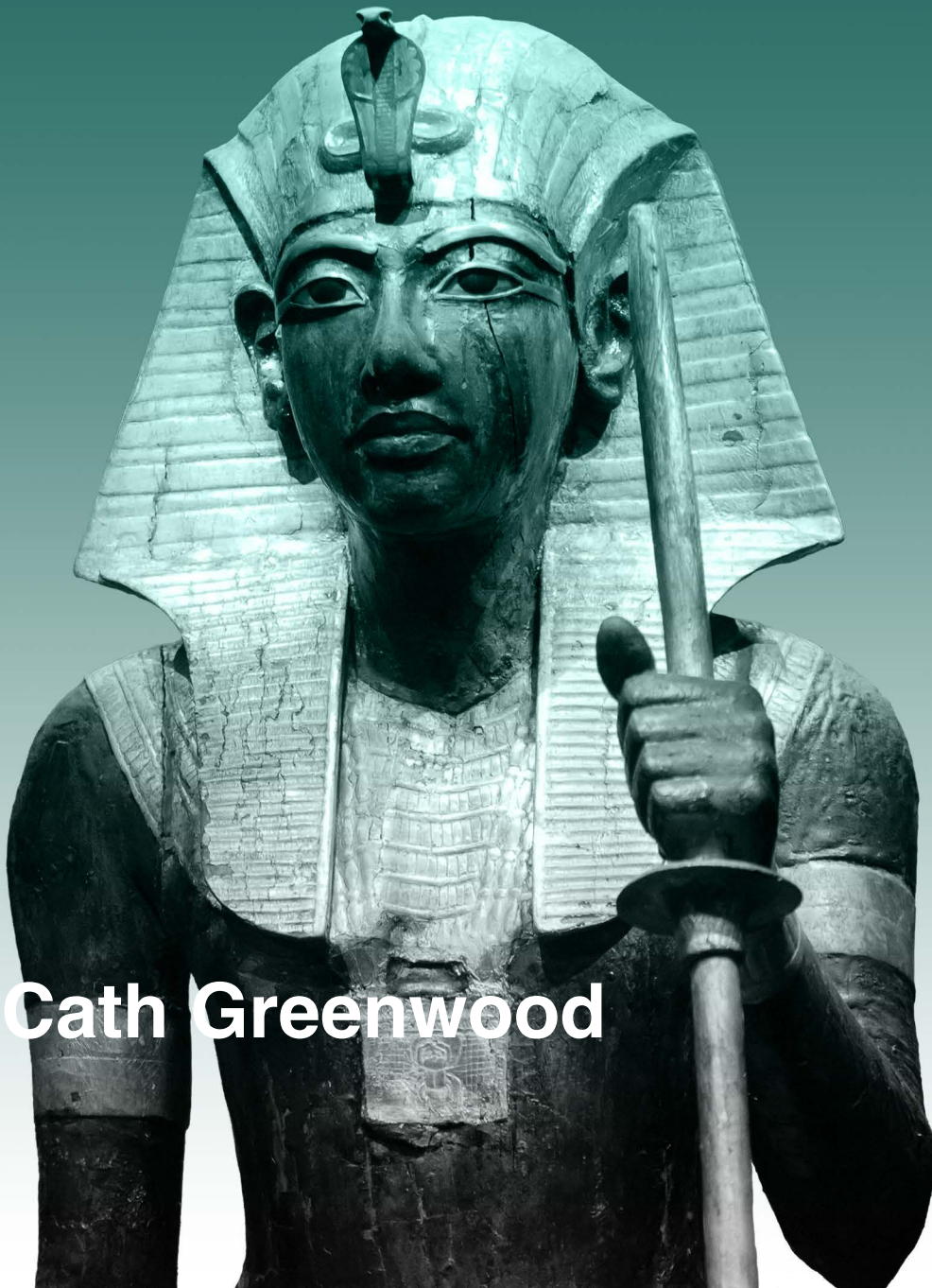


Framework 3

Ancient Egypt

by Cath Greenwood



Introduction

Session 1: Discovering Ancient Egypt

This framework provides teachers with a series of activities, divided into three sessions, that will bring the KS2 history topic Ancient Egypt alive through drama.

