

Teacher Resource Guide

The
Nelson-Atkins
Museum
of Art

Queen Nefertari: Eternal Egypt

November 15, 2019—March 29, 2020

Statue of the Goddess Mut, unknown provenance. New Kingdom, early 19th dynasty (about 1292—1250 B.C.E.). Limestone, 21 1/4 x 11 x 8 1/2 inches (54 x 28 x 22 cm). Museo Egizio, Turin.

EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

Drawn from the collections of the Museo Egizio in Turin, Italy, *Queen Nefertari: Eternal Egypt* allows students to step back more than 3,000 years into the past to glimpse the richness of life in ancient Egypt.

Queen Nefertari, favored wife of the Egyptian pharaoh Ramesses II, serves as the focal point of this exhibition. Objects from her magnificent tomb in the Valley of the Queens speak to her status and the importance of funerary practices and beliefs in ancient Egyptian society, while objects from temples, artisan villages, and other sites shed light on what life was like for Egyptians of Nefertari's time. Taken together, these works of art can enrich students' understanding of Egyptian history and provide opportunities for them to make connections between the past and their own lives.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Queen Nefertari: Eternal Egypt features more than 230 works of art, most of them made during Egypt's New Kingdom (1327—1075 B.C.E.). Students visiting the exhibition will see such objects as stone sculptures, painted coffins, jewelry, cosmetic containers, musical instruments, artisans' tools, and illustrated papyri. Throughout the exhibition, video projections offer a simulation of daily life in ancient Egypt, and interactive stations appeal to a variety of senses and learning styles. The exhibition also features reproductions of some of the imagery found on the walls of Nefertari's lavishly painted tomb.



ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide has been designed for educators wishing to incorporate *Queen Nefertari: Eternal Egypt* into their students' exploration of ancient Egypt. Look inside for background information about the exhibition and its contents, questions and activities to engage your students both at the museum and in the classroom, and suggestions for where to learn more.

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KEY THEMES IN THE EXHIBITION

Religion and Society in Ancient Egypt

Religion and politics were closely intertwined in the Egypt of Nefertari's time. Ancient Egyptians recognized a multitude of deities and worshipped them on both a personal and an official scale. Offerings and rituals performed in honor of the deities were meant to ensure life, health, and strength for the land and its people. Pharaohs, the rulers of ancient Egypt, were responsible for conducting rituals that would preserve order and balance. Considered to be an incarnation of the god Horus (the son of the sun god Ra), each pharaoh was seen as an intermediary between the divine and earthly realms and was imbued with both spiritual and political power. Sculptures and other temple items on view in the exhibition speak to the strong link between religion and state power in ancient Egypt.



Statue of Ramesses II, Seated Between Amun and Mut, Temple of Amun, Karnak. New Kingdom, 19th Dynasty, reign of Ramesses II (about 1279—1213 B.C.E.) Granite, 67 x 44 1/2 x 37 inches (170 x 113,5 x 94 cm). Museo Egizio, Turin.

This sculpture depicts Ramesses II in the center with the god Amun on the left and the goddess Mut on the right. The figures are all the same size, showing that in this instance, god, goddess, and king were considered equally important. Statues like this represented the role of the pharaoh as an intermediary between humans and the gods.

Daily Life in the Palace and the Village



Beer jar, Deir el-Medina, New Kingdom, 18th—20th dynasty (about 1539—1075 B.C.E.) Painted terracotta, 34 x 15 cm. Museo Egizio, Turin.

This jar's ovoid body, narrow neck, and lack of handles identify it as a beer jar. Beer, which was made from mashed loaves of barley bread, was the most common beverage in ancient Egypt. It was far less alcoholic than modern beer.

The Role of Women

In ancient Egypt, women were active participants in all spheres of society. Men and women were treated as equals in the eyes of the law, and women of every social class had the right to own property, run businesses, and bring cases before the courts. Some women of high rank served as temple priestesses, and the Egyptian pantheon included many powerful female deities. While pharaohs were almost exclusively



Clapper with Hathoric Face, unknown provenance. New Kingdom, 18th—20th dynasty (about 1539—1075 B.C.E.) Wood, 17.5 x 4.5 x 1.5 cm. Museo Egizio, Turin.

Music was a part of both secular life and religious worship in ancient Egypt. Within the women's palaces, women sang, danced, and played instruments. Clappers like this one were often associated with the goddess Hathor; they were believed to protect against evil spirits.

male, royal women like Nefertari could be well-educated, influential figures at court. Women were sometimes involved in political intrigue; a papyrus scroll on view in the exhibition tells of a failed coup orchestrated by one of Ramesses III's wives and numerous residents of the royal women's palace.

