

Pyramid Book (art + history)

Unlock the secrets of an ancient Egyptian pyramid with this easy-to-construct box that opens to reveal “treasure” inside.

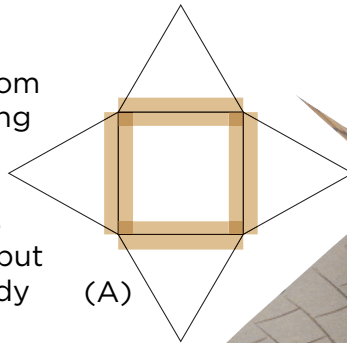
When closed, the outside walls are held in place with a clay disk. Remove the disk and open the pyramid to reveal what’s inside. Younger students can make artifacts from clay to place inside. Older students may be challenged to learn the inner parts of the pyramids and add paper pages to write about and illustrate their discoveries.

Grade Levels 3-8

Note: instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 25 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Cut triangles and squares from chipboard, all sides measuring 7". Each student will need four triangles and one square. Cutting chipboard is easiest with a paper cutter, but it can also be cut using sturdy scissors.

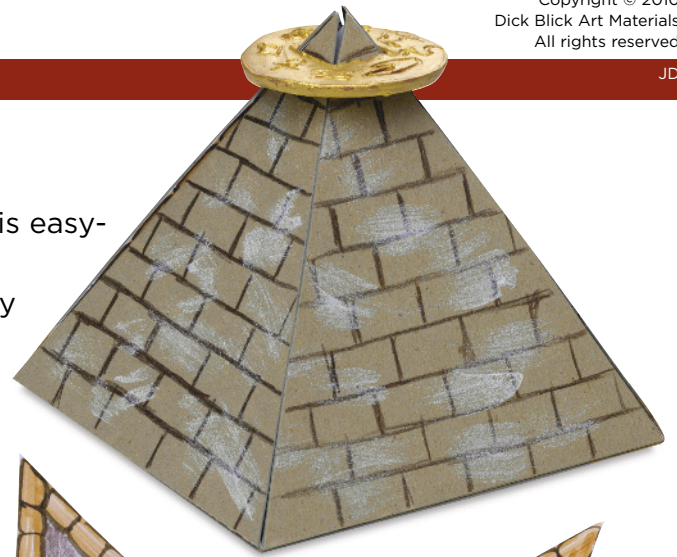


Note: 21 triangles with 7" sides can be cut from one piece of chipboard. Refer to the cutting guide on page 2 to see how this can be accomplished.

2. View examples and information regarding Egyptian pyramids and hieroglyphics.
Recommended resources:
[Hands-On Culture of Ancient Egypt](#) book (71836-0000).

Process

1. Hinge the triangles to the square base with Kraft Paper Tape, see (A). Trim the excess with scissors.
2. On each side of the pyramid, use a brown colored pencil or marker to sketch building blocks. Draw blocks on both sides. Lightly brush texture medium on the blocks to make them look as if they are sand-covered. Note: don't saturate the cardboard with medium or it will warp.
3. On a piece of wax paper, roll out and form a clay disk about 3" in diameter and 1/4" thick.



Materials

All-Purpose Chipboard, single thickness, 22" x 28" (13115-2222); share one sheet among four students

Kraft Paper Tape, 2" x 600-ft roll (24118-1002); share one across class

Schoolworks Scissors, 7" safety (57602-1007); one per student

Crayola® Colored Pencils, 12-color set (20519-1009); one per student

Crayola® Air-Dry Clay, 2-1/2 lb bucket (33272-1125); share one across class

Crayola® Tempera Medium - Texture It! 16-oz bottle (00043-1036); share one across class

Student Modeling Tools, 7-tool set (30361-1009); need one tool per student

Sargent Art® Metallic Acrylic Paint, assorted colors (00730-); share 3-4 colors across class

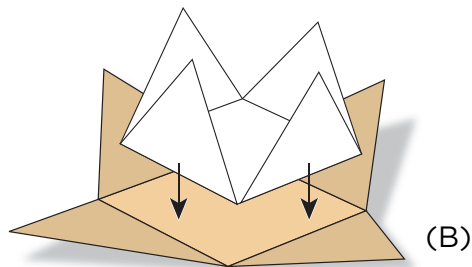
Blick® White Sulphite Drawing Paper, 18" x 24" 80-lb, 100-sheet package (10209-1049); need one sheet per student

Blick® White Glue, 4-oz (23882-1014); share one between two students

Process, continued

Use a cookie cutter or plastic cup to make a perfect circle. In the middle of the disk, cut out a square shape measuring approximately 1-1/2" x 1-1/2". Use modeling tools to make hieroglyphics (Egyptian picture-writing) on the disk and allow it to dry.

- Use the remaining clay to make "treasures" to place inside the pyramid. Taking inspiration from Tutankhamun's tomb (the only ancient Egyptian royal tomb to be found intact), the treasure of a pyramid might include a sarcophagus, a death mask, statues, jewelry, pottery, furniture or a chariot. When the treasures and the clay disk have dried, paint them with metallic acrylic colors.
- Grades 4 and older can use the cardboard pyramid as a template to cut the same shape from paper. Crease the sides to form walls and glue the bottom just to the inside square panel of the cardboard pyramid, see (B).



When dry, fill the pages with text and drawings about the contents of the pyramid. Refer to the Great Pyramid at Giza and use book pages to describe the King's Burial Chamber, the Queen's Chamber, the Great Gallery and the Underground Chamber.

- Raise the walls of the pyramid and place the disk over the top to hold the book closed.

Options

- Use the basic construction of the pyramid book to make gift boxes.
- Add more than one page to make an unusual art book.

National Standards for Visual Arts Education

Content Standard #3 Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas

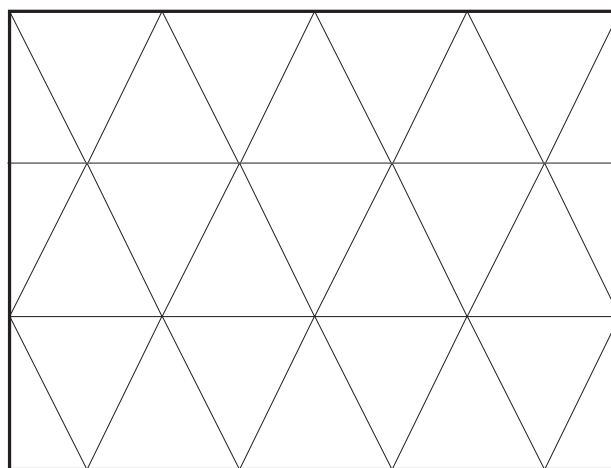
K-4 Students explore and understand prospective content for works of art.

5-8 Students integrate visual, spatial and temporal concepts with content to communicate intended meaning in their artworks.

Content Standard #4 Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

K-4 Students know that the visual arts have both a history and specific relationships to various cultures.

5-8 Students know and compare the characteristics of artworks in various eras and cultures.



Cutting guide for chipboard triangles, refer to preparation section, page 1.