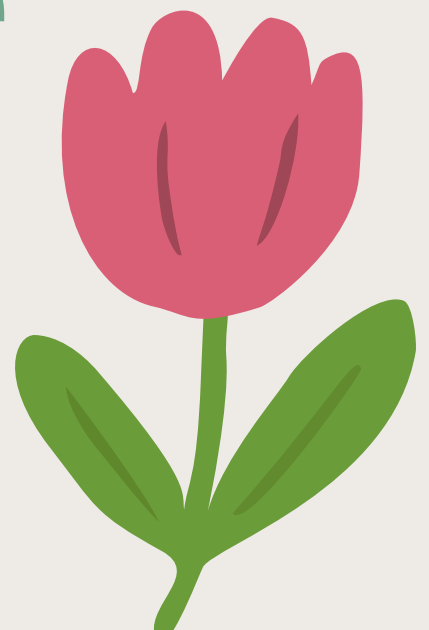




Young
Archaeologists'
Club



Archaeology and Nature Resource Pack



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Hello!



To celebrate the 2026 Festival of Archaeology, the Young Archaeologists' Club, working with members of the CBA's Youth Advisory Board and student placements, have created a bumper resource pack filled with fun activities to get you exploring this years theme:

Archaeology and Nature

Archaeology and nature are interconnected revealing how humans have lived with, shaped, and been shaped by the environment around them. By exploring the past using the climate, geology, animals, plants, landscapes and the effect of nature on archaeological sites and buildings today, we can understand how places and communities evolve and develop

This resource pack has been co-created by young people for young people. You can meet our contributors on the next page.

Together they have created a fun set of activities aimed at anyone aged 8–16, which are free to access.



**Young
Archaeologists
Club**



Our Creators



Amelia

Amelia studies Cultural Heritage Management at the University of York. Growing up around the Norfolk Broads and discovering its history inspired her love of archaeology. She was thrilled to work with YAC to share its wonderful stories and hopes you enjoy them too!



Emily

Emily is studying an MA in Art Gallery & Museum Studies at the University of Manchester and works as a Visitor Assistant at Beeston Castle. As a Youth Advisor with the CBA, she is passionate about youth engagement in archaeology and the museum sector. Emily created the Ancient Egyptian Makeup Tutorial activity.

Devanshi

is a Programme Associate at The YP Foundation. She completed her Masters in Gender Studies from SOAS, University of London and Bachelors in History from Lady Shri Ram College for Women, University of Delhi. Devanshi loves diving deep into histories of culture, art and fashion.



Amalia

Amalia is a member of the CBA's Youth Advisory Board. She is a Classical Archaeologist by training, and her research focuses on the Hellenistic period and, rather fittingly for this year's Festival theme, the worship of river gods across the ancient Mediterranean. She is also passionate about promoting access in archaeology/heritage!



Norfolk and Suffolk Broads

This resource is about the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads. We will take a look at the people who lived there; what they ate, how they tried to tame the landscape with new inventions and how it shaped their understanding of the world around them, possibly best exemplified by the many folklores linked to the region.

The Broads are a network of **waterways** that run through Norfolk and Suffolk. The waterways of the Broads are manmade, accidentally created by the flooding of peat channels that were dug for fuel during the medieval period. Despite the Broads' waterways being manmade, the Broads and its ancient marshland preserve some of Britain's best biodiversity, including water voles, eels, porpoise, Chinese water deer, muntjacs, and hares. The Broads are also a haven for common waterbirds and endangered birds such as cuckoos and bitterns. Nature is a vital part of the landscape's identity and history.

The Broads Timeline:

Ancient History

2600 years ago

Norfolk coastline was a mile further out east

Broads were peaty marshlands at the Bure, Yare, and Waveney

2300 years ago

Sea levels rise

Yare Estuary forms as sea breaks the mouth

2100 years ago

Forests and fens replaced by saltmarshes

The estuary became an expanse of seawater pools and mudflats

1800 years ago

The Romans sailed on what is now Halvergate marshes

The Great Estuary was an important traffic route, and was defended by Burgh Castle and Caister Roman Fort.

1500 years ago

Sea levels fall and the waterways are silted

The Great Estuary at the mouth of the River Yare split in two, and the sandbank is where Great Yarmouth sits today.



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1

Medieval–Present

13th century

Sea levels were lower and the Broads were used largely for grazing sheep

16th century

Rising water levels and a desire for grazing pasture led to improvements to flood banks.

18th century

Most of the grazing marshes of today had been drained by the 18th century. Poor quality drainage did little to stop the flooding

19th century

Land enclosure incentivised drainage infrastructure; flooding became rare.



1

Bake Your Own Suffolk Buns

Time Required: 35 mins | Age Range: 8+ | This recipe makes about 10-12.

Background:

Traditionally made for the harvest, where caraway seeds were used to sweeten the breath of farmers out in the fields till dusk, sowing the wheat for harvest. They were made with readily accessible ingredients for farmers to reward their labourers. Caraway seed buns are traditional eaten mainly to the south-east, but seed cakes and buns were also given to labourers across the country, with one of the oldest recipes surviving in Mary Hookes' manuscript of recipes from c.1680.

In this activity, you will be able to make your own Suffolk Buns. This activity is a great way to experience for yourself how East Anglian farmers found an affordable substitute for sugar to enjoy something sweet during the long hours of the harvest.



Ingredients:

- 350g plain flour
- 115g semolina
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 115g butter
- 75g sugar (optional)
- 2 tbsp caraway seeds
- 2 eggs
- 75ml whole milk

Equipment:

- Mixing bowl
- Fork & Knife (to cube the butter)
- Weighing scales
- Baking parchment
- Cookie/scone cutter (about 2.5 diameter)
- Rolling pin

Safety Considerations:

Be careful when cubing the butter as the knife can slide—an adult can do this part.
If needed, make sure you have an adult to supervise the use of the oven.



Method:



Step 1:

Preheat the oven to 200C. Line a baking tray with baking parchment. Combine the flour, semolina, salt, and baking powder with a whisk.



Step 2:

Cube the butter into small pieces and rub it into the flour mixture until it resembles fine breadcrumbs.



Step 3:

Mix sugar and caraway seeds to the breadcrumb mix.



Step 4:

Whisk the eggs and milk together using a fork and mix into the breadcrumb mixture. Bring together into a rough dough. Place dough onto a lightly floured surface and roll the dough out to about 1 inch thickness (2.5cm). Add milk by the spoonful if the dough is too dry, and flour by the spoonful if it's too wet.

Step 5:

Using a 2-inch cookie cutter (or the rim of a coffee cup), cut into circles. Arrange on your lined baking tray. Place the buns close together so they can help each other rise. Bake for 15-20 minutes until risen and lightly golden-brown.

Top tip! Try adding some salty butter to your buns to bring out the sweetness in the caraway seeds.



