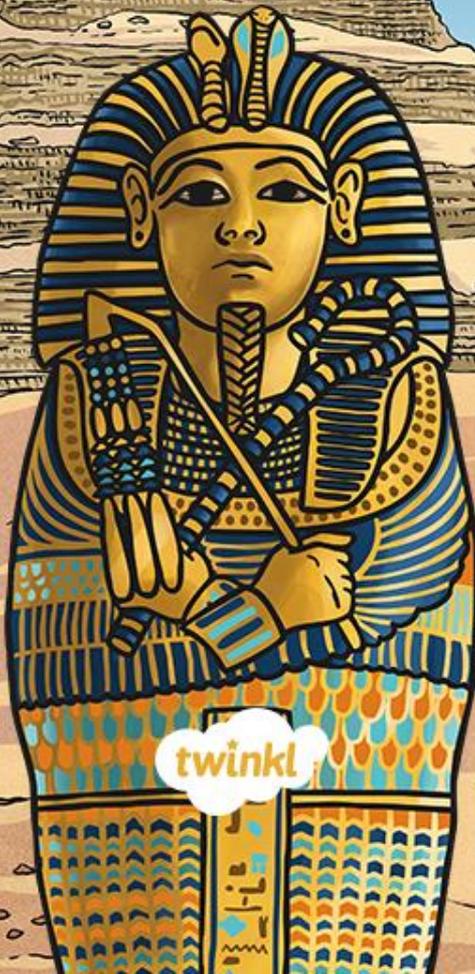


Egyptian Mummies



Learning Objective

To understand the purpose and use of the Canopic jars.



What is a Mummy?

A mummy is a body that has been preserved after death, it could be a human or an animal.



Why did the Egyptians preserve bodies?

The Egyptians believed that when they died their soul left their bodies. After they were buried their soul would return and together with the body would live forever in the afterlife when the world had ended. Unless their body was preserved, it would be no good in the afterlife.

Did all Egyptians preserve bodies?

Not everyone could afford to, it was a very expensive process that took around 70 days to complete.



How did the mummification process start?

The first ancient Egyptians didn't go through the long mummification process, they just buried people in small pits in the sand. The bodies dehydrated in the dry heat of the desert, preserving them naturally.

The downside to this was the risk of the bodies being eaten by wild animals. You didn't want to enter the afterlife with a half-eaten body after all. To stop this happening they started using coffins, but when the bodies weren't lying on the sand they didn't dehydrate so they decayed.

By 3400BC they had developed the method they are famous for today.

What was the process?

The body was taken to a place called the Beautiful House. It wasn't as beautiful as the name suggests!

The body was cleansed with palm wine and rinsed with water from the River Nile.

Sometimes they would use a slatted bed on a slant. This would let fluids drain off and out of the body, and allow them to wrap the strips of linen around the body.



Organs

A cut was made on the left side of the body and the organs removed to stop the body decomposing.

The liver, lungs, intestines and stomach were washed, dried in **natron** and either wrapped in cloth to place in the body later or stored in **canopic jars**.

The heart, responsible for intelligence and emotion, was left in the body as it was needed in the afterlife.

Natron is a natural salt.



Canopic Jars

The **canopic jars** had four different heads representing the four sons of Horus.

Hapi

Baboon headed
God. Looked after
the lungs.



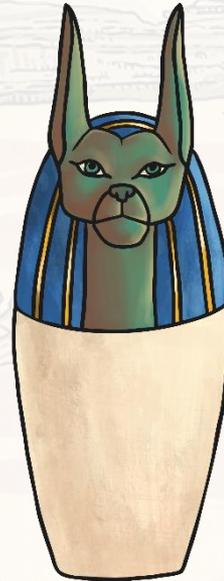
Imsety

Huma headed
God. Looked
after the liver.



Duamutee

Jackal headed
God. Looked
after the stomach.



Qebehsenuf

Falcon headed God.
Looked after
the intestines.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WKtbgpDfrWI>

Task: On the activity sheet, write down the name of each Canopic jar God and a sentence about the organ they protect. Write a sentence at the end about what they do with the brain and why?