TARGET AUDIENCE
Third through Eighth grade

STANDARDS
VA: WH.1.3
MD grades 3-8: Grade 3 Standard 5; Grade 6 Standard 5; Grades 3-8 Standard 6
DC grades 3-6: Grade 3-8 Historical and Social Studies Analysis Skills; Grade 7 Standard 7.3.
* See page 3 for an in-depth list of standards of learning covered in this program.

OVERARCHING GOAL
To analyze objects that could be found at archaeological sites in Egypt, and to interpret objects that have been found at middle class or elite burial sites.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES
1. Students will observe and describe objects that could be found at archaeological sites in Egypt based on its materials and uses.
2. Students will compare and contrast objects found at burial sites of pharaohs or queens and middle class people.

STUDENT OUTCOMES
1. Students will list what various objects might have been used for based on observations and prior knowledge of Ancient Egyptian society and traditions
2. Students will discuss why certain objects were found at the burial site of a pharaoh or queen, at the burial site of a common person or both sites, and explain what this tells us about the objects and Ancient Egyptian society.

MATERIALS, RESOURCES, TIME, SPACE
Materials: objects that could be found at archaeological sites in Egypt, such as beads, figurines, and papyrus; laminated cards representing the objects.
Time and space: 45 min. in the Discovery Room.

= Denotes helpful suggestions
PROCEDURE

Welcome: Scientist Discussion (2 min.):
Teachers and students are welcomed. The lesson begins with the instructor referencing a scientist in the museum who collects and studies artifacts: Archeologist. Students will practice being Archeologists in today’s lesson using their scientist skills – in particular what they already know, their sense of “sight” and prediction skills. They will learn more about the Ancient Egyptians by exploring artifacts that could have been found at archeological sites.

Brainstorming (Focus on Students Previous Knowledge) (5 Minutes):
First: students will be asked to think about what they already know about Ancient Egypt (this will activate prior knowledge and help the students become more comfortable providing thoughts). Students will be asked: “What do you think about when you hear the words Ancient Egypt?” The instructor will document the student’s descriptions, strategically placing them into categories, first without headlines.

Second: to generate further thinking the students will be asked what each group has in common. For example: descriptions such as pharaoh, scribes, farmers, etc. all describe People/Roles in Society. Other categories will include Religion/Death, Geography/Climate and Language/Art. This activity will assist students with observation skills, recognize what they already know and emphasize topics to think about during their small group’s activity.

Today the students will be working together as teams of Archeologists. Their challenge will be to learn more about the Ancient Egyptians, based on their observations of 7 artifacts that could have been found at archeological sites.

Modeling (Reference for Small Group’s Activity) (5 minutes):
The instructor will use a neutral object to engage the class in a group practice of the activity and to model effective thinking. The students will be asked to imagine finding this object without ever meeting the instructor: What could they learn about the instructor based on what they “see”? (E.g. What is it made of? What do they think it was used for? Do they see words or images that can give them clues about the individual or the culture in which he or she lived? What do they already know about the culture?)

The students will engage in the same type of questioning in their small groups as they explore 7 artifacts. They will describe what they “see” and then “predict” what they think the objects might have been used for. It will be reinforced that there are many possible “answers” and no single right one, as long as they can justify their decisions. The most important thing is to ask questions and explore possibilities!

Centers (Exploration and Discussion in Small Groups) (10 minutes):
The students will be divided into five groups. Each group will be provided 1 bag of artifacts. Each station will be managed by one chaperone/and or volunteer who will document the student’s ideas in order to not interfere with their flow of thinking. Students will be encouraged to work as a team however it is ok to disagree.
First: students will be asked: “What do you “see”?” (Focus on observation skills)
Students will examine the 7 artifacts and describe what they see. (E.g. What details do they see? What materials do they think were used? How was it made?)

Second: students will be asked: “What do you think it might have been used for?” (Focus on using previous knowledge, interpretation and predication skills).

Helpful Suggestion: Always ask students for their ideas first, however it may be necessary to model your own thinking process and/or problem solving. If students seem stumped refer to the list generated during the group brainstorming in order to support their thinking process.
Think of questions an archaeologist might ask: Was the material used scarce or common, was the artifact easy or difficult to make, did it take a special skill? Who might have used the object? How can knowledge about Ancient Egyptian beliefs help us in making predictions about the artifacts? Encourage students to work as a group, discuss with one another and that there is often more than one possible answer. The point is to ask questions, explore and make predictions.

