

About Fitchburg Art Museum

Founded in 1929, the Fitchburg Art Museum is a privately-supported art museum located in north central Massachusetts.

Art and artifacts on view:

- Ancient Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Asian, and Meso-American;
- European and American paintings (portraits, still lifes, and landscapes) and sculpture from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries;
- African sculptures from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries;
- Twentieth-century photography (usually);
- European and American decorative arts;
- Temporary exhibitions of historical or contemporary art

Museum Hours

Wednesdays-Fridays, 12 – 4 p.m.

Saturdays and Sundays 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Closed Mondays and Tuesdays,

except for the following Monday holidays: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Patriot's Day, and Columbus Day

Admission

Free to all Museum members and children ages 12 and under.

\$7.00 Adult non-members, \$5.00 Seniors, youth ages 13-17, and full-time students ages 18-21



The Museum is wheelchair accessible.

Directions

Directions to the Museum are on our website.

Address and Phone Number

25 Merriam Parkway, Fitchburg, MA 01420

978-345-4207

Visit our website for more information:

www.fitchburgartmuseum.org

To Schedule a Tour

All groups, whether requesting a guided tour or planning to visit as self-guided, need to contact the Director of Docents to schedule their visit.

Guided tours need to be scheduled at least three weeks in advance.

Please contact the Director of Docents for information on fees, available tour times, and additional art projects available or youth groups.

Museum Contacts

Main Number: 978-345-4207

Director of Docents: Ann Descoteaux, ext. 302
adescoteaux@fitchburgartmuseum.org

Director of Education: Laura Howick, ext. 305

Please note: The Museum is closed to staff on Mondays.

Preparing for Your Visit

Teacher or Leader Preparation

- If you wish to preview the Discover Ancient Egypt gallery, please call the Museum's Director of Docents (ext. 302) or Director of Education (ext. 305) for a free pass to use for that purpose;
- Read through this booklet. A ">" mark indicates an especially key point or suggested activity;
- When planning your tour, allow time at the end of your tour (guided or self-guided) for students to play any interactive games they didn't do during the tour;
- Call the Museum before your visit if anyone in your group needs a wheel chair, and one can be reserved for you;
- Prepare pre- and post-visit activities to strengthen what students learn at the Museum

Preparing the Students

- Shortly before the visit, discuss what students already know about ancient Egyptian civilization, if anything, and tell them about some of the exciting things they will be seeing;
- Share any goals you have for the visit, if appropriate;
- Try to give the students some choice and control over the visit by asking their input on the visit's agenda. Ask students what they want to see, learn about, or experience on the visit, and in what order they want to do things. Include time for bathroom and snack breaks, going to the gift shop, and time for students to explore on their own. **Most importantly, decide when students will be allowed to do the interactive activities** – while they're in each section of the exhibition, or after the entire tour? – and make sure all students understand this before the tour;
- Review **museum etiquette**:
 - No running (because the student or the artwork could be hurt);
 - No touching the artworks (oils and salts in our skin damage art);
 - Listen respectfully to others' responses to the art (because you may hear something that surprises you, a new way of looking at the artwork.)

continued

Preparing for Your Visit, *continued*

Tell students they may want to bring:

- A camera or camera-equipped cell phone (for use only in one place in the Egyptian gallery);
- Paper and pencil to record their favorite objects or experiences

NOTE:
**Photography is not allowed in the rest of
the Egyptian gallery or the Museum.**

The Day of the Visit

- Review the agenda for the day (explaining **when** they'll be taking the tour, playing the interactive games and taking pictures, eating a snack, etc.) Research has shown this step allows students to focus on learning once they are at the museum.
- Please remind them, again, of museum etiquette and the Museum's photography policy

Overview of the Exhibition

Discover Ancient Egypt presents a broad introduction to this long-lived, complex civilization. It was designed primarily for two audiences, school groups and families, and includes direct connections to some of the Massachusetts State History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks.

The Gallery is comprised of **several spaces**:

- Introductory Lobby
- Mural Hallway
- Ramp and Crawl Tunnel
- Gallery, organized by sub-topics
- The Nadine Martel DVD Viewing Area

And divided into **seven sub-topics**:

- Religion
- Mummification and Entombment
- Government and Writing
- The Nile River
- Everyday Life
- Draw Like an Egyptian
- Enduring Ideas

Art and artifacts on display include:

- Realistic paintings of actual tomb walls (painted at the time the tombs were opened in the early 1900s);
- Small sculptures of deities, iconic animals, a pharaoh, and funerary statues;
- Amulets that would have been wrapped in a mummy;
- Mummies (a child, a cat, a crocodile, and a composite mummy);
- Everyday items such as a plate, mirror, cosmetic jar;
- Jewelry

The **paintings of tomb walls** depict pharaohs, queens, government officials, a family, various occupations (boat-building, crafts), food, rolls of cloth, domesticated animals, the fauna of the Nile River, funerals, and even a legal will.

continued

Overview, *continued*

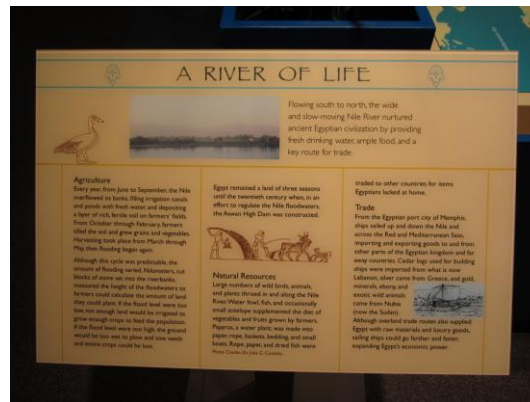
Interpretation in the exhibition includes:

- Maps and a timeline
- Large didactic panels on seven sub-topics (see previous page)
- Smaller labels on single topics
- Object labels for artworks and artifacts
- Explanations of the Egyptian gods and goddesses in the mural
- An audio and light show explaining a mural of The Book of the Dead
- A miniature diorama of the mummification process
- Reproductions of the Rosetta Stone, a False Door, a household shrine, and King Tutankhamen's throne
- Interactive stations (see next page)
- A DVD viewing area

Interactive Components:

- Crawl Tunnel (opening dimensions based on an actual tomb shaft);
- The Nile Challenge Game (questions and answers about Trade, Ecology, and Geography associated with the Nile River);
- Take-apart, put-together model of the Step Pyramid;
- Ancient Egyptian Employment Office – interview for the job of Farmer, Weaver, Scribe, or Vizier (needs two people to play);
- Create a Cartouche (hieroglyph rubbings);
- Solve the Riddles of the Sphinx (hieroglyph de-coding);
- Sit on King Tutankhamen's Throne (photography allowed)

Details of each space and sub-topic of the exhibition follow.



Sub-topic Didactic Panel

Introductory Lobby

Includes:

- **Introductory Panel** with **Timeline** of ancient Egyptian history;
- **Map** of contemporary Egypt and Nile River, marked with several major sites, and a **small map of the African continent** marked with Egypt ;
- **Information panel about New Hampshire painter Joseph Lindon Smith**, whose realistic paintings of interior tomb walls are featured in the Gallery;
- A **model of a home shrine** with a figurine of the goddess Bes, embedded in a wall;
- A **painting** by Smith of a wall scene from the White Chapel at Karnak

Suggestions for Self-guided Groups

> Introduce your group to ancient Egypt using the Timeline and the Map. Point out that ancient Egypt was larger than it is today (extending into what is now Sudan, Eritrea, and Ethiopia), and what continent it is on.

> Please remind students that the paintings are artworks, and should not be touched even though they look like carved stone.

Discuss the role of artist Joseph Lindon Smith on archaeological digs, and the importance of his artworks as records of the original colors on the walls.

Point out the wall shrine as typical of what would have been found in an ancient Egyptian household.

PANEL: Introduction

In the sands of the Sahara Desert in North East Africa, lie the archaeological remains of ancient Egypt—one of the world's oldest and most fascinating civilizations.

Protected from invading armies and foreign influences by the natural barriers of the desert to the west and the Red Sea to the east, ancient Egyptian civilization remained relatively unchanged for thousands of years. As early as 5000 BCE ancient Egyptians established agricultural settlements in the fertile flood plains of the Nile River. Then, as now, most cities and the majority of the population reside along the river.

The unification of Upper and Lower Egypt in 3150 BCE marks the period when ancient Egyptian political and social structures, religious beliefs, art, and architecture standards came together. The belief that death was not final, but only the next stage in living, led to the creation of monumental tombs and temples where religious practices and mummification ensured the bodies of deceased Egyptians would be preserved for eternity.

