

# An Ancient Sarcophagus

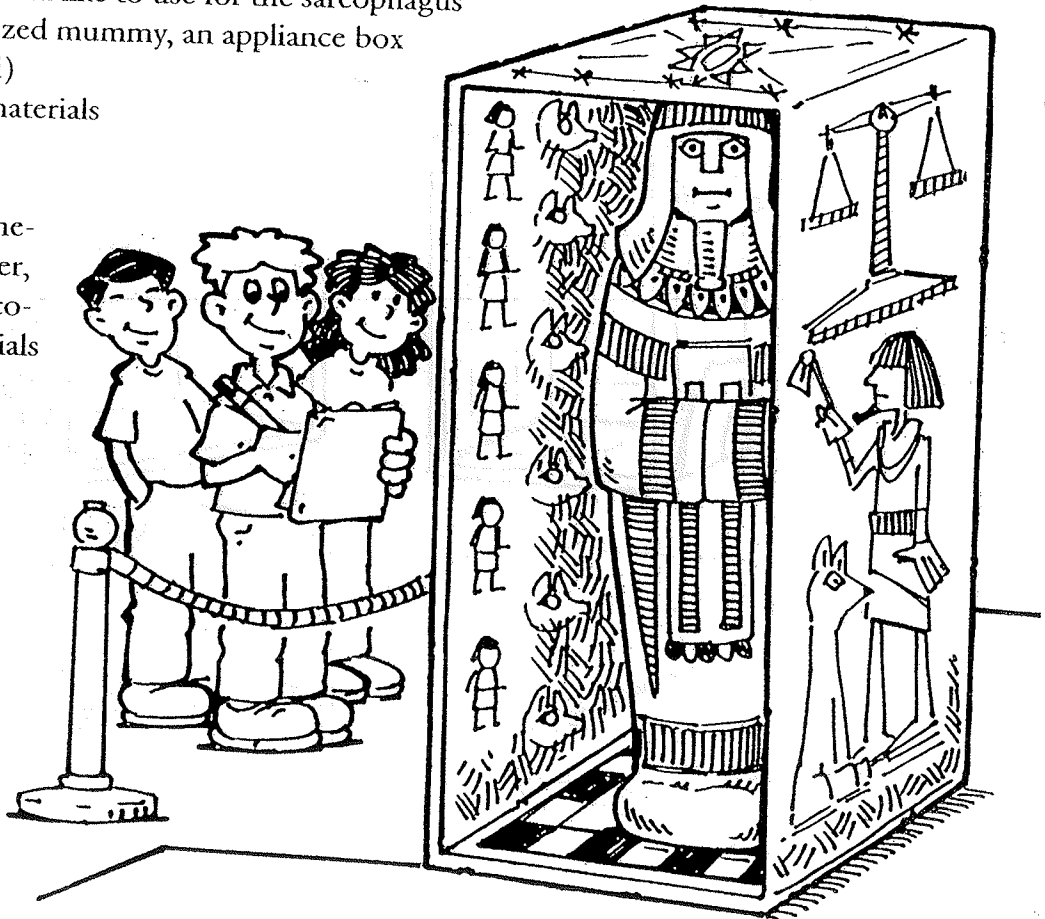
A sarcophagus is a large coffin made of stone or gold. They were expensive to make, so usually only pharaohs and queens, priests, and other important people were buried in them. A sarcophagus offered more protection for the mummy, and like the inner coffin, it was either shaped like a rectangular box or like a human.

## Project Description

You and the expedition ease your way along the dark and narrow passageway. As you round the corner you spot the pharaoh's burial chamber with its doors protected by a sealed rope. The rope is removed, you enter the chamber, and there before your eyes is the famous sarcophagus. It is gold with four goddesses carved in high relief on the corners. Sparking jewels are set in patterns on the lid. You begin making drawings so you can replicate this sarcophagus for your own museum.

