

# Teachers' notes

## Hedjet's Ancient Egyptian Adventure



**The notes include:**

- Answers to the challenges in the pupils' trail
- Extra questions and information

It's a good idea for each adult to have a copy of the notes and to read through them in advance.

### Practical points

- The trail is aimed at Primary 2–5 (age 6–9) pupils who have some prior knowledge of the ancient Egyptians.
- The trail will take approximately 60 minutes.
- The trail will involve moving between levels 1, 3 and 5. You can access all these areas using the lifts and stairs from the *Grand Gallery*. Each group should take a map with them to help them find the galleries and directions can be found on the trail sheet.
- Start the trail with your whole class together at the coffin in the *Discoveries* gallery on Level 1. After this, the challenges do not need to be completed in order, so please split up into smaller groups.
- Challenges 4-7 are in the *Ancient Egypt Rediscovered* gallery. This can be very busy with other schools and visitors so please try to stagger your groups arrival in the space.
- Enjoy looking at all the objects up close, but please remind pupils not to touch them. If objects have numbers next to them, look at the numbered text nearby to tell you more about the object.

### Introduction to Hedjet, the narrator of the trail

- Hedjet (pronounced Head-jet) was an ancient Egyptian goddess who was shown as a hippo. Her name means 'the White One' and in hieroglyphs is written with a royal crown (the white crown of Upper Egypt).
- She is based on a real object, a blue hippo statuette which was found in a tomb. Hedjet does not appear in our gallery, but there are other hippo related objects for pupils to find, including a hippo skull.
- Hippos played an important part in the ancient Egyptian world and while hippos were feared for being dangerous, females were admired for how fiercely they protected their young. Indeed, the goddess Taweret is shown as a hippo to reflect her role in protecting mothers and children during childbirth.





## Challenge 1: Egyptian drawings

### Activity

The drawings on the coffin gave magical protection to the person inside. Name three animals you can find:

**Falcon, cow, snake, bull**

How long is the coffin?

**Pupils are asked to use their feet to measure so this answer will vary**

### About the object

The base and lid are located towards the back of the **Collecting Stories gallery on Level 1**.

### Interesting fact

The coffin here has been well preserved. Sometimes coffins were mass produced and extra hieroglyphs were painted later to indicate who was buried inside. If you look closely you can see the darker black paint on the top of the coffin where the person's name has been added.

#### Other activities you can do here

Ask pupils to find:

- The falcon which depicts Horus, the god of the sky and son of Osiris, the god of the afterlife.
- The cow which represents Hathor, the goddess of motherhood and joy, and is shown with a sun-disc on her head, surrounded by papyrus plants, coming out of the side of a mountain.
- The god Osiris is shown with green or black skin which is symbolic of new life and regeneration like the colour of growing crops and fertile soil/earth.

## Challenge 2: Animal riddle

### Activity

I'm a big fierce animal,  
When you see me you might fret,  
My mane is made of stone  
Can you find me, my name is **Sekhmet**

### About the object

The statue of Sekhmet can be found on the **balcony of Level 3**, near the lifts.

### Interesting fact

Just like hippos, lions were feared as a dangerous animal, but also linked with various gods and goddesses as ferocious protectors. Sekhmet could bring destruction but also victory in battle, and she could either bring disease or cure it. Best to try to please her to keep on her good side!

Sekhmet was the daughter of the sun god. The fragment projecting above her head is the remains of this sun disc with the sides broken off. This statue was originally made for the funerary temple of Amenhotep III. The temple was built by King Amenhotep III, the grandfather of Tutankhamun.

#### Other activities you can do here

Ask pupils to name any other ancient Egyptian gods or goddesses and the animal they are linked to. If you have time, look into the animal galleries, at one end of the balcony, to find some of these animals. You can find more information about gods in back right hand corner of the **Ancient Egypt Rediscovered gallery**.

The ancient Egyptians linked their gods with animals as a way of showing their superhuman powers, in a similar way to how we show this today in superheroes like Spiderman and Batman. Ask pupils which animal would they base their own superhero on.

## Challenge 3: Searching skills

### Activity

Here pupils have to find and name three objects from an Egyptian tomb. From left to right, they are:

- **Pyramidion**
- **Stela**
- **Apis bull footboard**

### About the object

These can all be found in the **Artistic Legacies gallery on Level 5**.