Session 1 suggests ways to explore Ancient Egyptian beliefs, their burial rites and the stories of their gods and goddesses.

In Sessions 2 and 3 the children continue their exploration through the perspective of archaeologists, part of the team excavating the tomb of Tutankhamun in November 1922.

While we have broken the framework into three separate sessions of sequenced activities, the resource is intended to be flexible and for teachers to adapt and integrate into their curriculum planning.

*Activities outlined in Session 1 of the framework are demonstrated in **Film 1: Beginning a drama**. The drama strategies used in Session 2 are modelled in **Film 2: Continuing a drama** and the final film - **Film 3: Concluding a drama** - will take teachers through the final session in this framework.*

We have imagined a number of characters in our drama: the children in role as Egyptian archaeologists joining Howard Carter on the excavation of the tomb of Tutankhamun; the Head of the Egyptian Antiquities; the lead Egyptian archaeologist; and the boy who is believed to have discovered the steps leading to the tomb.

These characters may not be historically accurate, but they enable us to unlock the events surrounding the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun. For example, we want pupils to be able to explore the perspective of local Egyptian archaeologists joining the dig.

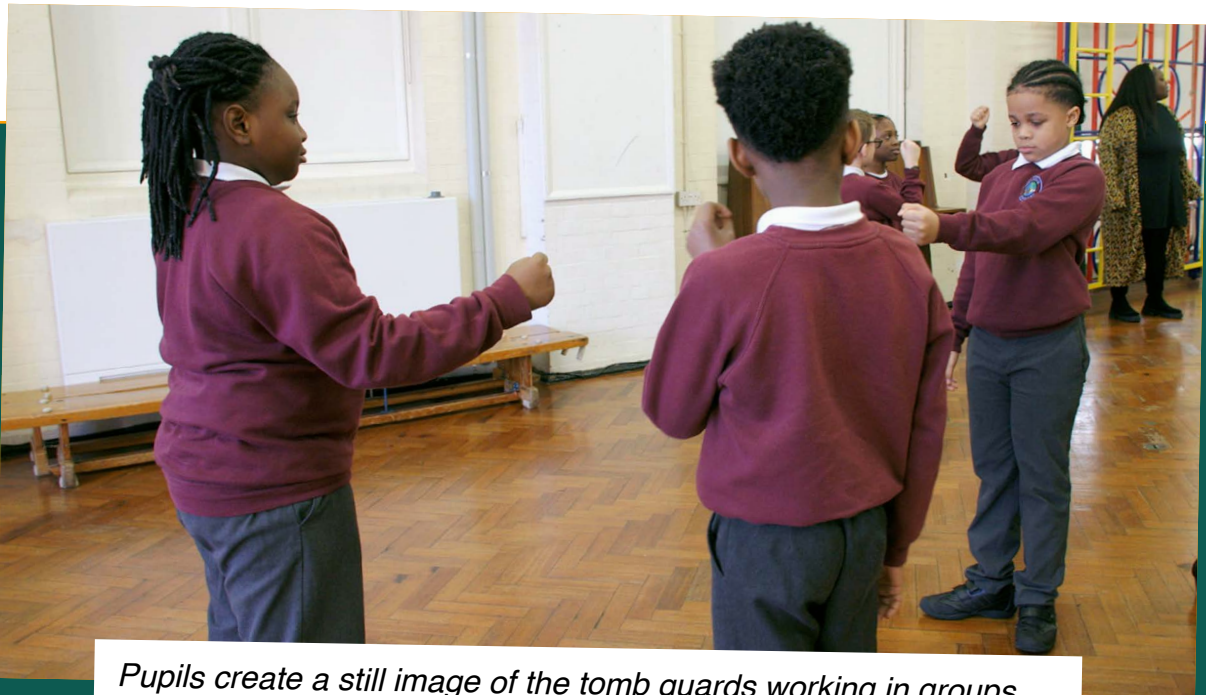
Overview

Session 1: Discovering Ancient Egypt**In Session 1 pupils will**

- Consider how we know about life in the past
- Explore Ancient Egyptian burial rites and the beliefs of Ancient Egyptians regarding gods and goddesses
- Encounter simple drama approaches to be built on in future drama work

Featured drama strategies

- *Stop and Go*
- *Story Whoosh*



Pupils create a still image of the tomb guards working in groups.