Excavations by archaeologists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries brought this mysterious and complex culture to the attention of America and Europe. Through artifacts and paintings of tombs, you, too, can discover ancient Egypt and explore the secrets beneath the sand.

PANEL: Joseph Lindon Smith

"I drove to Giza, and no words could describe my thoughts when, on the edge of a yellow desert, I saw my first pyramid. I went from it and sat in the hot sand and gazed into the battered and mutilated face of the Sphinx, as many millions of other human beings had done before me... I knew I would be back again and again."

Joseph Lindon Smith, on his first visit to Egypt in 1898;
From Tombs, Temples, and Ancient Art: Memoirs of Joseph Lindon Smith

For over fifty years, under the glare and heat of the sun, or in dimly-lit underground tombs, painter Joseph Lindon Smith recreated on canvas the stone relief carvings of ancient Egyptian monuments. Smith first traveled to Egypt in 1898 where he became acquainted with European and American archaeologists, among them Dr. George Reisner, leader of the Joint Expedition of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Harvard University at Giza, for whom he worked from 1910-1939.

Long before the widespread use of color photography, Smith accurately replicated the scale, colors, and conditions of the painted limestone relief carvings that decorated tomb interiors. His paintings, once exhibited in the Egyptian galleries at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, were one way to document and share archaeological discoveries.

Not well known today, Smith had deep roots in New England and extensive artistic training. He was born in Rhode Island in 1863, educated at Brown University in Providence and later at The Museum School of The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Like many artists at the turn of the century, he continued his studies in Paris, at the Academie Julian.

While home, or abroad, Smith associated with prominent artists of the early twentieth century —Rockwell Kent, Rudyard Kipling, Amy Lowell, John Singer Sargent and Louis Comfort Tiffany, among others— and his fellow associates of the Dublin Art Colony in New Hampshire. His friend Isabella Stewart Gardner asked him to become the first director of her new museum, a request he declined so he could continue to travel abroad.

continued

PANEL: Joseph Lindon Smith, *continued*

Today Smith's paintings are appreciated as valuable documentation of a lost civilization's art, but also as reminders of the exciting time when ancient Egypt's treasures were, once again, revealed to the world.

Did You Know...?

Ancient Egyptian artists mixed their own paints using earth, crushed rocks, minerals, chalk, charcoal and soot combined with water, acacia tree gum, and egg whites.

Mural Hallway

This hallway introduces ancient Egyptian **religion**. It includes:

- A mural of **Egyptian gods and goddesses with information panels** on the **right side**;
- **Interactive**: Press the button on the panels and a light will illuminate the 3-4 gods above it. The light will go off automatically;



- On the **left side**, a mural reproduction of **The Book of the Dead**, which explains the ancient Egyptian burial ceremony and what they believed happened after death;
- **Interactive**: **“Hunefer’s Journey Through the Underworld”** (an audio and light show).
Press the button on the panel across from this mural and hold it

for about 3 seconds to activate the show, which is approximately four minutes long.

Suggestions for Self-guided Groups

> Explain that the ancient Egyptians believed in many gods and goddesses (polytheism), and in an **active** life after death.

> Activate the audio and light show about The Book of the Dead.

Illuminate several groups of gods and read about them, noting that each served a purpose.

Discover Ancient Egypt

Script for the Automated “Flashlight Tour” of the Book of the Dead Mural Hallway

Final version

Welcome.

You are looking at recreated drawings from a papyrus scroll found inside a statue of Osiris, the ancient Egyptian god of the underworld. The statue and scroll, some 3300 years old, were discovered in the ruins of Thebes, a once great city on the banks of the Nile. Originally the statue and scroll were buried in the tomb of Hunefer, a royal scribe and a man of great importance.

This scroll, and others like it, are known today as *The Book of the Dead*. The Book contains precise directions, incantations, and spells needed to successfully pass numerous obstacles and tests on the perilous road to eternal life.

Let us join Hunefer on his journey as he approaches the most critical tests.

We see the mummy of Hunefer on his burial day, standing before the threshold of his tomb, supported by a priest dressed as Anubis, god of embalming and conductor to the afterlife. Another priest makes purification offerings and celebrates the “Opening of the Mouth” ceremony, touching the mummy’s mouth, nostrils, eyes, and ears with a ritual adze, reanimating the two parts of his soul: the Ka, or soul which would soon once again see, hear, eat, and drink; and the Ba, another form of the soul released to fly about during the daytime. Women mourners cry and wail.

Above, we see Hunefer’s soul, now dressed in white, answering questions about the worthiness of his life. He kneels before 14 gods, and will be judged by them and 28 others.

Next, Anubis leads the soul to the ultimate test, “The Weighing of the Heart” on the great scale of judgment....

...presided over by Ma’at, the winged goddess of order, truth and justice, shown at the top the scale. Hunefer’s heart, in a jar on the left, is balanced by kneeling Anubis against a single white feather on the right, symbolic of Ma’at.

Continued

Should Hunefer fail this test, he would be devoured by the waiting female demon, Ammut, “swallower of the dead,” who is part crocodile, part lionness, and part hippopotamus. He would be condemned to non-existence. This second death, too horrible to contemplate, has never been seen on known Books of the Dead.

The verdict of the trial is recorded by Thoth, the ibis-headed god of wisdom and writing.



Hunefer’s triumphant soul is led by Horus, the falcon-headed god of the sky, to the temple of his father Osiris, god of the dead. Now, the Ka and Ba are reunited to form the living Akh, the eternal spirit.

Osiris, upon his throne, is tended by his wife Isis and her sister Nephthys. He welcomes the rejuvenated soul of Hunefer to his kingdom. On the lotus flower before him are the four sons of Horus, guarding the canopic jars that hold Hunefer’s liver, intestines, stomach, and lungs, which he will once again need.

Finally, having overcome all the obstacles and passed every test, Hunefer has successfully achieved eternal life.

Ramp and Interactive Crawl Tunnel

After the murals, follow the ramp and you'll see:

- A case with a **real mummy of a child**;
- A small label over it, "Mummification + Tombs + Immortality;"
- A painting of a tomb interior with an information panel titled "What Is It Like to Open a 4,500 Year Old Tomb?" giving an eye witness account about the opening of a tomb (the very tomb shown in the painting) by an archaeologist who was there;
- A label, "Enter a Tomb Shaft," which has fun facts about the Great Pyramid at Giza;



Small children
can walk through
the Crawl Tunnel

Interactive: A rectangular opening into the **Crawl Tunnel** (faux tomb shaft), based on the opening dimensions of an actual shaft into a tomb. The Crawl Tunnel is about 8 feet long, and comes out on the other side of the wall. Inside the Crawl Tunnel are small windows into...

- A long wooden box holding a “**composite**” **mummy** (part real, part reproduction), which can be viewed from above as well as through slits on the long side;
- A **large panel, “Mummies: Eternally Tempting,”** about the history of mummification and tomb robbing, including a thief’s confession.
- Past the composite mummy is a small wall case with a real **mummified cat**;
- Across from the composite mummy are small wall cases with small **funerary objects** (like amulets and Ushabti figures) **and everyday objects**

continued

Ramp and Crawl Tunnel, *continued*

Suggestions for Self-guided Groups

NOTE: Kids love mummies, but some children may find the blackened and decayed mummified head and foot of the composite mummy frightening, so you may want to limit viewing for those children.

There are peep holes on the sides of the wooden box that holds the mummy...



Mummy head seen through peep hole

...as well as windows in the Crawl Tunnel that look into the wooden box.



Mummy head seen through
the windows in the Crawl
Tunnel

> Tell students to look for areas titled “Did You Know...?” on the large didactic panels throughout the exhibition for fun facts.

> Read the label over the child mummy; it is a key concept of ancient Egyptian religion.

Older children may be interested in the first person account about opening a tomb, on the panel titled “What Is It Like to Open a 4,500 Year Old Tomb?” or “The Thief’s Confession” on the panel over the composite mummy.

Explain that the ancient Egyptians worshipped a cat-like goddess named Bastet, and cats (and many other kinds of animals and birds) were routinely mummified.

PANEL: Mummies: Eternally Tempting

Did You Know...?

Pharaohs held their symbols of office on their chest. Other officials and common people had their hands at their sides.

Was this mummy a Pharaoh?

In ancient times, tomb robbers and vandals plundered the bodies looking for amulets and precious objects that had been placed in the cloth wrappings to ensure safe passage to the other world. In the Middle Ages mummies were often ground up for medicines!

Do you think this mummy was robbed? Why or why not?

A Short History of Mummification

Mummification in ancient Egypt began at least 5,000 years ago, around 3,000 BCE. At first only the pharaohs and royal family were mummified, but later the practice spread to officials and common people. It has been estimated that during three thousand years, over seventy *million* mummies were made. And that's not counting the thousands of cats, crocodiles, and other animals that were also mummified!