## Materials

- shoe box or box slightly larger than a mummy that you would like to use for the sarcophagus (for a life-sized mummy, an appliance box can be used)
- papier mache materials
- marking pens
- tempera paints
- old jewelry, rhinestones, glitter, or other decorative materials
- gold paint
- brushes
- white glue

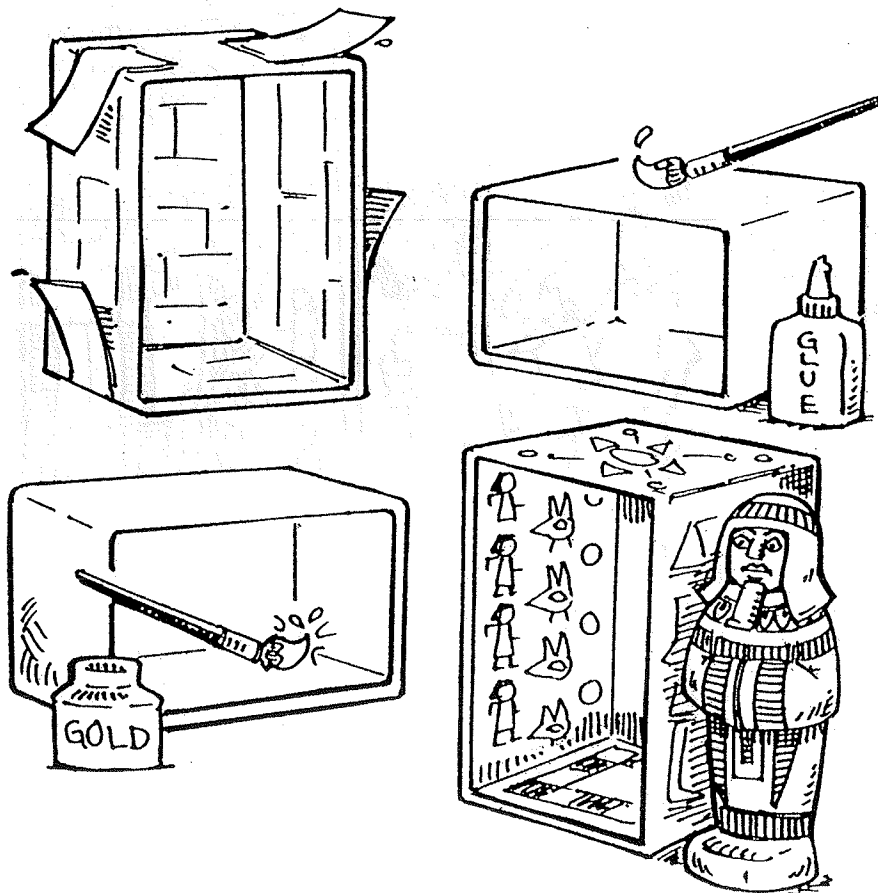


## An Ancient Sarcophagus (continued)

### **Directions**

*These directions are for making a rectangular sarcophagus.*

1. Use several layers of papier mache on both the lid and the bottom of the box that you have chosen for the sarcophagus. Use brown paper towels, or white paper, depending on the effect that you want. If you want the sarcophagus to open, papier mache the lid and the bottom separately.
2. Allow to dry thoroughly.
3. Brush on diluted white glue to act as a varnish, and let dry.
4. Paint gold and let it dry.
5. Add hieroglyphs and Egyptian drawings with marking pens or paint.
6. Decorate with jewels, beads, glitter, gold foil, and other decorative items.



# Egyptian Pyramids

Egyptian pyramids are among the largest man-made structures ever conceived, and they are one of the enduring symbols of ancient Egypt. Approximately ninety pyramid structures of various sizes and in various states of preservation exist today. Each pyramid required careful planning, from choosing the site to hiring architects, builders, painters, carvers, and numerous craft people.

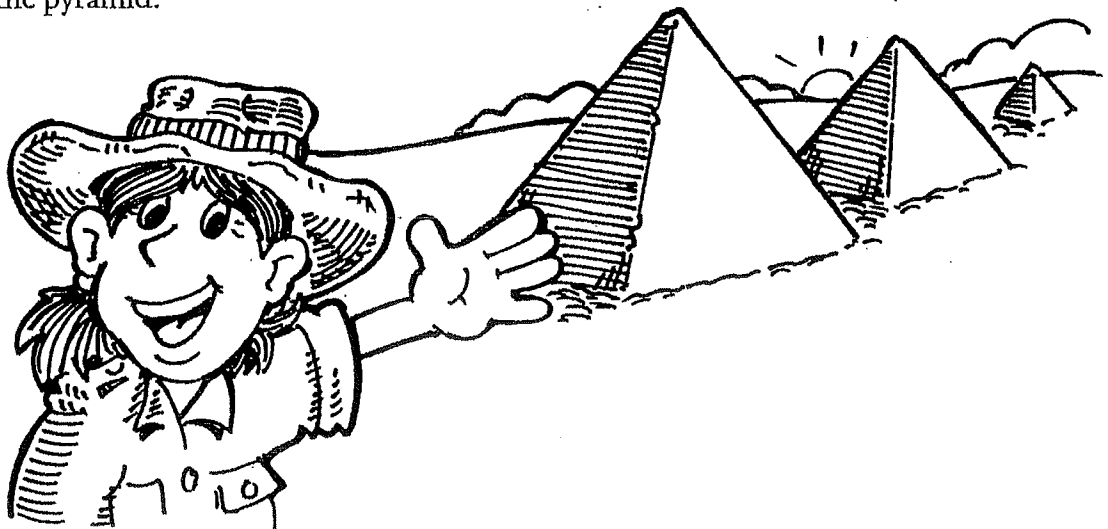
The first tombs were flat-roofed buildings called mastabas. They were used as burial chambers before pyramids were constructed. Over time, they evolved into the pyramids that we are familiar with today. Later on, the Egyptians decided to stop making pyramids and, instead, carved their pharaohs' tombs into the sides of cliffs.