Activity

Opening discussion

This opening discussion sets the context for the drama work in time and place. It asks the children to think about the ways we know what life was like in the past. It also introduces some key factual information about Ancient Egyptian beliefs regarding the afterlife.

Running the activity

Begin by introducing the setting of the drama to the group. Use **Resource 1** to show the class the map animation zooming into Africa, then Egypt and The Valley of the Kings.

Explain that this is where our drama takes place, about 4000 years ago, at the time of the Ancient Egyptian civilization. Next you can use **Resource 2** to show the class the timeline and discuss what the group imagines life was like 4000 years ago. What can we do to help us picture life at that time?

Find out what children already know about Ancient Egypt.

Share with the class that we understand Ancient Egyptian civilisation to have lasted over 6500 years, including the period when the pyramids were built and the later period when pharaohs were buried underground in The Valley of the Kings and The Valley of the Queens.

You could introduce a maths challenge to work out how long ago the building of the pyramids was (around 4500 years), or the length of time between the building of the pyramids and Tutankhamun becoming pharaoh (around 1100 years).

Discuss how historians learn about the past and the place of stories, myths and legends in our understanding of how people lived, and what they believed was important.

The drama work will contrast archaeologists discovering the past through artefacts with the stories about gods and goddesses that have been handed down over the millennia and which also reveal something of what was important to the Ancient Egyptians.

Use **Resource 3** to introduce the class to some key facts and images that you will be referencing in the drama work.

Activity

Stop and Go

*This activity encourages the children to work together to build focus and concentration, before introducing a key strategy of our drama work, **still images**, in which children physically embody the characters and settings that give context to - and will be developed further in - our drama.*

Running the activity

Move into the hall and set up a game of *Stop and Go*. Ask the children to spread out to cover the whole space.

On your command of 'Go!' the children move around the room, weaving in and out of each other and aiming to walk at the same pace. When you say 'Stop!' the children freeze like a statue.

Now introduce new instructions for 'Jump!' and 'Clap!' Aim for the class to do these as one. Once the group is working well reverse the instructions, so that 'Stop!' means 'Go!' and 'Clap!' means 'Jump!', etc.

Next explain that you are going to ask them to create statues - or **still images** - of the gods, characters and settings from the work on Ancient Egypt. Use the prompts in **Resource 4**.

Build the activity by first creating individual images, then introducing transformations on a count of five, before finally working in groups of a number that you call out.

Throughout *Stop and Go* ask children to stay where they are in the room and draw attention to the different creative solutions pupils have found to some of the challenges.

Reflection

Discuss what has interested the class and what you have discovered about the gods and goddesses so far. Reflect on how there are many different versions of these myths - there is no one definitive version. Much of what we have learnt about the Ancient Egyptians has come from the Ancient Greeks who wrote down their version of the stories and gave them Greek names.

*A more detailed description of how to run this activity is provided in the **Teacher Notes** and the activity is demonstrated in **Film 1: Beginning a drama**.*

How can they use their bodies and facial expressions to show these different characters and settings?

When working in groups see if they can aim to create their statue, or still image, without speaking.

Activity

Story Whoosh

A Story Whoosh is a way of acting out a story as a whole class, allowing children to see the main narrative, action and characters in a story in broad brush strokes.

Running the activity

Move the class into a circle. Then run the *Story Whoosh* about a pharaoh's journey to the after life using the text provided in **Resource 5**.

The teacher takes an active narrator / director role and supports the children in the creation of the images, inviting pupils in turn around the circle to show the moment being narrated.

At the end of each scene or moment 'Whoosh' them back into their seats and move onto the next child / children around the circle.

Reflection

After you have acted out the story discuss children's responses to the *Story Whoosh* and what you think it says about what was important to the Ancient Egyptians.

End by explaining that you are going to continue the drama by exploring the work of archaeologists in the 20th century whose discoveries have increased our knowledge of the Ancient Egyptians.