2

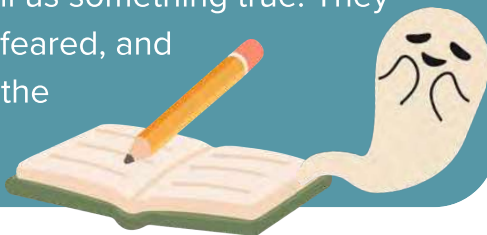
Write Your Own Ghost Story

Time Required: 1 hour | Age Range: 8+

Background:

Ghost stories can tell us a lot about history. When we hear eerie tales of Norfolk's headless horsemen, dead Saxons, shadowy black dogs, and vengeful witches, we step into the shoes of people whose fears made these stories.

Through ghost stories, we can learn about religious changes, fears of outsiders, and the treatment of women. Even though ghost stories are not facts we can prove, they still tell us something true. They show us what people feared, and how they understood the world around them.



About:

In this activity you will try writing your own ghost story, using the natural world you see in your everyday life to help make it much like many of the traditional folklore stories from the Broads.

On the following pages are a couple of examples to help inspire you. They demonstrate how the nature of the Broads is threaded throughout.



A Strange.

and terrible Wunder wrought
very late in the parish Church
of Bungay, a Town of no great di-
stance from the city of Norwich, name-
ly the fourth of this August, in y^e year of
our Lord 1577. In a great tempest of be-
leat raine, lightning and thunder, the
like wherof hath ben seld^e
sene sene.

With the apperance of an horrible shap-
ped thing, sensibly perceived of the
people then and there
assembled.

Drawen into a plain method ac-
cording to the written copie.
by Abraham Fleming.



Title page of the account of
Abraham Fleming's account of
the appearance of the ghostly
black dog "Black Shuck" at the
church of Bungay, Suffolk in
1577.



The ruin of St Mary's church, East
Somerton by Evelyn Simak

The Black Shuck



In August of 1577, in a small village tucked away in a quiet corner of Suffolk, a strange and terrible wonder paid a damning visit. The village sat on the edge of the Waveney Valley where summer had stewed the boggy wetlands. The heat was disrupted when a terrible storm struck on the first Sunday of August. Storm clouds billowed, rain flooded the streets, and sharp winds howled down chimney stacks. The villagers were huddled together in their church of St. Mary's when a violent clap of thunder boomed through the church, echoing off the walls and rattling the windows. Just as the thunder rumbled, the door to the church burst open with a crash. Through the door stalked a terrible beast. The village folk screamed and scattered, but there was nowhere to run. The creature had matted black hair and eyes that glowed red as madder dye. The defenceless villagers could see its sharp and crooked teeth as it snarled. The hound bound up the stairs to where the bells rang, killing two bellringers. When the beast then ran from the church, it was covered in blood and the bells fell silent.



Those who survived saw the beast in their dreams, or rather, their nightmares. The hound is now known as the Black Shuck. To this day, it continues to appear through the mist, prowl the lonely coastline, and lurk in the dark corners of churchyards. Though we might never know where it came from, all we can do is hope we never see it ourselves.



The Witch of East Somerton



East Somerton is a small village that is surrounded on all sides by the Norfolk Broads. It is most famous for its church, and the witch who haunts its ruins. Nature overruns the crumbling flint remains. Though it seems very peaceful, the church carries a wicked history. An enormous oak grows where the heart of the church nave once was. This is supposedly the finger of a witch who was executed in the village, pointing accusatorily up at the heavens.



According to some retellings, the witch was buried alive in the woods, with the church built around her to contain her evil. Others say she was taken to the abandoned church by villagers who believed she should be buried in blessed ground. Supposedly at twilight, if you circle the church three times and say her name, you can speak to the witch. But perhaps it is better to let a tortured soul rest...



Did You Know?

In the present day, East Somerton sits on the edge of a wetland nature reserve, and is a stone's throw away from the popular beach town of Winterton. But in the 16th century, East Somerton was a deeply isolated part of England. In the 16th century, it would've been a swampy, boggy land, with unsteady ground and low-lying mist, somewhere that likely flooded.

The witch hunts took place because people were taught to be distrustful and suspicious. Those trialled for witchcraft were unfortunate victims who could be blamed for bad weather, crop failures, or simply for having moles or scars. But in a landscape like the Broads, is it any wonder why there were so many witch hunts there?



You will need:

- Paper
- Pen
- A camera to take some photos (optional)

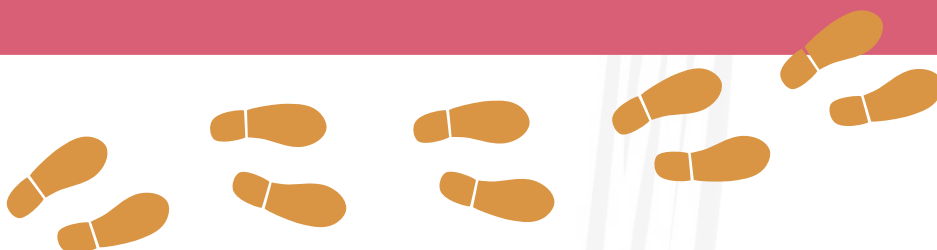


Safety considerations:



- When you go on your walk, make sure your parents know where you are and what you are doing.
- Make sure you are not trespassing on any private property.
- Always make sure to practice road safety when you're out and about.

Method:



1. On a walk you frequently do, note down five things in nature that you find interesting – a tree, a strange leaf, an unusual cloud, a pond, etc.
2. Create a mystery around one or two of these things. Maybe the tree looks like it has fingers from the corner of your eye. Maybe your character is the only one who can see a certain plant.
3. Try writing about this mystery. When you write, consider the environment around you. What does it smell like? Is it quiet or loud? What else can you hear? How does what you can see and smell and feel in the nature around you change your story?



Tips on writing a ghost story:

The best way to approach writing your ghost story is to think about everyday objects and sights, and how you can make them scary. Do they behave in a way they aren't supposed to? Are they maybe not what they seem at all?

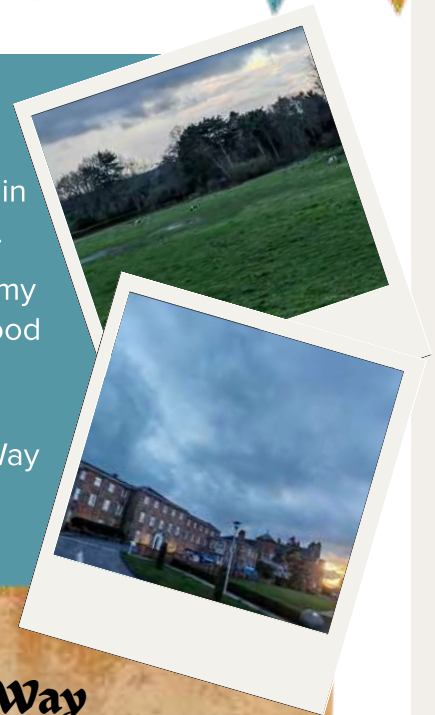


Example:

I did the same walk I always do; moving from Heslington Road in York and moving towards the university down a small footpath.

