

The Project Approach to Learning at

**RisingOaks**  
Early Learning | St. Matthew

**Project Name:** Ancient Egypt

**Age Group:** School-Age Group 1

**Project Start Date:** October 21, 2022

**Project End Date:** February 15, 2023



## Background

This project started on October 21st, 2022 in the School-Age group 1 program and ended on February 15, 2023. There were 23 children who participated in this project, however not all children participated at the same time. The children involved in this project ranged from 4 years of age to 6 years of age. The educators involved were Keri Neeb, RECE and Josephine Alishaw, RECE.

## Phase 1: Beginning the Project

This project interest started as Halloween grew closer and the children were talking about Mummies and various other costumes. The group kept returning to the concept of Mummies, so the educators introduced the idea of investigating Ancient Egypt to the group through a variety of experiences. This then probed various questions from the group surrounding the concept of mummies, pyramids, and the processes that took place in Ancient Egypt.

To start the project, we first wanted to highlight what the children already knew about Ancient Egypt and bring this knowledge into the spotlight. We then asked open-ended questions to the group that challenged them with coming up with a list of things they wanted to find out about Ancient Egypt. Below are the lists that the children compiled together.

### What do we know?

- There are pyramids - Grace
- There are mummies inside pyramids - Sloan
- People around the world visit them - Alexis
- People were buried with their belongings and treasures - Mya
- It is very old - Group
- The pyramids are big

### What do we want to know?

- How are Mummies created?
- What are pyramids?
- Did they have their own writing?
- When was Ancient Egypt?
- What did animals represent?
- Can you visit now?
- Who built the statues?

## Whom can we ask?

- Use the iPad for research
- Resource books from the library
- Archeologists and historians
- We can look at Museums

## Formal definition:

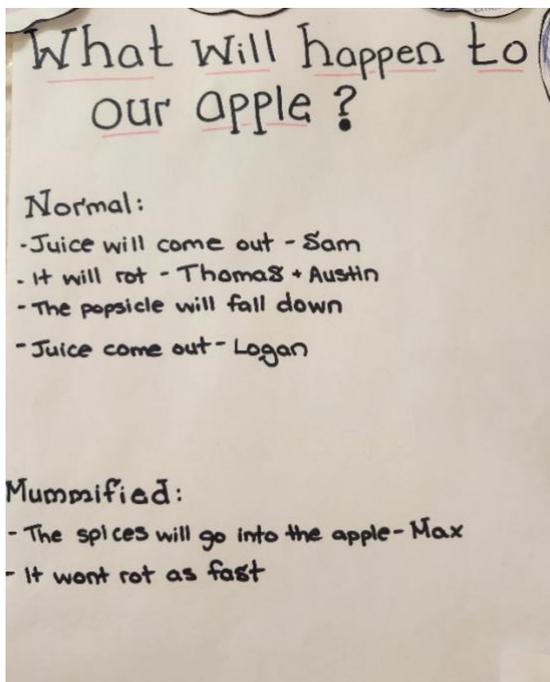
Ancient Egypt was one of the greatest and most powerful civilizations In the history of the world. It lasted over 3000 years from 3150 to 30 BC. The civilization of Ancient Egypt was located along the Nile River In northeast Africa. The Nile was the source of much of the Ancient Egypt's wealth. -  
www.ducksters.com definition

## Informal definition:

- They built the pyramids - the entire group
- It was built a long time ago - Max
- My grandma went to Egypt. The Pyramids are still there. - Sriya
- People that are mummified - Andrea
- Wrapped up mummies - Laura
- Alligators and fish are found In the Nile River. - Grace

