



**QUEENSLAND
MUSEUM**



Egyptian Mummies

EXPLORING ANCIENT LIVES

Schools Trail

The British
Museum



Egyptian Mummies

EXPLORING ANCIENT LIVES

How do we know about the ancient past?

What were the significant features and defining characteristics of ancient societies?

Explore how the study of objects and human remains has revealed detailed information about the lives, beliefs and practices of ancient Egyptians.



Nestawedjat Mummification

Ancient Egyptians took great care to preserve (or mummify) a person's body after their death. The survival of the body meant that you could use it forever in the afterlife. The task of mummifying a body was performed by embalmers and mummification was usually reserved for those of high social status.

Identify four items used to mummify a body. How were these items used during the mummification process?

OBJECT 1

OBJECT 2

OBJECT 3

OBJECT 4



Tamut Amulets

Ancient Egyptians used objects called amulets to protect their body during life and after death. There were many different types of amulets, each with their own magical powers. These powers were thought to reside in the specific shape, colour and material of the amulet and were activated with spells, rituals and incantations. Amulets were carefully positioned inside the body and under or between the wrappings during mummification.

CT scans have been used to identify the types of amulets that were placed on the bodies of mummies before they were wrapped, as well as the materials from which these objects were made.

Select an amulet used by ancient Egyptians and complete the following questions.

(Please note: Additional research may be necessary for some amulets)

Amulet	
Look closely at the amulet. What do you notice about the object? Describe its appearance, shape, colour, size and any other distinctive features you see.	
What material is the amulet made from? How do you think the amulet was made?	
Where was the amulet placed on the body?	
How did the amulet protect its wearer?	



Irthorru

Death and Disease

Ancient Egyptian medicine was highly advanced for its time. Ancient Egyptians were among the first to develop medical professions and methods to cure disease based on empirical evidence (knowledge gained through experimentation and observation).

A wide range of health problems and illnesses, many of which people experience today, affected all levels of ancient Egyptian society. Doctors were often asked to diagnose and treat these health problems with practical remedies, magical rituals and spells. Diagnostic and treatment methods were recorded in medical texts. Only a small number of these texts have survived from this time period, including the London Medical Papyrus.

It is often difficult to determine if mummified individuals suffered from specific health problems and illnesses, even using modern scanning equipment, as few conditions leave visible traces on the desiccated (dehydrated) soft tissues of a body or the skeleton.

CT scans have been used to reveal information about Irthorru's life. Explore the text, visualisations and objects in this room to answer the following questions.

What is known about Irthorru's state of health?

Can you hypothesise about the cause of this condition?

How might ancient Egyptain doctors have treated Irthorru in the past?
How would we treat this condition today?



A Temple Singer Social Class

Many different social classes were present in ancient Egyptian society. The organisation of these classes formed a hierarchy: at the top of the hierarchy was the pharaoh and at the very bottom were farmers and construction labourers. An individual's social class influenced many aspects of their life, including where they lived and what they ate, wore and owned. The ancient Egyptian social hierarchy was rigid and well-defined, with most individuals inheriting the social roles and responsibilities of their parents. Consequently, movement between classes was rare and difficult.

Priests and priestesses held a high level of power and privilege within ancient Egyptian society. They worked in temples and served the needs of the gods, preparing offerings and conducting daily rituals and ceremonies to satisfy, please, honour and appease these divine figures.



Look closely at these artefacts, found in the Temple Singer's room.

What clues allow us to infer that these priestesses were of a high social ranking?

Why are these particular items significant? Be sure to justify your response.





A Young Child Childhood

Ancient Egyptian children were at the heart of their family's concern. The survival and well-being of children was a high priority and considered to be a responsibility for all.

Can you locate evidence that supports the above statement?
What do these objects suggest about the attitudes towards children?

Evidence	Attitudes



A Young Man

Cultural Change

Greek and Roman rules over Egypt occurred between 332 BCE and 395 CE. During this time both cultures significantly influenced the traditional customs and practices of ancient Egyptian society. The extent of these changes can be observed with the aid of modern technologies and through the direct comparison of objects from different time periods.

Use exhibition objects to identify how funerary practices, including those related to the afterlife and mummification...

Changed	Stayed the same

Discussion Questions

Nestawedjat - Mummification

Consider the objects displayed within this section and what you already know about mummification practices and processes.

Mummification was most accessible for those of high social status. Why?

How might mummification differ for those of lower social status?

Tamut - Amulets

Amulets were also used during the daily lives of ancient Egyptians. These objects might be carried by their owners or used in necklaces, bracelets and rings to provide protection.

The belief that an object can provide protection or bring good luck is common to all societies. What do modern day societies and cultures use to bring good luck? How are these items used? What do they symbolise?

Irthorru - Death and Disease

The study of objects and human remains has revealed the sophisticated nature of medical and health care practices used by ancient Egyptians.

What aspects of this civilisation fostered and contributed to the development of such practices?

A Temple Singer - Social Class

Consider the objects displayed within this section and what you already know about the social structure of ancient Egyptian society.

What might you infer about the possible social status, roles and/or responsibilities of the temple singer's parents?

A Young Child - Childhood

Ancient Egyptian children were depicted as 'miniature adults' and assisted their parents with increasingly complex and demanding tasks as they grew. This time spent helping could be useful; children were likely to adopt the roles and responsibilities of their parents, following in their footsteps. Despite this children still had fun playing with games and toys. In fact, many objects and practices typically associated with modern childhood are present in this section.

