Notes for teachers

National curriculum links
- History: ancient Egypt, first civilisations
- Science: dehydration
- Citizenship: reflecting on spiritual and cultural issues

Location lecture theatre
Format students view images projected on a screen and participate through a Q&A
Capacity up to 120 students, usually from different schools
Duration 45 minutes
Price £1.50 per student

In detail
- Students are told about the dehydration process. The link between dehydration and preservation is introduced.
- Students find out about the process of natural mummification which occurred in the ancient Egyptian desert 5,000 years ago. They then discover the development and process of artificial mummification in ancient Egypt.
- Students consider how mummies are a source of evidence about ancient Egypt and how museum experts have investigated mummies in the past and the present. The students will find out how x-rays help the Museum to find out more about the mummies in its collection without unwrapping them. We discuss how the British Museum uses modern technology such as CAT scanning and 3D printing to investigate the mummies in its collection.

Before your visit
- Locate Egypt in an atlas and on a globe. Identify key geographical features.
- Introduce/revise the key themes and key vocabulary listed above.
- Create a timeline for ancient Egypt and mark on key historical events.
- Discuss modern burial practices – what happens when somebody dies?

After your visit
- Create a flow diagram explaining the process of artificial mummification – what happens in what order.
- Visit the British Museum ancient Egypt website and use the section on mummification or watch a British Museum conservator working on a painted Egyptian coffin.

Find out more
- More ancient Egyptian resources and sessions
- Related galleries: 4, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65
- Take a look at the galleries with Google Street View and search the collection online

Egyptian mummies: Notes for teachers
Visit notes for students and adult helpers

You can print this summary sheet and take it with you during your visit.

Learning objectives

- To understand the process of natural and artificial mummification
- To understand how modern technology is used to find out more about mummies

Key words

Mummy
Mummification
Natural
Artificial
Burial
Preservation
Dehydration – taking the water out of something
X-ray
CAT scan

Dehydration

- You will think about what happens when something is dehydrated and how this process can help preserve something.

Natural and artificial mummification

- You will find out about the natural process of mummification which happened in the ancient Egyptian desert 5,000 years ago.
- You will then find out about the development and process of artificial mummification in ancient Egypt.

Investigating mummies with modern technology

- Modern museums do not usually unwrap mummies to study them.
- You will find out how x-rays help the Museum to find out more about the mummies in its collection.
- You will find out how the Museum can use CAT scanning and 3D printing to investigate a mummy.

Egyptian mummies: Notes for teachers