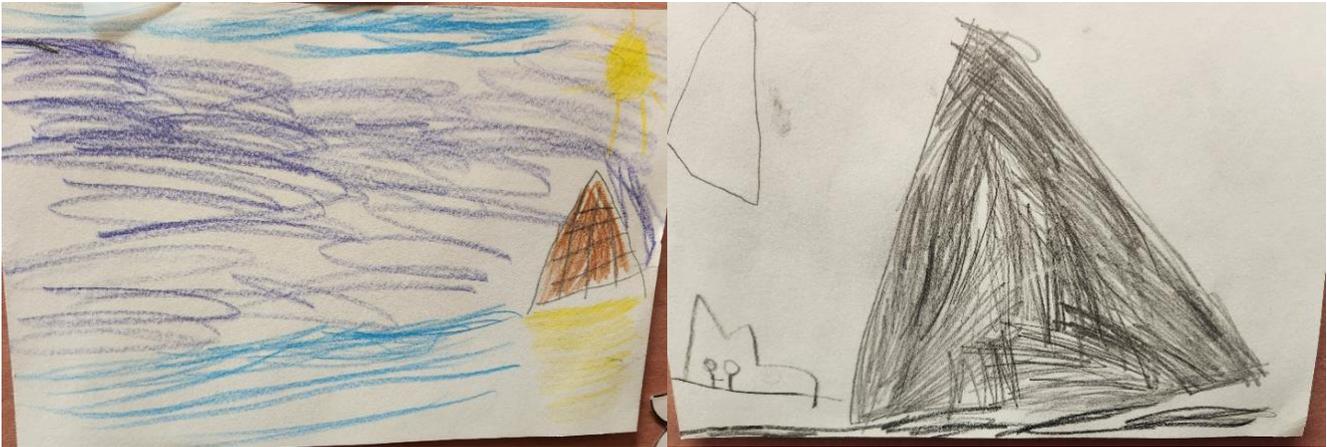
## Survey:

Prior to our Apple Mummification experience, the group used their critical thinking skills to create a survey to guess what they thought would happen to the apples. Below highlights their responses.



## First Drawings:

Prior to engaging in further investigation and discovery, we gave the group an opportunity to draw their own representation of what they envision when they hear Ancient Egypt. Below are some of the drawings that the children designed prior to learning any new gained knowledge of the project topic.



## Second Drawings:

Towards the completion of the Ancient Egypt project, the children took all of the learning concepts that they explored and turned these concepts into their second representations. We decided to incorporate 3 dimensional objects. Some children created the Nile River, others did Papyrus paper. See below for some sculptures completed by the children.