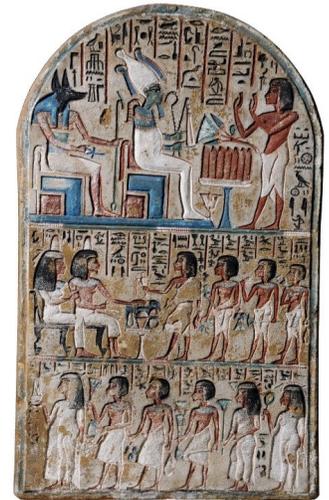


Statuette of Ahmose-Nefertari, Deir el-Medina. New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty (about 1539—1292 B.C.E.). Wood, 15 x 4 1/2 x 2 3/4 inches (38 x 11.5 x 7 cm). Museo Egizio, Turin.

Ahmose-Nefertari, the first queen of the New Kingdom who lived about 300 years before Queen Nefertari, was arguably the most venerated woman in Egyptian history. She held important religious offices during her lifetime, and after her death she was made a goddess.

Death and the Afterlife

Ancient Egyptians believed that life continued after death in the afterlife. To ensure that they reached spiritual paradise, Egyptians developed an elaborate set of funerary beliefs and practices. When a person died, their body was carefully preserved through mummification and placed inside a tomb filled with provisions for the afterlife. The spirit of the deceased was thought to embark on a dangerous journey through the underworld, completing certain ritual tasks in order to reach the afterlife. Spells and pictures painted on the walls of tombs (as in the magnificent tomb built for Nefertari) were intended to help the dead safely reach the afterlife, and numerous funerary objects on view in the exhibition demonstrate the elaborate preparations that went into protecting and provisioning the deceased.



Stela of Nakhi, probably from Deir el-Medina. New Kingdom, late 18th dynasty (about 1300 B.C.E.). Painted sandstone, 39 1/2 x 25 x 6 inches (100 x 63 x 15 cm). Museo Egizio, Turin.

This tablet, called a stela, shows the deceased receiving offerings of food and drink from his children, as well as the deceased making an offering to Osiris and Anubis, the two main gods of the underworld. Stelae like this one were often placed in or near tombs.

The Importance of Archeology



Discoveries from archeological excavations in Egypt help us reconstruct and understand ancient Egyptian culture. By studying Egyptian artifacts, scholars have been able to decipher hieroglyphic inscriptions, identify key religious beliefs and figures, piece together practices related to death and the afterlife, and better understand daily life in ancient Egypt. Photographs, models, and computer animation are all tools that can be used to share archeological discoveries with the public.

Francesco Ballerini, Edoardo Baglione, and Michelangelo Pizzio (Italian), *Model of Nefertari's Tomb*, early 1900s. Wood, 58 x 128 x 163 inches (147 x 325 x 160 cm). Museo Egizio, Turin.

This scale model was built shortly after Nefertari's tomb was uncovered by Italian archeologists in 1904. All the tomb paintings were carefully copied and reproduced at one-tenth scale. The model was so accurate that it helped in the conservation of the tomb in the 1980s.

TIMELINE: ANCIENT EGYPT

Pre-Dyanastic Period

6000—3100 B.C.E.

- Farming and beer brewing begin
- Hieroglyphic writing is developed

Old Kingdom

2575—2150 B.C.E.

- Great Pyramids and Sphinx are built

Middle Kingdom

1975—1640 B.C.E.

- Thebes becomes capital of the Egyptian Empire
- Construction of temple complex at Karnak begins

New Kingdom / Amarna Period

1539—1327 B.C.E.

- Pharaoh Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) and Queen Nefertiti rule Egypt, establishing a religion dedicated to the god Aten
- Pharaoh Tutankhamun reestablishes the worship of many gods

New Kingdom / Ramesside Period

1327—1075 B.C.E.

- Pharaoh Ramesses II, or Ramesses the Great, rules Egypt
- Ramesses II builds Abu Simbel to honor himself and Queen Nefertari, his First Great Royal Wife

Ptolemaic Period

332—30 B.C.E.

- Rosetta Stone is carved using Egyptian hieroglyphs and ancient Greek
- After the death of Cleopatra VII, Egypt becomes province of the Roman Empire

MAP OF ANCIENT EGYPT



By Jeff Dahl - Own work. CC BY-SA 4.0,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=5818406>

BEFORE YOUR VISIT

Explore Ancient Egypt Online

Interactive websites give students the chance to explore ancient Egypt in an immersive and relevant way. Have older students check out the Ancient Egypt site from the British Museum (ancientegypt.co.uk), or have younger students visit the site made by National Museums Scotland (nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/games/discover-ancient-egypt). What can they learn about the geography, culture, and society of ancient Egypt using these interactive tools?

Connect with a Kit

The Ancient Egypt Art Connection Kit, available in the Educator Resource Center at the Nelson-Atkins, contains multisensory objects, books, and visuals that can enhance students' exploration of ancient Egyptian life and culture. Try setting up kit objects at different stations throughout your classroom, and invite students to think like archeologists and historians as they study the various "artifacts."