What Can't Be Seen When You Look at This Mummy?

As the deceased bodies were wrapped around and around in cloth, sacred amulets were placed at specific places between the layers. Amulets were believed to protect the mummy and ensure safe passage to the afterlife. You can see some real amulets in the cases in this hallway.

A Thief's Confession

"We opened the coffins and bandages in which they lay. We found the noble mummy of the King with a long chain of golden amulets and ornaments around the neck. The head was covered in gold. The noble mummy of the king was entirely overlaid with gold and his coffin was covered both inside and out with gold and adorned with precious jewels.

We tore off the gold which we found on the noble mummy of this god as well as the amulets and ornaments from around the neck and bandages in which the noble mummy was wrapped...We divided into eight parts the gold which we found with this god, plus the mummy's amulets, the ornaments and the bandages."

From a confession extracted by torture from one of eight thieves who broke into the tomb of King Sebekemsaf. Most of the thieves were servants in the Temple of Amun and were confined to prison there. We do not know their final sentence, which may have been death. Robbing a king's tomb was not theft but sacrilege.

Gallery — Mummification and Entombment section

At the bottom of the ramp you'll see:

- A **large didactic panel** titled "**Mummification and Entombment;**"
- The four-sided **mummification diorama**, with information about the process of mummification on each side;
- Several **paintings** showing animals being brought for sacrifice, women mourners, and a funeral procession;

- A **case of small sculptures** against the wall

To the left of the ramp is:

- The opening of the Crawl Tunnel;
- A **model of a False Door** that would have been found in tombs;
- The **Interactive: Build the Step Pyramid**



This interactive is a low, glass-topped table with a **take-apart, put-together model of the Step Pyramid** on it.

> Be sure to look under the Pyramid model to see a model of the rooms that are below the surface of the Step Pyramid.

Information about the construction of *mastabas* (the most common type of tomb) and the Step Pyramid is on each side of the table top. Benches are on two sides of the table.

continued

Gallery — Mummification and Entombment, *continued*

Suggestions for Self-guided Groups

Students will be drawn to the mummification diorama like bees to honey.

> In Step 2 of the diorama, point out the piles of *natron* (a salt) used for drying the bodies, so later you can point out where *natron* came from when you look at the map of the Nile River.



Step 2 in Mummification diorama

> If you haven't done so already, explain that the religious belief of an *active* life after death was why the practices of mummification and burying the dead with worldly goods in tombs began.

Let students work in small groups to figure out how to take apart and put back together the Step Pyramid model. The Step Pyramid was built upon a smaller tomb called a *mastaba*; see if students can find the *mastaba* in the model (It's a rectangular shape on the very bottom.)

PANEL: Mummification and Entombment

Believing in an active life after death lead the ancient Egyptians to develop two practices that today symbolize their culture.

Mummification

Preserving the body and likeness of the deceased was essential to the ancient Egyptian conception of the afterlife. During the afterlife, the deceased's spirits could travel throughout the known world and the underworld. Each night, however, two of them—the *b'a* and the *k'a* — had to return to the body of the deceased, but could only do so if they could recognize the body. The elaborate techniques developed by the ancient Egyptians to mummify, or preserve, deceased bodies were created to ensure immortality.

Tomb Burial: Homes for Eternal Life

Most people were entombed in simple *mastabas* (mah-stah'-bahs), one-story high rectangular buildings made of mud brick. Like the colossal pyramids, the actual burial chamber is below ground. The ground floor contains a chapel where family members left daily offerings of food and drink to feed the spirits of the deceased.

All the items needed by the deceased to continue life as he or she once knew it were housed in the tomb. A person's wealth and social status can be estimated by the size of his or her tomb and by the amount of goods it held. Wealthy people might have twenty to forty rooms full of goods.

"I will possess my body forever...I exist, I am alive, I am strong, I have awakened in peace." Spell 154 from The Book of the Dead

Did You Know...?

A single mummy might be wrapped in up to 448.5 square yards of material. As many as twenty layers of alternating shrouds and bandages have been counted on some bodies.

From [Egyptian Mummies \(British Museum\)](#), Carol Andrews, pgs. 25 - 26

Gallery — Government and Writing section



Past the model of the Step Pyramid is the **Interactive: Create a Cartouche.**

Using the chart on the wall, students can arrange the hieroglyph blocks in the wooden holder to spell their name, put a specially-sized sheet of paper over it, and rub it with the large crayon.

On the other side of the table is the **Interactive: Solve the Riddles of the Sphinx.** Small boxes hold copies of five riddles printed on paper. The last word is in hieroglyphs and needs to be de-coded into English.

> Students may keep their cartouche rubbings and solved riddles to take home.

Also in this section:

- A **large didactic panel about the relationship between government and writing;**
- A large painting that contains a will (in hieroglyphs). The **translation of the will** is in a label to the left the painting;
- A **reproduction of the Rosetta Stone**, the stone that allowed hieroglyphs to be translated long after that script had died out, with explanations about the Stone and its importance;
- An **illustration** explaining how tomb wall were carved and decorated;
- A **painting of statues on a tomb wall** representing Queen Hetep-Heres II and her daughter Mer-si-ankh III

continued

Gallery — Government and Writing section, *continued*

Suggestions for Self-guided Groups

> Divide the students into small groups and rotate them to do the Cartouche, Decoding the Riddles, and the Step Pyramid.

> Explain that the invention of papyrus as a lightweight surface to write on allowed the Egyptians to keep many records, and therefore their government became very organized.

Point out the translation of the Will of Wepemnefert, and the fact that ancient Egypt had courts to settle grievances.

>Point out the painting showing the statues of Queen Hetep-heres and her daughter as evidence that there were women rulers in ancient Egypt. Women in general had more rights in ancient Egypt than in other cultures at that time.

Art teachers: If you want to teach students how to scale up a design, direct them to the illustration showing how tomb walls were decorated and carved using a grid system. Note the number of people working on the wall and how each had a specialized task.

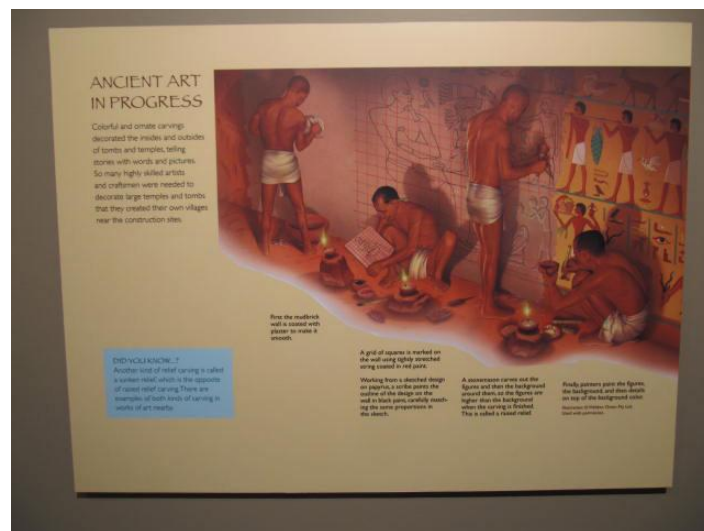


Illustration of the wall carving and decorating process

PANEL: Government and Writing

Theocracy and Bureaucracy

Ancient Egypt was ruled by kings. People believed their kings, called pharaohs, embodied the god Osiris. These powerful god-kings and their wives were worshipped, and together they performed many ceremonies and daily rituals meant to please the gods. When a king died, he passed on his wealth and position to his son. Few queens ever ruled Egypt.

After the king, the second most powerful people were the two viziers (vis-ee-ers), or chief ministers, who oversaw Upper and Lower Egypt. They were responsible for the treasury and collection of taxes, supervised agriculture and irrigation systems, and represented the king at court. Members of the royal family and other officials helped run the government. Priests who controlled the temples often held great power and influence. Most people only interacted with civil servants who managed local affairs, or judges who heard their complaints in court.

Keeping records of events, legal matters, and business transactions was a necessary function of the ancient Egyptian government. Individuals, too, kept records—receipts for payment of taxes, the outcome of property disputes, and documents to distribute their wealth after their death.

The Power of the Pen

As few people could write or read hieroglyphs, who kept track of all this information? Scribes, well-educated men who trained for years to read and write. Without writing, maintaining the law and keeping the highly organized government running would have been impossible. Much of what we know about ancient Egyptian society—its government, laws, religion, medicine, and literature comes from translations of scribes' writings on clay tablets and papyrus sheets.