Reconvene (Generate Further Thinking) (3 minutes):
Students will reconvene. The instructor will explain that often archaeologists discover new information that may alter or verify their original thinking, possibly leaving them with more questions than answers, which is okay and part of the process of exploring. As archaeologists working in the U.S., they have just learned that the artifacts they are studying were found at two different burial sites in Egypt: at the burial site of a common person and pharaoh/queen. Two of the artifacts were found at both.

Helpful Suggestion: Due to the fact that the artifacts were found at burial sites, it may be necessary to briefly introduce or re-emphasize previous knowledge surrounding Ancient Egyptian religious traditions, in-particular beliefs surrounding the afterlife.

Their job as Archeologists is to return to their groups and based on their observations from Activity 1 and previous knowledge; PREDICT what artifacts were found in which tombs. Students will be encouraged to discuss their predictions as a group and work as a team. It is also ok to disagree! At the end of the lesson groups will have the opportunity to share their thoughts with the rest of the class – compare and contrast their predictions.

Centers (Exploration and Discussion in Small Groups) (8 minutes):
Students return to their groups. Each group will be given a large piece of paper and a pack of laminated artifact cards. They will need to sort the cards accordingly and tape them to the paper. Which artifacts do they think were found in the tomb of a pharaoh/queen; a common person? Which two objects do they think were found in both? WHY?

Students are encouraged to work as a team, listen to opinions and decide on a final grouping. They should reflect on the group brainstorm and observations from Activity One. Students will be encouraged with follow up questioning. Why did they sort the objects the way they did? They should be able to justify their reasoning. If students disagree, they should discuss their differing opinions during the reflective thinking as the
conclusion of the lesson. This will promote scientific thinking and constructive dialogue between students.

**Reconvene (Reflective Thinking – Group Sharing) (8 min.):**
All posters are brought to the front of the room and hung on the wall. Students will be given the opportunity to observe and discuss their predictions with fellow classmates.

The instructor will focus attention on artifacts placed in different tombs. This will open up a conversation with groups who may have disagreed or had differing opinions. Students are invited to share their ideas and justify reasoning. At the conclusion the instructor will demonstrate which artifacts were found in which tombs, generally (though not always) agreed upon by archeologists.

The students will be asked to give themselves a round of applause for being such excellent Archeologists today.

**Closure (Thinking Post Lesson) (5 minutes)**
The instructor will reiterate that the students just went through a very similar process to the archaeologists at this Museum go through when they are studying objects from ancient civilizations. Note that students came up with interpretations of the objects that were similar in some ways and different in others. This is the work of an archaeologist – **to interpret objects when no “right answer” can be found.**

When scientists set out to answer a question, such as “What was life in ancient Egypt like?” they often end up with more new questions than answers. Interpretations are also always changing as archaeologists find new objects from the past and acquire new knowledge. Much like they did today…

The students and teachers will be thanked for coming, and also the chaperones for their assistance. Students are encouraged to visit again!
STANDARDS

VA World History:
- WH.I.3.b: Students will demonstrate knowledge of Egypt's ancient river valley civilization by describing the development of social, political, and economic patterns.
- WH.I.3.c: Students will discuss religious traditions in Egypt's ancient river valley civilization.
- WH.I.3.e: Students will learn that language and writing were important cultural innovations.

MD grades 3-8:
- Grade 3 Standard 5.A.2: Investigate how people lived in the past using a variety of sources.
- Grade 6 Standard 5.B.1: Discuss how civilizations emerged in the river valley areas.
- Grade 3-8 Standard 6.C.2: Identify a problem/situation that requires further study.
  Standard 6.D.1.c: Gather data and Information from appropriate non-print sources, mainly artifacts.
  Standard 6.D.2: Engage in "field work" that relates to the topic/problem/situation being studied.

DC grades 3-6:
- Grade 3-8: Historical and Social Studies Analysis Skills
- Grade 7 Standard 7.3: Students analyze the geographic, political, religious, social, and economic structures of Egypt.
Examine the 7 artifacts that could have been found at an archeological site in Ancient Egypt. First, **observe** and **describe** what you **“see”**. Then **“predict”** what you think the object was used for. Think out loud and discuss with one another. Remember that there can be more than one right answer, so keep describing and exploring until the time is up!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object #1</th>
<th>Describe what you see:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>What do you think the object was used for?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object #2</td>
<td>Describe what you see:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>What do you think the object was used for?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object #3</td>
<td>Describe what you see:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What do you think the object was used for?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object #4</td>
<td>Describe what you see:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What do you think the object was used for?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object #5</td>
<td>Describe what you see:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What do you think the object was used for?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object #6</td>
<td>Describe what you see:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What do you think the object was used for?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object #7</th>
<th>Describe what you see:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What do you think the object was used for?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Archaeology

Archaeology is the study of people and cultures from the past. Archaeologists seek to understand how people in the past lived, and what their beliefs were. They study past cultures by looking at the objects that people have left behind. Archaeologists study all kinds of objects, from huge buildings, like the pyramids, to a single clay bead. Other archaeological objects include ruins, roads, statues, jewelry, clothing, pottery, weapons, art, and evidence of writing. Archaeologists even study the bodies of people or animals from past times.

