



Grade 7 Sample Lesson

Pharaoh Activity

Directions: This activity can be done in a variety of ways. Ideally, students will work alone or in pairs. If students work in pairs, they will begin by first sharing with each other the type of leader they would like be. They will then merge their ideas into the perfect pharaoh and together select their choices of crimes and punishments.

Once all students have completed the task, have students share their crime and punishment choices with the whole class and record the data on the board.

The last step is to analyze the data. Which choices did people make who wanted to be feared? Which choices did people make who wanted to be loved? How can the process of creating laws cause citizens to feel a certain way about their leader? Criminal activities often affect more than one person; at their most basic level, there will be a criminal and a victim. Both roles can be affected by the laws in place. Think about both perspectives when considering your effectiveness as a leader.

When laws are made by one person alone (or two if working in pairs), it is only that person's experience and perspective that are taken into account. In a democracy, every person's voice is heard. Do the activity again, but this time the whole class will vote on each potential crime and each potential punishment. Compare the results to the previous ones.

If time permits, ask students to share the additional actions they would take as pharaohs.

You are the Pharaoh

You are a pharaoh which means that you own everything and have absolute power. This is a huge responsibility. The people of Egypt are counting on you to be a good leader.

1. What does it mean to be a good leader? Do you want to be feared, respected, or loved by the Egyptian people? Identify what it means to be a good leader. Either discuss with a partner first or write your own ideas.

2. Your first job as pharaoh is to make some laws. You would like to rid Egypt of bad behaviors that were becoming common when the last pharaoh was in charge.

You decide to begin by identifying five crimes and their accompanying punishments.

Choose five activities from the list below. These will be considered crimes under your leadership.

1. Tomb robbing
2. Murder
3. Spitting in public
4. Stealing
5. Wearing shoes in the temple
6. Saying mean things about the pharaoh
7. Runaway enslaved person
8. Taking too much water for crops
9. Not paying taxes
10. (Make up your own crime)

3. Choose a punishment that fits the crime. Remember that you want to be a good leader and you want people to stop doing these criminal activities. You may use punishments more than once and you can also create up to five punishments of your own.

1. Give up half of your crops
2. Serve the pharaoh for one month
3. Public apology
4. Banishment
5. Lose a finger
6. Build the pharaoh's pyramid
7. Public execution
8. One of your family members is given to the pharaoh as an enslaved person
9. Imprisonment for ____ days
10. No punishment the first time, but if the crime is committed again, then one of the punishments above

11. (Choose your own punishment)

1. Describe how your choices of crimes and their punishments will make you the leader you hope to be.
2. Pharaohs did more than identify crimes and their punishments. Describe three other actions you would take as a great leader.

Final thoughts

Choose one question and answer it fully in paragraph form.

1. What was good about being a pharaoh and what wasn't good?
2. Would you want to be a pharaoh? Why or why not?
3. Why don't we have pharaohs in the United States? Do you think we should? Why or why not?
4. If you could have any of the jobs that were described in the preceding sections, which would you choose and why?