*More detail on how to run the Scene making activity is provided in the **Teacher Notes** and demonstrated in the **Film 1: Beginning a drama**.*

Overview

Session 2: Archaeologists

In Session 2 pupils will

- Take on the role of archaeologists and explore their skills, motivations and passions
- Understand the significance of artefacts archaeologists might discover in a tomb
- Build a sense of anticipation about the discovery of a pharaoh's tomb in The Valley of the Kings

Featured drama strategies

- *Still images*
- *Teacher and children in role - leading to Whole class improvisation*



Pupils working in a group on the images for their Five point narrative.

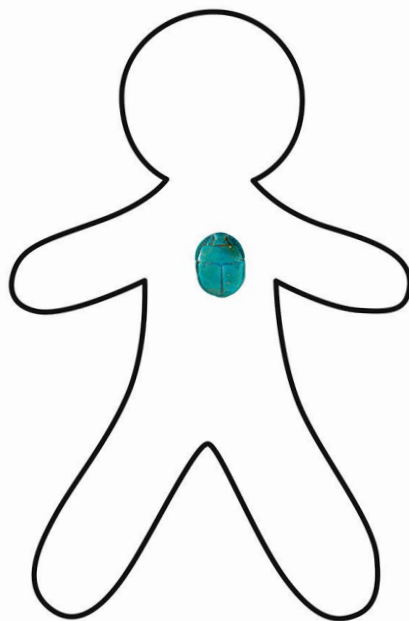
Activity

Discussion

Return to the timeline animation ([Resource 2](#)) as it moves forward to 1922. Explain to the class that they are going to imagine they are archaeologists joining an excavation in The Valley of the Kings.

Return to the map of Africa animation ([Resource 1](#)). Explain how the drama takes place in the context of European colonization of Africa. Britain had been in control of Egypt since 1882. The British government made a declaration of Egyptian independence in February 1922, though Britain remained in effective control of much of Egypt for some years to come.

Then zoom the map into The Valley of the Kings.



Explore what motivates archaeologists - you could use a role on the wall outline with a scarab over the heart.

Activity

Still images - archaeologists**Running the activity**

Discuss what archaeologists do and ask the children to think about what kind of people archaeologists might be.

- *What kind of skills might they have?*
- *What interests an archaeologist?*
- *What might be important to them?*

Write up the children's ideas inside a *Role on the wall* outline - a large outline of a gingerbread-like person with a scarab over the heart (see the design opposite). Think about what archaeologists might *love* and write those near the image of the scarab. Consider next what archaeologists might *think* and write these ideas nearer to the head.

- *An interest and knowledge of history*
- *The ability to work carefully with your hands*
- *Knowledge of sociology and anthropology to understand society and culture*
- *To be thorough and pay attention to detail*
- *Patience*
- *Analytical thinking skills*
- *Careful recording and analysis of objects*
- *Mapping an excavation site*

Discuss the tools that an archaeologist uses and how these change at the different stages of an excavation.

In small groups ask the children to create three still images that show them as archaeologists at work. They might be: digging; carefully brushing away the sand or earth; drawing the artefacts they have found; labelling and wrapping the precious objects.

Discuss what it is that motivates archaeologists - why do they become archaeologists? Is there something they remember doing as a child that sparked their interest in archaeology?

Activity

**Small group research - expertise
in Egyptian artefacts****Running the activity**

Move the class into small groups and give each group a different information sheet about an Egyptian funerary artefact using **Resource 6** - 'Expert information for archaeologists'

Explain that when we start the drama work they are going to imagine they are an expert on their particular object, so they need to do some research to prepare.

Share the images of canopic jars, amulets, the *Book of the Dead* and a shabti.



A collection of canopic jars - see **Resource 6**.

Activity

Moving into role**Running the activity**

Explain that you are going to imagine you are Egyptian archaeologists in 1922 who are part of a new excavation in The Valley of the Kings. You are going to be addressed by the Head of Egyptian Antiquities, who will be monitoring the excavation.

Use **Resource 7** to play the class the message from the imaginary Head of Antiquities. The words spoken are:

I want to welcome you all and thank you for putting yourself forward for this challenging, but exciting, job. It is heartening to know that we have the very best professionals joining this historic excavation.