On my walk I saw a few things that caught my attention that I thought could make for a good ghost story:

- Flooded plain
- A lone horse at Wentworth Way
- Overcast sky
- Muddy ground



The Haunted Horse of Wentworth Way

(My own ghost story)



In a field by Wentworth Way in York, something very strange happens when it rains and it floods. When the earth turns marshy and swampy from the storm, it becomes impossible to walk over the ground without slipping and sliding through the mud. Your breath hovers in the cold. The horizon is a streak of cold mist. There is a sense of uncertainty. Then, if you are very unlucky, out in the rain and flooded field, a mysterious horse might appear to you.

It will not be like any other horse you've ever seen. It doesn't neigh or toss its mane or stamp the ground with its hooves. It stands completely still, not even blinking. Many people who pass by the unsettling creature might try to approach the horse, but little do they know that is the worst thing you could do. It is said that if you hop the fence and get too close to the horse, you too might be suddenly still, unable to move, stuck in the swamp, not even able to blink. Then, when the mist dissolves and the rain clears, the field will appear empty again, with no trace of the horse or any person who was foolish enough to approach it. Every time the police ask the farmer who owns the field for answers, he always has the same reply: there is no record of a horse ever having been in this field.



3

Tame the Landscape: Marsh Diorama and Windmill Model

Time Required: 2.5 hours | Age Range: 8+ (with supervision)

Background:

Norfolk's windmills are their most iconic feature, with around 63 drainage mills of all types still remaining. They were introduced to help combat the floods that swept the Broads after peat cutting stopped in the 14th century, which left the empty peat channels to flood.

Combined with rising sea levels, the need to drain the land was urgent. The solution was simple: drainage mills, which were used to pump water away from the flooded areas. By the 17th century, drainage mills popped up across the Broads and they're now famous across the region.



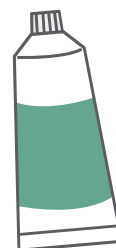
Turf Fen Windpump

About:

In this activity, the aim is to create a small model of the marsh landscape of the Norfolk Broads, complete with a windpump with sails that can spin. This activity is a great way to visualise the landscape, and how the windpumps of the Broads fit in with the natural landscape. We'll also be making some marsh reeds out of twine: Norfolk reeds line the waterways and are an important habitat for birds and small water creatures. Even now, the reeds are harvested by hand, and are used in heritage crafts such as roof thatching.

You will need:

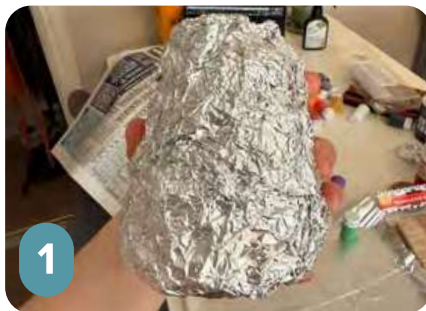
- Shoebox/cardboard
- Tinfoil
- Newspaper
- Acrylic paints
- Black/dark card stock
- Wooden kebab skewers
- Paintbrushes
- Scissors
- Clear PVA glue
- Green tissue paper (hedges)
- Twine (for marsh reeds)



Safety considerations:

- The kebab skewers can be hard to cut, so use a strong pair of scissors. Be careful of splinters from the kebab skewers too.
- Take care when piercing the card.

Method:



Making the Marsh

1. Using the lid of your shoebox as the base, trace out where you want your waterways to run, making sure you leave enough space for your windmill (which will be about 8 cm in diameter). Remember that alongside the natural rivers are the straight channels that are man made – can you include some straight waterways in your design?

2. Time to decorate the marsh! This includes:

- Painting in the sky, grass, and water
- Use some crumpled tissue paper to create the effect of hedges.
- Making the marsh reeds: cut small one inch pieces of twine and unravel one end, dip the unravelled piece in glue and stick in the tissue paper.

3. Once your paint has dried, paint a thick layer of clear PVA glue over the waterways – this will dry clear and make it look like water.



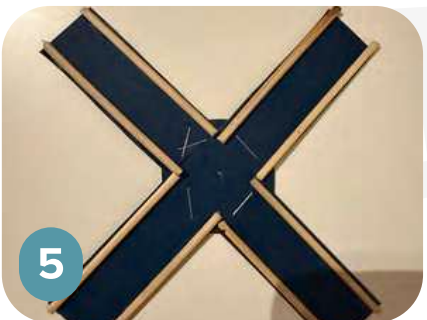
Making the Windmill

1. Use your tinfoil and scrunch it up into a cone shape, it should be around 8 cm in diameter at the base. Take the pointed end of the cone and press down on a table/flat surface until both the top and bottom have a flat end, with the bottom wider than the top.

2. Make a small semi-sphere cap from tinfoil to make the mill cap that goes on top.



Method:



3. Using PVA glue and newspaper, papier mache both tinfoil pieces to create a smooth surface that you can paint on when it's dried.

4. When the papier mache is dried, paint it black. Once the black has dried, paint the top white, with a white band about an inch thick around the top of the sides. You also can paint on windows and doors here.

5. Now we need to make the sails.

- Take your black card stock and cut out rectangles that are 2.5 cm wide and 9 cm tall. You will need to make 4 rectangles for the sails.
- Cut 8 wooden kebab skewers into 9 cm lengths. (You might need an adult to help with this part).
- Glue the kebab skewers to the edge of each sail – this will give your sails some structure and stability, but you can leave them out if you can't find any.

6. Cut out two circles of card (approx. 5 cm in diameter) and poke a hole through the middle using a kebab skewer. (If the kebab skewer won't pierce the card, try using the nib of a pen/pencil instead)

7. Glue/staple your card sails around one of the circular pieces of card, making sure they're evenly spaced so they look like windmill fans. Here, you can paint on the sail fan lines.

8. Take your assembled fan and slide the kebab skewer through the circle in the middle, through the hole pierced earlier.

9. Push the sharp end of the kebab skewer into the top inch of the mill and trim the excess skewer.

10. Glue your mill cap on top.



4

Ancient Egyptian Makeup Tutorials: make your own makeup palette

Time Required: 15-30 minutes to create your palette | Approximately 12-24 hrs to dry if using air dry clay. If your palette is thicker, it may take longer to dry | Age range: 8+

Background:

The ancient Egyptians are famous for their iconic makeup looks - their dark black eyeliner, green eyeshadow and red lipstick. We know that the ancient Egyptians wore makeup because of their portraits on sarcophagi, tomb paintings and statues, like in the image below, that depict their bold eyeliner. Archaeologists and Egyptologists have also found makeup palettes used to grind makeup and 'cosmetic boxes' in tombs and burials, that contained pots to store makeup and tools to mix and apply products to the skin. But have you ever wondered how they made this makeup?

