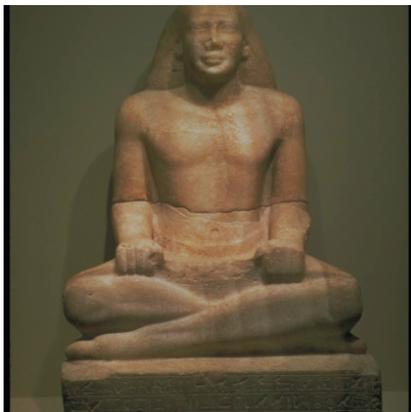




3rd Grade Resource Set: A Taste of the Ancient World

Discover the ancient world! Learn how geographical location and environment helped shape trade, culture, and politics for ancient Egypt, China, Greece, Rome, and Mali. Examine the importance of writing, art, and artifacts used in daily life and beyond!

Grade Level:	Grades 3-5
Collection:	African Art, Ancient Art, East Asian Art, Egyptian Art
Culture/Region:	China, Egypt, Greece, Rome
Subject Area:	History and Social Science, Visual Arts
Activity Type:	Resource Set



Seated Scribe (torso)

ca. 663-525 BC , Egyptian

Medium: alabaster

Accession ID: 64.60

The ancient Egyptians developed their own writing system by creating more than seven hundred hieroglyphs! Each hieroglyph was a symbol for a different sound, word, or concept.

Scribes, who recorded the important business of Egypt, were some of the few people who could read and write. They attended a special school to learn how to use hieroglyphs, and their skills and position were passed down to the next generation.

Scribes like VMFA's Sema-Tawy-Tefnakht were often depicted in ancient Egyptian art sitting cross-legged and holding a writing board. The hieroglyphs on our scribe's base tell us about him and his job: "The Herald of the King in all his Places, The one who surrounds the king and speaks to him when he is alone, the overseer of the secrets of the King in all of his places, who loves the king, who is beloved by the king." The hieroglyphs on his shoulders contain the name of the king who employed Sema-Tawy-Tefnakht. The pharaoh is most commonly known as Psamtik I.

Suggested Activities

- [Writing to Learn: Headlines, Tweets, and Memes](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/writing-to-learn-headlines-tweets-and-memes/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/writing-to-learn-headlines-tweets-and-memes/>)
- [Looking to Learn: Perceive, Know, Care About](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/looking-to-learn-perceive-know-care-about/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/looking-to-learn-perceive-know-care-about/>)
- [Moving to Learn: Strike a Pose](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/moving-to-learn-strike-a-pose/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/moving-to-learn-strike-a-pose/>)
- [Ancient Writing](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/ancient-writing/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/ancient-writing/>)



Bactrian Camel

7th century , Chinese

Medium: Earthenware with white glaze

Accession ID: 51.12.2

This sculpture was most likely found in the tomb of a very important person. It represents a Bactrian camel with two humps. This type of camel was used to transport goods across deserts and along the Silk Road, a series of more than 4,000 miles of trade routes that linked China with parts of Central Asia, the Mediterranean, Africa, Europe, and South Asia. Camels were an important part of daily life in ancient China. They could carry a great deal of weight and survive the weather in the Gobi desert, where it could be very hot during the day and very cold at night. Camels are built for long, dry journeys. Their humps store fat, which they use for energy when food is short. A camel's stomach lining is specially built for water storage. The length of time camels can go without a drink depends on their travel speed and the weight of the load they're carrying. They can last about six to ten days if traveling is slow and easy. Their long eyelashes keep the sand out of their eyes. Their big feet prevent them from sinking in the sand.

Like the Egyptians, the Chinese believed in a life after death so they buried their dead with things they thought they would need in the afterlife. This camel carries all of the necessities for a long journey across the desert or into the afterlife, including water and food.

