

Egyptian Sarcophagus

Ellen Reynolds– Pleasant Hill Intermediate



Grades 6–12

Materials:

- 2 qt flat juice bottle, with the lid cut off and bottle cut in half vertically. (You have to do this on a band saw, it is too hard to cut with w/ scissors)
- Sax Gold tempera paint (Sax has the perfect color)
- Construction paper colored pencils
- Sharpies
- Paper mache paste
- News papers and brown paper towels

- Duct tape
- Gold paint markers
- Mod Podge or gloss spray

1. Using a 4” strip of duct tape, tape the edge of the bottle pieces to create a hinged effect.

2. Paper mache the entire bottle, inside and out. Make sure the students close in the hole at the top of the bottle, by putting strips directly across the hole on both sides. Also, be sure they put extra layers on the hinge so it doesn't crack when opening and closing it. Too many layers will prevent it from closing at all. We stored them standing up, slightly opened. And paper mached student names on to them just before cleaning up. Put two coats of newspaper on it, and one coat of brown paper towels. The paper towels are nice because they go on so smooth, I even used the brown for the skin coloring of my person. I looks really good that way. (In the end, they won't close completely, but I tell the kids that allows

viewers to see the inside and outside at the same time.)

3. I had a hand out that was a tracing of the bottles contour. I gave each student 4 copies of the handout. One for each side of the sarcophagus:

1. Front– draw a king or queen. We discussed traditional design layout for the front of a sarcophagus.

2. Inside– hieroglyph– students could chose between the kings/ queens name, student name, a gods name, some even wanted to put a curse on it.

3. An Egyptian God– I had a hand out packet with a lot of gods in it.

4. Egyptian symbols– eye of Ra, pyramids, Ankh (the cross)

*They could do sides 2–4 in any order.

4. Transfer designs to sarcophagus.

5. Paint all gold areas. Encourage them not to get into tiny areas, save the detail areas for colored pencils or gold paint markers.

6. Color with construction paper colored pencils. The colors pop much better than regular colored pencils and there are some nice turquoise and teal colors in the sets. I told them that brown or skin areas could be left the color of the brown paper towels.

7. Outline everything with Sharpies.

8. Optional– some students painted Mod Podge over final project. The gold is already shiny. This step just allows the colored pencil areas to shine too.

Making the mummy:

- Plaster gauze strips
- Full sheets of newspaper
- Masking tape

1. Give each student 3 full sheets of newspaper (full sheet is one side of the double paper torn down the fold). And about 6 pieces of tape.

2. Create a small newspaper ball about the size of a super ball. (no tape needed yet).

3. Take a full sheet of paper and put the ball in the center, and pull the paper down around it like a ghost. Tape around the base of the head creating a neck, or “Egyptian ghost”.

4. I talk about proportions and making sure the mummy will fit in the coffin. The paper “skirt” can automatically be separated into two sides. Tape the waist and separate the legs, taping them and creating feet if they want. Some students will want to “mummify” the legs together, that is fine, but for now create the legs and feet. **They must make their mummies at least 1- 1.5 inches smaller than the inside of the coffin. Otherwise, after plastering it, it will not fit!**

5. Take the final sheet of paper, fold it in half horizontally, then roll it up. Center the tube on the back of mummy and tape an “X” on the back. Do not cross arms. That will be done when plastering.

6. Time to plaster. Cut strips up into ½ wide strips. Begin covering the body. DO NOT COVER ARMS YET. Don't completely smooth in the strips, that lets them look like mummy wrappings.

7. After everything but arms are covered (make sure there is enough time in class, or wait till the next day to do this step). Now, wrap arms, and fold them across the chest. To make them stay "tape" a piece or two of plaster across them to keep the arms in place. The reason this step needs to be last, or waited till next day, is so that students don't wrap arms and leave them straight out to quickly dry and then arms won't bend into place.

8. Optional, some kids wanted an "ancient" look, so we took brown and black water color and added some aging to them. Others wanted to keep their mummy wrappings white.



Some students even made burial masks, using model magic. I liked this a lot, but since we

were running out of time, only those who got done early got to do this. The model magic can form to the plaster when sculpting it. Leave it on the mummy to dry and it will permanently bond, without gluing.