Ancient Egyptians creatively used naturally occurring materials to create their cosmetic tools and products. Geological minerals, chosen for their vibrant colours, were the main ingredient in ancient Egyptian makeup. Minerals are inorganic (non-living) material that make up Earth's rocks, sands and soils, found naturally in the environment, including malachite, hematite, gold and silver. Minerals are very important parts of nature - without minerals, there would be no rocks or mountains in the landscape, plants could not grow and humans could not survive, as we need minerals like calcium and iron to stay healthy.



Upper part of a statuette of an Egyptian woman and her husband
Osama Shukir Muhammed Amin



Egyptian stele showing a woman applying makeup

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Ancient Egyptians also used siltstone, a type of rock found naturally in the environment, to use as makeup palettes to mix their makeup on. Archaeologists and Egyptologists have found over two hundred quarries created by ancient Egyptians used for mining minerals and rocks, some of which were used to make makeup and palettes. We know that ancient Egyptians had a lot of knowledge about the rocks and minerals in their natural environment, as they drastically changed their landscapes to create so many quarries to find these materials. Many of these quarries are still being investigated today.



After they had been mined, transported and traded, Ancient Egyptians ground the minerals into powders using a grinding stone and makeup palette to create makeup products. Next, they mixed this powder with oils and fats to create colourful eyeshadow, eyeliner, blush and lip gloss.

These pigments were stored in 'cosmetic boxes' inside small jars or pots, along with brushes, cosmetic spoons and kohl sticks to apply makeup with, and palettes to mix the pigments on.

Did you know?

Kohl was also used to protect from eye infections, as a fly repellent and to protect people from the sun's glare. People still make and use kohl today.



Cosmetic Box of the Royal
Butler Kemeni
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Minerals and Makeup:

Galena or lead was the black mineral used to make black kohl, or eyeliner.



Grinding up malachite, a green mineral, creates a vibrant green eyeshadow.



Red ochre is an orange/red clay pigment. It is not a mineral itself, but it contains the mineral hematite. The iron in hematite gives the ochre its red colour. It was used to make a warm blush or lipstick when mixed with fat.



Did you know?

Archaeological scientists use X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) to find the residues of pigments left on artefacts like ancient Egyptian coffins to find out what paints were used and what they were made of. They discovered that ancient Egyptians used malachite, red and yellow ochre, and calcite to create their paints, which are all naturally occurring minerals.

X-Ray Fluorescence is a scientific method used to test what elements are inside a material. This can be matched with the elements inside specific pigments. If the type and amount of elements on the object matches the type and amount found in a pigment, it shows that the material contains that pigment.

Let's get crafting!

About:

Makeup palettes were used for grinding minerals into powders to use as pigments to make makeup. Egyptologists have found makeup palettes from 5000 years ago which date to Pre-dynastic Period (3400BCE). These palettes were made of siltstone, a greyish green stone, and were mostly shaped like animals. Traces of makeup, like red pigments from ochre have been found on these palettes.



Fish-shaped palette, Naqada III
Metropolitan Museum of Art
Image in the public domain.



Naqada I-II bird-shaped palette
Image in the public domain

Ancient Egyptians would have used grinding stones, small, rounded pebbles, to grind minerals into powder against the palettes. Palettes were usually shaped like birds, fish, turtles or antelopes. Here are some examples.

Choose a bird or a fish and follow the instructions below to create your own ancient Egyptian makeup palette!

You will need:

- Air dry modelling clay or plasticine and a flat surface
- A rolling pin that you can use for clay
- Craft board, plastic sheet, newspaper or something similar to protect your work surface.
- Pointy tool like a toothpick/fork/craft tool to make your animal's eyes and simple patterns
- Somewhere to leave the clay to dry – like a windowsill or shelf



Safety considerations:

- Make sure any tools you use are suitable for use with clay and can be cleaned afterwards like your rolling pin.
- Make sure you cover your work surface with greaseproof paper, newspaper, a craft board or a plastic sheet to keep it clean and protected.
- When using sharp objects like a craft tool, or if you need to cut a section of clay to use, you must always be supervised by a responsible adult.
- Don't use your palette to mix makeup on, clay will absorb any makeup you put on it and it cannot be cleaned because of this.
- Wash your hands before and after handling clay.

Method:



1



2



3



1a



3a

Preparation

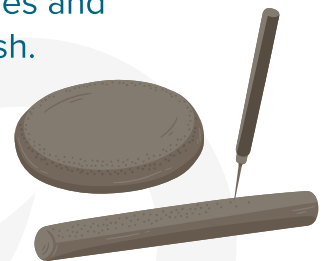
1. Prepare your work surface, get all your tools ready, including the clay. Clay is usually packaged in a big block so you may need to ask an adult if you need to cut it into sections to use. Choose the right amount of clay- depending how big you want your palette to be.
2. Roll/knead your clay into one large and one small ball. We will use the large ball to make the animal's body, and the small one to make features like the head and tail of our animal.
3. Use a rolling pin to roll the large ball of clay into a flat circular shape. It does not have to be a perfect circle! You can use your craft tool to neaten the circle by cutting off irregular parts, as you can see in the picture. This round shape will represent the animal's body. Your clay circle should be roughly 2cm thick, as palettes were quite thin.
4. Now we have the animal's body, we can make its other features. Here are some examples and guidance on how to make a bird or a fish. If you want to make another animal, use your imagination and get creative!

Bird

1a. To make a bird shape, like this palette, take the smaller ball of clay and make it into a sausage shape by rolling it between the palms of your hands.

2a. Next, make the sausage shape into a curve, like a lower-case letter 'n', with a pointy end to represent the bird's head and curved neck, with a pointed beak at the end.

3a. Flatten the 'n' shape down by putting it onto the surface or table and patting it down until it's flat, or lightly roll it with the rolling pin until it's the same thickness as the body.



Method:



3a. Now stick the neck onto the bird's body (the big circle of clay), squish the clay together with your fingers so it all sticks together, and lightly roll over the joined clay with your rolling pin until it is smooth and you can't tell it has been stuck together.

4a. Now you have a bird shaped palette! Move onto the Decoration stage to decorate your palette.



Fish

1b. To make a fish shaped palette, take one of your small balls of clay. This will be the fish's tail.

2b. Roll it out until its flat using your rolling pin.

3b. Use your fingers to squeeze and shape the clay or use your toothpick or craft tool to cut the clay into a triangle shape.

4b. Stick the tail onto one side of the fish's body by pressing it down until the clay sticks together, or lightly roll over where the clay has been joined using the rolling pin until you can't see the join.

5b. Now you have a fishshaped palette! Move onto the next stage to decorate your palette.



