

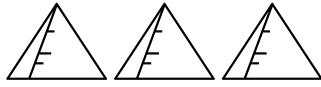
Ancient Egypt KS2

Story and Reading Comprehension (Levelled)



The Embalmer

The Embalmer



Level Three

The Nile shimmers a muddy blue, and the bulrushes move like swaying dancers in the breeze that runs its lazy fingers through my hair. I feel blessed every time I walk by this life-giving source, this gift of water that moves through my land. I pause to watch an Ibis stalking the shallows and silently thank this sacred bird. Another gift for us – the Ibis god of wisdom, Thoth, wife of Maat, preserves us all from plagues that could ravage us and bring nothing but death or famine.

A group of women are washing their clothes in the river, and they stop their labours to watch me respectfully as I pass. They know who I am. They know where I am going. I head inland and join a flow of people - labourers who are heading to prepare the tomb, their skin roasted by the sun as they lead donkeys and their burdens onward. All are solemn. Someone, somewhere, is wailing – a cry of grief.

The tent, the beautiful house, is set up and waiting for me. Inside it is cool and quiet, sheltered from the desert dust and the beating sun. Two men are standing watch inside, and I motion for them to leave, my gaze falling upon the body laid out upon the raised platform in the centre of the floor. The Pharaoh's son. I look at his strong features, his thick, dark hair, his youthful skin. A peace has fallen upon him, and now my work begins. A sacred journey awaits this young prince, and I must ensure he is ready.

I make a swift check of my equipment. Strips of linen are piled in a basket next to the body. I will not need these bandages for another forty days - the prince's body must be readied before this step. For now, I will need my oils, my natron salts, my tools for removing the vital organs. A hook for the brain. I carefully arrange the decorative canopic jars, the hawk for the intestines, the jackal for the stomach, baboon for the lungs, and human for the liver.

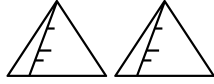
The bowl of sacred water stands untouched nearby, with which I will soon carefully wash the body. A collection of sacred amulets, scarabs and charms and the prince's finest jewellery are laid out on a mat of soft fabric. These will travel with the prince when his mummification is complete. He will need these objects in the afterlife.

He was a good man, I think, as I look at his face. The gods will know this. He will pass Anubis' test, his heart will be as light as Maat's feather, and he will be welcomed into the afterlife by Osiris, and we will all rejoice.

I am comforted by this belief. My work is sacred, vital. I must help this prince on his final path, I must ensure his journey is smooth, that he has all he needs. This is my task, my calling, my obligation. The most important job of all. I place a kiss on the prince's forehead.

I am ready to begin.

The Embalmer



Level Two

The Nile River shimmers a muddy blue, and the bulrushes move like dancers in the breeze. I feel blessed every time I walk by this life-giving gift of water that moves through my land.

I pause to watch an Ibis bird in the shallow water and silently thank it. It is a gift for us. The ibis god of wisdom, Thoth, wife of Maat, keeps us safe from illness and plague that could make us unwell or stop our crops growing.

A group of women are washing their clothes in the river, and they stop to watch me as I pass. They know who I am. They know where I am going.

I head inland and join a flow of people - workers who are heading to prepare the tomb, their skin roasted by the sun as they lead donkeys carrying their materials onward. All are sad. Someone, somewhere, is crying out – a cry of grief.

The tent, called the beautiful house, is set up and waiting for me. Inside it is cool and quiet, sheltered from the desert dust and the beating sun. Two men are standing watch inside, and I ask them to leave, my eyes falling upon the body laid out upon the table in the centre of the floor. It is the Pharaoh's son. I look at his strong face, his thick, dark hair, his young skin. He is peaceful, and now my work begins. A sacred journey awaits this young prince and I have to get him

ready.

I check the items I will need. Strips of linen are piled in a basket next to the body. I will not need these bandages for another forty days – other things must be done before this step. For now, I will need my oils, my natron salts, my tools for removing the vital organs. A hook for the brain. I carefully move the painted canopic jars, the hawk for the intestines, the jackal for the stomach, baboon for the lungs, and human for the liver.

