SOUNDS OF
ROMAN EGYPT
UCL PETRIE MUSEUM, LONDON
22ND JANUARY 2019 – 22ND APRIL 2019

SCHOOLS & TEACHER RESOURCE PACK

What did life in Roman Egypt sound like? What sorts of objects did people use to make music, and in what settings were they used? This exhibition, based on an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded research collaboration between the University of Kent, Manchester Metropolitan University, and the UCL Petrie Museum, begins to answer these questions, bringing to life the soundscape of Egypt during the Roman period.

You can download the “Petrie Museum” app to smart phones and tablets which has further interactive content and information relating to the exhibition.

To search for artefacts from the exhibition using their “UC” number, use the online catalogue: [http://petriecat.museums.ucl.ac.uk/search.aspx](http://petriecat.museums.ucl.ac.uk/search.aspx)

For more on the project, see: [https://blogs.kent.ac.uk/egypt-artefacts/blog/](https://blogs.kent.ac.uk/egypt-artefacts/blog/)
This resource pack supports the National Curriculum for Key Stage 2 History & Music.

**KS2 History**

This exhibition and the associated resources complement the understanding of world history and Roman Egypt in particular. It demonstrates how knowledge is constructed from a range of sources, showcasing the everyday lives of men, women and children through sound-making artefacts from Roman and late antique Egypt.

**KS2 Music**

This exhibition and the associated resources support the teaching and appreciation of music from different traditions, and an understanding of the history of music. It demonstrates the use of music for a range of purposes and the replica artefacts provide opportunities for the improvisation and composition of music.

**Pack Contents**

- Timeline of Roman Egypt
- True or False exhibition quiz
- True or False quiz answers
- Roman Rhythms exercise
- Animal Rattles exercise
- Rattle Decoration exercise
- Make your own clappers exercise
Timeline of Roman Egypt

- **30 BCE**: Egypt becomes part of the Roman Empire
- **1st century CE**: Christianity arrives in Egypt
- **69 CE**: Vespasian proclaimed emperor at Alexandria
- **2nd century CE**: Height of mummy portrait painting in the Fayum, Egypt
- **130 CE**: Emperor Hadrian visits Egypt
- **3rd century CE**: Christian monasteries are built throughout the Egyptian deserts
- **330 CE**: Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) is founded as the new capital of the Roman Empire
- **392 CE**: Egyptian temples close
- **642 CE**: The Arab invasion of Egypt and end of Roman rule
True or False Quiz

Look at the Sounds of Roman Egypt exhibition, then try answering the following questions:

1) You can play the original instruments kept in the Petrie Museum
   TRUE    FALSE

2) Sound making objects were only used by trained musicians in Roman Egypt
   TRUE    FALSE

3) Music was played within the home in Roman Egypt
   TRUE    FALSE

4) Bes was the god of love in Roman Egypt
   TRUE    FALSE

5) Bells were only used in religious ceremonies
   TRUE    FALSE

6) Clappers were made out of wood, metal, and bone
   TRUE    FALSE

7) Rattles were used by children in the Roman period
   TRUE    FALSE

8) All the replica instruments in the exhibition were made by 3D printing
   TRUE    FALSE

9) We only know about sound making objects from Roman Egypt from written descriptions
   TRUE    FALSE

10) Different kinds of sounds were used to scare off evil spirits
    TRUE    FALSE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. You can play the original instruments kept in the Petrie Museum</td>
<td>FALSE – the musical instruments are too old and fragile to be played</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sound making objects were only used by trained musicians in Roman Egypt</td>
<td>FALSE – objects like rattles, bells, and clappers were used by ordinary people in the home and in religious rituals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Music was played within the home in Roman Egypt</td>
<td>TRUE – especially in communal areas like courtyards which were shared by families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bes was the god of love in Roman Egypt</td>
<td>FALSE – Bes was a god who protected children and pregnant women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Bells were only used in religious ceremonies</td>
<td>FALSE – Bells were also worn by children as amulets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Clappers were made out of wood, metal, and bone</td>
<td>TRUE – examples made of all three are included in the exhibition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Rattles were used by children in the Roman period</td>
<td>TRUE – we think the egg shaped rattle is to stop it rolling away from children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. All the replica instruments in the exhibition were made by 3D printing</td>
<td>FALSE – some replicas are also made by craftspeople in metal, wood, and pottery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. We only know about sound making objects from Roman Egypt from written descriptions</td>
<td>FALSE – we have surviving instruments from archaeology, and images of musicians in mosaics and figurines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Different kinds of sounds were used to scare off evil spirits</td>
<td>TRUE – the sounds from bells were used to protect children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Percussion in Roman Egypt

Different percussion instruments would have accompanied singing, dancing and musical performances in Roman Egypt.

Rhythms for dancing were often based on 5 beats in the bar (rather than 4, as is common today).

Try the rhythms on the left:

1. Which do you find the easiest, and which do you find the most difficult?
2. Which instrument is best to use for these, and why?
3. With a friend, choose 2 instruments to play one rhythm at the same time – how does it sound?
Animal rattles

Our Roman bird rattle (UC34972) is missing its head! What did it look like before it was broken?

Draw your version on the picture below
Roman rattle designs

This rattle (UC65087) is egg-shaped and decorated with 2 different colours using slip (liquid clay).

1) Why do you think it is egg-shaped?
2) Design your own decoration for the 2 blank rattles below
Clappers were percussion instruments that made noise when shaken by the handle. Two loose panels are tied to the end of the main handle, meaning they hit the central section and make a ‘clap’ sound. The set on the left (UC71328) are made from bone, but other types in wood and metal also exist.

You can try and make your own set of clappers – follow the instructions below and use the picture on the left as a guide!

### Instructions

1) Cut out a wide strip off the bottom of the A4 foam / card. If your foam / card is thin you can fold or roll it up to stop it being too floppy – staple at each end to secure it. This is your clapper handle.

2) Cut 2 rectangles out of foam / card to match the shape of your handle at the end (see picture). These are your clapper pieces that move to make noise. If your foam / card is too thin you can cut out more squares and staple together to make thicker panels.

3) Place each clapper piece either side of the end of your clapper handle to form a sandwich. Hold together whilst you push a pencil carefully through all the layers near the bottom edge of the panels.

4) Cut a length of string and feed it through the hole you have just made. Knot the string securely either side of the clappers, but don’t make this too tight – you want the pieces to move enough to make a noise.

5) Shake your clapper by the handle to make a noise! If it is too quiet, you can add squares of thin plastic to the inner surfaces of the clapper pieces and the handle area where they hit. Use a stapler to attach them.

6) Don’t forget to decorate your clappers! Use the Petrie Museum online catalogue for inspiration.