Decoration

1. Use your toothpick, fork or craft tool to decorate your palette. You can use these tools to make patterns in the clay.

2. To make your animal's eye, poke a dot into your clay, or a hole all the way through.



Method:



3. To make scales, you could lightly press on the clay with your tool and draw small 'c' shapes or lines that look like scales across its body and tail.

4. You could draw a small horizontal line under the animal's eye for a mouth.

5. For the bird, you could draw a wing shape on its body.

Drying

When you are happy with the shape and decoration of your palette, you can now leave it to dry if you used air-dry clay. If you used plasticine, you don't need to dry it, you have finished making your palette – well done! Take a picture of your palette if you want to remember it, or you could squish it and try making another animal.

If you are drying your clay, this process should take 12-24 hours (but this depends on the clay you used). Follow the drying instructions on the packaging. Make sure it is fully dry before moving it.



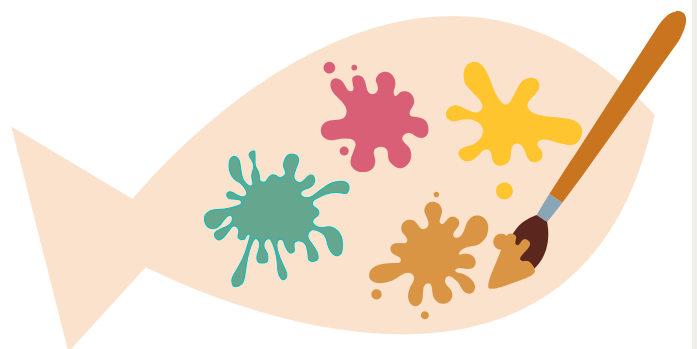
Finish

Once your clay is fully dry, you have finished. Now you have your own ancient Egyptian palette! You can keep this as a decoration, or you could use it to mix paint on next time you paint a picture.



Bonus Activity

When you're out and about, see if you can find a rounded smooth pebble you could use as a grinding pebble to crush pigments onto your palette! Make sure you don't take any stones off the beach or from coastal areas to help protect our coastline from erosion.



Glossary:

Makeup palette – A piece of siltstone (a type of grey stone) made into different shapes, sometimes animals. Ancient Egyptians used these as a surface to grind down minerals to make their makeup on and mix it with oils to make products.

Siltstone – A grey or greenish sedimentary rock (formed by layers of sediment or sand being squashed by pressure over time).



Predynastic Period – Egyptologists give different time periods in ancient Egypt names, so that they can compare them and see how life changed over time. The Predynastic Period is a section of time in ancient Egypt that lasted from 5500BCE-3100BCE, so from around 7000 years ago to 5000 years ago.



Sarcophagi – Sarcophagi means more than one sarcophagus, which is the name of the decorated coffins made of rock or metal that protected the mummified remains of ancient Egyptian rich and powerful people, like pharaohs.

Cosmetic – A cosmetic can include makeup or skincare products used to clean, change or improve your appearance.

Galena – is the naturally occurring mineral of lead sulphide, or an ore of lead, meaning you can extract lead from it. Ancient Egyptians would crush galena to make kohl or eyeliner.

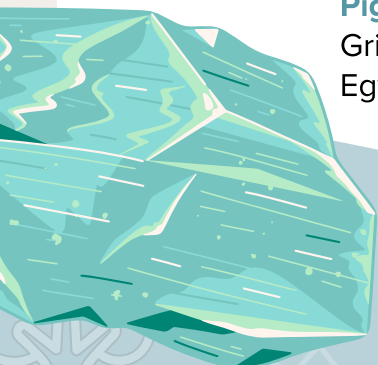
Ochre – is a natural pigment made when iron oxide changes the colour of clay and sand to make it orange-red or brown/yellow. It has been used since prehistory for painting and ceremonies. Ancient Egyptians ground up ochre to make orange-red makeup.



Malachite - is a copper ore, made of copper carbonite. It is a vibrant green colour with swirling light and dark green shapes. Malachite has been used as a green pigment for thousands of years. Ancient Egyptians ground up malachite to make green pigments for eyeshadow.

Mineral – is an inorganic (non-living) material that makes up Earth's rocks, sands and soils. Minerals include quartz, gold, silver, copper and diamond.

Pigment – a material that is used to make colour, for example for makeup. Grinding up the mineral malachite creates a green pigment to colour ancient Egyptian eyeshadow.



If you are interested in ancient Egyptian makeup...

Younger children:

Watch this video - [Weird Historical Beauty Trends compilation](#) – Horrible Histories: learn about what makeup was made of and how they applied it:

Read this article - [Cleopatra's Eye Makeup Warded Off Infections?](#) National Geographic Article to learn more about how kohl was used to protect from infections:



Older Children

If you want to know more specific and detailed information about palettes and makeup, read this [blog post](#). [Predynastic Palettes: A Workshop Produced Elite Status Symbol](#) by Matt Szafran.

This blog post looks at the different possible uses for palettes, not just for makeup, what they were made of and how they were made.

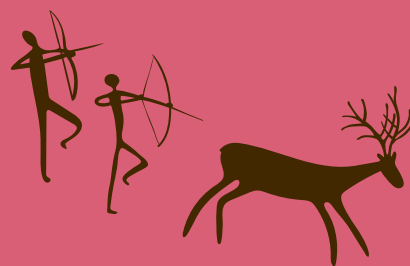


Bonus Activities

If you enjoyed this activity, why not try some other activities on the YAC website?

Mineral pigments

This activity explores how to use natural pigments from stone to [make your own cave painting!](#)



Dyeing textiles with natural pigments

[Dye Spy](#): In this textile dyeing activity, you can explore how different plants deposit colours onto cloth through experimentation. Forage for natural materials like leaves, berries and flowers and use the hammering method to dye cloth using natural materials.

[Make your own dyes!](#) For this activity you can use natural materials like onion skins and turmeric mixed with hot water to make natural dyes, using food items from your kitchen cupboard.



5

Remembrance Through Runestones

Time Required: 1 hour | Age range: 8+

Background:

As human beings, we have an impulse to leave a mark on the world we inhabit. Human beings since time immemorial have used various creative methods to show their impact, leave behind a legacy, and document their lives for future generations to discover, admire and understand. One such method was carving into stone. Stones were often used as they are a readily available material in nature, temperature resistant, as well as strong and durable. In prehistoric times, when humans lived closely connected with nature, stone was one of the first materials they used for creating tools, weapons, and as canvases for self-expression. **In this activity, we will explore a type of stone carving known as runestones.**



Uppland Runic inscription in Uppsala, Sweden
Photo: Joanne Kirton

A runestone is a big stone commonly found in the natural landscape with marks carved into the surface called runes. Runes are short, straight and diagonal lines that make up the alphabet 'Futhark'. They were erected to honour the memory of the dead, mostly powerful people. As they were intended to be visible, the carvings were commonly painted with bright colours and were placed near roads and bridges so people passing by could see them. Many runestones also depict images of people, animals and events.