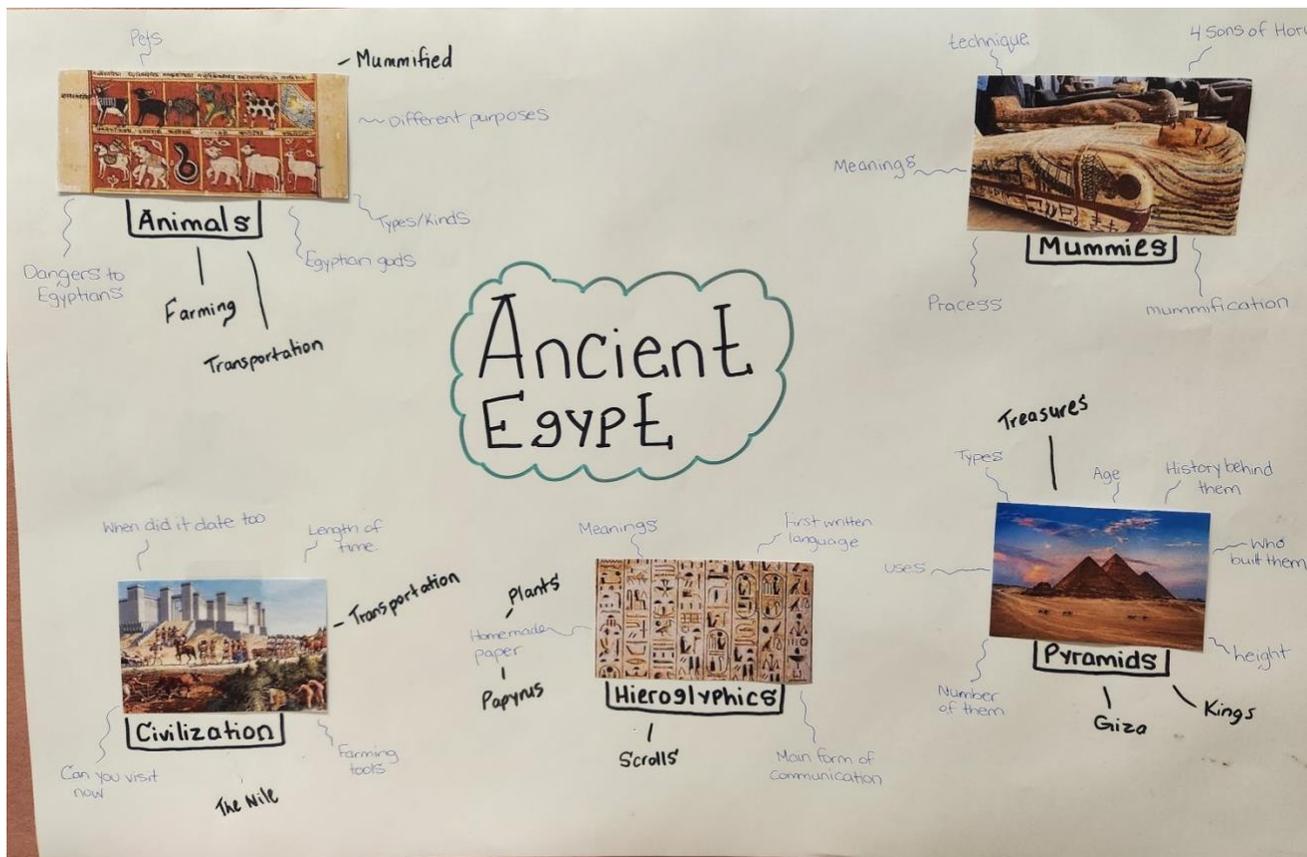




## Phase 2: Developing the Project

### Learning Web:

This following web served as a place to capture the children's learning process throughout the entirety of the project. It outlines the learning that took place and highlights the directions that the School-age group took and some of the categories they explored with Ancient Egypt.



## Vocabulary List:

Throughout the Ancient Egypt project, any new vocabulary that was gained by the children while investigating aspects of Egypt was added to our vocabulary list. This list was frequently re-visited by the group as we shifted through the various stages of the project. This allowed them to use these vocabulary words in their conversations regarding certain investigative experiences.

Embalm	Ancient
Pyramid	Scribe
Mummification	Spices
Sarcophagus	Shaduff
Archaeologist	Sphinx
Civilization	Nile River
Monuments	Giza
Hieroglyphs	Tomb
Pharaoh	Papyrus
Afterlife	Rulers

## How are Mummies created?

One of the very first questions that was prompted by the school age children was that of how mummies were created. To answer this question, the group turned to the iPad for some research and inquiry. We watched a video on mummification and explored the processes that took place by the Egyptians to ensure people were able to pass into the afterlife. We learned that all organs in the human body were taken out, except for the heart, in which the Egyptians believed was necessary to pass into the afterlife. These organs were placed in separate jars, which were placed with the mummy to ensure they were re-joined in the afterlife.

The group decided to practice their mummy wrapping skills by using yarn and cutout bodies. The group engaged in conversation throughout this experience and were able to re-visit the steps and processes from the many videos.



