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Ancient Egypt

Mr. Donn and Maxie's Always Something You Can Use Series

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Preface

I am a teacher. With “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) being the law of the land, and with every teacher required to help raise test scores on standardized tests, we are all looking for ways to improve our teaching. Today there are national Common Core State Standards for teaching as well as various state standards that students are expected to meet. Maybe your state or school district has exit exams students are required to pass. Your circumstances may be different from mine, but we all have the same goal in mind. Help our students reach their goals.

The Mr. Donn and Maxie’s Always Something You Can Use series was written in part because when I went looking for help as a new teacher, there was nothing there. The lessons you are about to use are ones that I have used in the classroom myself, with input from my colleagues, friends, students, and especially my wife.

I currently teach in an urban school with all its challenges and difficulties. I teach both language arts and social studies. I have been in various levels of secondary school, from grades 6–12.

Focus: This book, and the rest of the books in the series, are for teaching Ancient History. Each book is a separate unit that deals with each of the different ancient civilizations. Each book contains a complete unit on ancient history. Within each unit, there are various types of lessons. Each unit contains vocabulary lessons, writing lessons, and activity lessons. The variety will hopefully keep all your students involved, entertained, and learning.

In *Classroom Instruction that Works*, Marzano, et al. list ten research based strategies. The ancient history series uses these ten strategies, as well as other concepts, ideas, and strategies, to build lesson plans and instruction. For those who are unfamiliar with Marzano et al., here is a quick recap of those strategies:

- Identifying Similarities and Differences
- Summarizing and Note Taking
- Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition
- Homework and Practice
- Nonlinguistic Representations
- Cooperative Learning
- Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback
- Generating and Testing Hypotheses
- Cues, Questions and Advanced Organizers

These strategies and concepts are embedded into the lessons. You won't find a place where it says "We will now use the strategy of Cooperative Learning." Instead, you will find cooperative learning within the lesson. An example of this is in the Ancient China unit—students are divided into groups, and each group chooses or is assigned one of the dynasties. That group is given an opportunity to research, create a presentation, and then present their product to the class. This project is monitored by the teacher, who pays attention to progress and deadlines. Their product is then placed in the classroom for all to see, share, and use. This same project includes Marzano's strategies of "Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition," "Nonlinguistic Representation," and "Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback."

The Mr. Donn and Maxie Always Something You Can Use series also uses ideas and concepts to help make teaching and learning enjoyable—ideas such as "Word Walls" to help build vocabulary, various writing ideas to stimulate interest in writing, and games, pictures and graphic organizers to increase efficiency and retention.

We worked very hard to bring you the best ideas we could to make history a subject that students would want to learn.

Ancient Egypt Introduction

Subject: Ancient Egypt

Level/Length: This unit was written with sixth graders in mind, but it can easily be adapted for grades 5-9. The unit is presented in nineteen sections including the final activity; some sections are mini-units and will take longer than one class period to complete. Lessons are based on a 55-minute class period, but they can be adjusted to fit any time frame. As written, time frame needed to complete this unit: 6–7 weeks.

Unit description: This unit covers 5000 years of ancient Egyptian history and explores Upper and Lower Egypt, the Old Kingdom, Middle Kingdom, and New Kingdom periods, along with gifts from the Nile, mummies and the afterlife, government, legends, gods and goddesses, hieroglyphics, inventions, professions, beliefs, and daily life. It concludes with a mini-unit entitled Pharaoh's Fun House. Activities are varied and include classifying, abstracting, map work, writing, reading, speaking, researching, interpreting, presenting, and other higher-level thinking activities.

Rationale: In view of the latest government guidelines on education with No Child Left Behind, this unit was developed to meet standards applicable in most states. Lessons are designed to address various learning styles and can be adapted for *all* students' abilities.

Ancient Egypt

Setting up the Room

With this unit, there is little need to set up much of the room in advance. Travel posters or maps will brighten the room until student work is posted. Throughout the unit, the students will be creating several things to post on the classroom walls or bulletin boards including “In Praise of Me Poetry,” “Stump the Audience,” and “Backgrounds” for the live stage play *Life Along the Nile* and for “Pharaoh’s Fun House.”

We encourage you to set up a word wall and something special above the door leading into your classroom.

Word Wall:

Design: This is consistent for all units, but each has its own look. We suggest the outside shape of a pyramid. Place new words as you discover them in the unit on your word wall.

Once a week, have the students pick any word, define it, and use it in a sentence. Use the word wall to fill in short periods of time throughout the unit. Direct the students to select any five words from the word wall and create ongoing news in a letter home about their visit to the Nile.

Door Into the Classroom:

On the hallway side of the door into your classroom, use construction paper to frame your doorway, creating an entrance to ancient Egypt. We suggest the using a pair of obelisks, with the eye of Horus or Ra over the door.