## *Project Description*

Your tour guide takes you out early in the morning to see the great Giza necropolis (a Greek word meaning "city of the dead"). He explains that Giza was chosen by King Khufu and his successors as the site of their pyramids. The site also contains funerary boats, the Sphinx, other royal pyramids, and private tombs. As the sun rises over the pyramids, you begin planning a model of the necropolis that can be placed in your Ancient Egypt Museum.

## *Guidelines for building a model of the Giza necropolis*

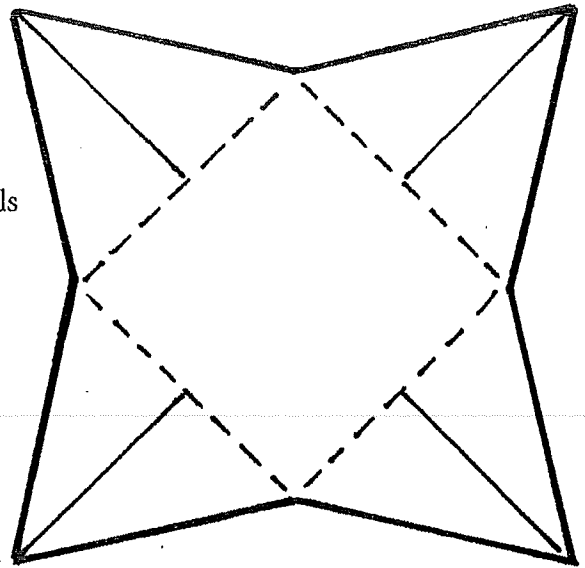
1. Include several required components in your model—the Nile River, the Great Pyramid of Khufu, the Pyramid of Khafre, the Pyramid of Menkaure, and the Sphinx.
2. Optional components of the model could include one or more mastabas, the Queen's Pyramids, cemeteries, one or more causeways, Sphinx Temple, a funeral barge, a typical royal family and professional mourners, the pharaoh, and possessions ready to be placed in the pyramid.



## Egyptian Pyramids (continued)

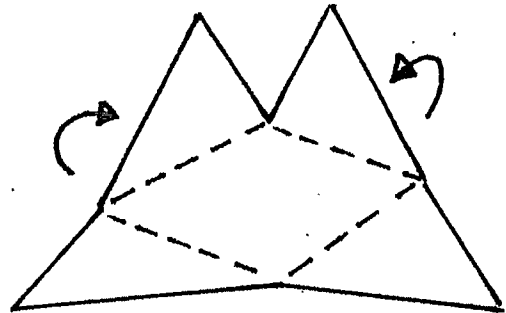
### Materials

a piece of plywood or heavy cardboard,  
for the base of the model  
poster board or cardboard  
sand or papier mache using brown paper towels  
glue  
scissors  
masking tape  
tempera paints or markers  
modeling compound for miniature  
components of model



### Directions

1. If the model of the necropolis will be built in sections—or by groups of students—standardize the dimensions so the sections fit together.
2. Make a diagram of the model.
3. Cut the base to fit the dimensions of your model.
4. Cover the base with white glue. Sprinkle sand over the glue and let dry thoroughly. You can also use several layers of brown paper towel papier mache to cover the base to achieve a sandy look.
5. Build the pyramids from cardboard. Enlarge the pattern and use it as a guide.
6. Use tape and glue to assemble the different structures.
7. Create small items, like the possessions to be buried with the pharaoh, out of a modeling compound.
8. Decorate the model with paints, markers, or other items to make it look authentic.



