

## **Ancient Egyptian Mummies**

Ancient Egyptians believed that there was a life after death called the 'afterlife.' They also believed that a body had to be preserved after death so that a person could safely reach the afterlife.

And so, they Egyptians made mummies to preserve the dead bodies of kings, queens and nobles. Mummification was a long, expensive process that took about 70 days to complete. Egyptians used the chemical natron to dry out the body and prevent it from rotting away.

First, the organs such as the stomach, intestines, lungs, and liver were removed from the body and preserved with natron. The organs were then put in jars called 'canopic jars' to be placed next to the body. The brain was then pulled out of the head through the nose using a long hook.

Then the body was covered with natron and dried for about 40 days. After that, the inside of the body was stuffed so that it would keep its shape. Then the body was wrapped in bandages. Finally, a religious ceremony was held to help the dead reach the afterlife.

## **Ancient Egyptian Beliefs**

Ancient Egyptians believed that there was a life after death called the 'afterlife.' They believed that the afterlife was a 'Field of Reeds' where people would live forever without sickness or death.

But not everybody was able to reach the afterlife. Only people who were good were allowed into the afterlife. And so, to prove they were good, the dead were put on trial.

The God Anubis (who had the head of a jackal) brought the dead person to the Hall of the Dead. There, Anubis weighed the dead person's heart to see if it was heavier than the 'Feather of Truth.' If a person was good then their heart was lighter than the feather.

However, if a person had done many evil things, their heart was heavier. In that case, the demon Ammit (who had the head of a crocodile and body of a hippo and lion) ate the heart and the person could not enter the afterlife.

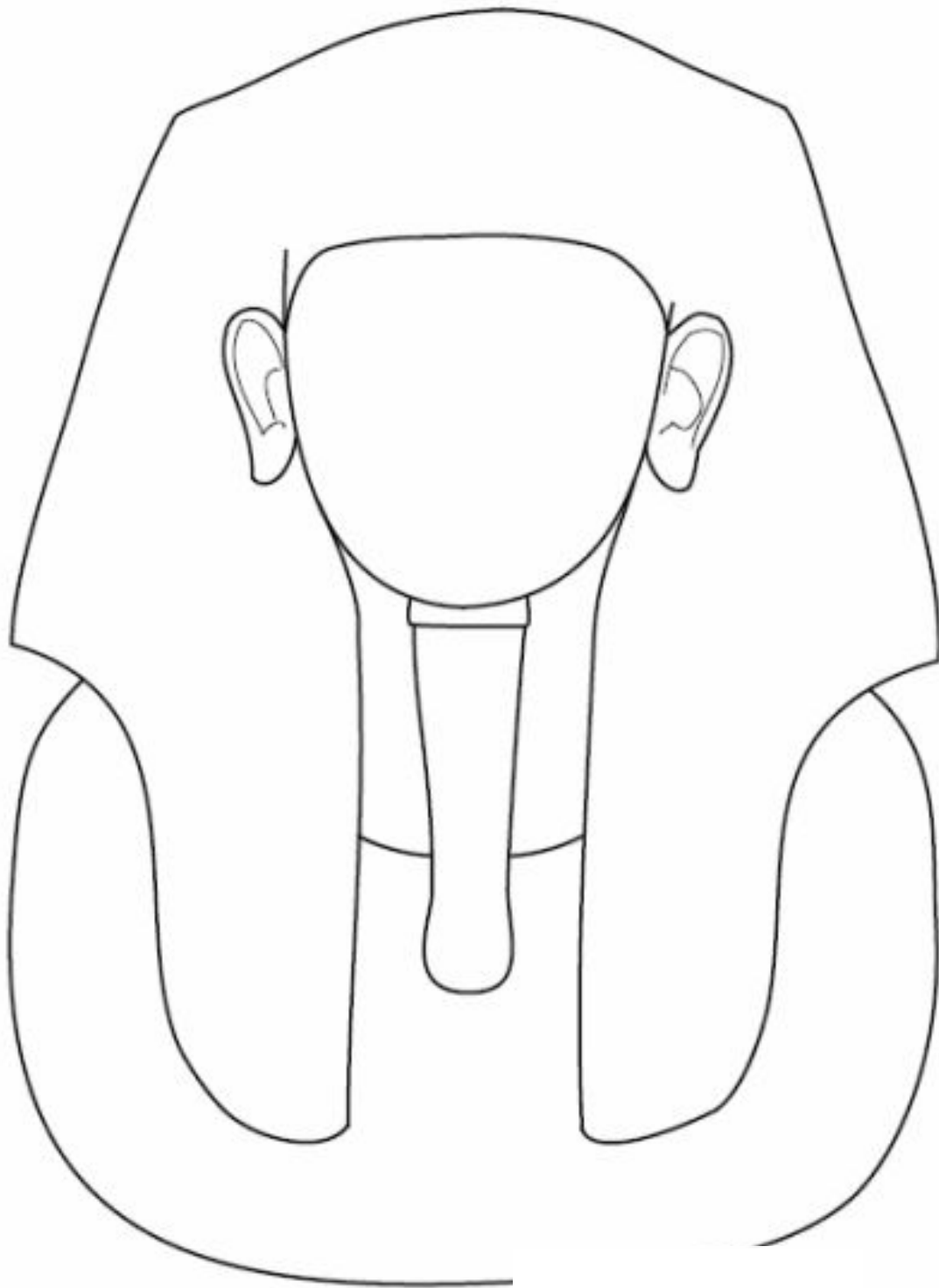
Finally, if a person had a light heart, they were brought before the gods and had to declare that they had done no evil in life. They had to swear they had killed nobody or committed no evil. Only then could they enter the afterlife.

## **Ancient Egyptian Mummies**

1. Why did Egyptians preserve the bodies of dead people?
2. Who usually got made into mummies?
3. Why did Egyptians use the chemical natron?
4. What happened to the organs?
5. Where were the canopic jars placed?
6. What happened to the brain?
7. How long was the body dried?
8. Why was the body stuffed?
9. What was the body wrapped in?

## **Ancient Egyptian Beliefs**

1. What did the ancient Egyptians believe the afterlife was?
2. What was the afterlife like?
3. Who was allowed to enter the afterlife?
4. Who was Anubis?
5. What did Anubis weigh the heart against?
6. What did it mean if the heart was lighter than the feather?
7. What happened to the heart if the heart was heavier than the feather?
8. What did Ammit look like?
9. What did the dead person have to swear?



When someone died in Ancient Egypt, their body would have been preserved by being mummified. This meant that the soul would have somewhere to return to after death. A death mask was created so that the soul would recognise its body, and return to it safely. Death masks were also believed to help to guard a dead person from evil spirits in the afterlife.

If the dead person was important, their mummified body would have been put into a special wooden coffin called a sarcophagus. These were highly decorated with bright paint, gold and gems, and often featured hieroglyphics. For the richest and most important Egyptians, the death mask would have been made of gold!