Figure 1 Two finished mummies up for display



Figure 2 Child wrapped up as a mummy

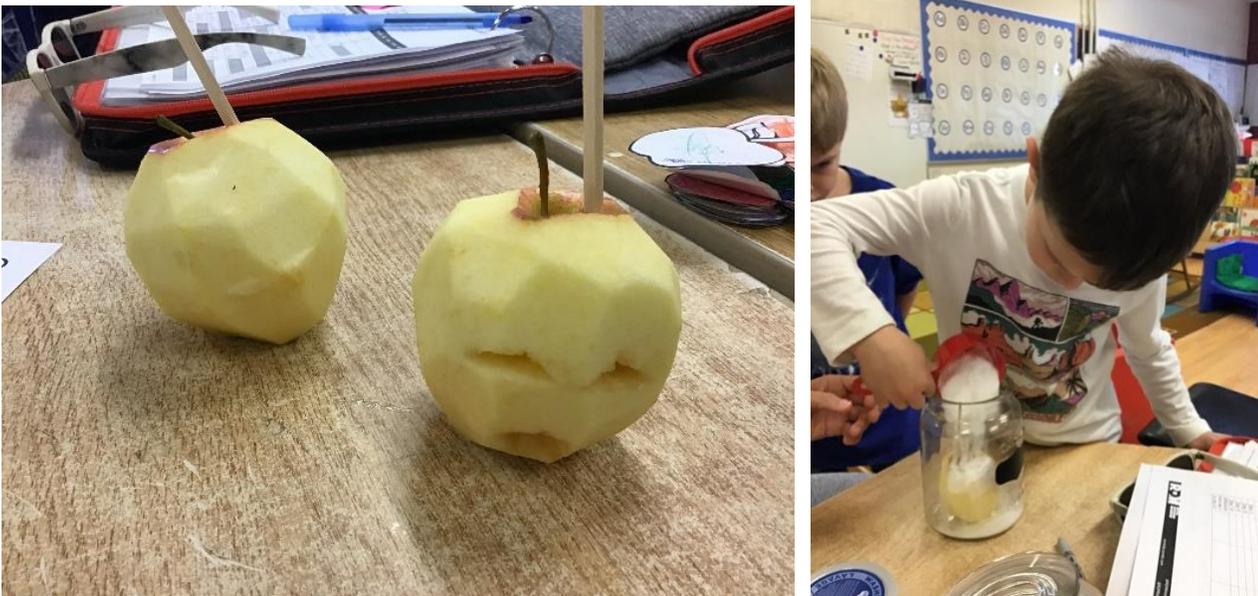
## Mummification

The next step we took in exploring the concept of mummies and their origin was to investigate into the process of mummification. To do this, we again took to the iPad to gain insight into these processes. We took note on the multiple steps that the ancient Egyptians took, the belief behind the process, along with the importance of mummification itself and the reasoning behind this process. We found it most interesting to learn about the many spices that were used as a source of preservatives in this process. To expand on this, Josephine introduced an experience in where the group mummified an apple.

The group first used their recap skills to identify the Importance of spices in the Mummification process. We then gathered salt and baking soda as our spices to use in this experience. From here, we then cut out the perfect mummy face on one of our apples.

A single apple was peeled and placed into an open jar. The children identified that this would be the apple that was not mummified. The second apple was also peeled, however the group then put the apple into another jar, then proceeded to dump our spices on top.

After a few days, the group revisited our apples. Right away we noticed that the non-mummified apple was turning brown, while the mummified apple was getting smaller and the juices were being pulled out of the apple altogether. Our mummified apple looked like a real mummy! The group was amazed at this outcome and began talking again, about why the spices were able to dry out the apple.



*Figure 3 Taking part in the process of mummification*



Figure 4 Children adding spices to our jars

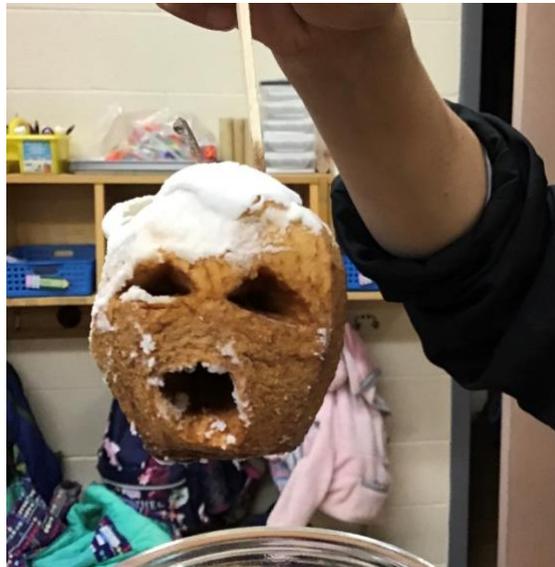


Figure 5 A good look at pre and post mummification

## 4 Sons of Horus

While learning about the mummification process, the group also wanted to investigate further into what was done with the other organs that were set aside to be reunited with the body. We quickly learned that they were placed in 4 special containers called the 4 Sons of Horus. After further investigation, we discovered the following:

- Imsety was a jar that had a human head and contained the liver
- Qebehsenuf was a jar that had a falcon head and contained the intestines
- Hapy was a jar that had a baboon head and contained the lungs
- Duamatef was a jar that had a jackal head and contained the stomach

After gaining this knowledge, the group decided to work together to create our own Canopic Jars known as the 4 Sons of Horus jars. Below highlights the process that the children went through to create these jars.

We also touched on the Importance of Pyramids In the Egyptian world and how they 4 Sons of Horus jars were represented throughout the pyramids. The children worked to create their own pyramids, which highlighted their ability to use their Imaginative play skills and creative expression skills.



