually tapers as it rises and is topped by a pyramid.

Context: The obelisks that Cleopatra built at the Caesareum inspired similarly shaped monuments like the Washington Monument.

pharaoh

Definition: A ruler of ancient Egypt.

Context: A pharaoh was considered to be an all-powerful ruler with divine connections.

reign

Definition: Royal authority.

Context: Hatshepsut's reign as king was successful, proving that a woman could rule as well as a man.

rival

Definition: One of two or more striving to get what only one can have; competitor.

Context: Cleopatra joined Mark Antony when he sailed into the Battle of Actium against his rival, Octavian.

Academic Standards

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit <http://www.mcrel.org/>.

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- History: Understands selected attributes and historical developments of societies in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe.



- Historical Understanding: Understands the historical perspective.
- World History: Understands how major religious and large-scale empires arose in the Mediterranean Basin, China, and India from 500 BC to AD 300.

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

NCSS has developed national guidelines for teaching social studies. To become a member of NCSS, or to view the standards online, go to <http://www.socialstudies.org>

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Time, continuity, and change
 - Power, authority, and governance
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Support Materials

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>