# How to Build a Pyramid for a Middle School Project

Written by danielle odom |



A model pyramid is a simple structure to create.

Students will have many opportunities to learn about ancient Egyptian culture throughout their time in school. A day will come sometime in middle school when they have the assignment to re-create an ancient Egyptian structure. Middle school is the convergence of math and history that makes a project like this valuable. Teachers use real models and hands-on experience to excite students while they learn. While pyramids seem to have a basic structure, making them look more accurate could possibly mean the difference between passing and failing.

Skill level:

Moderately Easy

### Instructions

#### Things you need

- White glue
- Permanent marker
- Ruler
- Sand
- Sugar cubes
- Sand paper (if desired)
- Clay (if desired)
- Butter knife
- Craft paint
- Paint brush

## Sugar Cube Pyramid

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1. Begin with a piece of wood or foam core that is big enough for your finished model. Depending on what you have chosen to build your structure from, this should be at least 1 1/2 feet long by 1 1/2 feet wide.
2. Use the marker to place a dot in the centre of your foam core. Use the ruler to draw two lines, 12 inches long, making an "x" over the centre dot. Now, connect each point of the "x" to make a square. This will be the outline for your pyramid.

Take the sugar cubes and glue a row of cubes along the line. You want the outside of the sugar cube to touch the inside of the square. Glue down the entire first layer of cubes and allow them to dry. It is not necessary to fill in the entire area of the square, just the outline.

3. 4

Wait for the glue to dry and then lay the next layer. Place the cube half way off the row below it to make it look like steps. Make sure to offset the blocks so there is a solid cube above the seam between the two lower cubes. This will make the pyramid look more authentic. Allow each layer to dry completely before laying the next layer.

4. 5

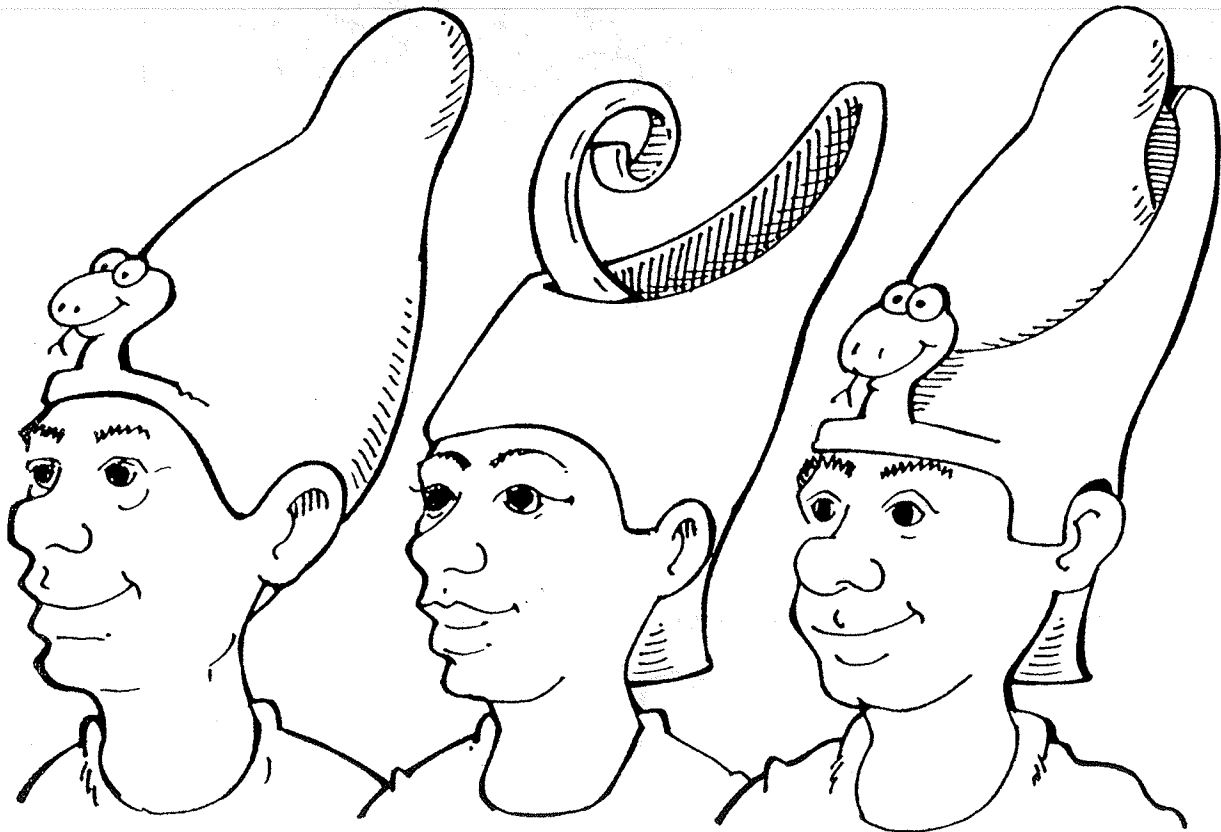
Sand the cubes gently if you would like a smoother look to the pyramid, or you can use clay to fill in the space and use the sugar cube structure as a skeleton. Make a triangular point from the clay and attach it to the top cube. Then make "snakes" of clay by rolling it on a flat surface with your hands and place the "snakes" into the steps of the pyramid. Then roll out large pieces of clay and use the ruler to measure out the length of one side of the pyramid and cut it out of the clay. Gently place the piece on the structure and secure into place. Use a butter knife or a clay tool to add horizontal and vertical lines to simulate bricks. Repeat for the three other sides.