Figure 6 Children working through the steps to create their own 4 Jars of Horus



Figure 7 Children matching the correct body part with the jars



Figure 8 Child holding us their finished jar



Figure 9 Child working to create their finished Pyramid



## Did they have their own writing?

The group was able to explore the Ancient Egyptian writing of Hieroglyphics. Collectively as a group we researched the many different forms of their writing, and the areas in which they used It around Ancient Egypt. We learned that this writing was used outside of Temples, Pyramids, and even on the Tombs of the many Pharaoh's that ruled Ancient Egypt.

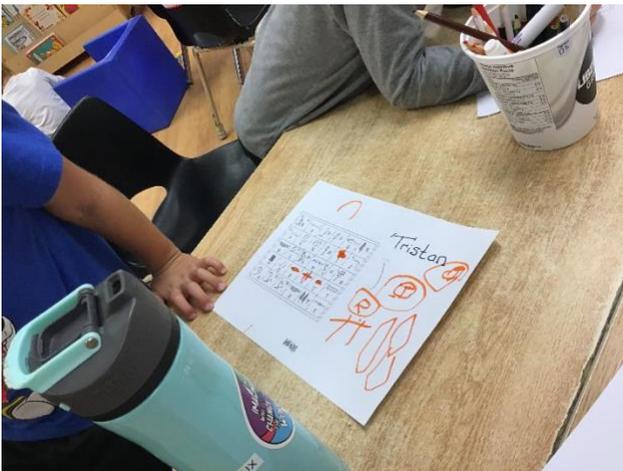
The writing consisted of a variety on animals and other common signs found throughout Egypt. We discovered the following definition on Google.

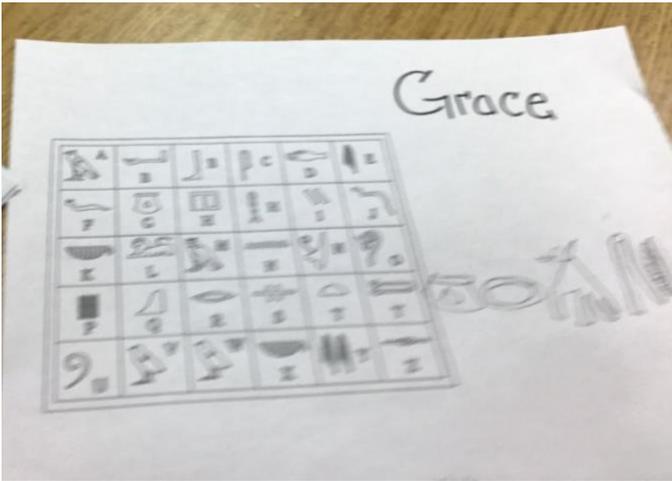
"The word hieroglyph means "sacred carvings". The Egyptians first used hieroglyphs exclusively for Incriptions carved or painted on temple walls. This form of pictorial writing was also used on tombs, sheets of papyrus, wooden boards covered with a stucco wash, potsherds and fragments of limestone.

" - Google definition

	A vulture		L lion		W chick
	B leg		M owl		X cloth
	C cup		N water		Y feathers
	D hand		O chick		Z bolt
	E feather		P stool		CH tether
	F viper		Q hill		KH sieve
	G pot		R mouth		SH basin
	H wick		S cloth		MAN
	I feather		T loaf		WOMAN
	J cobra		U chick		ANKH
	K cup		V viper		

www.egyptbook.com © Sarah Peters





## Papyrus Paper

The group worked together to make Papyrus Paper with strips of brown paper bags, glue and water. First, they made a mixture of glue and water in a large bin, then added paper strips in the glue mixture. They took out one strip at a time and removed the excess glue. They then lay the strips side by side on a sheet of wax paper, overlapping them slightly, then applied another layer of strips at a right angle. This was then left to dry overnight. The children enjoyed exploring this sensory experience as they created the paper just like Egyptians.

To scaffold on this experience, the children then took these pieces of Papyrus paper and drew their own hieroglyphs and pictures on them. These pictures were then displayed on our Project wall for all of the families to see.



## When was Ancient Egypt?

One of the very first topics that we began discussing and investigating after the pyramids, was that of the Nile River. Through this investigation, the group discovered that this is in fact the longest river in the world. The Ancient Egyptians used this river for travel, swimming and leisure, food and farming, as well as for protection.