Here we can see on the map of The Valley of the Kings the previous excavation sites. Most of the tombs previously discovered had been found empty, robbed thousands of years ago. But we feel there is evidence that another pharaoh's tomb lies here somewhere undiscovered, untouched.

Carter, a British archaeologist, has been given permission to head up the dig. He is very experienced and has been part of previous archaeological digs in Egypt and other places before. He also brings substantial funding from Lord Carnarvon. Here at the Egyptian Antiquities Association we are confident that we can work well with Carter. But we will ensure that any discoveries will remain here, on Egyptian land. If found, the world will be invited here to view these important finds. We will be adding to the knowledge of the incredible Ancient civilisation here 4000 years ago.

This could be an extraordinary find. If we discover a tomb of one of the great pharaohs there will be unimaginable riches; artefacts that will be of huge scientific and historical significance, that will make us famous throughout the world.

I will leave you with the leader of the Egyptian Archaeology team to answer your questions and complete the briefing.

Activity

Teacher and children in role

Teacher in role is an effective way of developing depth by joining the children in the drama in what becomes a whole class improvisation. When everyone is in the imagined world together the teacher is able to play alongside the children, asking questions and challenging thoughts and feelings from inside the story. You can pose problems and help children explore dilemmas, imagine future possibilities and take action within the drama.

Running the activity

Move into role as the lead member of the archaeology team who takes over from the Head of Antiquities. Set up the space so that you are in a meeting to welcome the new team to the excavation.

Find a scarf or jacket - or similar - to signal to the children when you are in role.

You can use the outline script provided in **Resource 8** to help you improvise the meeting, and you could also display a map of The Valley of the Kings so that you can indicate the other burial sites and where you hope to find a new tomb of a great pharaoh.

The teacher in role provides the children with more information about what is happening next in the drama. Asking the children questions in role as archaeologists allows them to improvise and create more detail about who they are and what they care about, thus deepening their investment in the drama. The children also have the opportunity to ask questions, which will give you more information about where their interests lie and where there may be gaps in their understanding. If you don't know something you can always stop the drama, step out of role and discuss what further research you could do to find out.

The script provided can be used a little or as much as needed. If you are new to this way of working it would be possible to follow the script very closely and see how the children respond to the questions. As you become more confident aim to listen and respond to what the children bring into the drama and follow that.

*More detail on how to run this activity is provided in the **Teacher Notes** and demonstrated in **Film 2: Continuing a drama**.*

Activity

Writing in role**Running the activity**

Finish this session by asking the children to write in role as the archaeologist. They could write a diary entry for that night, on the eve of the excavation, detailing their hopes and concerns for the work ahead. Alternatively they could write a letter to someone of their choosing.

Ask the children to find a space on their own for this and imagine where and at what time of day they are writing.

When they have finished ask them to choose one sentence they would be happy to share. Go around the circle and hear each child's sentence in turn. Hearing something from all pupils will build a picture of what it is the archaeologists hope and dream of as they prepare to join this important excavation.

*More detail on how to run this activity is provided in the **Teacher Notes** and demonstrated in **Film 2: Continuing a drama**.*

Overview

Session 3: The tomb

In Session 3 pupils will

- Explore the tension between the drive for knowledge of the archaeologists and the beliefs and funerary rites of the Ancient Egyptians
- Have the freedom to express what has interested them in the drama work in a final scene making activity

Featured drama strategies

- *Five point narrative*
- *Conscience alley*
- *Scene making - dream sequence*



One pupil becomes the archaeologist and walks along the 'Conscience alley', while the others speak the archaeologist's thoughts.

Activity

Five point narrative - discovering the tomb

This activity allows children to invent and shape their ideas about what happened in the lead up to the discovery of the sealed tomb. This task requires them to collaborate in making choices about what is important in their narrative.

Running the activity

In groups of five or six ask the pupils to create a short movement piece showing the timeline of the discovery of the tomb.

Begin by sharing **Resource 9** and **Resource 10**, which include images of the excavation site, the steps leading to the tomb of Tutankhamun, and a description of the stages of discovery leading to the sealed doorway.

Ask groups to start by creating five still images of the different stages of discovery up to the point when they are outside the inner tomb.

When they have created their five still images ask them to find a way to transition, moving from one image to the next in controlled slow motion.