5. 6

Paint the cubes (if you didn't cover them with clay) a light sandy colour with acrylic craft paint. Spread the glue in small sections along the foam core and sprinkle sand over the glue. Continue covering the base with sand until completely covered and allow to dry.

## The Pharaohs' Crowns

At one point in ancient times, Egypt was two kingdoms—Lower Egypt (land downstream or to the north) and Upper Egypt (land upstream or to the south). The kings of Upper Egypt wore a white crown, while the kings of Lower Egypt wore a red crown. For centuries the two kingdoms fought each other to gain control of the whole region. Menes was the first king to unify Upper and Lower Egypt into one kingdom. After unification, the Egyptian pharaohs began to wear a crown that was a combination of the crowns of both kingdoms. Each crown had a serpent, or snake, at the front that was the symbol of royalty. (Some Egyptologists think that the pharaoh Narmer unified Egypt; some hold that Narmer and Menes are the same person; still others hold that Menes completed a process of unification started by Narmer.)



The crown of  
Upper Egypt

The crown of  
Lower Egypt

The double crown of  
united Egypt

### *Project Description*

Several renowned Egyptologists will be attending the grand opening of the Ancient Egypt Museum. You and your staff want to impress them with your knowledge of Menes and the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt. Study art work showing historical depictions of the crowns, and then re-create one of them for the museum.