An aspect of the Nile that the children gravitated towards was the way the Egyptians gathered water from the river to use for food and irrigation. We discovered that the Egyptians built a tool known as the Saduff. This revolutionary invention at the time was built with a wide base and a swinging arm. One end of the arm had a rock or heavy object to weigh it down, while the other end had a bucket attached to it. The Egyptians used this to gather large amounts of water, and place in into a canal, which was then transported to fields, crops, and villages.

The group decided to take on the challenge of using their creative thinking and innovation skills in order to create our very own Saduff's. Using popsicle sticks, pipe cleaners, sticky tack and hot glue, the group was able to create their very own working Saduff's.



Figure 10 Child seen working on their Saduff

## Can you visit now?

Ancient Egypt Is a popular tourist location to this day. Many people travel from all around the world to visit the sites of the Pyramids and to see the Great Sphinx of Giza.

Together as a group we discovered that there are daily tours all throughout Egypt that highlight the rich history of what was Ancient Egypt.

Collectively we completed some research and found the following 10 Wonders of Ancient Egypt. These are places you can still visit:

- The Pyramids of Giza
- The Great Sphinx
- Karnak (temples)
- Tutankhamun (tomb)
- Abu Simbel Temples
- Kom Ombo Temple
- Luxor Temple
- The Valley of the Kings
- Philae Temples
- The Nile

## Who built the statues?

The Great Sphinx of Giza

4500 year old limestone statue

This was in honor of Ra-Horakhty, a powerful Sun God.

It measures 240 feet (73 meters) in length, and 66 feet (20 meters) in height

## Animals - their Importance and meaning

One of the constant topics of conversation throughout all of the past experiences the children explored was the Importance of animals In the Ancient Egyptian world. The educators decided to touch on this aspect in order to provide the children with an opportunity to gain Insight Into the various types of animals. Below highlights the Information that the children grasped, along with a matching game where the children had to Identify the correct Ancient Egyptian animals.

Crocodile - crocodiles were one animal that the Egyptians feared as they had the powerful ability to damage Ancient Egyptian's boats while travelling In the Nile.

Cat - one of the most sacred animals In Ancient Egypt. One of the most common household pets.

Were believed to be descendants of Bast, goddess of moonlight and fertility.

Cobra - highly feared animal. Was a symbol of royalty

Ibis - associated with Thoth, Egyptian god of wisdom and writing

Cattle - Egyptians used cattle for farming, milk, meat and horns. The leather was used to make shoes, shields and chairs.

Dogs - man's best friend. Used for hunting and guard dogs

Jackal - they would wander In the desert and look for food. Associated with Anubis, the Ancient God of the afterlife and mummification.

Scarab Beetle - associated with the sun In the sky

Beasts of Burden - donkeys, camels, and horses were used for plowing fields and transporting Items.

Hippopotamus - much feared animal as they frequently damaged boats In the Nile and attacked people near the river banks.



Figure 11 Ancient Egyptian animals shown on our board

## Phase 3: Concluding the Project

### Virtual Tour of Ancient Egypt

Throughout the project, the children would engage in constant conversation about how they wish they could visit Egypt and tour Inside of one of the pyramids. Keri and Josephine wanted to ensure that this aspect was represented in the project as It was a conversation piece throughout. On one of the PA days In January, Keri and Josephine brought forward a virtual opportunity for the children to tour through the Great Pyramid of Giza. This Pyramid was one that we frequently observed In many of our learning experiences, so the children were thrilled.

Harvard University was able to recreate a virtual tour Inside of the Pyramid of Giza, so we took this opportunity to grab the projector and go on a journey as a group. Throughout the guided tour, the children were able to hear the history of the Pyramid, the events of what was thought to have happened, who Khufu was, along with the 3 chambers located in the Pyramid which held the King and the Queen.

The group learned the rich history behind this pyramid, along with other's just like it located throughout history. This is the last Wonder of Ancient Egypt that is still standing and preserved to this day.

