

Make an Ancient Egyptian Tomb

“...as my eyes grew accustomed to the light, details of the room within emerged slowly from the mist, strange animals, statues, and gold - everywhere the glint of gold. For the moment - an eternity it must have seemed to the others standing by - I was struck dumb with amazement, and when Lord Carnarvon, unable to stand the suspense any longer, inquired anxiously, 'Can you see anything?' it was all I could do to get out the words, 'Yes, wonderful things.’”

This is what Howard Carter, the famous archaeologist, said when he first peered into the tomb of Tutankhamun which he discovered in 1922.

Which of the words do you think best describes how he was feeling?

Excited Bored Amazed Confused Stunned Surprised Shocked
Scared Anxious Nervous Exhausted Dazzled Overwhelmed

An ancient Egyptian tomb is for someone who has died in this life and has been mummified in the hope they will come alive in the next life – the Afterlife.



Figure 1 Howard Carter (right) opening the door to the tomb of Tutankhamun.
The J. Paul Getty Museum

Make your own Egyptian Tomb

Can you make your family and friends feel as excited as Howard Carter did when they used their torch to peer inside and see the wonders within?

What you will need:

- **Paper, cardboard, crayons/felt pens/paints, scissors, sticky tape, glue**
Optional: tissue paper, modelling clay, plastic bottles and other objects from the recycling bin, sand, brown paper
- **A cardboard box.** It could be a shoe box or much larger. Importantly, it needs a lid or flaps to fold over so that it is dark inside. If you only have an open box, you can always cover it with a dark cloth

Making the Tomb

Make a peephole. Draw a rectangle on one of the shorter sides of the box and cut it out carefully.

How could you make it look really ancient? You could put glue on it and then rub-in sand and dirt, use dark coloured tissue paper or use a sponge to put paint onto it.



Figure 2 make a 'peephole'

Decorating the inside of the Tomb

Ancient Egyptians decorated the walls of the tombs of important people with amazing, colourful pictures. These might show the pharaoh in battle, or the person meeting the gods, but mostly they showed everyday life in Egypt.

Draw some pictures to stick on the inside walls of your tomb. If you have a lid (roof) for your tomb, why not draw a picture on that as well?



Figure 3 Ancient Egyptian tomb wall painting, showing Nebamun Hunting Birds
The Art of Ancient Egypt 2000

Cartonnage, Coffin or Sarcophagus

An ancient Egyptian tomb is for someone who has died in this life and has been mummified in the hope they will come alive in the next life – the Afterlife.

Can you make a beautiful box for the body to be in? You could make this from a small box, you could draw one on cardboard and cut it out, or you could cover a plastic bottle or carton with *papier mâché* (tissue paper and glue) and decorate it.

Very important people would have had all three of these boxes, one inside each other.



Figure 4 Cartonnage and coffin of Shep en-Mut, and an example sarcophagus
Sarcophagus The Brooklyn Museum

Tomb objects

Here is an image from inside Tutankhamun's tomb, when it was found. Look carefully and you will see chests and boxes with treasure inside: animal figures, statues, pots and jars for food and drink.

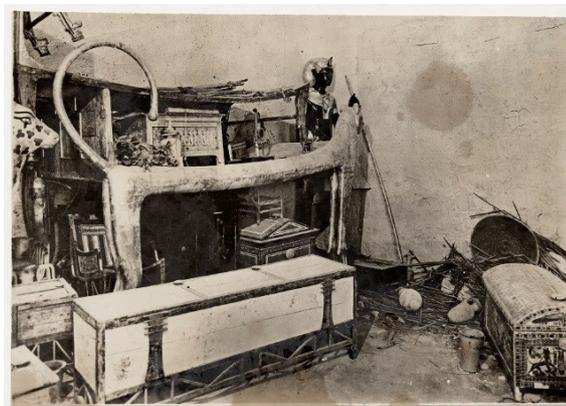


Figure 5 Tutankhamun's tomb
The British Academy

Make your own tomb objects to go inside your ancient Egyptian tomb.

Use your imagination to think about the different ways you could make such objects. You could use:

- Paper or card
- Modelling clay
- Home-made [salt dough](#)
- LEGO bricks
- Baking foil
- Small toys or objects from around your house

Here are some object suggestions from RAMM's collection:



Figure 6 A Mummified Hawk, an Offering Cup, a Food or Drink Jar, Horse Head Figurine, the Goddess Sekhmet and Canopic Jars

Sealing the Tomb

Close your finished tomb so that it is dark inside.

Now shine your torch through the peephole to see the wonders within and invite your family to do the same.