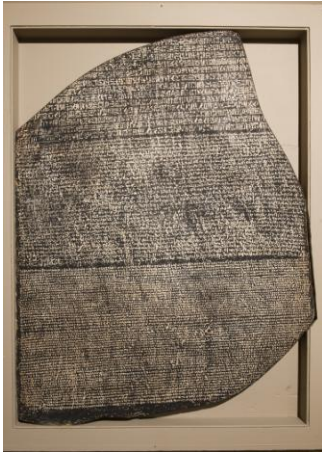
Ancient Egyptians considered hieroglyphic writing to be sacred text. For day-to-day writing on papyrus or wood, hieratic, a form of cursive script, developed from simplified glyph forms. Hieratic script later evolved into demotic script. These scripts were easier and faster to write using ink than hieroglyphs, but they did not replace hieroglyphic writing. The three writing systems developed alongside each other until Egypt, then under Persian control, was conquered by the Greeks in 332 BCE.

continued

Egyptian Chronology with reigns of selected pharaohs

Old Kingdom	2649–2150 B.C.
4 th Dynasty	
Khufu	2551–2528 B.C.
Djedefre	2528–2520 B.C.
Khafre	2520–2494 B.C.
Menkaure	2490–2472 B.C.
Shepsekaf	2472–2467 B.C.
5 th Dynasty	
Neferirkare	2446–2438 B.C.
Niuserre	2420–2389 B.C.
Djedkare-Isesi	2381–2353 B.C.
6 th Dynasty	
Teti	2323–2291 B.C.
Pepi I	2289–2255 B.C.
First Intermediate Period	2150–2040 B.C.
Middle Kingdom	2040–1640 B.C.
Second Intermediate Period	1640–1550 B.C.
New Kingdom	1550–1070 B.C.
18 th Dynasty	
Tutankhamen	1332–1322 B.C.
Horemheb	1319–1292 B.C.
Third Intermediate Period	1075–664 B.C.
Late Period	664–332 B.C.
Ptolemaic Period	332–30 B.C.
Roman Period	30 B.C.–A.D. 476

LABEL: The Rosetta Stone



This is a molded copy taken from the original Rosetta Stone, the artifact that made deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphs possible. It was discovered by Napoleon's army in 1799 in Egypt's Nile delta, long after the ancient Egyptian languages had died out. Three languages are written in bands across the Stone — Egyptian hieroglyphs, Egyptian demotic, and ancient Greek. Using his knowledge of Greek, and guessing that the inscriptions were identical, Jean Francois Champollion translated the Stone in 1821.

What Is This?

A copy of the famous Rosetta Stone, the key to unlocking the mysteries of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Notice the three sections, each written in a different language: Egyptian hieroglyphs, Egyptian **demotic** (the cursive form of the ancient Egyptian language), and ancient Greek at the bottom.

How Old Is the Original Stone?

Experts believe it was made around 196 BCE, about 2,100 years ago.

Where Did It Come From?

Soldiers in Napoleon's army found it in 1799 at Rashid, or Rosetta, in the eastern Nile delta, Egypt.

Why Is It Famous?

At that time of its discovery, ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs and demotic writing had not been used for hundreds of years, and no one knew what they said. Some scholars, however, knew how to read ancient Greek. They guessed the Stone said the same thing in three different languages. By translating the Greek, they could figure out what the Egyptian hieroglyphs and demotic writing said. A brilliant French linguist, Jean Francois Champollion, deciphered the Stone in 1821.

continued

PANEL: The Rosetta Stone, *continued*

How Did He Do It?

Like any good code-cracker, he looked for patterns. He noticed some hieroglyphs were surrounded by ovals (called cartouches), and he guessed these might represent a royal name. The Greek section mentions King Ptolemy V (tahl-eh-mee), so Champollion matched Ptolemy's name with the hieroglyphs in the cartouche. Once he knew what those hieroglyphs meant, he had part of the code cracked. Much more work was needed, however, because hieroglyphs can also represent ideas and sounds, as well as single letters in an alphabet.

What Does It Say?

It announces special benefits given by the King of Egypt, Ptolemy V (who reigned 204-181 BCE), to the Egyptian people. Ptolemy was Greek, not Egyptian. (The rule of Egyptian kings ended in 332 BCE when Greece, led by Alexander the Great (356-323 BCE), conquered Egypt.)

Some of the benefits include the forgiveness of debts and the right of the Egyptian priests to receive an annual share of grain. Because most of the Egyptians resented being ruled by a foreigner, Ptolemy's decree is a good example of diplomacy.

Gallery — The Nile River section

In this section you'll see:

- A small **mummified crocodile**;
- A large **didactic panel about the Nile River** that discusses the flooding cycle, natural resources, and trade;
- A large rectangular block with a horizontal **map of ancient Egypt** on its top;
- Three large **paintings related to the Nile River**: boat-building, a ship, and above and below the surface of the Nile River
- The **Interactive: The Nile Challenge game cards** about Geography, Ecology, and Trade
- Faux papyrus plants and benches

Marked on the **map** are:



- Sites where **natural resources** were found;
- Several of the important temple and pyramid sites;
- Bodies of water, mountains, desert, and surrounding countries during ancient times;
- A brief paragraph about the Nile River;
- **Geography vocabulary**;
- Drawings and paragraphs about several Nile River animals that can be found in the painting of the river (a fun activity for young children)

Interactive: The Nile Challenge game

This game is a set of cards with questions in three different categories, Geography, Ecology, and Trade. Most of the answers can be determined by looking at the map or the paintings in this section. Correct answers are on the backs of the cards.

continued

Gallery — The Nile River, *continued*

Next to The Nile River section is the **Nadine Martel Viewing Area**, a darkened room with benches, for viewing DVDs about ancient Egypt. Currently an hour-long DVD produced by National Geographic is played. The room can accommodate about 21-25 students.

Suggestions for Self-guided Groups

> Play The Nile Challenge game. Divide students into two teams. Have one group ask questions from the first 2-5 cards, and then switch so the second group asks questions from the next 2-5 cards (there are 10 cards altogether).

Discuss how the Nile River flows from south to north, which is why the southern part of the country was called Upper Egypt, and the northern part was called Lower Egypt.

Figure out how far the ancient Egyptians had to travel by ship in order to trade for various goods using the mileage key on the map.

> **Discussion Question:** How did the Nile River sustain the ancient Egyptian civilization?

Possible answers:

- Fertile flood waters meant they could grow large amounts of grain
- It provided food (ducks and fish) and fresh drinking water
- It was used for transportation and trade
- It provided natural material (papyrus) for making rope, paper, and even small boats.



PANEL: The Nile River

Flowing south to north over, the wide and slow-moving Nile River nurtured ancient Egyptian civilization by providing fresh drinking water, ample food, and a key route for trade.

Agriculture

Every year, from June to September, the Nile overflowed its banks, filling irrigation canals and ponds with fresh water, and depositing a layer of rich, fertile soil on farmers' fields. From October through February, farmers tilled the soil and grew grains and vegetables. Harvesting took place from March through May, and then the flooding began again.

Although this cycle was predictable, the amount of flooding varied. Nilometers, cut blocks of stone set into the riverbanks, measured the height of the floodwaters so farmers could calculate the amount of land they could plant. If the flood level were too low, not enough land could be irrigated to grow enough crops to feed the population. If the flood level were too high, the ground would be too wet to plow and sow seeds, and entire crops could be lost.

Egypt remained a land of three seasons until the twentieth century when the Aswan High Dam was constructed in an effort to regulate the Nile floodwaters.

Natural Resources

Large numbers of wild birds, animals, and plants thrived in and along the Nile river. Water fowl, fish, and occasionally small antelope supplemented the diet of vegetables and fruits grown by farmers. Papyrus, a water plant, was made into paper, rope, baskets, bedding, and small boats. Rope, paper, and dried fish were traded to other countries for items the Egyptians lacked at home.

Trade

From the Egyptian port city of Memphis, ships sailed up and down the Nile and across the Red and Mediterranean Seas, importing and exporting goods to and from other parts of the Egyptian kingdom and far away countries. Cedar logs used for building ships were imported from what is now Lebanon, silver came from Greece, and gold, minerals, ebony, and exotic wild animals came from Nubia (now the Sudan). Although overland trade routes also supplied Egypt with raw materials and luxury goods, sailing ships could go farther and faster, expanding Egypt's economic power.

Gallery — Everyday Life section

In this section you'll see:

- **A case of jewelry** and other items related to personal adornment;
- A case holding a **necklace** next to a painting showing a woman wearing a similar necklace and her husband, plus a small label on "Lookin' Good;"
- **A reproduction of King Tutankhamen's throne**;
- A small **sculpture of a head of a pharaoh**;
- A large **painting of a priest** at an offering table, with food and goods piled on the table;



Interactive: The Ancient Egyptian Employment Office

This activity is the same on each table. Two people are needed to play, one to be the Interviewer, and one to be the Job Seeker. Job Seekers may apply for the job of Farmer, Weaver, Scribe, or Vizier. Interviewers read a script with questions and multiple choice answers, and keeps score of correct answers from the Job Seekers.