Section One:

Introduction, Map, Map Puzzles

Time frame: 1 class period (55 minutes)

Introduction

Egypt's Natural Barriers

Map

Preparation:

- Daily Question. Use overhead projector or write question on the board.
- (This is a student writing activity. Students are to write answers to daily questions in their notebooks upon arrival.)
- A copy of the movie “Stargate” or “Raiders of the Lost Ark” and a DVD player
- Overhead transparency of *Map of Egypt*
- Materials needed to make Map Puzzles
- Heavy paper or cardboard stock to which the students can glue their maps
- Glue, scissors (students should have these in their desks, but have extra on hand)
- Business-sized envelopes—one per student
- A box or bag to use to collect envelopes
- Reproducible: *Map of Egypt*

Daily Question: What is a natural barrier?

Open Class: Welcome to ancient Egypt!

Opening Activity: Show a short cut from one of these two movies:

- *Stargate*: Show the opening credits through the end of the scene on the Giza Plateau (when the ring is standing). The art behind the credits and the music are both perfect for your needs; show the opening scene in which the characters find shows an archaeological dig.
- *Raiders of the Lost Ark*: Show the scene in which the characters find the miniature village in the pyramid. This cut shows paintings on tomb walls, hieroglyphics and more.

Background: Tell the students:

The ancient Egyptians were fascinating people and, thanks to the movies, are often misunderstood. The ancient Egyptians were not devoted to death, but rather with life! They worked very hard, but they also saved time to enjoy family, friends, music, parties, swimming, fishing, hunting, and sailing, all of which were very important to them.

Animals were also very important to the ancient Egyptians. Unlike other ancient cultures, whose gods looked somewhat like people, most ancient Egyptian gods had animal heads.

Cats, especially, were held in high esteem. The ancient Egyptians believed cats protected their homes and children from danger and helped their crops grow. In return, the ancient Egyptians carefully protected their cats. Any person who killed a cat paid for that crime with his or her life!

The ancient Egyptians believed in an afterlife in which people enjoyed many of the same activities as they did in their current life. They prepared for the afterlife by filling their tombs with statues of friends and family, household items, and other items they might need to keep them company and to ensure a pleasant state of being.

The ancient Egyptians built huge structures—most notably the pyramids—filled with incredible objects of art. They invented the 365-day calendar. They managed to stay alive as a civilization for over 4,000 years. (The U.S.A. has only been a country for about 230 years.) How were they able to maintain that continuity? Part of the answer lies in their geography.

Class Activity: Egypt's Natural Barriers

Ask: What is a natural barrier? Does anyone remember? (Get an answer.)

Say: What truly helped to keep Egypt isolated from much of the rest of the early ancient world was their geography.

Place *Map of Ancient Egypt* on the overhead projector. Point out and write down Egypt's natural barriers. Be vague (do not name specific deserts or mountain ranges yet.)

- North: Mediterranean Sea
- East: Red Sea
- South: Mountains
- West: Desert

Activity: Map of Ancient Egypt

Hand each student one copy of the blank *Map of Ancient Egypt*. Together, go over the natural barriers one more time, and direct students to write these barriers on their maps. Point out the Nile River, and the location of Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt. Add those names to the map on the overhead projector. Check to make sure all students are participating in this activity.

Since Lesson 2 is on the Nile River, on opening day you need only briefly introduce the Nile. **Say:** The Nile River is the longest river in the world. It is over 4000 miles long. It starts in the mountains in Central Africa and flows north, downhill, to the Mediterranean Sea. That's why Lower Egypt is located to the north at the Nile delta, and Upper Egypt is located south, on higher ground.

Individual Activity: Map Puzzles

- Direct students to glue their maps to a piece of cardboard
- Have them color their maps
- Direct students to each cut their own map into no less than 15 and no more than 25 pieces to create a map puzzle. Assign each student a number and have him or her write that number on each one of his or her map puzzle pieces. Tell students they're doing this so that the puzzles don't get mixed up.
- Hand out one envelope per student.
- Direct students to put their map puzzle pieces into their envelope, and sign their name across the flap. Have them tuck the flap in, but do not seal it as they're going to get these pieces out again later on.
- Collect all envelopes in a box or bag, making sure each student has written their name across the flap, and that each student has written their number on each piece. (If the student was assigned the number 28, all pieces should have 28 written on the back. Some students may need clarification on this.)

Close Class: That's all for today. See you tomorrow, crocodile—at the Nile!

Teacher note: *Not to be shared with students!*

It's very important that students number the back of their puzzle pieces. If their assigned number is 30, their puzzle pieces must have the number 30 on the back of each piece. Tell them to do this to avoid possible confusion. When you collect the envelopes, make sure they have followed the directions. Here's why:

- In Lesson 1, students create Map Puzzle.
- During Lesson 4, students will receive their Map Puzzles back.
- Prior to handing the Map Puzzles back, remove one piece from each puzzle.
- Envelopes will not be handed back to the person who created them. They will be handed back at random, so that one student will attempt to solve another student's puzzle, without knowing that one piece is missing.
- This exercise demonstrates what archaeologists do. They try to put pieces of a puzzle together without all the pieces—in our case, without even knowing that they are missing a piece or two. (These instructions are also listed in Lesson 4.)

Name:
Date:
Class:
Period:

Map of Egypt

Africa
Egypt
Mediterranean
Sea
Eastern
Desert
Western
Desert
Red Sea
Nile River
Nile Delta

