Lesson #4: Inquiry of Ancient Egyptian Daily Life
Prepared by Shannon Parker

**Audience:** Second grade students

**Standards:** Virginia SOLs:

2.3— The student will identify and compare changes in community life over time in terms of buildings, jobs, transportation, and population.

2.7— The student will describe natural resources (water, soil, wood, and coal), human resources (people at work), and capital resources (machines, tools, and buildings).

National Standards for History Grades K-4 (Standards in Historical Thinking)

**Standard 1. Chronological Thinking**

A. Distinguish between past, present, and future time.

B. Identify in historical narratives the temporal structure of a historical narrative or story.

C. Establish temporal order in constructing their [students’] own historical narratives.

G. Explain change and continuity over time.

**Standard 2. Historical Comprehension**

A. Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage.

B. Identify the central question(s) the historical narrative addresses.

C. Read historical narratives imaginatively.

D. Evidence historical perspectives.

**Standard 3. Historical Analysis and Interpretation**

A. Formulate questions to focus their inquiry or analysis.

**Standard 4. Historical Research Capabilities**

A. Formulate historical questions.

B. Obtain historical data.

C. Interrogate historical data.

D. Marshal needed knowledge of the time and place, and construct a story, explanation, or historical narrative.


**Objectives:** Given class discussion of ancient Egyptian daily life, students will:

1. Generate questions and formulate hypotheses.

2. Gather information based on their research question.

3. Publish results in a class information book.

**Lesson Content:**

**Catalyst:** Ask students if they think Ancient Egyptian children played Wii, or if they had board games, if they went to school, if they wore jeans, etc.

**Introduction:** Tell them that today they will get a chance to find out what life was like for Egyptian children and other Egyptian people. Show the students the daily life image. Ask them

¹ Sources found on site
“What do you think the picture is showing?” Encourage the students give a variety of suggestions. Discuss that the picture shows that ancient Egyptian children went to school just like they do. Ask the students to think about any questions that they might have about what daily life was like for the ancient Egyptians. Mention how you already learned about one of the leaders, or pharaohs, but what about other people? List the questions on the board. [Sample responses: Where did they live? What jobs did they have? What did the kids do? What did they eat?] Have the class vote on the three questions that they most want to learn about, and assign one question to each of the three group.

Content focus: In their groups, have students generate possible hypotheses for each question. Encourage them to be creative. Then introduce them to the Trackstar site and show them how it works. Tell them that you want them to use the sites to find more information on their specific question. Introduce them to the “What I Found Out” worksheet and emphasize that this is meant to be used as an outline for what they learn. Give them time to talk amongst themselves to figure out who is going to look for what information and where. After 30 minutes of conducting research via the Trackstar website, have them come back together in their groups and discuss what they learned. Tell them that you want them to show what they learned in the “Ancient Egypt Daily Life” book.

Closing: Have the students present what they learned on their specific question during their inquiry to the rest of the class. All three questions that the class chose during the introduction should be addressed. Combine each group’s section of the “Daily Life” book into one book to put on display in the class.

Lesson Extension: Ask students “What parts of life in ancient Egypt were different than our lives today? [Sample responses: clothes, pharaohs, slaves] What parts of life were the same? [food, toys, music, some jobs]” Discuss how many aspects of life in ancient Egypt were similar to ours. Talk with students about the social/political levels in Egypt (ex, slaves, workers, administrators, pharaoh), and how we have social and political levels, too. We have a president and he has advisors, and there are people with a lot of money and people who don’t have that much money. Discuss inequality with students, and ask them for suggestions about what to do about this. These suggestions could be used for a lesson in civics.

Assessment:
Formative: Check for understanding through questioning and by walking around the classroom to ensure that students are on task and understanding what they should be doing.

Summative: Draw a picture of what life was like for the ancient Egyptians, specifically referring to your inquiry question. Then write three sentences explaining your drawing. Be sure to include all three questions that we discussed in class.

Background Information/Content:
The ancient Egyptians were an agrarian society, using the flooding of the Nile and irrigation to grow crops. Many people worked in the fields. Others worked as craftsmen or builders. Women generally stayed at home, but they could have jobs as well. Most families had children, and the boys went to school while the girls stayed home (but many learned to read and write at home). Children had toy balls and rattles and played with board games as well as outside. They lived in mud brick houses, with the size based on how rich a person was. The main foods were bread, lentils, and a few other food. They drank beer, water, and sometimes milk, but at banquets they would have a lot of the same meat and fruit that we have as well as wine. The men wore kilts and loincloths, while the women wore long dresses, mostly white. [Relevant information will be based on what inquiry questions the students vote to focus on.]
What I Found Out

What facts did I learn about the Ancient Egyptians lifestyle?

What inferences can I make based on the facts I found?

What else did I find out that might be interesting?

What new questions do I have?
What I Found Out

What facts did I learn about the Ancient Egyptians lifestyle?

*Boys went to school to learn how to read and write. Girls did not go to school. They usually stayed home with their mother to learn how to do things at home. They also learned how to read and write. Kids played with toys and played outside. They also swam in the Nile.*

What inferences can I make based on the facts I found?

*Kids lives were kind of the same in Ancient Egypt as ours are today. They had to work hard at their chores, because they don’t have the same tools that we do. But they also had fun and played with their friends.*

What else did I find out that might be interesting?

*Kids drank beer for lunch! They ate it with bread and water.*

What new questions do I have?

*What kind of games did they play? What chores did they have to do?*
ANCIENT EGYPTIAN

DAILY LIFE

Ms. Parker’s 2nd Grade Class
Life in Ancient Egypt was different than it is today because:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

[Draw a picture]
But it is also similar because:

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

[Draw a picture]
What was life like for children in Ancient Egypt?

[SAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSE]

Life in Ancient Egypt was different than it is today because:

- Children had to work in the fields and learn how to bake bread. They
did not have toys and computers like we have.
But it is also similar because:

Children went to school to learn how to read and write. They also learned math. They played board games. They swam and played outside to have fun.