Archaeologists face many challenges in attempting to learn about past cultures. Since many of the cultures that archaeologists study are very old, it can be difficult to find anything at all that once belonged to a certain culture. Over many years, most objects are weathered away, stolen, sold, or collected. Some materials survive longer than others, so an archaeologist is more likely to find a building of stone or a pot of clay than delicate clothing or a rare piece of jewelry.

Archaeologists can study any culture from the past, but some cultures that are very popular for archaeologists to study include ancient Egypt, ancient Greece, ancient Rome, the Maya, and the Aztecs.

Ancient Egypt

History
The history of Egypt dates back more than 5,000 years. In prehistoric times, great cities and kingdoms grew up along the Nile. Egypt was made up of many cities, towns, and villages, along with farmlands and deserts. These lands were ruled by an Egyptian king, called the pharaoh. He was responsible for overseeing the Egyptian government, as well as the Egyptian religion. During some points in Egyptian history, the pharaoh was even considered to be a god.

Location and Climate
Egypt is a country in northern Africa, bordering the Mediterranean Sea and located between Libya and the Gaza strip. Egypt has a desert climate, with hot, dry summers and moderate winters. There is very little rainfall. The Nile River runs through Egypt, and provides water essential for farming and living.
Society
People had many different roles in ancient Egypt. The pharaoh and his family were very rich and ruled over everyone else. There were wealthy officials who worked for the government, and priests who served the Egyptian gods. Egyptians on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea were able to trade with many other countries, so there were many rich merchants in Egypt. Craftspeople made and sold many kinds of goods, such as pots, cloth, perfumes, and furniture. Farmers lived in the country and grew foods such as grains, dates, figs, and onions as well as raising livestock. Slaves belonged to the upper classes and served their owners.

Religion
Religion was very important to the ancient Egyptians. They were polytheistic, which means they believed in many gods. Different gods ruled over different aspects of Egyptian life. For example, there was a god who ruled over the sun (Ra), a god of the dead (Thoth), and a goddess of justice (Maat). From studying ancient writing and carving, we know that many ancient Egyptian gods and goddesses were drawn as having the body of a person and the head of an animal. There were gods with the heads of a ram, a falcon, and a jackal, among others. There were many temples and feasts dedicated to certain gods.

Death
Religion also played a large role in the way the Egyptians thought of death. The ancient Egyptians believed that if people were good while they were alive, they would continue living in an afterworld that was very beautiful and much like earth. Since the afterworld was like the living world, dead people would need many of the same things that living people needed. Dead people would need food and drink in the afterworld, and they would also want their clothing and possessions. Most importantly, people would still need their bodies in the afterworld. Because of this belief, ancient Egyptians preserved the bodies of the dead using a special process called mummification.
**Mummification**

Mummification took around seventy days to complete. Special priests would work on embalming, or mummifying, the body by draining, drying, and wrapping the body while they said special prayers, called incantations. Internal organs had to be removed and placed in special jars that were buried along with the mummy. These were called canopic jars. The heart was the only organ left in the body, since this was believed to be the center of a person’s intelligence. The body was dried, both outside and inside, using a special salt. Any sunken areas would be filled in with cloth, and false eyes could be added. The mummy was wrapped up in hundreds of yards of linen strips. The mummy was then placed inside an inner coffin, which was placed in an outer coffin, sometimes called a sarcophagus. Finally, the body and some of the dead person’s belongings that they would need in the afterlife were placed in a tomb during a special ceremony.

![Ancient Egyptian mummy with funeral mask (innermost layer), inner coffin, and outer coffin.](www.rickrichards.com/egypt/Egypt7_coffer.html)

**Learning from tombs**

Toward the end of the 19th century, interest in finding ancient ruins and tombs and studying them increased. Many famous tombs, including those in the Valley of the Kings, were discovered. Also around this time, the translation of ancient Egyptian writing, called hieroglyphs, was translated using the Rosetta Stone. Archaeologists could finally read all the ancient Egyptians had written about themselves. Archaeologists were not able to see all the contents of all the tombs, however, since many were raided long ago for their treasure, and others have yet to be discovered. With advanced technology, such as scanning mummies to discover their contents and computer imaging to reconstruct what people would have looked like based only on their skull, archaeologists are continually learning more about ancient Egypt.
Glossary

anthropology **Noun.** The science that deals with the origins, physical development, culture, social customs, beliefs, and biological characteristics of human beings.