- A large **didactic label about "Everyday Life"** that covers Family Life, Homes, Personal Adornment, and Making a Living;
- Paintings of **people doing various occupations**, including children playing, musicians and dancers, and several kinds of craftsmen
- A **diagram about the social structure** of ancient Egyptian society.

continued

Gallery — Everyday Life section, *continued*

Suggestion for Self-guided Groups

> Divide students into small groups, and assign each group one part of this section to explore, with the goal of telling other students at least three things they learned about everyday life in ancient Egypt.

> Discuss how the lives of the ancient Egyptians were similar ours, and how they were different. If your students could go back in time and live there, what would they like about it?

Compare the ways in which the ancient Egyptian adorned themselves with those of the students (the use of jewelry, make-up)

Look at the paintings showing various occupations, and discuss where those occupations may have been in the social structure “pyramid.”



Reproduction of King Tutankhamen's throne

This is the only place in the Museum where photography is allowed, so enjoy being King for a few minutes!

PANEL: Everyday Life

Daily life revolved around many of the same activities we do today.

Family Life

Most Egyptians' lives centered around the traditional family unit. Husbands and fathers worked for goods and food, while wives and mothers stayed home to raise children and run the household. Unlike other ancient societies, however, wives were not considered property of the husband, but equal partners.

Homes

A typical home of a middle-class family was built from mud brick, and had few furnishings. It might have a walled courtyard for keeping animals, three rooms, a hearth for cooking, and a flat roof where people slept on hot nights. Simple wooden stools, reed baskets, mud brick benches along the walls, and straw beds served for furniture and storage. A small shrine to a local deity might be set into a wall.

Wealthy families' homes were often built with stone, with carved furniture, courtyards, lush gardens, and even swimming pools.

Personal Adornment

Ancient Egyptians believed a well-groomed personal appearance pleased the gods as well as others. People from all levels of society bathed regularly and adorned themselves. Clothing, jewelry, perfumes, wigs, and cosmetics indicated one's gender, age, wealth, and status.

Making a Living

Ancient Egyptian society depended on a large number of occupations: farmers, craftspeople, entertainers, merchants, soldiers, scribes, doctors, priests, government officials, and others. Usually a young man learned his father's occupation, which meant farmers' sons became farmers, and noblemen's sons became priests or government officials. Young women usually stayed home, but some were allowed to become weavers, musicians, dancers, and mourners. Workers were paid with food and goods instead of money, which they bartered for other things they needed.

Gallery — Draw Like an Egyptian section

On the other side of the wall with the Social Structure diagram is:

- A **painting showing a family**;
- A **large didactic panel, “Draw Like an Egyptian,”** about the rules ancient Egyptian artists followed. Written in the form of a Test for an Apprentice Artist, it asks viewers to look at nearby paintings for answers to the test. A grid diagram shows how Egyptian figures were proportioned.
- A **case** with a cosmetics palette, an ancient kohl container with a cover, a modern kohl box, bottle, and applicator — black kohl around the eyes is associated with the “look” of ancient Egyptians.
- A **large painting of a male figure**

Suggestions for Self-guided Tours

>Ask students to mimic the pose of the man in the large painting.

> Read the Apprentice Test questions and multiple choice answers to the students, and ask them to look at the surrounding artwork for answers (the correct answers are upside down at the bottom of the panel).

PANEL: Draw Like an Egyptian

Artists Followed Rules

Artists in ancient Egypt conformed to strict rules when drawing and carving, and for 3,000 years they generally followed them.

Apprentice Artist Test

Can You Describe the Four Rules for Egyptian Art?

1. How to Draw Humans, Part 1

Take a careful look at the large male figure in this painting.

What direction is his face pointing?

What direction are his eyes pointing?

What direction are his chest and shoulders facing?

What direction are his legs pointing?

Rule #1 is...

- a. Draw the figure any way you like
- b. Show as much of the body as you can, even if it looks unnatural
- c. Never show real hair

2. How to Draw Humans, Part 2

According to this diagram, how many squares long should the legs be? How many squares tall should the entire body be?

Rule #2 is...

- a. Bodies should be eighteen squares high from the ground to the top of the head, and legs should be eleven squares long.
- b. A square equals twelve inches.
- c. The legs should be one-half as long as the entire body.

3. How to Show Social Status

Who is the most important person in this painting? Who is the next most important person? Who is the least important person? How can you tell?

continued

PANEL: Draw Like an Egyptian, *continued*

Rule #3 is...

- a. Important people wear special hats.
- b. The oldest person is the most important.
- c. The most important person is the largest, the next most important person is the next largest, and the least important person is the smallest.

4. How to Show Perspective

What is the correct way to draw a table full of offerings? (See an example in the large painting on the wall in the Everyday Life section.)

Rule #4 is...

- a. Draw all of the offerings above the table, so they can all be seen.
- b. Draw the offerings in front, and only draw a bit of the offerings behind them.
- c. Draw only one of each offering on the table.

(Answers: 1. b, 2. a, 3. c, 4. a.)

Look for images inspired by ancient Egypt elsewhere in the Museum (such as the silver Fish Server in our Decorative Arts gallery, on the second floor of the Merriam Parkway building).

Enduring Ideas didactic panel

This panel is directly across from Draw Like an Egyptian. The four accomplishments of ancient Egyptian civilization listed are also in the MA State History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks. (Text of panel is on next page.)

Suggestions for Self-guided Tours

> Summarize your tour by reviewing these four accomplishments, especially noting the “firsts” in the blue box at the bottom of the label.

PANEL: Enduring Ideas

Agriculture on a Grand Scale

The fertile soil left by the flood of the Nile River, the warm climate, an effective irrigation system, and an organized government allowed the ancient Egyptians to grow food on a large scale. Ancient Egyptians divided their farmland along the Nile River into small rectangular plots. Between the plots were canals and smaller ditches that captured water during the flood season, and stored it for irrigating the fields later in the year. Government officials inspected the boundaries of each farmer's land, calculated the area, and from that amount determined how much of the crop grown had to be paid to the government as tax.

A Calendar

The Old Kingdom Egyptian calendar might seem surprisingly familiar. It had 10 days to a week, 3 weeks to a month (30 days), 4 months to a season (120 days), 3 seasons to a year (360 days) plus 5 holy days for a total of 365 days. It became the basis for the ancient Roman Julian calendar (named for Julius Caesar, ruler of the Roman Empire from 60-44 BCE), which was later modified to become the Gregorian calendar (introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in 1532 CE) that we use today.

Papyrus "Paper"

Strips of papyrus—a water plant that grew along the Nile River—laid cross-wise and pounded together made the first type of paper. Papyrus was easy to make and lightweight, making it possible to keep numerous civic, religious, and personal records on which the complex Egyptian government depended. Egyptian officials may have been the first “paper – that is, papyrus—pushers” in the world.

Monumental Architecture and Sculpture

Built over four thousand years ago and rising 481 feet high, Pharaoh Khufu's Great Pyramid in Giza is still the largest stone building in the world. In addition to pyramids, some pharaohs created huge temples decorated with colossal sculptures, such as the Great Temple at Abu Simbel, built under King Ramesses II. Sculptors and laborers took twenty years to build it (1244 BCE to 1224 BCE), and at its entrance are four, sixty-six foot high statues carved from rock of—guess who?—Ramesses II.

continued

PANEL: Enduring Ideas, *continued*

Did You Know...?

The ancient Egyptians were the first to invent:

Pens

Ink, black and colored

Ox-drawn plows

Sails for boats

Books

Police

Lighthouses

Eye makeup

Hair pins

Candy

Ball games

Rattles

Zoos

Organized labor

They were also the first to use carrier pigeons

Resources about Ancient Egypt

Websites on Ancient Egypt - Annotated

http://www.amazon.com/Tales-Ancient-Egypt-Puffin-Classics/dp/0140367160/ref=pd_sim_b_98

Here are approx 36 books for children ages 9-12 with interesting topics on Ancient Egypt.

http://www.amazon.com/Fun-Hieroglyphs-Metropolitan-Museum-Art/dp/1416961143/ref=pd_sim_b_4

This has activities on hieroglyphs from the MET.

http://www.amazon.com/Ancient-Egyptian-World-Times/dp/0195173910/ref=sr_1_12?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1279034798&sr=1-12

This is a book for a slightly older group of kids (better for the 7th graders). It includes histories and timelines with arranged chapters, and would make for a good source of materials on which to base reading questions and activities.