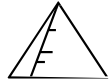
The bowl of sacred water is next to me, and I will use this to carefully wash the body. Sacred amulets, scarab beetles and charms and the prince's special jewellery are laid out on some soft fabric. These will travel with the prince when his mummification is finished. He will need these objects in the afterlife. He was a good man, I think, as I look at his face.

The gods will know this. He will pass Anubis' test, his heart will be as light as Maat's feather, and he will be welcomed into the Afterlife by Osiris, and we will all be happy

This belief helps me. My work is sacred and important. I must help this prince. I must make sure his journey is smooth, that he has all he needs. This is my task. The most important job of all. I place a kiss on the prince's forehead.

I am ready to begin.

The Embalmer



Level One

The Nile River is blue with brown mud at the bottom, and the bulrush plants move in the wind. I feel lucky every time I see this gift of water that moves through my country.

I stop to watch an Ibis bird in the shallow water and thank it. It is a thin, white bird with a long beak. The Ibis god of wisdom is called Thoth *and makes sure our food grows and stops us from getting ill.*

Some women are washing their clothes in the river, and they stop to watch me as I go past. They know who I am. They know where I am going.

I walk away from the river and join lots of people – they are workers who are heading to get the tomb ready, and they have donkeys carrying their tools. They look sad. Someone I can't see is crying.

The tent, called the beautiful house, is set up and waiting for me. Inside it is cool and quiet, away from the desert dust and the hot sun. Two men are inside, and I ask them to leave, and I look at the body laid on the table in the centre of the floor. It is the Pharaoh's son. I look at his strong face, his thick, dark hair, his young skin. He is very peaceful. The prince has to go on a special journey now, and I have to get him ready.

I check the objects I need. Lots of bandages are piled in a basket next to the body. I won't need these for another forty days – I have to do other things first. I will need my oils, my natron salts, my tools for removing the organs and a hook for the brain. I carefully move the painted canopic jars, the hawk for the intestines, the jackal for the stomach, baboon for the lungs, and man for the liver. The bowl of sacred water is next to me, and I will use this to carefully wash the body. Sacred amulets, scarab beetles and charms and the prince's special jewellery have been put on some soft fabric. These will travel with the prince when his mummification is finished. He will need these objects in the afterlife.

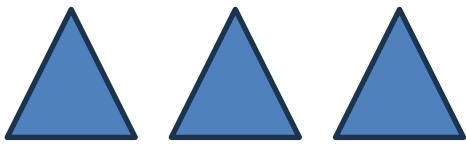
He was a good person, I think. The gods will know this. He will pass Anubis' test, his heart will be as light as Maat's feather, and he will be welcomed into the Afterlife by Osiris, and we will all be happy.

Thinking of that helps me. My work is very important. I must help. I must make sure his journey is easy, and that he has all he needs. This is the most important job of all. I kiss the prince's head.

I am ready to begin.

Comprehension Questions – The Embalmer

Level Three:



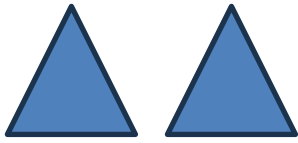
1. What does the Embalmer's job involve and why is it so special?
2. Why is the Embalmer grateful to see the ibis?
3. Why do you think the women washing their clothes watch the Embalmer "respectfully?"
4. Why do you think the labourers are headed to the tomb? What are they going to do there?
5. The Embalmer uses the word "sacred," several times. What do you think they mean by this word?
6. Why do you think it is important for the Embalmer to include charms and amulets, and the pharaoh's son's most valuable jewellery in the process?
7. The Embalmer mentions three Ancient Egyptian gods. What are they?
8. What do you think is meant by the donkey's "burdens?"

9. Canopic jars are where certain internal organs are placed after removal. Which organs are placed in which jars?

10. The Embalmer says the water of the Nile is “life-giving.” Why do you think this is?

Comprehension Questions – The Embalmer

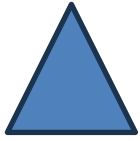
Level Two:



1. What type of bird does the Embalmer see in the river?
2. Where are the workers going and why?
3. Can you list three items or tools the Embalmer needs to do their job?
4. What is the Embalmer going to use to wash the pharaoh's son's body?
5. What are the women doing in the river?
6. Fill in the blank. The Embalmer uses _____ salts.
7. Whose test must the pharaoh's son pass to enter the afterlife?
8. What is piled in a basket next to the body?
9. What is the tent called?
10. Who does the feather belong to?