Use **Resource 11** to play the music as pupils are practising moving from one image to the next. Watch the movement pieces of each group in turn.

Discuss what you enjoyed and noticed in each other's work and what it tells you about the discovery and how people on the site were thinking and feeling.

*More detail on how to run this activity is provided in the **Teacher Notes** and demonstrated in **Film 3: Concluding a drama**.*

Activity

Conscience alley

A *Conscience alley* allows pupils to explore a moment of dilemma by voicing a character's inner thoughts as they consider different possible actions they might take.

Running the activity

Explain that at this moment, on the threshold of the inner tomb, we imagine the Egyptian boy - believed to have discovered the steps to the tomb - speaking. He questions whether it is right to break into the pharaoh's tomb and disturb the burial site. Use **Resource 12** to play the audio of the boy's speech. The words spoken are:

It cannot be right to open the tomb of the Great Pharaoh, can it? This King has been buried with all he needs for the afterlife - if the objects are removed it will disturb the Pharaoh's peace and everlasting life in the Field of Reeds. What right have they to do this? Surely they know about the difficult journey to the underworld. Do they care about this sacred site? What do these archaeologists care about? The tomb should not be disturbed.

Explain that hearing what the boy has to say causes the archaeologists some doubt that they cannot ignore.

In pairs or small groups ask pupils to discuss what might be going through the archaeologists' thoughts at this time.

Set up a *Conscience alley* in the passageway to the inner tomb. Ask the children to form two lines and become the walls that speak the inner thoughts of the archaeologist. Ask one child to volunteer to be an archaeologist and walk slowly through the passageway to reach the statues guarding the inner chamber of the tomb.

As the archaeologist walks past, the children who are the walls of the passageway should speak the inner thoughts of the archaeologist. Alternatively they could voice the paintings of the Egyptian gods and goddesses on the walls. When the archaeologist reaches the wall ask them to show whether they break the seal to the tomb: do they raise the pick axe in readiness, or do they turn around and walk back?

More detail on how to run this activity is provided in the **Teacher Notes** and demonstrated in **Film 3: Concluding a drama**.

- Remember why they became archaeologists; why they love the job and think it is important work.
- Remember what they know about the Ancient Egyptians' burial practices and their belief in the afterlife.
- Think about the different gods and goddesses we've learnt about - why they were important to the Ancient Egyptians and what they might say or do at this moment.

You can run the **Conscience alley** with different children, developing and hearing different arguments and with different outcomes.

Activity

Final scene making - dream sequence

This activity is an opportunity for children to draw on all the elements and content they have explored in previous sessions.

Running the activity

In small groups ask the children to create a final performance piece that shows a dream one of the archaeologists has after that moment of hesitation, hearing from the Egyptian boy.

Ask them to create at least three different episodes for the dream and to use different approaches they've explored during the sessions.

Discuss the nature of dreams and how they are often surreal and without logic: things, people and places can transform into other things - anything can happen!

Remind them of the drama skills they have developed and give them free rein to create what they want to - but ensure they are mindful of the things they have explored so far:

- *Do they want any of the gods or goddesses to appear in the dream? What might they do or say?*
- *They might imagine the future - what might happen if they discover enormous riches in the tomb?*
- *Does the Egyptian boy appear in the dream?*
- *Does the Head of Egyptian Antiquities appear?*
- *Do Carter or Lord and Lady Carnarvon appear?*
- *Maybe they imagine the archaeologist's own heart being weighed against a feather by Osiris.*

If possible offer groups a choice of music to underscore their dream sequences.

Watch all of the dream sequences and discuss what emerges - what pupils enjoyed in each other's work and what they have expressed about the tension between the thirst for knowledge of the archaeologists on one hand, and the beliefs and rituals of the Ancient Egyptians on the other.

*More detail on how to run this activity is provided in the **Teacher Notes** and demonstrated in **Film 3: Concluding a drama**.*

These might include:

- *Still images*
- *Slow motion movement*
- *Choral work: voices speaking in unison, canon, or overlapping*
- *Short naturalistic moments with dialogue between characters.*

You could continue the discussion by telling pupils they are ready now to research the amazing discoveries that were found within the inner chamber of Tutankhamun's tomb.