

Writing

Hieroglyphs were written by scribes, who had to go to a special school to learn how to write. Almost all scribes were men, although there is some evidence of female doctors being able to read hieroglyphs in medical texts.

The Rosetta Stone, discovered in 1799, was written in hieroglyphs and two other languages, including ancient Greek, which linguists (language experts) could still read.

Linguists translated the hieroglyphs by comparing the languages. It took 20 years to translate all the text into modern language.

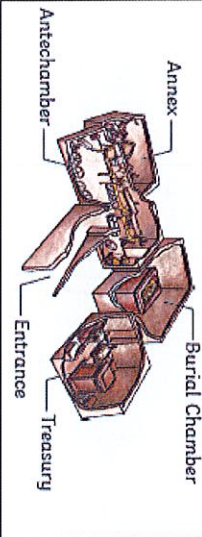
Embalming and Mummification

1. Wash the body.
2. Pull out the brain through the nostrils with a hook and fill the skull with sawdust.
3. Remove all internal organs except the heart. Put them into canopic jars.
4. Cover the body in natron salt and leave it to dry for 40 days.
5. Remove the natron salt and pack the body with straw, dried grass or linen.
6. Apply makeup and take eyes.
7. Wrap the body in linen fabric, adding amulets and a Book of the Dead.
8. Place the mummy in a sarcophagus (decorated coffin).



canopic jars

Tutankhamun's Tomb



The Nile

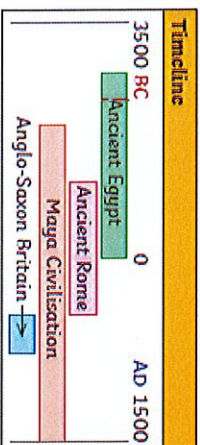
The river Nile was essential to life in ancient Egypt. Every year, it flooded, leaving behind a black silt that enriched the soil for growing crops. The river was also used to irrigate fields in other areas. Most people lived along and around the Nile. This is still true in Egypt today. The river was used for water, fishing and trade. Mud from the river was used for bricks and papyrus plants were used to make paper.

Tutankhamun Facts

- Born: around 1342 BC
- Died: around 1323 BC
- Pharaoh from approx. 1333 BC to 1323 BC
- Known as the 'boy king' as he became pharaoh aged only 9
- Tomb discovered by Howard Carter and his team in the Valley of the Kings in 1922
- Tomb contained over 3000 treasures
- Historians believe Tutankhamun died suddenly as the tomb was finished hastily.



Tutankhamun's death mask



Key Vocabulary

BC	Used to show that a date is before the year 0. This is counted backwards, so 200 BC is before 100 BC.
AD	Used to show that a date is after the year 0. This is counted forwards, so AD 100 is before AD 200.
hieroglyphics	A system of writing that used pictures and symbols (hieroglyphs) instead of letters.
mummification	The process of preserving a dead body as a mummy
cartouche	A oval carved shape in which the names of kings and queens were often written in hieroglyphs to show they were special.
pharaoh	A ruler of ancient Egypt.
canopic jar	A covered urn used in burials to hold the entrails and other organs from an embalmed body.
Ra	Sun god, lord of the gods. Sailed his boat through the sky during the day and through the underworld at night.
Amun	Created all things. Usually invisible unless mixed with another god, e.g. as Amun-Ra
Horus	God of the sky. Pharaohs were believed to be a god-like, living version of Horus.
Anubis	God of mummification. Weighed the hearts of the dead against Ma'at's feather. If your heart was lighter, you would live forever.
Isis	Queen of the goddesses.
Osiris	God of the dead.