



Ramosé and the Tomb Robbers
by
Carole Wilkinson

**Series: Book 2,
Ramosé**

**Teacher Notes
prepared by Joy
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Readership: Mid to upper
primary, Lower secondary
Class Study
Serial Read
Independent Reading

Genre: Historical fiction, Ancient
Egypt, adventure

Award: Children's Book Council
of Australia Notable Australian
Children's Book

Rationale

- These teacher notes have been written to send students back to the text and other sources, to encourage an active engagement in learning and provide a creative learning experience, where possible.

How to use

- Learning activities suggested in one subject area may also be applicable to another subject area.
- Many of the activities have suggested answers and page numbers as time-savers for teachers.

About Ramosé and the Tomb Robbers

Prince Ramosé is still living as an apprentice scribe in the Great Place, the Valley of the Kings. Of his royal family, only his sister knows that he is alive. Rain causes a flooding deluge. People die and Pharaoh's tomb is ruined. Ramosé pushes his friend Hapu into a crevasse to save him. Ramosé rescues a cat, which he gives to Karoya the slave girl. The Pharaoh falls ill, so Ramosé and his friends journey to Memphis to try to see him, but Ramosé only manages to see his father from a distance. Ramosé is captured by tomb robbers, who force him to read a papyrus and guide them inside the tomb of Pharaoh Senusret. Inside they find mummies, and the boys escape the tomb trap. Ramosé and Hapu are left to die in the tomb but they find a tunnel and come across Karoya's cat which leads them to safety.

Themes

- Ancient Egypt
Slaves/Refuges
Burial tombs, mummies and tomb robbers
Gods
Friends

Teaching Applications

SOSE/HSIE

- Slaves and refugees** The issue of slavery is also raised in *Ramose: Prince in Exile*. Slave girl, Karoya, owns nothing of her own, except the clothes she wears, page 3. Ramose would like to give her a cat. Research what possessions contemporary refugees have. If you were a refugee, what one thing would you want? Ramose would free Karoya if he was pharaoh, page 11. Hapu challenges him, 'What about the other thousands of slaves?' Discover how slavery has been ended in parts of the world throughout history. Then try to answer Hapu's question.

Historicity

- Carole Wilkinson is recognised for her rigorous historical research as well as her storytelling expertise. The following SOSE / HSIE teaching applications may be also used to enlist students as historian-detectives who are corroborating or challenging the author's research.
- Pharaohs' Tombs** These are described on pages 5-7, 28, 60-115. The trap is described on pages 98-99. The princess' tomb on pages 92-95. The chamber with the ceiling covered in yellow stars is described on page 8. Find out more about the tombs then construct a model of an exterior or interior (or part of). Research and write about mummies, such as the pharaoh's mummy on page 81 and his daughter the princess' mummy on page 93 (see also English: Minor Characters)
- Writing on Stone** Writing on stone flakes was also a feature of *Ramose: Prince in Exile* (see Teacher Notes for that book). On pages 6 and 7, Ramose writes lists of the men who had reported to work. Write a list of pharaohs on stone flakes or thin stones. Use a permanent marker pen.
- Egyptian Gods** The symbol of the cat is a feature of this book and is extended in the form of the cat goddess on page 9. Other gods are mentioned, such as the cobra goddess, page 16, Osiris, page 30, the sky-goddess Nut, page 79 and the god Amun with a ram's head, page 97. In groups or individually, select one to find out more about, and present to the class. Replicas could be made.
- Hut Model** Ramose and Hapu live in a hut made of 'a pile of rocks roofed over with a few palm fronds,' page 10, while working in the Great Place. Make a sturdy half-size or quarter-size replica of the hut in the corner of the room.
- Food** Some foods eaten in Ancient Egypt are mentioned in *Ramose: Prince*



in Exile, such as bread, dried fruit, cake and pomegranate juice. Other foods are mentioned in *Ramose and the Tomb Robbers*, such as figs, page 4, the midday meal of lamb, bean stew and boiled eggs on page 9, fig and nut cakes on page 10, pomegranates and grapes on page 33, fish, lentils and fruit on page 119. In groups, prepare some of these foods and share them to have a midday workers' meal. Include the following recipe for Egyptian fig cakes, which is given by the author, Carole Wilkinson. This doesn't require any cooking.

Egyptian Fig Cakes

Ingredients

200 g figs

Half a teaspoon ground cardamom

1 tablespoon honey

50 g walnuts

50 g ground almonds

Procedure

Break up the walnuts into very small pieces using a rolling pin (or blender). Chop up the figs into very small pieces (a blender is better but the ancient Egyptians didn't have them).

Mix the walnuts, the figs and the cardamom. Add a little water until it sticks together. The mixture must be firm, not sloppy.

Shape into balls.

Roll first in honey and then in the ground almonds.

