

Sumer

Aims

- To provide students with visual encounters with key objects from Sumer.
- To provide teachers with an opportunity to build student familiarity in terms of object identification and object vocabulary.
- To provide a visual starting point for cross-curricular work on Sumer.

Description

- A sequence of 10 slides

Teaching ideas

- If you are planning a visit to the British Museum, use the images to familiarize the students with some of the objects they will be seeing in Room 56 at the Museum.
- Introduce vocabulary associated with the objects such as materials (e.g. stone, shell, lapis lazuli), technical terms (e.g. carved, imprint, cast), name of object (e.g. cylinder seal, lyre, plaque), function of object (e.g. identification, adornment, entertainment).
- Assign individual objects to student groups. Ask the group to research their object and then present their object to the rest of the class.
- Use the objects as a source of inspiration for art and design work.
- Create a classroom version of the Standard of Ur. The other side could feature a playground scene.
- Add bubble captions to the Standard of Ur scenes – what are different people in the scenes saying?
- Design your own board game and create a written set of rules.
- Cylinder seals were used in administration for marking property and as a personal signature. Their design could include written inscriptions and images. Ask students to design their own cylinder seal scene using either Mesopotamian or modern references.

Notes on the pictures

Use the web address for each object to retrieve further information from the British Museum website.

Shell plaque

www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/s/shell_plaque_queens_grave.aspx

Queen's Lyre

www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/q/queens_lyre.aspx

Beads and pendants

www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/b/beads_and_pendants.aspx

The Standard of Ur

www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/t/the_standard_of_ur.aspx

The Royal Game of Ur

www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/t/the_royal_game_of_ur.aspx

The ram in the ticket

www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/t/the_ram_in_a_thicket.aspx

Cylinder seal of Pu-abi

www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/c/cylinder_seal_of_pu-abi.aspx

Clay tablet

www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/r/record_of_food_supplies.aspx

Background information

Interactive online learning site for Mesopotamia at www.ancientmesoptamia.co.uk

Look at other Sumerian objects at www.britishmuseum.org/explore/introduction.aspx