- Pyramidion (half way up the left hand side wall of the gallery)
- Stela (on the back wall to the right)
- Apis bull footboard (on the back wall to the right)

### Interesting fact

They would all have been found in tombs but would have served different purposes.

**Pyramidion** – This shows people worshipping the god of the afterlife, Osiris. It would have been the top block of a very small pyramid above the tomb of a wealthy person. The man who invented pyramids, Imhotep, was so highly thought of that long after his death he was made the god of wisdom and medicine.

**Stela** – Stelae in ancient Egypt were a type of monument that had different uses, from memorials to recording wins in battle. This stela is made from painted wood and features an image of the winged sun disk over a group of divine figures. This stela was used as a memorial for a dead person.

**Apis bull footboard** – This comes from the bottom of the coffin. The bull was a sacred animal in ancient Egypt, associated with the king and the sun god, and was a powerful protector of the body.

#### Other activities you can do here

In the Animals in Art case, find the statue of Bast (or Bastet), the cat goddess of protection. She is associated with fertility and is the peaceful side of Sekhmet. Ask pupils to find out what material she is made from.

## Challenge 4: Mix and match

### Activity

Complete the jars by drawing on the heads. Then match up the names.

- Imsety (human)
- Hapy (baboon)
- Qebehseuef (falcon)
- Duamutef (jackal)

### About the object

Entering the gallery from *Inspired by Nature*, these can be found on the right hand wall of the **Ancient Egypt Rediscovered gallery on Level 5**. They are quite low down to allow children to see them properly.

### Interesting fact

Canopic jars are commonly found in ancient Egyptian tombs. However, organs were not always removed from the body during mummification. They first began being removed and stored in jars during the period of the Old Kingdom, but by the Third Intermediate Period, although the organs were removed and treated, they were then placed back in the body. However, despite this, canopic jars remained popular in burials, although sometimes they were solid dummies.

### Other activities you can do here

Near this case you can see a map of Egypt, ask pupils these questions:

- The capital city of Egypt today is Cairo. Can you find this on the map?
- Find the map insert which shows you the location of Egypt in relation to other countries in the world. Can you find Scotland on the map? What other countries do you recognise?
- What do you notice about where the cities are on the map? Why do you think we find them where we do?

**They are next to the water.**

## Challenge 5: Coffin clues

### Activity

This activity asks pupils to choose two coffins and compare them. Try to encourage pupils to choose coffins that look quite different.

**The differences could include answers such as size, materials, decoration, colours, number of people, adult/child, male/female, and so on.**

### About the object

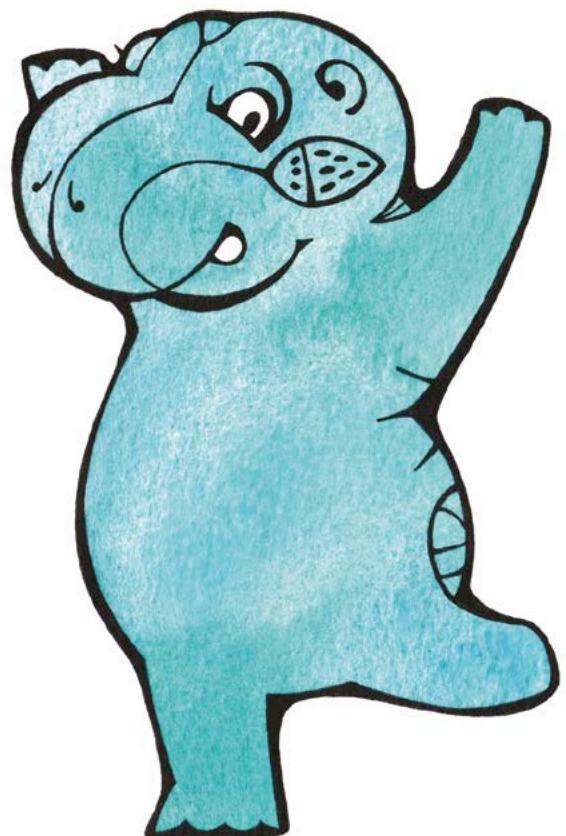
There are many coffins on display in our **Ancient Egypt Rediscovered gallery on Level 5**.