<http://www.atozteacherstuff.com/Themes/Egypt/>

This website lists a number of great teacher websites about thematic units and activities around Ancient Egypt. Most seem like they would be good for middle school age groups. The printable versions are really cool.

<http://www.carnegiemnh.org/exhibitions/egypt/guide.htm> This was found this within the A to Z teachers stuff website, and it has a lot of great information about Ancient Egypt, with subsequent classroom activities under each section of information.

Websites on mastabas and tombs

http://www.osirisnet.net/mastabas/mererouka/e_mereruka_01.htm

http://www.osirisnet.net/tombes/nobles/ramose/e_ramose_02.htm
Extensive documentation including sections on themes and gods

Books – Annotated

Tales of Ancient Egypt by Roger Lancelyn Green (Puffin 1995)- This book focuses on the Tales of the Gods, Tales of Magic and Tales of Adventure. It contains a map and an introduction about Egypt.

Pyramid by David Macaulay (Houghton Mifflin Company 1975)- This book focus's on the planning, design and construction of Ancient Egyptian pyramids. It uses a fictional pharaoh's need for a new pyramid to discuss the labor-intensive process of pyramid building.

Ancient Egyptians and Their Neighbors: An Activity Guide by Marian Broida (Chicago Review Press)- This book gives a detailed time line about different cultures and civilizations that existed during the time of the Egyptians. It also gives key information about each society that includes history, geography, architecture, clothing, writing, food, religion, and employment. This book also provides land maps of the civilizations.

Egyptian Echo (Newspaper Histories Series) by Paul Dowsell (Usborne Publishing)- This book reads like it was printed in Ancient Egypt, with “up-to-date” information about various periods through history in a fictional tabloid newspaper format. The advertisements are clever and funny; a hilarious read that will keep kids entertained. (IF you like this product, the publisher makes many variations: Roman Record, Greek News, Greek Gazette, Stone Age Sentinel etc)

Ancient Egypt by George Hart (DK publishing)- Uses great pictures of objects to captivate the attention of its readers while providing useful information about daily life, architecture, religion, agriculture and recreational activities.

Early Civilization by Jane Chisholm and Anne Millard (Usborne)- Provides extensive information about all aspects of Ancient Egyptian civilization throughout its periods. Provides a “Who's who” in the appendix as well as a Glossary and Timetable in the back of the book. It also lists extensively the Egyptian Kings and their rule dates. Good resource for teachers as well as students.



Step into...Ancient Egypt by Philip Steele and consultant Felicity Cobbing (Lorenz books)- Provides information on every aspect of Egyptian life with pictures of artifacts and excavation sites. This book includes activities that match up with the theme being discussed (in making a pyramid, for example, height and length are given to make triangles; this could easily turn into geometry problem solving).

The Legacy of Ancient Egypt by Charles Freeman (Facts on File 1997)- Under each section of information a map and a timetable is given. Pictures are used to illustrate the information being presented. It also provides information about alliances and rivals between Egypt and other civilizations.

Imagining Egypt by Mark Millmore (Black Dog & Leventhal 2007)- Gives “a living portrait of the time of the pharaohs.” Many original drawings of what the temples probably looked like at the time they were built. Provides hieroglyphic equivalent of birth names, throne names of rulers, and important people throughout Egyptian history. Also provides key maps in each section and specific information about temples and tomb construction and their use.

Science in Ancient Egypt by Geraldine Woods (Franklin Watts of Grolier Publishing 1998)- This book highlights the accomplishments of Ancient Egypt in architecture, medicine, astronomy, mathematics and agriculture.

Ancient Egypt: An Interactive History Adventure (You Choose Books: Historical Eras) by Heather Adamson- This book provides three story paths with forty-three choices and twenty-two endings. It allows students to see where their choices would lead if they were living in Ancient Egypt.

Spend the Day in Ancient Egypt: Projects and Activities That Bring the Past to Life (Spend The Day Series) by Linda Honan (John Wiley & sons 1999)- Provides instructions and recipes for making boats, statues, sarcophagi, face painting, headdresses, cookies, hummus with flat bread etc. These would be items that would have been equivalents to items found in Ancient Egypt that were actually used. Over 100 pages of instructions with 2 full pages of resources.

Cultural Atlas of Ancient Egypt by John Baines and Jaromir Malek (Andromeda Oxford, published by Checkmark Books, 2000) – A great resource for adults, this book includes maps of ancient Egypt in different time periods, extensive descriptions and photos of temple and pyramid sites, and general information. Educators might be especially interested in its Chronological Table, Glossary, and list of Museums with Egyptian Collections.

Joseph Lindon Smith and Archaeology

Joseph Lindon Smith, Rhode Island-born and Paris-trained, was famous for his paintings of ancient Egyptian ruins and artifacts. In November 1898, he traveled to Egypt on a whim, sailing up the Nile to the rock-cut temples of Abu Simbel. While painting the colossal statues, built for Ramesses II (Pharaoh of the 19th dynasty, 1292-1190 B.C.), he was discovered by Phoebe Hearst, then on her first trip to Egypt. She was so impressed with his work that she immediately bought eight of his paintings, four of them sight unseen. Later, at a dinner party given by Mrs. Hearst, Smith met George A. Reisner, her field agent in Egypt. After 1905, when Reisner joined the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Smith became a staff-artist for his expedition team.

Phoebe Hearst met George A. Reisner on her first trip to Egypt in early 1899
http://hearstmuseum.berkeley.edu/exhibitions/cent/1_8.html

Also 1950 my first Trip to Egypt
Smith introduced Reisner to Phoebe Hearst
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/15462835/Egypt-1950-My-First-Visit>

First person account of opening a tomb
by ARTHUR WEIGALL

From Weigall's *The Glory of the Pharaohs*, (London, 1923,) pp. 127-130.

"...In the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings at Thebes excavations were conducted for some years at the expense of Mr. Theodore M. Davis, of Newport, Rhode Island, by special arrangement with the Department of Antiquities of the Egyptian Government; and as the representative of that Department I had to supervise the work. The finding of the tomb of Yuya and Tjuyu during these excavations was an event only eclipsed by Lord Carnarvon's recent discovery, and one which came somewhere near to the standard of romance set by the novelists. Yuya and Tjuyu were the parents of Queen Tiy...When the entrance of their tomb was cleared, a flight of steps was exposed, leading down to a passage blocked by a wall of loose stones. In the top right hand corner a small hole, large enough to admit a man, had been made in ancient times, and through this we could look down into a dark passage. As it was too late in the day to enter at once, we postponed that exciting experience until the morrow, and some police were sent for to guard the entrance during the night. I had slept the previous night over the mouth, and there was now no possibility of leaving the place for several more nights, so a rough camp was formed on the spot.

"Here I settled myself down for the long watch, and speculated on the events of the next morning, when Mr. Davis and one or two well known Egyptologists were to come to the valley to be present at the opening of the sepulcher. Presently, in the silent darkness, a slight noise was heard on the hillside, and immediately the challenge of the sentry rang out. This was answered by a distant call, and after some moments of

alertness on our part we observed two figures approaching us. These, to my surprise, proved to be a well-known American artist and his wife [Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Lindon Smith], who had obviously come on the expectation that trouble was ahead; but though in this they were destined to suffer disappointment, still, out of respect for the absolute unconcern of both visitors, it may be mentioned that the mouth of a lonely tomb already said by native rumour to contain incalculable wealth is not perhaps the safest place in the world. Here, then, on a level patch of rock we three lay down and slept fitfully until the dawn. Soon after breakfast the wall at the mouth of the tomb was pulled down, and the party passed into the low passage which sloped down to the burial chamber. At the bottom of this passage there was a second wall blocking the way; but when a few layers had been taken off the top we were able to climb, one by one, into the chamber.