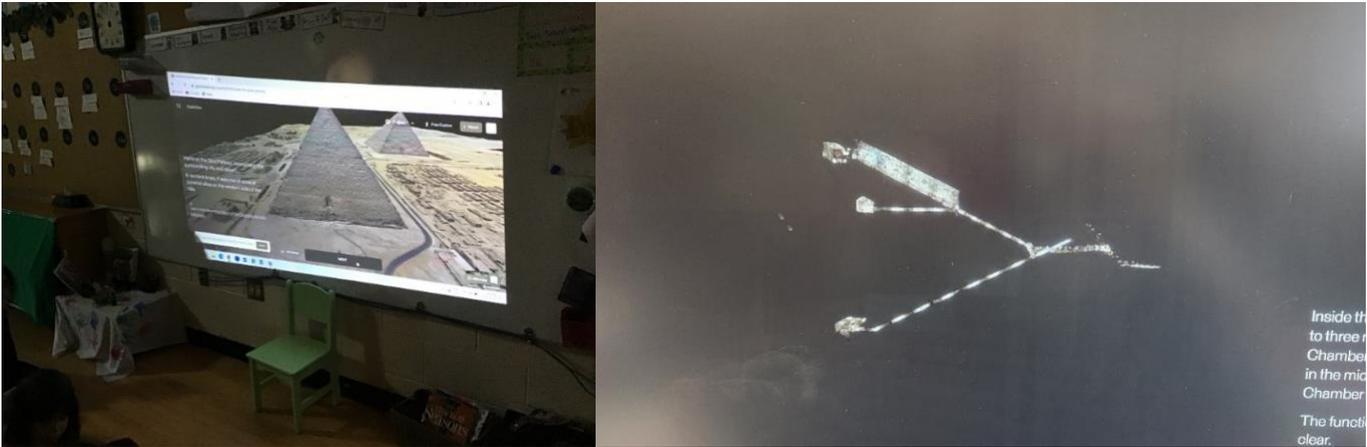


Figure 12 The chambers inside the Pyramids



Figure 13 Children observing an Ancient Egyptian documentary

## Ancient Egyptian Date Snacks

As the School-Age group 1 concludes their Ancient Egypt Project, the educators wanted to ensure we get a final taste of Egypt through a baking experience. Educator Josephine brought forward the experience of the children being able to create their very own Ancient Egyptian Date Balls. The group was collectively tasked with deciding on which ingredients they would like to use. We came up with dates, chocolate chips, sunflower seeds and sesame seeds.

Using a rubber mallet, the children took turns engaging their hand-eye coordination and strength as they began to smash the dates into smaller pieces. We encouraged everyone to take a turn and our sense of belonging was put on display and the group cheered one another on. Eventually, we had to turn to a blender to ensure the dates were well mashed.

From here, we mixed all of the ingredients together in a bowl and rolled them into individual serving sizes. Some children were eager to try the sweet treat, while others were hesitant as it was something new to them completely.

This was the perfect way to finish up our project on Ancient Egypt, enjoying a snack with some good company.



## Final 3-D Representation of Ancient Egypt

For our final representation of Ancient Egypt, the JK/SK group looked to Incorporate the great Canadian Winter and all of the elements that it encompasses. We took to the snow as the group first dug the channel that would serve to be the Egyptian Nile. We Incorporated heavy work as we shoveled snow from one area to the next. We enhanced our teamwork skills as we worked together to solve problems that arose. The children also enhanced their recapitulative play skills as they joined in conversation about previous elements of our project. They reflected on what they had learned about the Nile and the Pyramids as they built them out of snow. "We have to put some crocodiles in the Nile" Grace exclaimed to the group. As Keri and a few children were building the pyramids, they joined in conversation as they recalled that not all pyramids have a pointed top. This was then represented as we built pointed pyramids, wide pyramids, and even flat pyramids. As we took a step back to look at our work, there was a sense of accomplishment felt from across the group and those that worked to create this 3-D representation of Ancient Egypt.

Josephine also Included a final creative experience where the group was able to make an Egyptian mask. Josephine reminded the children that these masks were similar to those placed on a King's sarcophagus, creating a symbol of who lies inside.





Figure 14 The finished Egyptian Nile and an assortment of Pyramids



## Teacher Reflections

Throughout the entirety of the project, the educators found it fascinating to see the joy in the children's wonder and learning. During key moments of the project, the children were eager to learn and complete the experiences. We saw them engaged in individual activities and collaborative teamwork building alongside their peers. You could see the excitement when they completed an engaging activity or learned new information that they would then share with their peers. This project brought on many learning opportunities for not only the children, but for the educators as well. It was memorable and involved engaging experiences for all of the children involved.