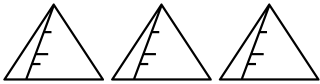
Comprehension Questions – The Embalmer

Level One:



1. What colour is the Nile River?
2. How does the Embalmer describe the ibis bird?
3. What do the men in the tent do after the Embalmer arrives?
4. Who will welcome the pharaoh's son into the afterlife?
5. How many canopic jars are there?
6. Fill in the blank. The organs are placed in _____ jars.
7. How many days will it be until the Embalmer needs the bandages?
8. What organ will be placed into the baboon jar?
9. What type of beetle does the Embalmer talk about?
10. What is in the bowl?

Glossary



Embalmer: A person whose job it is to preserve a human body after death, to ensure the body does not rot away. In Ancient Egypt, embalmers were considered very important as they were special priests - religious persons who ensured the process was done correctly, with care and respect in line with the Ancient Egyptian's religious beliefs, and to ensure the mummified person reached the Afterlife.

Mummification: A long and careful process in which the dead person was prepared for being buried, and for the afterlife. It involved many different steps including wrapping in bandages. Embalmers carried out this job.

The Nile: A long river, which flows partly through Egypt. It was very important to the Ancient Egyptians as every part of their lives depended on the river. It was considered a "life-giving," resource, enabling Ancient Egyptians to travel, water their crops, and sustain themselves.

Bulrushes: Plants that grow near fresh water like the Nile. It is long and green with a thick brown tip.

Ibis: A breed of bird with long legs and a long sharp beak. Ibises live in wetlands. The Ancient Egyptians worshipped many different animals that corresponded to different gods. The Ibis represented the god Thoth.

Tomb: Burial chamber. An enclosed space or building in which Ancient Egyptians would bury their mummified dead. The Pyramids of Giza are tombs.

Labourer: A manual or physical worker. In the Embalmer's story, these labourers were responsible for carrying materials needed to ready the tomb of the pharaoh's son.

The Beautiful House: A special tent where the embalming process took place, protected from the desert sun, dust and heat.

Linen: A type of fabric the Ancient Egyptians used for bandages in the mummification process. It is similar to cotton, but the fibres used to make it come from the flax plant rather than cotton seeds.

Pharaoh: An important ruler, a monarch. A king who ruled over Ancient Egypt and its people. There were many different Pharaohs over many thousands of years.

Natron: A salt-like substance that was used to dry out the bodies as part of the mummification process. It's a bit like mixing baking soda and salt together.

Organs: Parts of the inside of the human body that keeps it working properly. Liver, lungs, intestines and stomach are all examples of vital organs.

Canopic jar: A vessel, often decorated, in which the vital organs were placed. These jars were buried with the mummified person.

Jackal: A wild animal, similar to a dog or fox.

Sacred: Very important, connected to religious beliefs.

Amulet: An ornament, or small item, thought by the Ancient Egyptians to have protective qualities, for example, to keep away danger or disease.

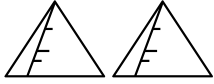
Scarab: A type of beetle. These represented the circle of life, birth, life and death, and also resurrection in Ancient Egypt, which means having another life after you die.

Anubis: The Ancient Egyptian god of care of the dead. He judged people after they died and helped guide them into the afterlife.

Maat: The Ancient Egyptian goddess of truth, harmony and justice. The Ancient Egyptians believed that when you died, your heart would be weighed against Maat's feather to test if you had been a good person and lived a good life.

Osiris: The Ancient Egyptian god of the Afterlife, resurrection, life and the underworld, the place beyond death. Also god of the Nile floods that Ancient Egyptians needed to help grow food. Osiris welcomed people into the Afterlife.

