

Egypt: Beyond the Tomb

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Secondary School Education Kit

Originally produced by Helen Wheeler and the education staff of the Australian Museum 2005. Revised for New Zealand schools and material added by Te Papa education staff 2006.

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Introduction

Egypt: Beyond the Tomb explores ancient Egyptian beliefs and practices relating to death and the afterlife. This extraordinary exhibition follows Keku, a woman who lived 2700 years ago, as she makes the perilous journey through the underworld towards the eternal afterlife. Featuring in the exhibition are the mummy of Keku and her intricately decorated sarcophagus (coffin), plus over 200 other ancient Egyptian burial treasures.

About this education kit

This education kit:

- identifies curriculum links for the exhibition
- guides you and your students through the exhibition and suggests questions to help interpret the content
- provides background information about ancient Egypt
- outlines a range of research activities to do at school
- provides useful resources including a timeline, glossary, and list of related websites.

Preparing to visit the exhibition

So that your students can make the most of their exhibition visit, we recommend that they have at least a basic knowledge of:

- the ancient Egyptian belief in the afterlife
- associated gods and goddesses
- the mummification process
- the periods and/or dynasties of ancient Egypt's history, including the Old Kingdom, Middle Kingdom, New Kingdom, and Late Period
- Egypt's geography, including Upper Egypt, Lower Egypt, and the Nile.

As a teacher, you will find the following websites useful for creating a unit of work:

- Te Papa – www.tepapa.govt.nz/egypt
- Australian Museum – www.amonline.net.au/teachers_resources/background/ancient_egypt.htm (background information on ancient Egypt) and www.austmus.gov.au/life (information that relates directly to the exhibition).

You can find other useful websites at the end of this document. (They are also available as a separate PDF.)

PLEASE NOTE

Egypt: Beyond the Tomb contains human remains in the form of Keku's mummy. Some Māori and people of other cultures have strong beliefs and feelings about the display of human remains. Please ensure that your students have parental consent to visit the exhibition. Note that the mummy is displayed in a separate room, allowing people to choose whether they wish to view her.

Curriculum links

This exhibition and its associated activities link mainly to social studies at levels 4–6, years 9–10. However, there are also strong links with:

- the arts
- technology
- science
- English.

Social Studies in the New Zealand Curriculum

Strands and achievement objectives

Culture and Heritage	
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• why and how individuals and groups pass on and sustain their culture and heritage
Level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ways in which cultural and national identity develop and are maintained
Place and Environment	
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• how places reflect past interactions of people with the environment• why and how people find out about places and environments
Level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• why particular places and environments are significant for people
Level 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• how people's descriptions of places and the environment reflect particular purposes and points of view

Essential skills

Communication skills

- Communicate confidently and competently by listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Numeracy skills

- Understand information that is presented in mathematical ways.

Information skills

- Gather and process information from a range of sources.
- Identify, describe, and interpret different points of view.
- Present information clearly, logically, concisely, and accurately.

