

Teaching Guide: Dig Animals of the Ancients

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Objectives:

- * Students will gain an understanding of the importance of animals to ancient people.
- * Students will gain an appreciation of the similarities and differences between how animals were treated by ancient and today.

Prior Knowledge:

- Before reading the articles, ask the students if they have a pet and encourage students to share with the class some personal experiences.
- * Ask the students if they know what an archaeologist does and some of the things which have been unearthed of ancient people.
- * Encourage students to share any information they may have on uses of animals throughout history.

Friends and Neighbors pages 6-8

Vocabulary words: deliberately, domesticate, DNA, fortress, monarchy, vermin

1. What are some of the uses of animals by humans?
2. How might early people have first "domesticated" animals such as wolves, sheep and deer?
3. In what way, does the reading suggest that cats first came to the island of Cyprus?
4. What do archaeologists look for in determining when people first arrived on an island?
5. What is the legend about ravens at the Town of London in Great Britain?

Animal Gods pages 9-13

Vocabulary Words: patron, pilgrimage, appropriate, attributes, chaos

- * Why do you think that the ancient Egyptians believed in many gods? What types of things became "gods"?
- How did the jackal become the god of the mummification?
- Why did the Egyptians think that the gazelles and antelopes were unsafe and treacherous?
- What were two reasons cats were valued by the ancient Egyptians?
- What unusual mummified animal was found in the ancient cemetery complex of Saqqara?
- Draw a picture of a scarab beetle. Write a paragraph with 3 facts learned about this bug.
- Have the students look at the Egyptian mural on p. 10. What are four things you can learn about the Egyptians from the mural (ie: clothing and hair styles).
- Draw a canopic jar including a head of either, the falcon, jackal, human or a baboon. Draw lines from the jar and write statements including what is inside, why the Egyptians had canopic jars and what did the head of the jar represent.

A 9500-Year- Old Cat pages 14- 15

- * Why do you think humans and animals were buried facing west?
- * What could be determined from the bones of the cat found in Grave 283?(two facts)
- * What important contributions did cats provide?
- Have the students draw a tomb. If you could pack your tomb with personal items, what would be 7 things you bring with you for the afterlife? Draw pictures of the items.

Switch pictures and pretend to be an archaeologist discovering the “tomb” of another student. What are some things you can infer about the person based on the objects found in the tomb?

Jaguar Kings and Monkey Brothers pages 16-20

* What were some of the contributions of the ancient Mayans to the world?

• Use a map and have the students locate the countries in South America where descendants of the Mayans live today.

* Use the website: <http://www.worsleyschool.net/socialarts/mayan/art.html> or

<http://home.epix.net/~miser17/art.html> In groups, have students list some of the things which can be learned from looking at the artwork of ancient people? From the article, what was noticed with some animals and what did it suggest?

* Not finding birds or monkeys in garbage dumps but finding squirrels and deer might suggest what about the ancient people?

* Have students write a creative writing on being the queen of the Copan Dynasty being served shrimp/fish with chocolate or write a creative writing on the young child buried with a deer unearthed at the site of Dos Pilas.

The Great-Granddaddy of Guinea Pigs pages 22-23

Vocabulary words: specimen, semi-aquatic, conquistadors

* Have the students make two cluster maps (mind maps) and write *Goya* on one and *guinea pig* on the other. Have groups of students write four-five facts about the Goya and four about the guinea pig.

* Have a paper with similar and different at the top. Have the students now organize the information they have gathered and categorize the information under the two headings.

Frozen Horses pages 24- 26

Vocabulary words: elaborately, nomadic, griffins, sphinxes, mitochondrial DNA

* On a piece of paper have the headings FACTS and INFERENCES. Discuss with the students what an inference is and how it differs from a fact. In groups have the students list 3-5 facts and the inferences that scientists have made from those facts. For example: **Scythian women have been found with weapons/ were warriors**

• Have students look at the Scythian saddle and use the different senses to write descriptive phrases to describe what they see.

* Give the students about three minutes to underline facts about the Scythian people and then have the students take turns asking questions of the class. For example: What lands were controlled by the Scythian people? This encourages students to skim and find content in the reading.

Man’s Best (Prehistoric) Friend pages 27-29

* Ask the students to list reasons why people have called dogs “man’s best friend”.

• Write a paragraph explaining what may have happened to the boy who was buried with a dog’s muzzle on his left shoulder and paw across the boy’s chest.

Readings on “Stuff, The Antikythera Mechanism, Geese to the Rescue and Bordeaux Child

• Divide the students into small groups and assign one of the short readings. Have the students then give a “newscast” of the story including *who, what, when, where and why*.

• As a group discuss the role of an archaeologist. What are the characteristics of someone that is an archaeologist (ie: patient, likes to work outdoors, doesn’t mind getting dirty). What are some of the positive aspects of the job of an archaeologist? What are the negative aspects? Give the students a piece of a chocolate chip cookie and a toothpick (place on a paper towel). Have the students carefully dig for “artifacts” (chips) trying not to break it.

Trivia hunt:

1. Which queen had a pet guinea pig?(Queen Elizabeth 1)
2. What was possibly a *pet* for a Roman soldier stationed in England?(garden dormouse)
3. Who first domesticated the guinea pig AND what was their main use?(Incas/food)
4. What is the name for someone who studies the relationships between people and animals?(zooarchaeologist)
5. Who was the famous ancient Greek historian?(Herodotus)
6. What is a shaggy-haired ox native to the mountains of Central Asia called?(yak)
7. What did Alexander the Great notice about the "untamed" black colt?(afraid of its shadow)
8. In what way did prehistoric people use dogs' teeth?(ornaments)
9. Who or what was Owney?(mail mascot)
10. Baboons are very smart. The Egyptians used the baboon to represent the god of intelligence and wisdom. What was this god's name?(Thor)