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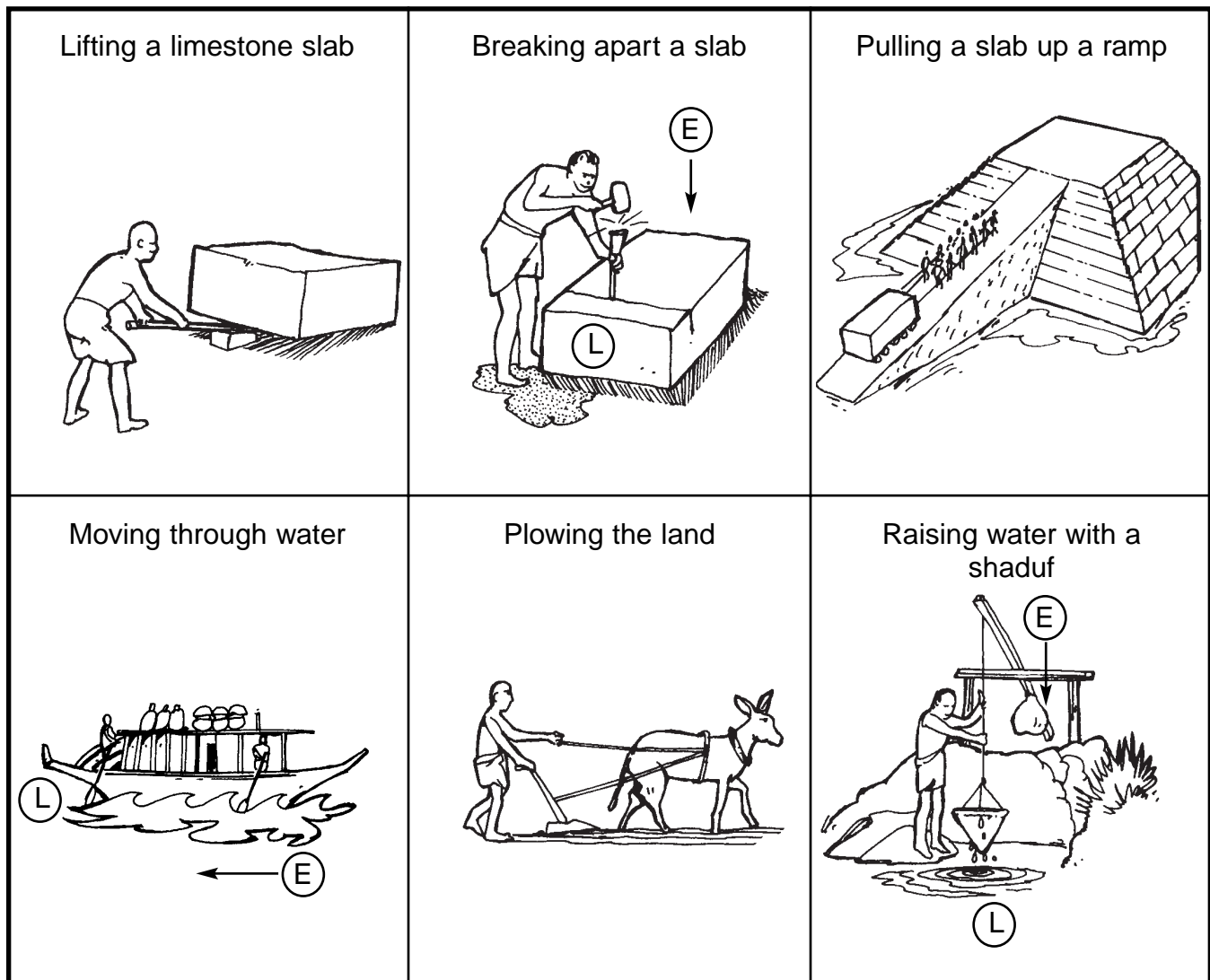
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Simple Machines

All machines, no matter how complex, are made of one or more simple machines. The six simple machines are the inclined plane, wedge, screw, lever, wheel and axle, and pulley. People use machines because they provide an advantage over doing work without a machine. When we work we use force (effort) to overcome a resistance (load). When we work, we use effort over a distance to move a load. When you lift a book from the floor to a table, you are working!

Lifting one book may not be very hard work, but what about lifting ten books? How could you lift something too heavy for you to pick up? You need something to give you more force. You need a simple machine. Simple machines can give you more force, give you more distance, or give you more speed. For example, you can walk to school, or you can use a machine—a bike. With a bike, you can use less effort over the same distance in less time. It's easier and it's faster.

The Ancient Egyptians understood these principles and used simple machines to do work such as irrigating, plowing, and building. Below are some pictures of Egyptians using simple machines in their daily lives. Three of them have been labeled to show the load and the direction of the effort applied. Look at the other pictures and identify the load and the direction of effort.



Make a Relief Carving

Another popular form of art was carving the walls inside the tombs or temples before painting them. Have students create their own relief carvings.

Preparing for the lesson:

1. Prepare the tile grout at least one day ahead of time. Gather a plastic tub, sturdy spoon, and a medium-sized bag of white tile grout. Mix the tile grout, following the directions on the bag. Pour the prepared grout mix into Styrofoam meat trays (one for each student; one for your sample) to about a half-inch (1.25 cm) thick. Let the grout set overnight.
2. Make a sample. Gather samples of Egyptian art to use as other samples.
3. Gather scratch paper and a carving tool for each student (thick paper clips work well).
4. Assemble water color paints, cans of water, and brushes.
5. Cover work areas with paper or plastic to catch tile grout dust as students carve.

Teaching the lesson:

1. Tell students that they each will be making an Egyptian relief painting by carving and painting a plasterlike surface. Display the samples.
2. Distribute scratch paper and have students draw the images they want to carve onto the tile grout. Remind them to keep it simple—a face, animal, Egyptian symbol, or part of a picture that is like a broken fragment from a tomb wall.
3. Distribute a slab of dried tile grout to each student. Have students keep the tile grout in the tray until the project is completed.
4. Have students lightly pencil-sketch their drawings onto the tile grout.
5. Distribute paper clips. Have students carve out the outlines of their pictures or carve away the backgrounds, leaving their pictures standing out in relief.
6. Once the carvings are complete, invite students to paint their carvings, using very little water, since the colors will bleed. Have students practice on the backs of their carvings before painting the fronts. Have them carve their initials on the backs, too.
7. Display the painted reliefs on a counter by removing them from the trays and placing them on a small sheet of colored construction paper. Have students write their names and titles on the construction paper. Some students may choose to carefully break away the edges to give a rough, authentic look to their relief.
8. Option: use light-brown tile grout and have the students make an unpainted carving.