Science

- Plants 1. Garden** Read the description of the garden on pages 1 and 2 (also see English: Description Text Type below). Make a full-size or miniature (using a planter pot) Egyptian garden bed by sowing onions, herbs, wheat and other plants. 2. Wheat When the wheat has grown (or obtain grain from elsewhere), grind the grain as Karoya did on page 2 to bake bread. Compare with bread-baking today. Extension: bake bread or damper.
- Flood** After reading the account of the sudden flood on pages 13-23, investigate general and specific floods. Make an animation of either the flood in *Ramose* or another flood, showing the causes and effects. The re-sculpturing of the valley floor with wet sand and boulders, page 20, could be portrayed using a sand-pit or sand-tray.
- Phobias** *Ramose* doesn't like being enclosed. He suffers from some claustrophobia, which makes it awkward for him when a large part of this story is set inside a tomb. Brainstorm other phobias, such as arachnophobia. Categorise phobias into 1. the natural world 2. built environments and 3. people, such as xenophobia.

English

Speaking and Listening

- Prediction** If *Ramose: Prince in Exile* has already been read, predict what may happen and which characters may feature in *Ramose and the Tomb Robbers*.
- Moral Dilemma** What should Ramose do when he is forced to help the tomb robbers? Think of contemporary situations and examples. Extension: These could be played out as role plays.
- Discussion** The issue of 'destruction for gain' is raised when the tomb is pillaged, page 93. The tomb robber chose to destroy rather than preserve. When else has this happened in the past and present? Consider artefacts, buildings, the natural world and people.

Reading and Writing

- Plot Summary** Read the first chapter, particularly pages 3 and 4 to see how the author has summarised what happened to Ramose in *Prince in Exile* so that new readers to the series are informed, and old readers have their memories refreshed. Note how Carole Wilkinson has achieved this. After reading another novel or picture book, use this technique to write the beginning of a sequel.
- Description Text** Type Descriptive writing, interspersed with action, is a strength of this series. Everyday life is brought to life at the start of the book where the outdoor kitchen and Karoya's work there is described. Use this as a scaffold for students' descriptive writing about another possible character.
- Character Profile** Ramose is still eleven years old when the book starts but he has changed because of his experiences, pages 3,33. Even though Ramose was a real person, the author has imagined what happened to him. See 'A Word from the Author' on page 130. Create a character profile for Ramose.
- Minor Characters** There are some interesting minor characters who could be written about further, including evil Vizier Wersu, pages 25-27, the tomb raider, Intef, page 80, and the princess who was mummified, page 93.
- Pyramid Riddle** Read the riddles from the papyrus scroll that the tomb robbers find, beginning on pages 51 –52, then page 59 and onwards. Write your own riddles and present in a similar form.



Viewing

- Tomb Raider** View part of a Tomb Raider movie and contrast with the tomb robbing scenes in Ramose. NB Age suitability may need to be checked, and parental permission may be required.

Mathematics

Measurement

- The following activity is suggested by the author, Carole Wilkinson. Ancient Egyptians didn't use kilometres and centimetres when they measured things. They used the cubit, the palm and the finger-width. A cubit is the length from the elbow to the tip of the finger. A palm is the width of a hand, not including the thumb. A finger-width is the width of a finger. Take some measurements the Ancient Egyptian way. Measure the distance from the white board to the door in cubits. Measure the dimensions of your desk. Individually or in pairs, measure your height in cubits, palms and finger-widths. Begin by using cubits. When the distance left to measure is less than a cubit, measure in palms. When the remaining distance is less than a palm, measure in finger-widths. You will be likely to have a final measurement in cubits, palms and finger-widths. Think of some other distances to measure.

Physical Education

- Fitness** When Ramose first started walking up and down to the burial tomb, his leg muscles were painfully sore and he felt very tired. 'Now he'd walked up and down the steep slope of the tomb shaft so many times that he hardly noticed it. The muscles in his legs had grown strong.' pages 8-9. Over 5 days or longer take your pulse to show your heart-rate and your time, after running up and down steps or a steep slope. Graph improvement in both heart-rate and time.

Creative Arts

- Paintings** Ancient Egyptian paintings feature in Ramose: Prince in Exile. The process of tomb painting is described on pages 6-8. There are four main stages: apprentices painting the borders, rough drawings by outliners, sculptors following the outlines and painters using bright colours. After looking at some paintings from Ancient Egypt, create some pseudo Egyptian art incorporating some or all of these stages. Ramose's escapades could be used as subject matter.

About the author



Carole Wilkinson is an award-winning author of books for children. She has a longstanding fascination with dragons and is interested in the history of everything. Carole is a meticulous researcher who finds it difficult to stop researching and begin writing. She once searched for weeks to find out whether there were daffodils in Han Dynasty China. Carole is married, has a daughter, and lives in inner-city Melbourne.