"Imagine entering a townhouse which had been closed for the summer; imagine the stuffy room, the stiff, silent appearance of the furniture, the feeling that some ghostly

occupants of the vacant chairs have just been disturbed, the desire to throw open the windows to let life into the room once more. That was perhaps the first sensation as we stood, really dumbfounded, and stared around at the relics of the life of over three thousand years ago, all of which were as new almost as when they graced the palace of Prince Yuya. Three arm-chairs were perhaps the first objects to attract the attention: beautiful carved wooden chairs, decorated with gold. Belonging to one of these was a pillow made of down and covered with linen. It was so perfectly preserved that one might have sat upon it or tossed it from this chair to that without doing it injury. Here were fine alabaster vases, and in one of these we were startled to find a liquid, like honey or syrup, still unsolidified by time. Boxes of exquisite workmanship stood in various parts of the room, some resting on delicately wrought legs. Now the eye was directed to a wicker trunk fitted with trays and partitions, and ventilated with little apertures, since the scents were doubtless strong. Two most comfortable beds were to be observed, fitted with springy string mattresses and decorated with charming designs in gold. There in the far corner, placed upon the top of a number of large white jars, stood the light chariot which Yuya had owned in his lifetime. In all directions stood objects gleaming with gold undulled by a speck of dust, and one looked from one article to another with the feeling that the entire human conception of Time was wrong. These were the things of yesterday, of a year or so ago. Why, here were the meats prepared for the feasts in the Underworld; here were Yuya's favorite joints, each neatly placed in a wooden box as though for a journey. Here was his staff, and here were his sandals--a new pair and an old. In another corner there stood the magical figures by the power of which the prince was to make his way through Hades. The words of the mystical "Chapter of the Flame" and of the "Chapter of the Magical Figure of the North Wall" were inscribed upon them; and

upon a great roll of papyrus twenty-two yards in length other efficacious prayers were written.

"But though the eyes passed from object to object, they ever returned to the two lidless gilded coffins in which the owners of this room of the dead lay as though peacefully sleeping. First above Yuya and then above his wife the electric lamps were held, and as one looked down into their quiet faces (from which the bandages had been removed by some ancient robber), there was almost the feeling that they would presently open their eyes and blink at the light. The stern features of the old man commanded one's attention, and again and again our gaze was turned from this mass of wealth to this sleeping figure in whose honour it had been placed here.

"At last we returned to the surface to allow the thoughts opportunity to collect themselves and the pulses time to quiet down, for, even to the most unemotional, a discovery of this kind, bringing one into the very presence of the past, has really an unsteady effect. Then once more we descended, and made the preliminary arrangements for the cataloguing of the antiquities. It was now that the real work began, and, once the excitement was passed, there was a monotony of labour to be faced

which put a very considerable strain on the powers of all concerned. The hot days when one sweated over the heavy packing-cases, and the bitterly cold nights when one lay at the mouth of the tomb under the stars, dragged on for many a week; and when at last the long train of boxes was carried down the Nile *en route* for the Cairo Museum, it was with a sigh of relief that I returned to my regular work."

What Did the Ancient Egyptians Eat?

By [Saad Fayed](#), About.com Guide

The history of ancient Egyptians is always included in school curriculums, however I have noticed that they fail to comment on what the diet of the ancient Egyptians was.

Many people are surprised to find that a few of the foods ancient Egyptians consumed are being eaten still today! For example, [ful medammes](#), a fava bean dish that is often a breakfast food is now the National Dish of Egypt was eaten in the Pharaonic periods. [Hummus](#) was also served in ancient Egypt as well.

What the ancient Egyptians ate varied depending of their social and financial status. The more money and power you had, the better you ate.

Fruits

Several fruits were eaten in ancient Egypt, depending on the period. What was available depended on agriculture and trade. Popular fruits in ancient Egypt include:

- dates
- grapes
- pomegranates
- peaches
- watermelon

Meats

Several types of meats were eaten, including pork in some regions.

Cattle beef was commonly eaten by the rich, along with sheep or goat, while the poor often ate geese, ducks and other fowl.

Animals that we consider to be exotic today we also eaten, such as gazelles and antelopes.

Because of religious stigma, many types of seafood were avoided.

Beverages

Beer was a common beverage and served at meals. It was made from barley and stored in specially made beer jars.

Wine was consumed at meals by the rich. The manner in which wine was made is very similar to how it is made today.

There is evidence of cow milk consumption, but may have been included in a recipe and not necessarily as a drink.

Breads

Bread was a very important part of the ancient Egyptian diet. It differed from the breads we eat today. Bread in ancient Egypt was very hard and gritty, not soft and chewy like we consume today. It was very damaging to their teeth.

There was a wide variety to eat in ancient Egypt. Egyptologists believe that even the poor ate well, and few starved.

Ancient Egyptian Recipes

Hummus

Ingredients (serves 2):

- 400g Chickpeas (or 1 can of precooked garbanzo beans)
- 2 Tablespoons of Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 2 Tablespoons of Tahini (sesame paste)
- 3 Tablespoons of Lemon Juice
- ¼ Teaspoon of Salt
- Pinch of Cumin
- Pinch of Cayenne Pepper
- 1 Clove of Garlic
- 1 Sprig of Chopped Parsley

Directions

1) If using dried chickpeas first soak them for ten hours in roughly three times their volume of water. Drain them thoroughly and then cover in a pot with cold water and bring to the boil. Simmer for 1 hour. Then drain and wait to cool.

2) If using tinned chickpeas it's much faster. Empty the tin into a sieve and rinse thoroughly with cold water.

3) Peel and finely chop the garlic.

4) Add the chickpeas (save a few for decoration), olive oil, tahini, lemon juice and salt into the blender and blend into a fluffy paste.

It also fine to use a stab mix and a bowl if a blender is unavailable. If the hummus looks to dry add a little more oil and lemon.

5) Put the blend past into a serving bowl, add a pinch of cumin and stir.

6) Create a whirlpool effect in your bowl of hummus with a spoon and then drizzle olive oil on top as shown in the picture above.

Voila! Serve with fresh, warm pita bread.

Ful Mudammas (or Foul Mudammas)

Ingredients:

- can of Foul Mudammas beans
- Sprig of Fresh Parsley
- 1 Onion
- 1 Lemon
- Olive Oil
- 1 teaspoon of Cumin Powder
- 1 clove of Garlic
- 1 fresh Chili

Directions:

1. Go to any Arabian or Turkish food store and buy a can of Foul beans. Some other Asian food stores also sell this product. Unfortunately it has not quite made it on to the shelves of mainstream supermarkets yet.
2. Empty the can into a sieve and rinse thoroughly.
3. Heat some olive oil in a pan, when it gets hot add one chopped clove of garlic, one chopped chilli, the onion (diced) and a teaspoon of cumin powder.
4. Stir together and allow to sizzle on a medium heat for one to two minutes.
5. Add Foul Beans to pan.
6. Add one table spoon of fresh lemon juice, and two more table spoons on olive oil.
7. Stir continuously for five to ten minutes until the foul has become mushy. Ideally it should appear 'half mush/ half beans', although you can adjust this at your own discretion.
8. When it takes on the appearance describe above, add another splash of olive oil, sprinkle some fresh parsley on the top and serve quickly.

Foul Mudammas is usually served in pita bread sandwiches with hummus and salad.

Tiger Nut Sweets

Chop fresh dates and blend with a little water. Add cinnamon and chopped walnuts to taste. Shape into balls, coat in honey and ground almonds.

Research Notes on Legal Rights in Ancient Egypt

Janet H. Johnson. *Women's Legal Rights in Ancient Egypt*. Fathom Archive, 2002. Web 6 July 2010. <<http://fathom.lib.uchicago.edu/1/777777190170/>>

The formal legal status of Egyptian women was almost identical to that of Egyptian men. Men were distinguished by the type of job they held, which gave them their status and income. Women did not usually hold jobs outside of the home and were therefore referred to as “mistress of the house” or “citizeness”. They were frequently identified by the name and title of their husbands or father from whom they received their social status. “A woman is asked about her husband, a man is asked about his rank.”

Legally however, men and women could act on their own and were responsible for their own actions. (This contrasts with ancient Greece society where women did not have their own legal identity and were not allowed to own (real) property, in order to participate in the legal system they had to work through a male, usually their closest male relative, who was called their “lord”).

Egyptian women were able to acquire, to own, and to dispose of property (both real and personal) in their own name. Women could sign contracts, initiate civil court cases and could be sued. They could serve as witnesses in court cases, serve on juries, and could witness legal documents. As a result from social factors women however, did not serve on juries or as witnesses to legal documents often.

The social status differed greatly from the legal status of Egyptian women. One of the literary texts from the Middle Kingdom, “The Instructions of the (Vizier) Ptahhotep,” states: “When you prosper and found your house and love your wife with ardor, fill her belly, clothe her back; ointment soothes her body. Gladden her heart as long as you live; she is a fertile field for her lord. Do not contend with her in court. Keep her from power, restrain her—her eye is her storm when she gazes. Thus will you make her stay in your house.” While this text encourages men to take care of their women, it also warns them that, their women will fight for their rights. It also seems that while women had legal rights, they were objects for the men to use, (“she is a fertile field FOR her lord.”)

Civil Law

The law in Ancient Egypt during the New Kingdom was known as the King’s word. Contracts were written copies of a conversation between Party A and Party B in the presence of witnesses and a scribe who copied down the words of Party A. Party A was the only one who spoke, but Party B had the right to accept or refuse the contract, thus making the agreement two way and binding on both parties. Contracts involving real property were copied and filed with local records office where the vizier had ultimate

jurisdiction. The public records allowed the state to know who owed taxes on land and the documents were also available for any subsequent lawsuits.