## The Pharaohs' Crowns *(continued)*

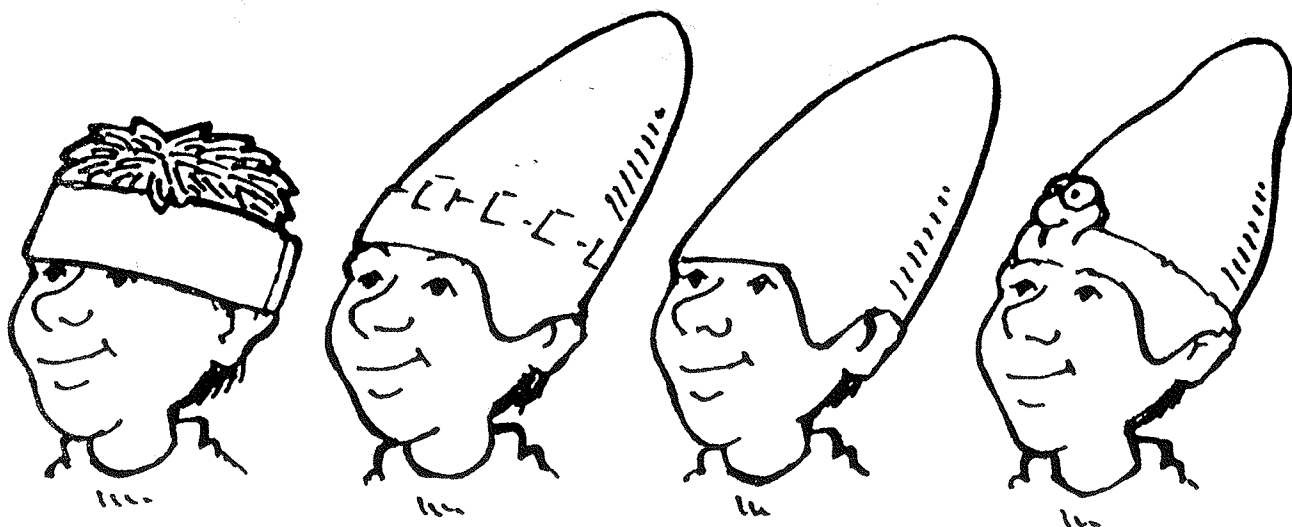
### Materials

cardboard or poster board  
 foil  
 newspaper  
 felt  
 masking tape  
 string  
 white glue or liquid starch  
 white tempera paint  
 brushes  
 marking pens  
 stapler  
 gold foil



### Directions for making the white crown

1. Measure a four-inch-wide strip of cardboard so that it fits around your head. Staple the ends together. Cut out the ear openings. This is the foundation of the crown.
2. Use newspaper or foil to build the bowling-pin-shaped crown. Use masking tape to anchor the newspaper to the cardboard strip. Then papier mache the form.
3. When the papier mache is dry, paint it white.
4. Make a serpent out of foil, cover it in masking tape, and papier mache it. Use marking pens to add features. Glue the serpent to the front of the crown.