afterworld **Noun.** The world after death.

archaeology **Noun.** The scientific study of historic or prehistoric people and their cultures by analysis of their artifacts, inscriptions, monuments, and other such remains, especially those that have been excavated.

archaeologist **Noun.** An anthropologist who studies prehistoric people and their culture.

artifact **Noun.** An object found at an archaeological site during an excavation.

canopic jar **Noun.** A jar used in ancient Egypt to contain the organs of an embalmed body.

embalm **Verb.** To preserve a body using various substances.

excavate **Verb.** To unearth, dig up, or uncover a site once occupied by humans.

hieroglyph **Noun.** Ancient Egyptian writing.

incantation **Noun.** The chanting or speaking of words believed to have magical power.

merchant **Noun.** A person who trades goods and services as a profession.

mummify **Verb.** To make (a dead body) into a mummy, as by embalming and drying.

pharaoh **Noun.** An ancient Egyptian king.

polytheism **Noun.** The belief in more than one god.

prehistoric **Adjective.** Occurring before written history.

sarcophagus **Noun.** A stone coffin, especially one bearing sculpture, inscriptions, etc.
Resources

Suggested Web Sites:
British Museum Ancient Egypt Overview
http://www.ancientegypt.co.uk

Carnegie Museum of Natural History Ancient Egypt Information
http://www.carnegiemnh.org/exhibits/egypt

CIA World FactBook

Discovery Channel Egypt Programs

History for Kids Ancient Egypt Information
http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/egypt

Library of Congress Selected Internet Resources: Egypt
http://www.loc.gov/rr/international/amed/egypt/egypt.html

National Geographic Discovering Ancient Egypt Interactive Site
http://www.nationalgeographic.com/egypt/

Social Studies for Kids Ancient Egypt Glossary
http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/wwww/world/worldlistegypt.htm

Suggested Books:


References:


Explore the Western Cultures exhibit. Choose 3 objects that you think would have been found in the tomb of a member of the **MIDDLE CLASS**. Base your suggestions on the physical characteristics and possible uses or meanings of the objects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Possible uses or meanings</th>
<th>Why do you think this object would be in the tomb of a middle class person?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Explore the Western Cultures exhibit. Choose 3 objects that you think would have been found in the tomb of a member of the **ELITE CLASS – a pharaoh or queen**. Base your suggestions on the physical characteristics and possible uses or meanings of the objects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Possible uses or meanings</th>
<th>Why do you think this object would be in the tomb of an elite class person?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objective:
1. Students will identify and sort and analyze objects (“artifacts”) from fellow students’ backpacks based on their material composition.
2. Students will predict whether objects (artifacts) could survive decomposition based on their material composition.

Time: One 55-minute period (could be longer depending on complexity of project)

Materials: Activity sheets from Museum visit; reference books on archaeology; white paper; pencils; backpacks or desk contents including everyday school objects such as stapler, glue, textbook, pen, etc.

Post Activity Discussion (10 min; Day 1)
Students share their findings from the Unearthing Egypt lesson and Western Civilizations visit. Teacher lists the additional characteristics and reviews vocabulary about archaeology and ancient Egypt as students discuss what they learned.

Post Activity Problem Solving/ Application (40 minutes)
Explain that students are going to be doing some “backpack/desk anthropology,” so students should remove all but six objects from their backpacks or desks. Alternatively, teachers can make up to 2-6 sample backpacks so the students do not use their actual bags. Introduce the “problem” students will solve. You are anthropologists at the National Museum of Natural History, and you must examine the following objects to predict whether they would survive 5000 years of decomposition. Students may exchange backpacks/desk contents with another classmate, or work in small groups of 3-5 students to examine the contents of the backpacks/desks given to them.

1. In the classroom, students compile a list of the objects they have found in the backpack/desk and list the material(s) they are made of.
2. Students/groups assess whether these objects could survive 5000 years into the future if abandoned outside. (This portion of the lesson can be expanded to include research into what types of materials typically survive decomposition in a given region. Suggested group topics include properties of plastic, wood, metal, glass, food, etc.
3. Students/groups present their findings and predictions.

Possible Extensions: Additional scenarios, such as whether the objects would survive 5000 years in a tropical climate or a desert climate, or whether they would survive if buried in the ground unwrapped versus buried in a container made of various materials (wood, plastic, glass, etc.). If time permits, objects could be buried outside in various containers or conditions and recovered after a period of time to determine decomposition.