While the tradition of inscribing stones with runes has pre-Christian origins, the practice of making runestones truly flourished in the Late Viking Age (10th - 12th centuries). We know of around 7,000 known runic inscriptions around the world.

They are most commonly found in southern Sweden and southern Norway. Others can be found in Denmark, Iceland and the UK. Some have even been found as far east as Turkey or as far west as Greenland, showing how wide Viking culture had spread. The inscriptions preserve ancestral names and lineages, travels, great achievements, sad fates of individuals and more.

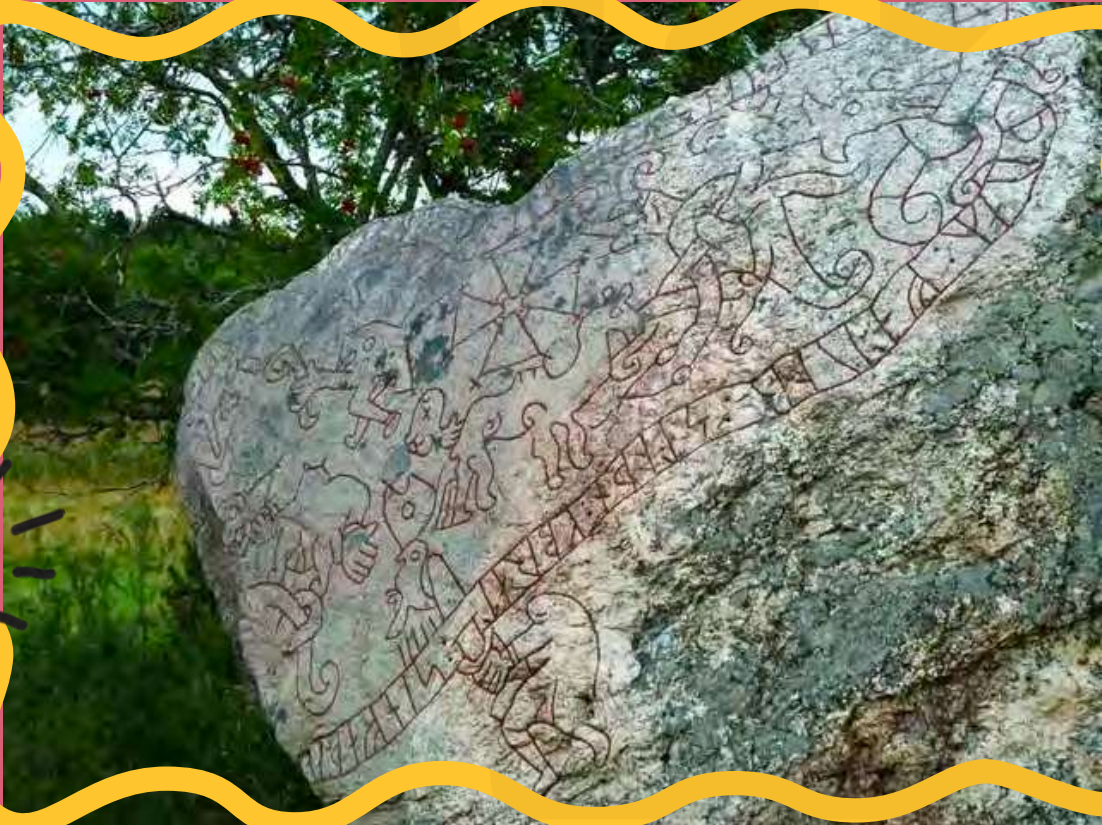


The Möjebro Runestone (U 877), ca. 5th century, an early Runestone from Hagby (earlier placed near Möjebro) in the county of Uppland, Sweden on the left and its tracing by Oscar Montelius (1905) on the right. The drawing is thought to represent Germanic warriors on horseback, inspired by Roman depictions. Credit: Wikimedia Commons

A popular myth found on runestones was that of Sigurd the Dragon Slayer. Sigurd is a heroic character who appears in both Germanic and Old Norse literature, believed to be a member of the royal family of Denmark and a descendant of the god, Odin.



What myth would you have inscribed on a runestone? What message do you think future generations would take away from it?



The Ramsund runestone in the province of Södermanland, Sweden
Photo Credit: Joanne Kirton



A drawing of the Ramsund inscription showing Sigurd the dragon slayer, in the province of Södermanland, Sweden
Source: Wikimedia Commons

Runestones could also be poetic in nature. An example of a runestone inscription is as follows:

“Tóla had this stone raised in memory of her son Haraldr, Ingvar's brother. They travelled valiantly far for gold, and in the east gave (food) to the eagle. (They) died in the south in Serkland”

Since these were made to commemorate powerful people, can you think of who was likely to have the resources to hire a runemaster? Write your thoughts below.

In this inscription, ‘gave food to the eagle’ is actually a metaphor. Can you guess what it means?



(Find the answers at the end of this activity, but don't peek until you've given the questions some good food for thought!)



Did you know?

The Swedish word bokstav (“letter”) originally means “a rune carved on a beechwood tablet.” Which means that the very word for “letters” refers to runes

Kjula Sö 106. This runestone from Södermanland, Sweden, reads ‘Alríkr, Sigríðr’s son, raised the stone in memory of his father Spjót, who had been in the west, broken down and fought in townships. He knew all the journey’s fortresses’.

Photo Credit: Joanne Kirton



Activity: Make Your Own Runestone!

About:

In this activity, we will make our own runestone. We will use the Elder Futhark alphabet, which is the oldest form of the runic alphabet. The alphabet consists of 24 runes, each representing a specific sound or phoneme as well as a meaning.

You will need:

- Polymer clay
- Rolling pin
- Cookie cutter (optional)
- Baking sheet
- Access to oven
- Toothpick or needle tool
- Acrylic pens/paints
- Paper towel



Safety considerations:

Make sure you have adult supervision as we will be using an oven for baking. Also be careful while carving your inscription with a sharp object onto the clay.

Method:



1

1. Grab a bit of polymer clay and roll it in your hands to form a sphere.



2

2. Use a rolling pin to flatten the clay. Make sure it is thick and big enough for your inscription.



4

3. Use a cookie cutter of any shape or a circular object to cut out a piece of the clay. Or you can choose to leave the clay as is for a more natural and weathered look.

4. Using a toothpick or needle tool, carve in your Runic inscription. This could be your name, a word of your choice, letters whose meanings you like, or a message you would want to be remembered by.