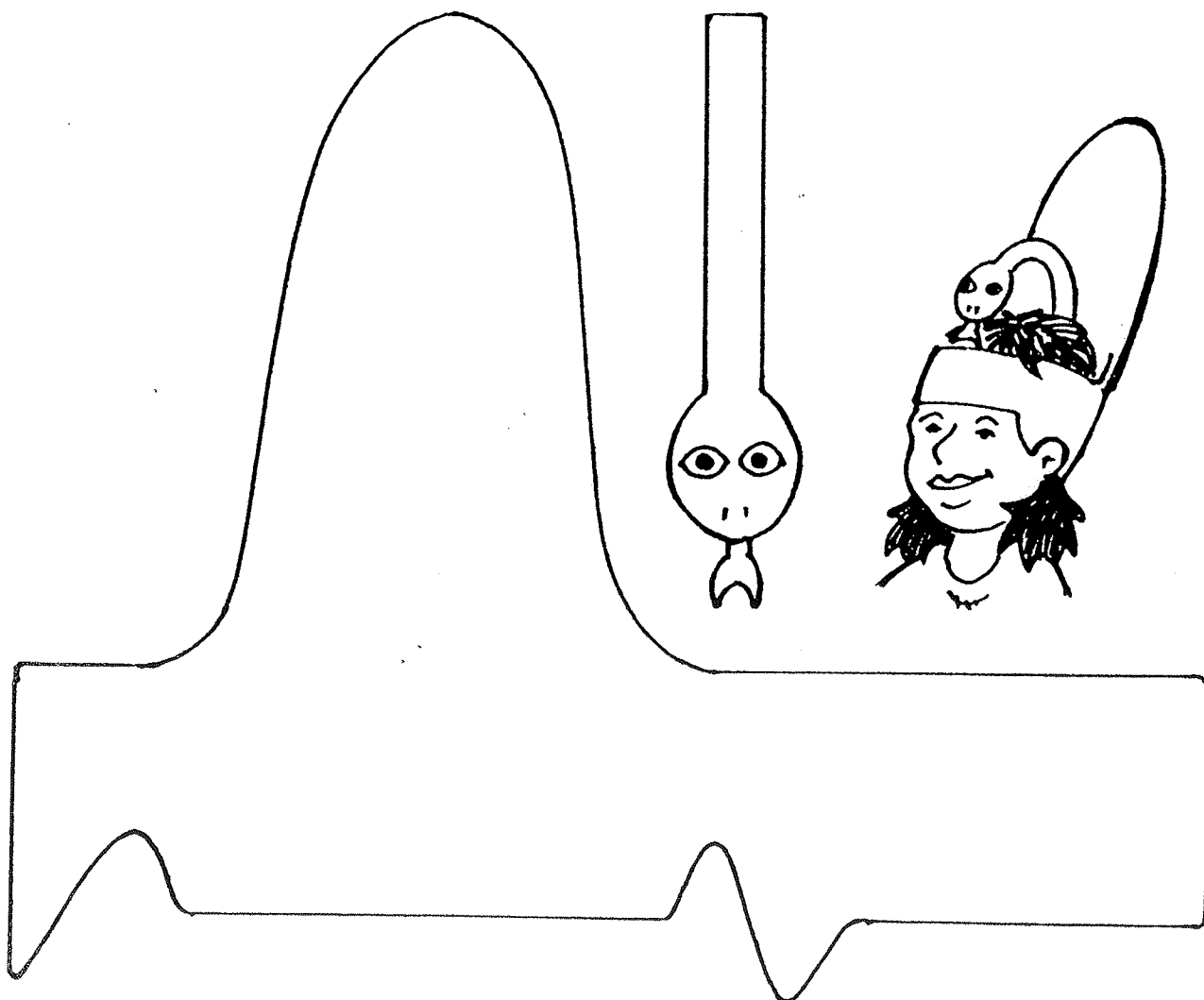




## The Pharaohs' Crowns *(continued)*

### *Directions for making the red crown*

1. Draw a pattern of the crown on a piece of poster board. Make sure the crown will fit on your head. (You can measure your head with a piece of string and use that as a guide for your head circumference measurement. Make the crown a couple of inches wider so it can be glued or stapled together.)
2. Cut out the crown, making sure that the spot for connecting the crown is at the side of the crown and not the back. Paint the poster board or glue red felt onto it.
3. Staple the crown together. Make a serpent out of cardboard, cardboard and felt, or gold foil. Attach it to the crown.
4. For the unified crown, the white and red crowns can be combined and worn together.



# Make Your Own Obelisk

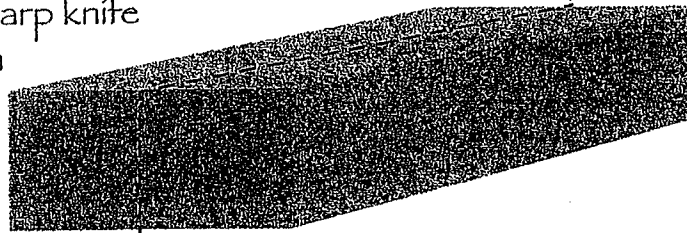


offering.

This project requires a sharp knife so make sure you have an adult to help.

**1** Cover your workspace with newspapers. You need the florist foam to have square ends so cut it accordingly. Most florist foam comes in rectangular blocks. The easiest way to make a square-based piece of foam is to lay the foam down and cut it in half, lengthwise.

cut in half to make a square length of foam



**2** Obelisks have pyramid-shaped tops, so carefully use the knife to carve one end into a pyramid. You can practice on a piece of scrap foam to figure out the best carving technique.

## Supplies

newspapers



12-inch-long block of florist foam (from the floral arrangement aisle of any craft store)



glue



a sharp knife



4-by-4-inch wood base (from the woodworking section of a craft store)



small can of sand- or stone-colored spray paint

**3** Use the tip of the knife to carve hieroglyphs into the long sides of your obelisk. You can also use a pen or a toothpick to carve the symbols.

**4** Stand the obelisk up (the pyramid should be at the top) and glue it to the wooden base. Let the glue dry for a few minutes.

**5** Spray paint the foam obelisk according to the directions on the spray paint can. Because the foam will absorb some of the paint, you may need a couple of coats.

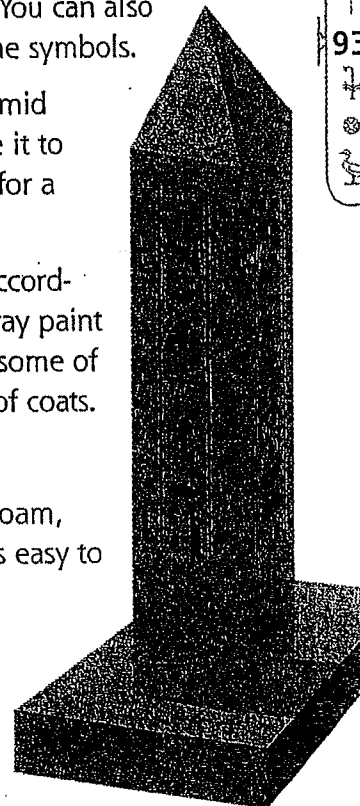
**Variation:** If you can't find florist foam, Styrofoam will work, too. It's not as easy to carve as the florist foam, though.

## Time Needed

# 30 minutes

not including drying time

A drawing the obelisk known as Cleopatra's needle.