### Interesting fact

Coffins were intended to protect the body of the dead person and to transform them so they could reach the afterlife. Many are decorated with images of protective gods and goddesses as well as magic spells written in hieroglyphs. Often these spells refer to the dead person as the god of the afterlife Osiris (for example 'the Osiris Khnumhotep') to help their transformation into a godlike-being who could reach the afterlife.

### Other activities you can do here

- Try to find all the coffins in the gallery – how many are there?  
**There are seven.**
- You can continue to compare our coffins by visiting [www.nms.ac.uk/explore](http://www.nms.ac.uk/explore)





## Challenge 6: Egypt i-spy

### Activity

This activity asks pupils to find objects that are really big, very small, shiny, and surprising.

They can choose from across the gallery and should be able to find enough that each pupil could choose something different.

### About the object

Pupils can pick from any of the objects in the **Ancient Egypt Rediscovered gallery on Level 5**.

Some suggestions for these include:

- **Really big** – casing stone from the Great Pyramid (on the left as you enter the gallery)
- **Very small** – fish pendant (on the back of the Khnumhotep case as you enter the gallery)
- **Shiny** – gold mummy mask of Montsuef (in the middle of the gallery)
- **Surprising** – cast of the Rosetta stone (in the back right corner of the gallery)

### Interesting fact

In the examples chosen above:

**Casing stone:** This is the only casing stone from the Great Pyramid of Giza to be displayed anywhere outside Egypt. The Great Pyramid is the oldest and largest of the three pyramids in the Giza pyramid complex and would originally have been clad in bright white, polished limestone.

**Fish pendant:** This represents a catfish, symbolising fertility and rebirth. There are lots of fish pendants displayed here of varying quality and the best one was made by a master goldsmith.

**Gold mummy mask of Montsuef:** The wrapped body of a mummified person was sometimes given a case or mask made of cartonnage (a linen and plaster mix) before being placed inside a wooden coffin or a stone sarcophagus. Mummy masks were often gilded or painted yellow because Egyptians believed the skin of the gods was gold.

**Cast of the Rosetta stone:** This one of the first four casts made from the original in 1802 which was given to universities to encourage efforts to decipher hieroglyphs. Until the discovery of the Rosetta stone, hieroglyphs could not be understood or translated. The stone has the same information in three languages – ancient Greek, demotic and hieroglyphs. Knowledge of ancient Greek was helpful in attempts to decipher and figure out how hieroglyphic script worked.

### Other activities you can do here

You can ask pupils to challenge each other find objects using other describing words – old, exciting, puzzling and so on

## Challenge 7: Join the dots

### Activity

Find the mummified animals. Look for the smallest one. Join the dots to see which animal is inside.

### Crocodile

### About the object

The two mummified animals can be found lower down in a case on the right hand side of the **Ancient Egypt Rediscovered gallery on Level 5**. The crocodile is the slightly smaller one.

### Interesting fact

Crocodiles in ancient Egypt were linked to the crocodile-headed god Sobek, who was powerful and frightening. In the Greco-Roman period, ancient Egyptians believed they could gain favour with Sobek through giving mummified animals to the temple. Originally, the dead crocodile associated with Sobek himself was lavishly mummified with gold and other precious things. Eventually it became common for people visiting the temple to pay for the mummification of crocodiles as gifts to the god. These were often baby crocodiles, bred for sacrifice and killed before they became unmanageable. Typically the body was dried with natron, a form of salt, treated with beeswax and resin as preserving agents, and wrapped in linen, sometimes with elaborate patterns.

### Other activities you can do here

Ask pupils to look closely at the mummified crocodile and think of different questions they would like to know about mummified animals (For example, how were they wrapped, what materials are used, what were they used for, and so on). They can then research these using the information in the gallery as well as other sources when back in class.

## Challenge 8: Hedjet's celebration

### Activity

To finish, pupils need to draw themselves with Hedjet. You could suggest they also draw in some of the objects they've seen on their adventure.

### Additional activities

There are lots of other ancient Egyptian objects across the museum. You can also find out more about our objects online [nms.ac.uk/explore](https://nms.ac.uk/explore)

*Thank you to the Primary 2 classes and teachers from Kinnaird Primary School who helped develop the trail.*

If you'd like to share your Egyptian adventure in the museum with us, get in touch  
Twitter @NtIMuseumsScot Online [nms.ac.uk/schools](https://nms.ac.uk/schools)