Note:

You will notice that not all English alphabets can be found in the rune chart, so we will have to improvise! Here are some tips:



Use **K** for a hard "C" sound (like Caleb)
Use **S** for a soft "C" sound (like Cynthia)
Use **U** for a "V" sound (like Victor)

 Fehu f Meaning: cattle, wealth	 Uruz u Meaning: wild ox, strength	 Thurisaz th Meaning: pain, thorn	 Ansuz a Meaning: god	 Raido r Meaning: riding, journey
 Kaunan k Meaning: torch	 Gebo g Meaning: gift	 Wunjo w Meaning: joy	 Hagalaz h Meaning: hail	 Naudiz n Meaning: need
 Iuzz i Meaning: ice	 Jera j Meaning: year, harvest	 Eihwaz e Meaning: yew tree	 Perthro p Meaning: disputed - perhaps a dice cup	 Algiz a Meaning: elk, protection
 Sowilo s Meaning: sun	 Tiwaz t Meaning: the god Tyr	 Berkanan b Meaning: birch tree	 Ehwaz e Meaning: horse	 Manaz m Meaning: man, humankind
 Laguz l Meaning: water, lake	 Ingwaz i Meaning: the god Ing	 Dagaz d Meaning: day	 Othala o Meaning: ancestral homeland, inheritance	

Credits: Based on the runic chart on the Polytranslator website

5. Place your runestone on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake in a standard oven according to your package instructions. Let it cool completely before touching.

6. Now you can paint your runestone with a colour of your choice. You can paint the engraved section or put some paint on the whole surface and wipe away the excess with a paper towel. Make sure you let the paint completely dry before picking it up.

Et Voila! Your tiny but mighty runestone inscription is ready!



If you do not have access to polymer clay, you can also use stones and pebbles found in nature. Simply find a flat stone or pebble of your choice, clean it to remove any dirt, and paint your runic inscription with acrylic paint or markers!

Bonus Activity

Now that your runestone is ready, think about where you would like to place it in the natural landscape. Would you like to place it somewhere where lots of people might see it, such as near a busy road? Or would you want to keep it at a secret spot, and leave behind clues for your descendants to find the runestone? How do you think your runestone might change shape and form due to natural weather conditions a hundred years from now?



Glossary:

Commemorate – to remember officially and give respect to a great person or event, especially by a public ceremony or by making a statue or special building.

Myth – an ancient story or set of stories, especially explaining the early history of a group of people or about natural events and facts

Heroic – having to do with a hero or heroes.

Descendant – a person who is related to you and who lives after you, such as your child or grandchild.

Metaphor – an expression, often found in literature, that describes a person or object by referring to something that is considered to have similar characteristics to that person or object.



Resources

- Learn more about Viking runes here: [The secret messages of Viking runestones - Jesse Byock - YouTube](#)
- For younger children: [Runestone Facts for Kids](#)
- Learn more about the Vikings here: [Who were the Vikings and where did they come from? - BBC Bitesize](#)
- Check out this fun activity sheet by the Museum of Ireland: [Activity Sheet: Viking Runes | Archaeology | National Museum of Ireland](#)
- Here's an [interesting activity on Ogham](#), an early medieval alphabet used for writing an early form of the Irish language
- Make your own Viking ship with this activity: [Sail With the Vikings | Mini Longship Craft](#)
- Make a Viking shield: [Relentlessly Fun, Deceptively Educational: Viking Shield](#)



Answers:

A1. Most runestones are linked to Viking Age aristocracy or to wealthy farmers.

A2. “To feed the eagle” means to kill.



6

Sacred Landscapes and Ritual Offerings

Time Required: 30-40 minutes | Age range: 10+

Background:

In this activity you will learn about the archaeology of sacred landscapes and discover examples from across the world.

Since the dawn of time, humans have been drawn to important features in the natural world around them. Caves, mountains, and rivers were all thought of as awe-inspiring spaces in which humans could meet the gods that shaped the world around them. It is in these places that humans moulded the natural world to create sanctuaries on mountain tops and imagine the underworld in caves. To explain natural events such as floods, sunrise/sunset and the seasons, aspects of nature were personified as gods and given a mythology to explain their origins. This appears across civilisations.

In archaeology, the study of sacred landscapes traces what humans left behind to reconstruct religious experiences in the past. In physical terms, this means looking at the remains of temples or shrines to understand how people of the past interacted with the natural world. This also involves understanding the way humans designed the sacred experience in significant locations within the landscape. Some of the most iconic examples of this come from monumental terraces in ancient Mesopotamia and temples constructed on the tops of mountains in Greece.



Temple of Apollo at Delphi, 4th century BC. Set high in Mount Parnassus against a striking landscape overlooking the valley of Phocis, this was the site of Apollo's famous oracle. Notably, Apollo was also linked with the sun as well as music, poetry, healing and prophecy. Image source: Wikimedia Commons | Skyring



Indian diya (lamp) floating on the water. Many diya offerings happen from the ghats of Varanasi, a series of stone steps on the western banks of the river Ganga, in the evening. This is a good example of how offerings can still be linked to nature to this day.

These sites often have multiple versions on the same spot, which points to just how long the awe-inspiring natural setting was considered sacred. Constructions within the landscape became the focus for worship, including the offering of ritual objects, and a space for communities to gather together and ask the gods to protect them from nature's whims. Even today, traces of this habit continue where modern religions focus some worship around natural locations.



**Young
Archaeologists'
Club**

Did you know?

Archaeologists use a range of scientific methods to identify traces of structures in the landscape, even if there is nothing left on the surface! By using a combination of aerial photographs to identify crop marks or parch marks, and survey equipment such as ground-penetrating radar (GPR) and LiDAR, archaeologists are able to identify the remains of towns, forts and farmings structures beneath the ground!



Crop marks visible during the summer which indicated traces of round, pre-historic burial mounds and other structures within an ancient necropolis located in France. Can you spot the doorways?

Image credit: WikimediaCommons cliché J. Dassié

Introduction:

In this activity you will create a token made from natural materials from your surrounding landscape to 'dedicate' back to the land.

To honour the gods that oversaw the nature around them, humans have always made offerings to thank nature gods for fertility and prosperity or to appease them if they have been angered. In the past, natural events such as thunderstorms and flooding were interpreted in many cultures as the anger of the local gods. Without modern technology, humans were much more at risk from extreme weather events. The examples below reflect ways in which humans across the world interacted with their local landscape in a desire to understand and rationalise the world around them.



Herakles wrestling the river Acheloos. The physical river is located in Western Greece, 220 km long, and was one of the most powerful and navigable rivers in antiquity. Attic red-figure column-krater, c. 450 BC.

Case Study One:

In the ancient world, rivers were often linked to the protection of children as a natural result of their life-giving waters. Rivers were thanked at coming of age ceremonies for protecting a child up to adulthood, or given offerings to ask for children or successful crops. The deification of rivers in particular is a phenomenon that appears across the known world, and is something that links humanity together. Rivers were often imagined as half-bull half-man creatures that represented their power and mystical nature.