Suggested Activities

- [Looking to Learn: What Makes You Say That?](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/looking-to-learn-what-makes-you-say-that/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/looking-to-learn-what-makes-you-say-that/>)
- [Moving to Learn: Make It Move](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/moving-to-learn-make-it-move/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/moving-to-learn-make-it-move/>)
- [Sketching to Learn: Before and After](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/sketching-to-learn-before-and-after/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/sketching-to-learn-before-and-after/>)
- [Writing to Learn: Narrative](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/writing-to-learn-narrative/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/writing-to-learn-narrative/>)



Relief Pithos (Storage Container)

ca. 675 B.C. , Greek (Cretan)

Medium: terracotta

Accession ID: 79.147

The ancient Greeks are famous for their decorated pottery, which was often functional, or used in daily life. This is a very large amphora, or storage jar, from ancient Greece. It is almost five feet tall and more than 2600 years old. It came from the island of Crete, the largest of the Greek islands. Crete sits in the eastern Mediterranean Sea, which made it extremely important for trade between Egypt and other regions of the Greek world. This vessel is covered with decorations, which were made with a mold or stamped on. Many of the decorations may have been inspired by designs on textiles the Greeks imported from the ancient Near East.

Suggested Activities

- [Lesson Concept: Greek Vase](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/lesson-idea-greek-vase/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/lesson-idea-greek-vase/>)
- [Take & Make: Ancient Greek Pottery](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/take-make-ancient-greek-pottery/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/take-make-ancient-greek-pottery/>)
- [Looking to Learn: What Makes You Say That?](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/looking-to-learn-what-makes-you-say-that/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/looking-to-learn-what-makes-you-say-that/>)
- [Sketching to Learn: Lines, Shapes, and Pattern Hunt](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/sketching-to-learn-lines-shapes-and-pattern-hunt/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/sketching-to-learn-lines-shapes-and-pattern-hunt/>)



Relief of a Potter and His Wife

1st-2nd century AD , Roman

Medium: marble

Accession ID: 60.2

This work of art comes from ancient Rome and was created almost two thousand years ago. It is a relief sculpture, which means the background is carved away to allow the figures to stand out. It is carved from a stone called marble, which is a natural resource the Romans frequently used to make sculptures and build temples and other buildings. This work of art was part of a funerary monument to honor a man and his wife after they died. Freed slaves often purchased reliefs like this to proudly record their successes in life. A funerary relief is similar to a headstone or gravestone you may have seen in a cemetery or graveyard. This would have marked where the man and woman were buried.

Suggested Activities

- [Looking to Learn: Perceive, Know, Care About](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/looking-to-learn-perceive-know-care-about/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/looking-to-learn-perceive-know-care-about/>)
- [Writing to Learn: Words in Their Mouths and Thoughts in Their Heads](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/words-mouths-thoughts-heads/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/words-mouths-thoughts-heads/>)
- [Moving to Learn: Living Tableau](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/_trashed-7/)
(https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/_trashed-7/)
- [Sketching to Learn: Before and After](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/sketching-to-learn-before-and-after/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/sketching-to-learn-before-and-after/>)



Ci Wara Headdress

19th-20th century , Bamana

Medium: wood

Accession ID: 77.93

The Bamana [bah-mah'-nah] people, one of many ethnic groups in Mali, are farmers and hunters who live on the western edge of the Sahara Desert. This Chi Wara headdress is part of a mask ensemble the Bamana use that relates to agricultural cycles. Two animals can be seen in this wood carving. The snout makes reference to the armadillo—an animal that burrows in the ground, similar to the way a farmer tills the soil. The tall thin

antlers represent an antelope, an animal that is highly regarded among the Bamana. The antelope on the mask actually represents a supernatural being named Chi Wara. According to Bamana mythology, Chi Wara was the first farmer, a wild beast that taught mankind how to cultivate the fields.

Chi Wara masquerades take place during annual ceremonies when young men learn the agricultural skills they need to become successful farmers, who can provide for their families and contribute to the community. Performers don the headdress on top of their head and cover their bodies with raffia. As they perform they remain bent over, because an excellent farmer hoes the ground continually without straightening to take a rest.

Suggested Activities

- [Sketching to Learn: Contour Drawing](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/sketching-to-learn-contour-drawing/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/sketching-to-learn-contour-drawing/>)
- [Looking to Learn: What Makes You Say That?](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/looking-to-learn-what-makes-you-say-that/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/looking-to-learn-what-makes-you-say-that/>)
- [Looking to Learn: I See, I Think, I Wonder](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/looking-to-learn-i-see-i-think-i-wonder/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/looking-to-learn-i-see-i-think-i-wonder/>)
- [Writing to Learn: Creative Comparisons](https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/writing-to-learn-creative-comparisons/)
(<https://www.vmfa.museum/learn/resources/writing-to-learn-creative-comparisons/>)