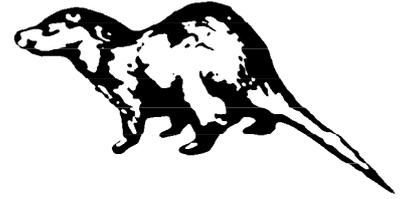


NUFFIELD PRIMARY HISTORY



A WORLD STUDY: ANCIENT EGYPT TUTANKHAMUN'S TOMB

TEACHERS' NOTES

This was the second history topic of the year. The class had previously studied Invaders and Settlers, focusing on the Vikings. They had used written texts, looked at artefacts and watched videos and slides. The children were aware that the past can be investigated from a variety of sources, including pictures, but they had never studied pictures or photographs as sources in their own right.

I decided to investigate how to use a picture or photograph to develop the historical understanding of my pupils. I would provide them with a suitable photograph plus any additional information which they would need in order to understand the pictorial source.

This is a written account of what I taught, with some reflections on how the teaching might be improved next time.

Year group/class

A year 4 class, average to low ability, including three statemented children, who are supported by a full-time SNSA.

Teaching time One and a half hours.

Learning objectives

For the children to:

- understand the circumstances surrounding the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb
- develop the skills of: scanning, observing and focusing, questioning
- use other sources to find out about the scene
- record their findings in pictorial or written form.

Key question

How was Tutankhamun's tomb discovered?

Assessment

Children's work and oral responses.

Resources

A picture of Howard Carter, Lord Caernarvon and helpers at the entrance of Tutankhamun's tomb

Magnifying glasses

Written account of the discovery, taken from the pack: *Ancient Egypt* (available from Nicolas Roberts Publications, Long House, Chruch Road, Wisbech St Mary, Cambs PE13 4RN. tel 01945 410 648 or see www.osirisweb.com/egypt/tutpage.htm)

A Sense of History: Ancient Egyptians Longman

Replica artefacts from the tomb, bought from: History in Evidence, Unit 4, Park Road, Holmewood, Chesterfield S42 5UY

Literacy World Big Book: *The search for Tutankhamun*. Heinemann.

The teaching

Episode 1

Focus: Setting the scene – focused observation of a pictorial source.

In pairs, the children were given a picture placed face down so that they could not see what it was. This created an air of mystery and certainly aroused curiosity. Each pair was also given a magnifying glass. This created a great deal of excitement!

We played Kim's game as a stimulus to looking: In pairs the children were given two minutes to look at the picture. They were then told to jot down as many things as they could. I gave three house points to the team with the most items.

The results were astonishing. Each group was asked in turn to tell me one item which they had spotted. All responses were written on the board. The answers included:

Egyptian painting, a lamp, a big box, Egyptian men, Howard Carter. The children agreed that the picture showed 'the olden days'. They began to speculate about the date. One person said it was taken in the 1920s 'because of the clothes'.

The children managed to see things that I hadn't noticed before. Each time something new was mentioned, I got the rest of the class to look for that specific item. When the item was confirmed by one other person we moved on.

Episode 2

Focus: Entering the picture – bringing the picture to life by creating before and after pictures.

We extended the children's understanding by asking them to draw a before, during and after scene for the picture. They were given a few minutes to discuss with their partner:

- What happened immediately before the scene in the picture.
- What happened immediately after the scene in the picture.

We gave each individual a piece of plain A4 paper and I demonstrated how to divide it into three equal parts. (I folded the sheets for the special needs children myself). At the top of their paper they wrote in the relevant sections: 'Before', 'During' and 'After'. I then asked them to use the paper to draw a sequence of pictures in those three sections to show what had happened.

Episode 3

Focus: Pursuing the investigation – using printed sources to find out about the scene.

As a class, we read a Literacy World Big Book about the discovery of the tomb.

In pairs the children also read a recount : *The Discovery of the Tomb of Tutankhamun*, from the Nicolas Roberts Publications pack *ANCIENT EGYPT*.

Orally we compared the similarities and differences between the two articles, pulling out the similarities and differences between them.

Before reading the information sources it would have been a good idea for the children to brainstorm all the questions which they would like to have answered about the discovery. They could have used the sources to find answers to their questions.

Episode 4

Focus: Constructing freeze frames – the thoughts and feelings of the people in the photograph.

I asked the children to count how many people there were in the picture. They answered in unison: 'Four'.

I asked them to get into groups of five and instructed them how to create a freeze frame of the picture. This activity was new to them.

First they were in deep discussion within their groups.

Then I noticed that in several groups a leader emerged, took charge of the picture and consequently ordered or guided the other members of the group into the correct position.

As the children froze they were asked how they felt. The responses ranged from happy, excited, tired, hot, hungry, thirsty, to overwhelmed. The picture and the story were coming to life for these children. (The use of the school hall would have provided more space for this activity; I'll use it next time.)

Episode 5

Focus: Collecting our thoughts – providing a written record of children's interpretations.

In this episode we used speech bubbles for people in the picture to develop ideas of how different people present might have reacted to the scene.

I told the children to go back to their original partner and to place the photograph in front of them.

I asked them to draw a speech bubble for each of the characters and to write inside it what they thought each of the characters was saying.

- Most people agreed that Howard Carter was expressing relief, saying, 'At last! After all this hard work'.
- Lord Caernarvon was expressing different sentiments. 'Look at all this gold! We are rich!'
- The helpers on the other hand were saying things like, 'I don't think that this is a good idea. There could be a curse'.

Episode 6

Focus: Entering the chamber – drawing the artefacts and writing.

To round off the lesson the children investigated further sources and wrote an account from the perspective of a journalist.

The *Sense of History Resource Book* provides a map of the tomb. As we visually walked through the 'chamber' the children took on new roles.

Half the class became archaeologists and Carter's helpers. They examined the replica artefacts from the tomb.

The other half became journalists. While the archaeologists examined artefacts and made close observational drawings, the journalists went back to their office (the ICT room) to prepare their article on the discovery.

Learning outcomes

The children had:

- scanned the picture effectively
- entered the picture and understood the thoughts and feelings of the people involved
- investigated the circumstances surrounding the discovery of the tomb
- visually 'walked through' the tomb and examined some of the artefacts.

Reflection/evaluation

The children, by their comments at the end of the lesson, showed that they had enjoyed it.

The lesson took slightly longer than anticipated. When the class began to draw the replica artefacts they didn't want to stop.

It was very useful to have another member of staff in the classroom. I also had two year six pupils who helped with the special needs children, scribing for them when necessary.

Although this is recorded as a single lesson, a further lesson was necessary in which the children investigated the artefacts further, evaluated what these objects tell us about life in Ancient Egypt and finished writing their journalists' reports.

Editorial note

This is a fascinating account, jam-packed with stimulating activities to extend pupil understanding. The school is in special measures, and this lesson shows what a teacher can do if given the freedom to use her professionalism as she thinks appropriate. Magic stuff!

Nuffield Primary History project

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