Case Study Two:

The Greek goddess Persephone was worshipped in certain caves across Greece. In mythology, Persephone lived with Hades in the Underworld for half of the year and was allowed to return home to see her mother, the goddess Demeter, for the other half of the year. In her joy, Demeter was said to bloom flowers across the world and ripen crops. This mythology explained the annual transitions of the seasons. At Eleusis, women brought tokens of their worship to the cave which was said to be the entrance to the underworld, especially pomegranates, in order to ask Persephone for fertility. To this day, people visiting the site can find flowers and small fruits dedicated at the goddess' cave.



Terracotta pomegranate, originally painted red. 7th-6th century BC.
Image credit: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin



Inka ruins on Pilko Kaina, on Isla del Sol, Lake Titicaca, Bolivia.

Image credit: Wikimedia Commons | Steve Bennett

Case Study Three:

The Inka Empire of South America worshipped a complex system of nature gods. Mountains themselves (wak'as) were also sacred to the Inka, with the Apu (mountain spirit, meaning 'great lord') of the most important mountains receiving sacrifices. Lake Titicaca, one of the highest altitude lakes in the world, was a highly sacred site for the Inka, said to be the birthplace of the Sun God (Inti) and the ritual platforms surrounding the lake were designed to align with solstice sunsets. Within the lake is an underwater reef, the Khoa reef, where stone boxes containing miniature figurines of gold, silver and rare shells were submerged as ritual offerings. These were high value items given as tributes to the gods, and were just one of the types of offerings considered vital for appeasing the nature gods, influencing weather and ensuring the success of crops.



Variety of Inka ritual offerings. Objects like these have been found dedicated at mountain tops, the coast and other significant natural features at the limits of the Inka empire. These were part of the ceremony of capac hucha ("royal obligation") in Quechua, which marked natural events like a drought or transitions between Inka rulers.

Image credit: Metropolitan Museum of Art

Did you know?

Underwater archaeology is another valuable method which allows divers to investigate archaeological sites which have been submerged, flooded, or fallen into the sea by coastal erosion. Many important discoveries such as shipwrecks are found this way!



How do these case studies demonstrate the theme of a sacred landscape?
Where does nature play a part in worship?

Sadly, many of the offerings have not survived in the archaeological record, as they were often temporary, perishable materials including food. However, we know of temples and festivals used to worship aspects of nature, ritual offerings are well-evidenced in ancient texts and art, and traces of this practice often remain in modern traditions or folklore.

Activity: Creating your own ritual offering

About:

In this activity you will create your own ritual offering inspired by the information given above, using natural materials foraged from the local area.

You will need:

- An interesting-shaped twig/stick as your base
- A variety of natural, biodegradable materials such as: feathers, pebbles, flowers (ideally foraged from the local area)
- An assortment of feathers, wood-beads, or other left-over craft items made from natural materials
- Twine from natural fibres (jute, cotton, hemp, flax)
- Glue
- Scissors



Top Tips!

Make sure all of the items you are using are biodegradable and made of natural materials. This helps to safeguard nature for the future and protects wildlife from harm.

If you are foraging your materials, be selective. Make sure not to take too much of anything, and leave behind plenty for everyone else to enjoy.





Method:

1. Locate your natural materials from a nearby park or garden. Allow yourself to be open minded and inspired by anything that takes your interest. Does it have an unusual shape? Is the colour especially vibrant?

2. Take your chosen stick and tidy up any offshoots, leaves or extra branches with your scissors. You want to strip it down to its basic shape, leaving enough room to attach your embellishments.



3. Cut lengths of twine to tie your embellishments onto the branch, or use glue to make it more secure

4. Admire your hand-made offering inspired by your local landscape!



Activity: 'Dedicating' Your Offering

About:

In this activity you will take part in a phenomenon that has been happening for thousands of years by dedicating something to nature.

Method:

Option One

1. Choose a space in nature that feels special to you, somewhere that holds good memories or you think is beautiful.

2. Bring your ritual offering from the previous activity with you and take a trusted adult along.

3. Place your offering somewhere out of sight, for example under a bed of leaves by a hedge or between the roots of a tree.



4. As you make your 'ritual offering' take a moment to close your eyes and soak in the nature around you.

What do you hear? What do you smell?

Take a moment to breathe with the nature around you and consider how people of the past may have seen it, and how the natural world is relatively unchanging.

Option Two

1. Gather pens and pencils, or whatever medium of your choice. Set up a clear workspace and cover any surfaces.

2. Use the background information as inspiration for the type of natural setting that would be most suitable for your ritual offering from the previous activity. **What kind of shrine would suit a dedication to a mountain god? A sun god? A river god? And, more importantly, who is your ritual offering for?**

3. Start drawing your shrine

When you 'dedicate' your token, imagine yourself taking part in this long human tradition of thanking nature for its life-giving force and everything it does to sustain us.



Pongal is a four-day harvest festival in South India. It thanks the Sun God and nature's forces for a good rice crop



Loy Krathong, or Thailand's Festival of Lights, is an annual celebration that honors the Water Goddess Phra Mae Khongkha

Glossary:

Crop Marks – Variations in crop colour, height or ripening caused by archaeological features buried deep beneath the ground, best seen from the air.

Deification – The act of making someone or something – such as a human, animal or concept – into a god, elevating the subject to divine status.

Perishable – Something likely to rot, spoil or decay over time.

Personification – When an inanimate object or abstract idea is given human form, characteristics, emotions or behaviour in order to bring it to life. In the ancient world, this happened often to create a relatable god out of something that did not have an easily understandable form, such as thunder, rivers, winds. This gave humans an image to direct their worship towards.

Phenomenon – Widespread events, behaviours, or trends. When referring to natural phenomena, this means events in nature that can be observed and now explained by modern science, such as aurora, rainbows, eclipses, earthquakes and tides. In the past, these events sometimes caused awe or even fear and were instead explained by origin stories related to gods and powerful beings.

Ritual – A repeated, structured sequence of actions or behaviours with symbolic meaning that often take place during a ceremony with religious significance.

Sanctuary – A sacred or holy place, often where humans carefully craft the religious experience so that they can encounter the divine.

Shrine – A holy or sacred space dedicated to a specific god or group of related gods which acts as a focal point of worship. For nature gods, these shrines are often located in naturally-occurring spaces such as caves.

Tribute – An act or offering given to represent deeply felt praise, honour or allegiance given to a deity.

Resources

- Find out how cropmarks form and what they might represent: [The Formation of Cropmarks](#)
- Find out more about Inca offerings in Lake Titicaca: [Centuries-old Inca offering discovered in sacred lake](#)
- More about the Lake Titicaca Archaeological expedition: [Secrets of Lake Titicaca: Archaeological expedition uncovers pre-Columbian heritage](#)
- Follow Aristonike, an Oracle-in-training in Delphi: [a day in the life of the Oracle of Delphi - Mark Robinson](#)

