Teaching Guide

Minecraft: Egypt

Use this guide in conjunction with the Egypt world in Minecraft.

Unit Overview

- Students will learn about life in ancient Egypt by exploring and interacting with various characters.
- Students will learn about the religious beliefs of the Egyptians and how those led to many of their buildings and practices.

Estimated time per lesson: 45–60 min

Unit objectives

- Identify the major gods of Egypt and their relationship to nature.
- Explain the origins and significance of the term *pharaoh*.
- Describe the Egyptians' fascination with the afterlife.
- Describe the reasons for building the pyramids and sphinx and mummifying bodies.
- List examples of everyday life in ancient Egypt.
- Explain how archaeologists and historians have learned about the daily lives of ancient Egyptians.
- Identify Ramses II.
- Describe the geographic extent of the Egyptian empire under Ramses II.
- Describe the New Kingdom's decline and ways in which foreign conquerors adopted Egyptian culture.

Unit assessment: Students will use their in-game portfolio and camera to document the people they meet, occupation tasks they complete, and other information they learn through Minecraft game play. Search "how to export a portfolio in minecraft" to learn how to export a portfolio from Minecraft.

Vocabulary

- afterlife
- archaeologist
- hieroglyphics
- Isis
- linen
- mummify
- Nut
- Osiris
- pharaoh
- pyramid
- Re

Lesson 1

Lesson goals

- Identify the major gods of Egypt and their relationship to nature.
- Explain the origins and significance of the term *pharaoh*.

Materials

- Egypt world

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- camera and portfolio (in game)

Activities

1. **Egyptian gods:** Explain that ancient Egyptians worshipped many gods. Their belief in these gods was central to their religious practices and influenced how they lived. Divide students into groups to research one or two of the following ancient Egyptian gods and introduce those gods to the class: Isis, Osiris, Nut, Re, Horus, Thoth, and Anubis.
2. **Minecraft game play:** Have students log in to Minecraft. If students have completed the Hunter-Gatherers lessons, they will be in ancient Egypt. If this is students' first time in the world, they can type **/tp @s 150 66 -74** to teleport to ancient Egypt.
3. Tour guides in the form of non-player characters (NPCs) will share information about seven ancient Egyptian gods (Isis, Osiris, Nut, Re, Horus, Thoth, and Anubis). The NPCs will also show students a painting of each god on the pyramid walls. Students will need to take a picture of each painting and write a caption explaining what each god was known for.

Questions

1. What did the Egyptians call their king *pharaoh*?
2. Why did ancient Egyptians build pyramids?
3. Why were the pyramids important to the Egyptians?
4. Which ancient Egyptian god was a mother? Who was god of the sun? Of the afterlife?
5. What roles did ancient Egyptians believe their gods played in everyday life?

Lesson 2

Lesson goals

- Describe the Egyptians' fascination with the afterlife.
- Describe the reasons for building the pyramids and sphinx and mummifying bodies.

Materials

- pictures of canopic jars (teacher provided)
- Egypt world
- camera and portfolio (in game)

Activities

1. **Canopic jars:** Show students photographs of canopic jars. Have students describe what they notice about the jars and brainstorm how the jars might have been used in ancient Egypt. Discuss the actual purpose of the jars (to hold internal organs during the mummification process).
2. **Minecraft game play:** Student will meet a temple priest (NPC) and learn that there are four thieves at large. They will need to find each thief, gather the items the thieves stole, and take those items back to the pharaoh's tomb. Students will need to take a picture of each item and write captions that explain how each item was important to the dead. Items include a canopic jar, golden hat, gold sword, and gold shield.

Questions

1. What did most Egyptians believe happened after they died?
2. Why did the Egyptians mummify bodies?

Lesson 3

Lesson goals

- List examples of everyday life in ancient Egypt.
- Explain how archaeologists and historians have learned about the daily lives of ancient Egyptians.

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Materials

- video on making papyrus (teacher's choice)
- Egypt world
- camera and portfolio (in game)

Activities

1. **Papyrus:** Discuss that ancient Egyptians made many items, including papyrus (paper). Show students a video of your choice on making papyrus, and discuss the process.
2. **Minecraft game play:** Students will walk through the town and interact there with different merchants, tradespeople, and people with other livelihoods. In their portfolio, students will add a picture and caption to describe each job they learn about.

Questions

1. What was life like for the average Egyptian?
2. What did ancient Egyptians do for leisure, games, or sports?
3. What kinds of things did wealthy Egyptians have access to, like, and often purchase?

Lesson 4

Lesson goals

- List examples of everyday life in ancient Egypt.
- Explain how archaeologists and historians have learned about the daily lives of ancient Egyptians.

Materials

- Egypt world
- camera and portfolio (in game)

Activities

1. **Jobs in ancient Egypt:** Review some of the livelihoods of ancient Egyptians (farmers, fishers, miners, merchants). Discuss which jobs students might like and why. Compare these jobs to those in modern society.
2. **Minecraft game play:** Students will select an everyday item and get a job creating that item. Once they have helped create the item, they will photograph that item for their portfolio.

Questions

1. What type of fabric was the clothing of Egyptians made from?
2. Did ancient Egyptians have pets? Explain.
3. How have archaeologists and historians learned about the daily lives of ancient Egyptians?

Lesson 5

Lesson goals

- Describe the Egyptians' fascination with the afterlife.
- Describe the reasons for building the pyramids and sphinx and mummifying bodies.

Materials

- picture of the Great sphinx (teacher provided)
- Egypt world
- camera and portfolio (in game)

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Activities

1. **Monuments:** Show students a picture of the Great sphinx and discuss its significance as a monument. Have students give examples of other monuments, both well known and local. Discuss how the monuments are similar and different.
2. **Minecraft game play:** Students will visit the quarry, mine, and build something to honor Ramses, such as an obelisk, statue, or temple building. Students will photograph and caption their monument for their portfolio.

Optional Extension Activities

- Create a mock social-media profile of an ancient Egyptian. The fictional subject of the profile can be anyone from a thief to a pharaoh to a farmer!
- Mummify an apple! With adult help, carve a face and a few additional holes in an apple. Place the apple in a container of salt deep enough to fully cover the apple. Close the container and leave for a few days. Observe the apple after a few days, and discuss how the changes in the apple relate to ancient Egyptian mummification.

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