Lawsuits (Civil) were made legal by an oral petition to the court by an individual. Courts were comprised of relatively important local people ranging from scribes to crew chiefs and simple workmen and rarely women. Egyptian judges made decisions based on traditions and precedent and records were kept of all decisions.

A land transfer document (*imyt pr*) were contracts identified as wills. They allowed the transfer of property to someone other than the person(s) who would naturally inherit the property upon death without a will. These documents were sealed and filed in a central government office.

Documents from the Old Kingdom show that women worked as merchants in the market and acted as priestesses (like for goddess Hathor). New Kingdom documents about the economic role of women include their business with both men and women. A text called Papyrus Wilbour recorded taxes due on farm land which shows women were able to owe taxes. Each entry includes the land identified by owner and (if different) the person working the land. 10% of 2,110 parcels of land held names of women where their children work the land.

Property

Egyptians had developed a definition of private property as well as joint property (property gained by a married couple during their marriage). In the case of joint property the husband could dispose of it without his wife's knowledge or permission. If he did sell or otherwise dispose of a piece of joint property (or anything his wife brought into the marriage) he was legally bound to provide her with something of equal value. The social standard of men participating in the public sphere but not women is shown in the male veto of joint property.

Marriage

Marriage was private where the state kept no record. There is no evidence that supports a legal or religious ceremony needed to establish a marriage. Most likely there was a party to celebrate. A marriage was considered to be an agreement between the families and the two involved. The agreement was to live together, to create a home and to have a family. "Although most marriages may have been arranged at the desire of the husband and parents of the bride, there is also a repeated literary image of a girl persuading her father to let her marry the man whom she wishes, rather than the father's choice."

Women could have been seen as property where a man would give a gift to his prospective father-in-law as payment for his daughter. Some scholars however, interpret this gift to his prospective father-in-law as breaking the bonds with the biological family so that the new couple can create their life with family at the center and strong bonds of loyalty.

Most Egyptians married within their own social class. This was a social condition that was thought to make the marriage more comfortable since this group of people was with whom both parties had the most contact. There were however marriages where the wife was stronger or more important than the husband (by family, fortune or personality).

Annuity Contracts

Marriage contracts were developed to ensure that a husband would provide for the material future for his wife and children. They did NOT legalize or legitimize the marriage. This was done because women were not usually acquiring wealth enough to provide. Women held jobs through textile production and helped their husbands with their jobs. This contract was economically based only and held no social expectation.

(NOTE: Greek and Aramaic Jewish marriage contracts preserved from the first millennium Egypt established social/personal rights and responsibilities of each party towards the other) The annuity contracts were made between the man and his wife to feed and clothe his wife and their children.

Wisdom literature from the Old Kingdom on depicts the obligations of a man to his wife. In a New Kingdom letter a man says: “fidelity, (loving) attention, the responsibility to provide well for her and their children, to take care of her medically, to take pride in her, and not to treat her as a master treats a servant” were what he considered his obligations to his wife.

An annuity contract also spelled out the implications of divorce. Specifically stating the value of all the expensive property the wife brought into the marriage and how much money he will give her as a “bridal gift”. If the couple were to divorce (whether instigated by him or her) the total amount mentioned (bridal gift and property brought in by wife) in full at time of divorce. If he doesn’t or cannot give her all the money, the husband must continue his responsibility of feeding and clothing his wife and their children, where the amount of “grain, oil and money for clothing” are listed specifically in per month values, until he can and does give her the full amount in SILVER. If he cannot make a payment the wife remains legally entitled to any and all of the debited property. Once he has paid her the full amount of silver listed in contract, the contract is given back to the husband and all obligations are moot. (NOTE: the value of items had to be repaid, not the specific items) The husband’s father must approve the contract, since the husband would not inherit the amount for bridal gift until the father’s death. This ensures that the father approved the marriage and ensures the wife and children will be taken care of. These contracts were also used as deterrents of divorce.

Divorce

Remarriage and divorce were common in Egypt during all periods. It was also common to marry half-siblings. Full-grown men were usually economically dependent upon their fathers until the parents died. It was the father’s responsibility to secure

marriage for his older children. It was in their best interest to agree since they could not obtain their inheritance until after their parent's death.

Divorce and remarriage according to documental evidence, was relatively easy and common. Polygamy was therefore not an issue, except for the king, there was however "serial monogamy" that occurred due to the ease of divorce and remarriage. Marriage was not recognized by the state or by religious sects giving either party the right to divorce without grounds. Marriage was essentially a couple living together; divorce was a man abandoning or leaving a woman and a woman going away from or abandoning a man. Divorce did not need social, moral or ethical ground either. The only necessary step was made in the annuity contract.

If a man divorced his wife, he had to return her dowry (if applicable) and pay her a fine (bridal gift); if she divorced him there was no fine. If the couple divorced due to a breaking of an obligation (including adultery) the faulting party gave up his/her share of joint property. Until the husband returned dowry, paid the fine and until she accepted it the husband remained responsible for supporting her even if they no longer lived together. After divorce both parties could remarry.

Adultery was defined as a married person having sex with someone other than that person's spouse. The offence was just as bad for woman as it was for men to commit. Sex by unmarried individuals was not a major concern.

From Joyce Tyldesley, via resource one, ***The Status of Women in Egyptian Society***, <<http://www.library.cornell.edu/colldev/mideast/womneg.htm>>

Greek women were required to have a designated male (kourios) to represent them in all legal contracts and proceedings. The kourios was her husband, father or brother. Egyptian women could free slaves, adopt children, execute testaments, sue at law and manage, own and sell slaves, land, livestock, servants money and portable goods. During a marriage the wife owns up to 1/3 of all joint property in her marriage. On the death of a husband the woman inherited 2/3 of their joint property where the remaining 1/3 was divided among their children and then divided among brothers and sisters of the husband.

To leave the wife a larger part of the share or allow her to dispose of all the property a husband could do two things:

1. Middle Kingdom allowed him to draw up an imyt-pr or "house document" which was a will for donating property. It was made by the living husband and would assign his wishes for the property to his wife.
2. If there were no children, and he did not want his siblings to have the 2/3 of community property, he could legally adopt his wife as his child and heir and therefore leave all the property to her. If children were involved this

stipulation could still apply and leave the wife part of the 2/3 share for the children in addition to her normal 1/3 share of the joint property.

A woman however, could leave her property from her husband to her children or to her siblings (unless otherwise stipulated in her husband's will). She could also disinherit children from her private property (that which she brought into the marriage as well as her share of the joint property). She also had the right to selectively leave property to some children and not others.

Marriage

It was almost a duty to get married in ancient Egyptian society. No age limit was set on when people could be married, but usually a girl would not marry until she started menstruating (about age 14). Some documents show marriage at age of 8 or 9. After marriage the wife kept her independence but left the protection of her father's home in order to start her own with her new husband. Divorces were signified when the wife moved back to her matrimonial home, leaving both parties to remarry.

The life cycle was based on birth, death and rebirth. This made the intimate relationship of a married couple very important to Egyptian life. It was even important in the after life. Male mummies were adorned with false penises whereas female mummies were adorned with false nipples to ensure a fully functional afterlife.

Children were seen as a reason for boasting. The more children a man could produce was parallel to his "manliness". Women gained respect from society and approval of their husbands when pregnant. Sterile women were sometimes divorced, however, adoption was very common due to the short life expectancy and high birth rate. To determine pregnancy a doctor would check for a missed menstrual cycle and examine the woman's breasts, eyes and skin. A child was named directly after birth including stillborns and miscarriages to ensure a name in the afterlife.

Second-death was feared by the Egyptians. It was defined as the complete obliteration of all earthly memory of someone. This made names very important. Spells and symbols were painted on the coffin of the deceased to make sure no one would forget them.

Socyberty **Ancient Egyptian Society**, <<http://socyberty.com/history/ancient-egypt-2/>> (Information needs to be verified...)

The Pharaoh (king) was male, and could not be female. Once the Pharaoh died, the next male in the family became the new Pharaoh. His viziers (advisors) were responsible directly to the Pharaoh and were in charge of the provinces (nomes) of Egypt. Generally they were priests and were considered to be nobles. This meant they did not have to pay tax.

Citizens were defined as people who were born in Egypt. They could own land and could be employed but they had to pay tax according to Pharaoh law. It was sometimes mandatory to serve in the army.

Slaves were considered men who were captured outside of Egypt and prisoners of law. They had no rights and were subject to the wishes of their masters. They could be freed but could not be a citizen, own land or make money. Slavery was uncommon until the New Kingdom.