Recall the objects you saw and information shared in this section of the exhibition. What connections can you make between your childhood and that of the ancient Egyptians?

A Young Man - Cultural Change

Ancient Egypt was a valuable addition to the Roman Empire. What resources could this civilisation offer to their new rulers?

Teacher Notes

The Ancient Egypt: Exploring Ancient Lives schools trail has direct links to the Year 7 History and Senior Secondary Ancient History curriculum.

Four shared themes have been identified across the content descriptors of the above year levels. These include:

- Analysis of human remains using modern technologies
- Significant beliefs, values and practices of the ancient Egyptians, with an emphasis on the everyday life, death and funerary customs of these people
- Social hierarchies (roles of and attitudes towards key groups in ancient Egyptian society)
- Contacts with other societies

It is recommended that you explore the trail contents with your students prior to entering the exhibition.

You may also choose to engage your students in the 'jigsaw' teaching technique to complete the trail. This will involve:

- Dividing your students into six groups.
- Assigning each group with a section of the trail to investigate further. Students may work independently or within smaller groups to complete their section of the trail.
- Forming new groups upon returning to the classroom. Each new group should contain one student from each of the original six groups. Students share their findings with their peers and the class.

You will also find discussion questions located on page seven. These questions may be used during or after your visit to the exhibition to prompt further inquiry into trail themes and concepts. Students may conduct additional research to assist their completion of these questions.

Australian Curriculum Links (8.3)

Year 7 History The Ancient World

Overview Content Descriptors

- The evidence for the emergence and establishment of ancient societies (including art, iconography, writing tools and pottery) (ACOKFH002)
- Key features of ancient societies (farming, trade, social classes, religion, rule of law) (ACOKFH003)

Depth Studies

1. Investigating the Ancient Past	2. The Mediterranean World (Egypt)
How historians and archaeologists investigate history, including excavation and archival research (ACDSEH001)	Roles of key groups in ancient Egyptian society (such as the nobility, bureaucracy, women, slaves), including the influence of law and religion (ACDSEH032)
The range of sources that can be used in an historical investigation, including archaeological and written sources (ACDSEH029)	Significant beliefs, values and practices of the ancient Egyptians, with a particular emphasis on ONE of the following areas: everyday life, warfare, or death and funerary customs (ACDSEH033)
	Contacts and conflicts within and/or with other societies, resulting in developments such as the conquest of other lands, the expansion of trade, and peace treaties (ACDSEH034)

Historical Skills

Chronology, terms and concepts

Use historical terms and concepts (ACHHS206)

Historical questions and research

Identify a range of questions about the past to inform a historical inquiry (ACHHS207)

Identify and locate relevant sources, using ICT and other methods (ACHHS208)

Analysis and use of sources

Identify the origin and purpose of primary and secondary sources (ACHHS209)

Locate, compare, select and use information from a range of sources as evidence (ACHHS210)

Perspectives and interpretations

Identify and describe points of view, attitudes and values in primary and secondary sources (ACHHS212)

Explanation and communication

Develop texts, particularly descriptions and explanations that use evidence from a range of sources that are acknowledged (ACHHS213)

Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies (ACHHS214)

Unit 1: Investigating the Ancient World Historical Knowledge and Understanding

Historical authentication and reliability	Treatment and display of human remains
Methods of authentication, including scientific and comparative dating techniques for documents and objects and cross-referencing of ancient sources (ACHAH018)	The methods and results of scientific analysis (forensic techniques) and modern preservation of the remains (ACHAH031) The significance of the human remains for an understanding of the life and times in which they lived, including the social status of individuals, the beliefs and practices of the society, the health of ancient populations, and the nature of the environment (ACHAH032)

Unit 2: Ancient Societies Historical Knowledge and Understanding

Social structure	
The main social hierarchies for example elites, workers, slaves, ethnic groups and foreigners (where applicable) (ACHAH106)	
The role of, and attitude towards, children and education (ACHAH108)	
The family	Beliefs, rituals and funerary practices
Beliefs and practices that influenced family life, including: the purpose of marriage and/or betrothal, marriage rituals, divorce, concubines, infanticide, gender, leisure activities (ACHAH136)	The nature of the sources for beliefs, rituals and funerary practices (ACHAH140)
Concepts of childhood and childhood experiences, including: education, rites of passage, age of maturity (ACHAH138)	The dominant beliefs and rituals (ACHAH141)
The significance of the family in social and political life (ACHAH139)	The influence and significance of beliefs and rituals (ACHAH142)
	Attitudes to and beliefs about death, and the concept of an afterlife (ACHAH143)
	Funerary practices (burial sites, forms of burial, ceremonies) and their relationship to religious beliefs and social status (ACHAH144)

Historical Skills

Chronology, terms and concepts

Use historical terms and concepts in appropriate contexts to demonstrate historical knowledge and understanding (ACHAH002)

Historical questions and research

Formulate, test and modify propositions to investigate historical issues (ACHAH003)

Identify, locate and organise relevant information from a range of primary and secondary sources (ACHAH005)

Analysis and use of sources

Identify the origin, purpose and context of historical sources (ACHAH007)

Analyse, interpret and synthesise evidence from different types of sources to develop and sustain a historical argument (ACHAH008)

Perspectives and interpretations

Analyse and account for the different perspectives of individuals and groups in the past (ACHAH010)

Explanation and communication

Communicate historical understanding by selecting and using text forms appropriate to the purpose and audience (ACHAH014)