Glossary



Embalmer: A person whose job it is to look after a human body after death and do certain things to keep the body from rotting away quickly. In Ancient Egypt, embalmers were very important as they were special priests - religious people who did their job with care and respect. It was part of making sure the person reached the afterlife.

Mummification: A process in which the dead person was prepared for being buried, and the afterlife. It involved many different steps including wrapping in bandages.

The Nile: A long river, part of it is in Egypt. It was very important to the Ancient Egyptians as they needed the river to travel and grow food.

Bulrushes: A plant that grows near fresh water, like the Nile. It is long and green with a thick brown tip.

Ibis: A type of bird with long legs and a long, sharp beak. Ibises live near water. The Ancient Egyptians worshipped many different animals which they thought were like their gods. Thoth was the Ibis bird god.

Tomb: An inside space where Ancient Egyptians would bury mummified people. The Pyramids in Egypt are tombs.

The Beautiful House: A special tent where embalming and mummifying was done, where the embalmer would look after the dead person and make sure their body was ready, and that they were ready to go to the Afterlife.

Linen: A type of fabric the Ancient Egyptians used for bandages for mummified people. It is like cotton but made from a plant called flax.

Pharaoh: A king who ruled over Ancient Egypt and its people. There were lots of different Pharaohs over thousands of years.

Natron: A bit like mixing baking soda and salt together. Used to dry out the body of a dead person.

Organs: Parts of the inside of the human body that keeps it working. Liver, lungs, intestines and stomach are all examples of vital organs.

Canopic jar: Jars where vital organs were put. These jars were then buried with the mummified person.

Jackal: A wild animal, a bit like a dog or fox.

Sacred: Very important, religious.

Amulet: A small object thought by the Ancient Egyptians to protect them.

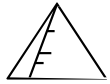
Scarab: A type of beetle. The Ancient Egyptians believed scarab beetles had a lot to do with birth, life and death, and also resurrection. This means having another life after you die.

Anubis: The Ancient Egyptian god of care of the dead. He judged people after they died and helped them into the Afterlife.

Maat: The Ancient Egyptian goddess of truth, harmony and justice, which means fairness. The Ancient Egyptians believed that when you died, your heart would be weighed against Maat's feather to test if you had been a good person and lived a good life.

Osiris: The Ancient Egyptian god of the Afterlife, resurrection, life and the underworld - the place beyond death. Also god of the Nile floods that Ancient Egyptians needed to help grow food. Osiris welcomed people into the Afterlife.

Glossary



Embalmer: A person whose job it is to look after a human body after someone had died, and to stop it going rotten.

Mummification: What happens to a person being made ready for being buried and the afterlife. There were many different tasks to do as part of mummification, like wrapping in bandages.

The Nile: A long river, part of it is in Egypt. It was very important to the Egyptians as they needed the river to travel and grow food.

Bulrushes: A plant that grows near fresh water, like the Nile. It is long and green with a thick brown tip.

Ibis: A type of bird with long legs and a long sharp beak. Ibises live near water. The Ancient Egyptians worshipped many different animals which they thought were like their gods. Thoth was the Ibis bird god.

Tomb: An inside space where Ancient Egyptians would bury mummified bodies. The Pyramids in Egypt are tombs.

The Beautiful House: A special tent where people were Mummified.

Linen: A type of fabric the Ancient Egyptians used for bandages for mummified people.

Pharaoh: A king who ruled over Ancient Egypt and its people. There were many different Pharaohs over thousands of years.

Natron: A kind of salt used to dry out the body of a dead person.

Organs: Parts of the inside of the human body that keeps it working in different ways. Liver, lungs, intestines and stomach are all examples of vital organs.

Canopic jar: Jars where vital organs were put. These jars were then buried with the mummified person.

Jackal: A wild animal, a bit like a dog or fox.

Sacred: Very important, religious.

Amulet: A small object thought by the Ancient Egyptians to protect them.

Scarab: A type of beetle. The Ancient Egyptians believed scarab beetles had a lot to do with birth, life and death.

Anubis: The Ancient Egyptian god of care of the dead.

Maat: The Ancient Egyptian goddess of truth.

Osiris: The Ancient Egyptian god of the afterlife, resurrection, life and the underworld - the place beyond death.