

Mummy Mania

Name _____ Date _____

Synopsis

Ancient Egyptians honored the deceased with an elaborate burial ceremony. They meticulously prepared the body, not simply for burial, but for a long journey into the afterlife. In this activity you will prepare a beloved stuffed animal for the afterlife, based on the ancient Egyptians' values and customs.

Required Supplies

- Stuffed animal (the animal will be significantly altered)
- Scissors
- Drawing paper
- Markers, colored pencils, or crayons
- Small jars
- Salt
- Newspaper
- Plastic wrap
- Small rocks
- Toilet paper
- Rubber bands or string
- Shoe box or other small container



Vocabulary

- *ceremonial* A system of ceremonies, rites, or formalities for a specific occasion.
- *canopic jar* A jar used in ancient Egypt to contain the entrails of an embalmed body.
- *hieroglyphics* A figure or symbol with a hidden meaning.
- *natron* A mineral, hydrated sodium carbonate (type of salt).
- *amulet* A small object worn to ward off evil, harm, or illness or bring luck.
- *Osiris* In ancient Egyptian culture Osiris was the king and judge of the dead.
- *sarcophagus* A stone coffin, especially bearing sculpture or inscriptions.
- *mummy* The dead body of a human being or animal preserved by embalming.
- *tomb* An excavation in earth for the burial of a corpse; a grave.
- *Aaru* The Egyptian heavenly paradise. The god Osiris was the ruler.

How to Prepare a Stuffed Animal for Mummification

1. *What the ancient Egyptians did: The Egyptians removed the brain and threw it away, as it was not considered to have any value.*

What you will do: Cut the stuffed animal on the nose and remove part of the stuffing to symbolize the brain. Throw the stuffing in the trash.

2. *The Egyptians removed all of the internal organs from the body, except for the heart. They believed that the heart was the place where the person's soul resided.*

Carefully cut open the stuffed animal's stomach and remove the stuffing from the torso region. Do not remove any stuffing from the head or limbs.

Draw a heart and place it inside the stuffed animal's torso.

3. *The Egyptians placed the organs in a ceremonial vase, called a canopic jar. They painted pictures of the person on the vase, using bright colors.*

Place the stuffing into small jars. On the outside of the jars, draw scenes that might have occurred in the stuffed animal's life, or you may write sayings in hieroglyphics.

4. *The Egyptians spread a special kind of salt, called natron, all over the body and inside the body to preserve it from decay. They let the natron dry out the body for 40 days.*

Sprinkle some salt on the stuffed animal, on both the outside and inside.

Please wait 40 seconds, to symbolize the 40 days that the Egyptians waited.

5. *The Egyptians waited until the body was dry then they stuffed the body with linen or sand to give it a more human shape. They also put items of value, like gold, jewelry, and food inside the body. The items could be used by the deceased in the afterlife to purchase things and live comfortably.*

Stuff the animal with newspaper and put items that you think are interesting or valuable inside the stuffed animal. Put in items that the stuffed animal might need in the afterlife. You may place small rocks inside the animal, symbolizing valuable gems and gold.

6. *To protect the body from harsh weather, the Egyptians coated it with a thick layer of tree sap. This coating kept water from leaking into the body and prevented the desert heat from destroying the body.*

Carefully cover the stuffed animal with plastic wrap.

Make sure there are no places where water can get in.

7. *The body was now ready for the ceremonial cloth wrapping. The Egyptians wrapped the body, beginning with the feet and gradually worked their way to the head. They placed magic stones, called **amulets**, between the strips of cloth as they went. The amulets had phrases of good luck written on them from their family and friends. The Egyptians placed a special phrase on the mouth that the person might have spoken when he or she was alive.*

Carefully wrap the stuffed animal with toilet paper, beginning at the feet. Place some small stones or rocks in the wrappings. Write a few, 3-4, phrases with good luck messages and/or advice and add them to the stones. Add a special phrase that the stuffed animal might have said and place it on the animal's mouth.

8. *After the body was wrapped a special ceremonial mask was placed over the head. The mask helped the God of the Dead, **Osiris**, identify the person in the afterlife.*

Draw a picture of the animal's face. The picture should show the animal in its' best condition, just like the Egyptian masks did. Attach the mask to the face with a rubber band or string.

9. *The Egyptians prepared a **sarcophagus** (coffin) for the deceased. The coffin was brightly colored with scenes from the person's life and/or pictures of relatives and loved ones.*

Decorate a box with scenes from the stuffed animal's life. You may include pictures of family members or people who loved the stuffed animal.

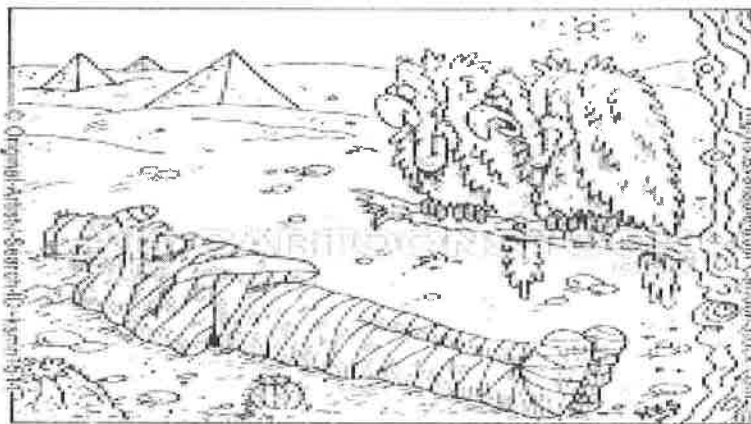
10. *The preserved body, called a **mummy**, and the canopic jars were carefully placed into the sarcophagus for burial in a **tomb**. The sarcophagus was sealed for the long journey to **Aaru**.*

Carefully place the wrapped stuffed animal into the decorated box.

Place the canopic jars near the animal's hands/paws for easy access in the afterlife.

Additional Resources

A master list of websites on Egypt <http://www.alaska-kids.com/egypt.html>



"I'm not eating that! It's probably full of preservatives!"