

Creating an Amulet: Learning About Lucky Charms

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Historical Context: Amulets were objects created and carried for their symbolic importance, whether that was protective, spiritual, ancestral, to bring good luck, or to represent an important bond. Everything about these objects had meaning; the shape, texture, words, color, and material all had importance. Today, people still create and carry amulets for the same reasons; we may call them wedding rings, crucifixes, lucky charms, or the like, but the reason is still the same; we believe these objects possess some power or importance to us. In ancient Egypt, an amulet made from certain material would show the wealth of the bearer, as it was traded from afar, the object itself serving as both a talisman and a socio economic indicator.

Time: Two class periods (40 minutes each)

Correlation to Standards:

World History,
Economics,
Geography,
Art

Materials Needed: Using a computer with a projector, open the following webpage:

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/egam/hd_egam.htm

chart explaining various color and materials found in ancient Egyptian amulets, blank paper, crayons, markers, glitter, glue, etc.

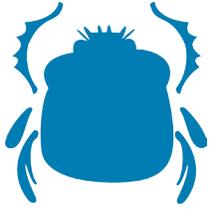
Objectives: Students Will Be Able To:

Identify what an amulet was, and what it meant to the people of ancient Egypt.

Discern the differences in materials, and how those materials made the piece valuable.

Understand the relationship between trade and the value of materials.

Create their own amulet and explain their choice of materials based on their understanding of the lesson.



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Task: Teacher will use the PowerPoint with embedded slide notes and attached notes to guide first part of lesson. Have students use notebooks to record answers to questions in presentation. In the lesson, the teacher will display the webpage from the Metropolitan Museum of Art and ask students to read the passage to themselves, then in their notebook write down answers to the following:

What is an amulet?

An object held because it had magical powers or protection.

What are three major ways amulets were used?

They were carried, part of jewelry, wrapped with mummies for the afterlife.

What made the amulet special? The color, shape, material, words, or symbols on it.

After going over these answers, proceed to the next slide, where students will respond in their notebooks to the following:

Today people still use amulets, write down three examples you can think of.

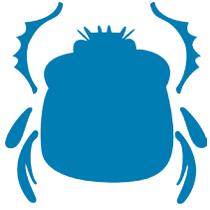
Answers Vary: Wedding rings, crucifix, Star of David, Pandora (charm) bracelets, hearts, claddagh ring, rabbit's foot, lucky coin, (with justification any object could be applied)

Now explain why each of these things has special power or meaning.

Answers will vary, but should reflect the theme that the object holds symbolic or real power to help the wearer

To ancient Egyptians the material was very important, as a symbol of wealth or because the material had certain power. Many raw materials were traded from across the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

After discussing the history of the amulet, students will create their own amulet. They must explain what the power/purpose is, how it is used (carried/worn), what it is made of, colors, text/writing/symbols used. This will be presented to the class during the second day, then would make nice display for bulletin board.



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Assessment: Students will produce an amulet and a description that they will present to the class.

Cross-Curriculum Idea: Working with either the art or technology teachers, create the amulet out of clay, wood, metal, paint, etc., while the research and descriptions are done in Social Studies.

Extension: Use a map to locate the origins of the raw materials used by ancient Egyptians in the creation of their amulets, then look for trade routes that would have linked the Nile River Valley to the places and materials they sought. What difficulties might be found in these trade routes, what other peoples might be connected by trade to ancient Egypt?