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# Ancient Egyptian Harp

Beautifully decorated Egyptian harps were an important component of ancient religious ceremonies, banquets, and social gatherings. Other instruments were lutes, drums, cymbals, bells, tambourines, flutes, and trumpets.

Harps were usually made in one of two ways—a small portable or shoulder harp, or a much larger arched harp. Both were plucked rather than bowed. The portable harp was made out of wood and had eight to twelve strings made from animal gut. This type of harp was often decorated with expensive materials like silver, gold, and lapis lazuli, and covered with flowery or geometrical ornamentations. In one picture on a tomb, a harp is shown with a jaguar's skin, an instrument for rich people.

## Project Description

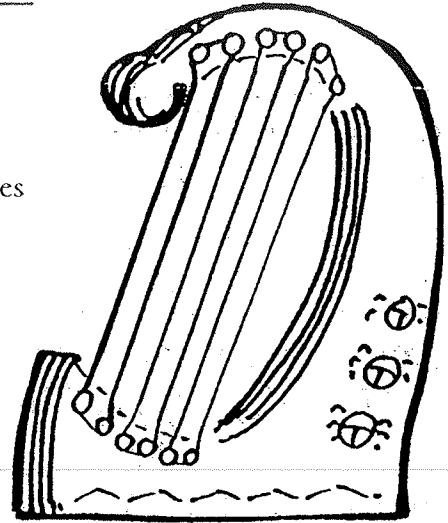
You have just toured the tomb of an 18th Dynasty prince. One of the murals in the tomb showed part of a banquet scene with a strolling lute player and two other musicians playing harps. The mural is supposed to show the pleasant scenes of the afterlife with the female musicians playing for the soul of the deceased throughout eternity. You notice that the portable harp is made out of gold and alabaster and a dark, rich wood. It is so beautiful that you begin plans to make a reproduction of this harp for the Ancient Egypt Museum.



## Ancient Egyptian Harp (*continued*)

### Materials

pattern of your harp design  
 4 pieces of cardboard or posterboard, about 15 x 15 inches  
 extra cardboard to add stability to the base  
 stapler or glue  
 paints in gold and a variety of bright colors  
 assorted rubber bands  
 scissors  
 hole punch  
 brads



### Directions

1. Draw a pattern for the portable harp. Be creative but follow ancient Egyptian artistic techniques. Include ideas for how it will be painted.
2. Make four tracings of the pattern onto the cardboard and cut out the four pieces.
3. Measure and mark the location of holes for the harp strings on one piece and punch the holes. Lay the punched piece on each of the remaining pieces, mark the location of the holes, and punch them. Make six holes on the top and six on the bottom.
4. Glue or staple all four pieces together, keeping the holes aligned. If you use glue, let it dry thoroughly.
5. Paint and decorate the harp with elaborate yet traditional designs.
6. Place a brad in each of the twelve holes.
7. Wrap a rubber band around two adjacent brads on the top of the harp, then stretch the rubber band across the harp and wrap it around the two corresponding brads on the bottom, making two "strings." Repeat for the remaining pairs of brads. Use thicker or longer rubber bands for the low notes, thinner or shorter rubber bands for the high notes. Adjust the tension of the rubber bands so that the notes sound good together.

## Funerary Boat Model

The Nile River was the main travel route in ancient Egypt, and all the cities and towns were easily accessible by boat. Small boats, like fishing boats, were made from bundles of papyrus stalks lashed together with ropes. The larger boats were usually built of wood. The pharaohs prided themselves on their pleasure boats with multiple decks containing cabins, kitchens, dining rooms, and lounges.

Elaborate funerary boats were very important to the ancient Egyptians because these boats took the pharaohs to their tombs. According to their beliefs, the soul of the dead accompanied the sun on its eternal journey in the heavens around the world. Therefore a boat—or at least a model of a boat—was included in every tomb. In Tutankhamun's tomb there were thirty-five boats. The most famous boats are the two discovered in 1955 next to the great pyramid at Giza, although their exact purpose is still in dispute.

### *Project Description*

You leave the site of the museum that houses the famous boats found at Giza and you find yourself imagining that you are working in one of the pharaoh's workshops—a special one that is creating the funerary boat for his final trip on the Nile before he is buried in his tomb. You are excited because you have come up with some ideas that will make this boat unique but still follow the basic designs of the ancient Egyptians. Make a drawing of your plan, and then construct a model of it to be displayed in the Ancient Egypt Museum.