Consider Sources of Knowledge

Much of our knowledge of ancient Egypt derives from the study of objects and structures uncovered through archeology. Written accounts by ancient writers form another type of primary source. Discuss as a class:

- What types of primary sources have you used to learn about the past?
- When trying to learn about the past, why would it be helpful to study artifacts, buildings, or documents created during the time period under study?
- If historians living 3,000 years from now wanted to learn about the United States in the 21st century, what kinds of primary sources might they turn to?

Examine an Ancient Object

A visit to *Queen Nefertari: Eternal Egypt* gives students the opportunity to consider what art objects can tell us about ancient Egypt. Practice this process in the classroom by showing students an image of an ancient Egyptian work in the permanent collection of the Nelson-Atkins. Discuss as a class: What do you think this object is made of? What is going on in the work of art? How might it have been used in ancient Egypt? What might it tell you about ancient Egyptian life?



Suggested works:

- **Model Boat**, Middle Kingdom, late 12th dynasty
- **Servant Kneading Dough**, Old Kingdom, 5th dynasty

View these and other works online at art.nelson-atkins.org.



IN-GALLERY ACTIVITIES

Examine an Exhibition Object

Working alone, in pairs, or in small groups, students can repeat the object analysis process described in the pre-visit section. Have students select an ancient work on view in the exhibition and discuss among themselves:

- What is this object made of?
- What is going on in this work of art?
- How might it have been used in ancient Egypt?
- What can it tell us about ancient Egyptian life?
- What questions does it raise for us?

Study a Stela

Stelae are carved and/or painted stone slabs that were often placed in the chapels or courtyards of Egyptian tombs. They are typically composed of registers (rows), each depicting a different scene or part of a scene. Funerary stelae may show the deceased receiving offerings of food and drink and making offerings to various gods in hopes of winning divine favor and protection. Choose a funerary stela to analyze, and discuss as a class:

- Describe the people you see here.
- What do they seem to be doing in each scene?
- What other objects, figures, or markings can you see?
- What might be going on here?



Stela of Kel, Deir el-Medina. New Kingdom, 19th Dynasty, reign of Ramesses II (about 1279—1213 B.C.E.). Painted limestone, 76 x 55 cm. Museo Egizio, Turin.

The top register of this stela depicts Kel, a stonemason, pouring water over the food offerings he is presenting to the gods Osiris, Ptah, Anubis, Horus, and Hathor. In the middle register, he does the same for family members. In the bottom register, Kel and his wife receive offerings from their children.

Look for Symbols of Power

Pharaohs and deities are recognizable in Egyptian art by their symbols of power. Have students look for the following details in depictions of powerful figures within the exhibition:

Nemes—a striped head cloth worn by royalty

Uraeus—a rearing cobra worn on the pharaoh's forehead

Crown—crowns bearing horns, feathers, or other animal imagery were worn by pharaohs, queens, and deities



What similarities and differences can students identify among the various depictions of rulers and deities within the exhibition? If time permits, visit the museum's permanent collection galleries to see additional works depicting powerful ancient Egyptian figures. How do they compare to what students saw in the exhibition?

Statue Bearing the Name Thutmose I (detail), Temple of Amun, Karnak. New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, reign of Thutmose I (about 1493—1483 B.C.E.). Granodiorite, 71 x 21 1/2 x 43 1/2 inches (180 x 55 x 110 cm). Museo Egizio, Turin.

AFTER YOUR VISIT

Consider a Contemporary Object

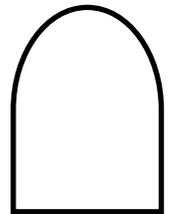
Now that students have considered what art objects might teach us about a past civilization, have them employ the same kind of thinking when considering an object from their own lives. Have students bring in something from home or identify an object found in their classroom. Ask students to discuss with a partner: If that object were uncovered 3,000 years from now, what might students of the future think of it? What might it tell them about American society in 2019-2020?

Dig Deeper

During their visit to the exhibition, students may have examined a work of art and made a list of all the questions it raised for them. Have students choose one of their questions and make a research plan for how they might try to answer it. If the resources they would need are not readily available, discuss: What tools, resources, or information would historians need in order to answer our questions? Where might they get them?

Respond Through Art

Have students synthesize the observations they made of ancient Egyptian art to create their own original works. Using a blank stela-shaped template, students can draw their own narrative scenes in two or more registers, incorporating symbols of power that would indicate the presence of a ruler or deity. In planning their drawings, students will want to consider whether they will make an ancient scene or a contemporary one. What will the figures in their narrative be doing? What other markings will they include to complement the visual narrative?



CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

The activities described in this guide can engage students with the following curriculum standards:

Visual Arts Performance Standards (KS)

- Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

Visual Arts Grade Level Expectations (MO)

- Through observation, infer information about time, place, and culture in which a work of art was made.
- Analyze how art reflects changing times, traditions, resources, and cultural uses.

History, Government, and Social Studies Standards (KS)

- The student will investigate specific beliefs, contributions, ideas, and/or diverse populations and connect those beliefs, contributions, ideas and/or diversity to contemporary issues.

Social Studies Grade Level Expectations (MO)

- Analyze and use artifacts to share information on social studies topics.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Art Connection Kit: Ancient Egypt	Hands-on materials to bring ancient Egypt to life. Available in the ERC.
Legacy: The Origins of Civilization	DVD series exploring six ancient civilizations. Available in the ERC.
500 Things to Know About the Ancient World	Fun, kid-friendly facts from the British Museum. Available in the ERC.
Queen Nefertari: Eternal Egypt	The exhibition catalog features images and essays. Available in the ERC.
The Art of Ancient Egypt	Metropolitan Museum of Art curriculum kit. Available in the ERC.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS RELATED TO ANCIENT EGYPT

Afterlife	Life after death
Amulet	A small charm that was meant to offer protection to its owner
Anubis	The ancient Egyptian god of the dead; he was associated with mummification and was often represented as having the head of a jackal and the body of a man
Artifact	Any object made or modified by humans; it can be studied to learn about the past
Canopic jars	Jars used to hold certain internal organs—the lungs, liver, stomach, and intestines— that were mummified separately from the rest of the body
Cartouche	An oval frame that encircles a set of hieroglyphs, usually representing a royal name
Embalming	Treating a dead body with preservatives to slow its decay
Hieroglyphs	In the formal writing system of the ancient Egyptians, symbolic characters representing sounds or ideas
Ka	According to the beliefs of the ancient Egyptians, the <i>ka</i> was a person’s vital life force; it could survive the death of the body and needed to be provided for with food and other comforts in the afterlife
Kohl	A powder worn as eye makeup in ancient Egypt
Mummification	In ancient Egypt, the practice of preserving a dead body by embalming it and wrapping it in strips of linen
Natron	A natural salt used to dry out a body as part of the mummification process
Nemes	A striped headdress worn by pharaohs of ancient Egypt
Osiris	The ancient Egyptian god of the underworld and resurrection; he is often shown as a mummified man wearing a white cone-shaped headdress
Papyrus	A paper-like material made from the pressed and dried stems of the papyrus plant
Pharaoh	A ruler of ancient Egypt

GLOSSARY OF TERMS RELATED TO ANCIENT EGYPT, continued

Primary source	A source (like a document, object, or recording) that provides firsthand evidence of a historical event or period and was made during the time period under study
Ritual	A religious ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed in a fixed order
Relief sculpture	A sculpture that projects from a surface but is still attached to that surface
Sarcophagus	A stone coffin
Scarab	A type of beetle that was seen by the ancient Egyptians as a symbol of renewal and rebirth
Scribe	In ancient Egypt, someone who learned to read and write hieroglyphs as a profession
Secondary source	A source (like a textbook or encyclopedia) that does NOT provide a firsthand account of a historical event or period but was created later
Social pyramid	The ranking of different groups or classes of people within a society
Stele	A carved or painted stone or wooden slab that was placed upright as a monument
Ushebti	Also called <i>shabtis</i> , these small figurines were placed in ancient Egyptian tombs to perform labors on behalf of the deceased

EXTEND YOUR STUDY OF ANCIENT EGYPT

The exhibition *Queen Nefertari: Eternal Egypt* will be on view at the Nelson-Atkins for a limited time. But, other works from ancient Egypt are on view in the museum's permanent collection galleries throughout the year. Check out some of these visitor favorites, along with other works from Egyptian history:



L to R: *Inner Coffin of Meret-it-es* and *Outer Coffin of Meret-it-es*, Egyptian, Late Period to Ptolemaic Period, 30th Dynasty to early Ptolemaic Dynasty (ca. 380—250 B.C.E.), Wood, pigment, gesso and gilding. Purchase: William Rockhill Nelson Trust (by exchange), 2007.12.2.A,B and 2007.12.1.A-C. *Mummy of Ka-i-Nefer*, Egyptian, Later Period, 27th Dynasty to 31st Dynasty (525—332 B.C.E.), human remains, linen, resinous material. Purchase: acquired through the generosity of Jean H. Deacy, 2004.11



EDUCATOR RESOURCE CENTER

The ERC can help you expand your pre- and post-visit activities to connect students' museum experience with your classroom curriculum. The ERC offers:

- Curriculum consultations
- Circulating resources
- Professional development workshops

Visit nelson-atkins.org/educators/resources for info.