Processes

Inquiry, values, and social decision-making

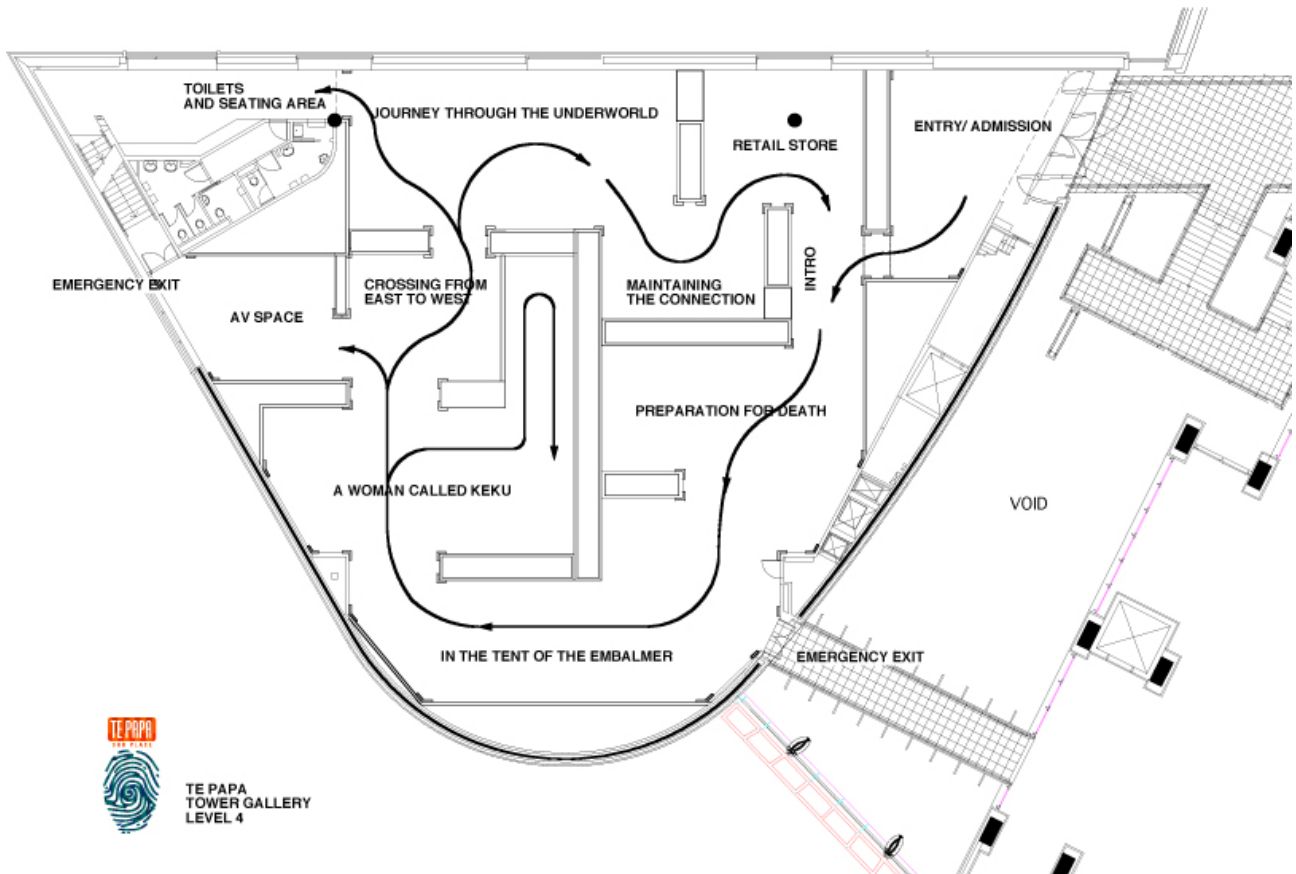
Perspective

Multicultural perspective

Setting

Other

Exhibition floor plan



Exhibition guide

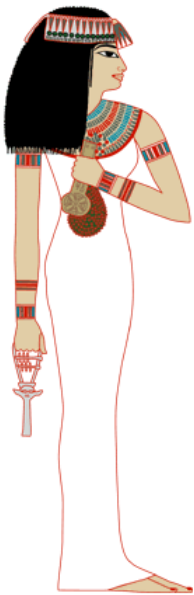
Your students could use this exhibition guide directly, or you could retain it and use it to focus their discussions. It is unlikely that your students will be able to cover all the discussion points in one visit, so you may want to focus on specific points.

Introduction

'My name is Namenekhamun. I live in Thebes under the divine protection of our King Psam-tek. It is the morning of my precious daughter Keku's funeral. Today will be a day of sorrow and celebration.'

Follow the story of a wealthy father as he relates the final journey of his young daughter. Namenekhamun and Keku were real people who lived and died nearly 2700 years ago, in the Late Period of ancient Egypt's history.

Experience how researchers have been able to piece together their story through the artefacts, writings, and bodies this civilisation left behind. Step into this ancient society, where death is a doorway and life exists beyond the tomb.



Preparation for death

Find the first section in the exhibition, called 'Preparation for death'. Read the introduction on the wall.

'I am not afraid for Keku's spirit. My daughter has prepared well for her death. She will continue in the afterlife in much the same way as she lived with her mother and me.

This is a sad occasion, yet I am also joyful because today Keku is going to paradise – provided she can find her way through the dangerous underworld journey and pass the final judgment.

Keku prepared by collecting special objects for her tomb, many of which we bought together at the marketplace. Some objects, such as amulets and spells, will protect and guide her on the underworld journey. Others, such as food, shabtis (funerary statuettes) and clothing, will provide essential nourishment, leisure and comfort for her eternal spirit.'

Discussion topics

Explore this section. Then discuss some or all of the following questions.

- In the Late Period (664–332 BCE), tombs generally consisted of two parts: the burial chamber and the mortuary chapel. What was the purpose of each part?
- Find two objects that provide evidence that the ancient Egyptians prepared for their own death. Discuss them with a partner.
- What sorts of inscriptions and images were painted on the coffins?
- What types of objects did the ancient Egyptians bury with them and why?
- What is a shabti, and why did the ancient Egyptians include shabtis in their tombs?
- What are two signs of a fake shabti?
- Which objects would you choose for a tomb and why?

In the tent of the embalmers

Find the section in the exhibition called 'In the tent of the embalmers'. Read the introduction on the wall.

'When Keku died, her body was taken to the tent of the embalmers to be washed and mummified. The embalmers preserved her body, ensuring that her ba (soul) would always have the physical base it needs in the afterlife. The embalmers also carried out many religious rituals as part of this process.

The embalmers' tent is a busy and noisy place. There are bodies lying around in various stages of preservation, and there is the constant noise of ritual chanting. Different embalming techniques are always being practised, depending on what each person has been able to afford.

Thankfully, the wealth bestowed on me by the god Amun means that Keku was embalmed in a fashion that befits her status.'

To preserve a body, the embalmers:

- removed and preserved most internal organs
- treated the body with salt to dry it out
- filled the hollow spaces in the body with sawdust, straw, or other materials
- wrapped the body, covering the first layers in resin (a sticky substance that many plants produce).

Discussion topics

Explore this section. Then discuss some or all of the following questions.

- Why did the ancient Egyptians mummify the bodies of dead people?
- What tools and materials did mummification involve, and what were they used for? How hard do you think they would be to use?
- Why did the ancient Egyptians leave the heart in the body and throw the brain out? What do you think about this? Do you associate a particular part of the body with knowledge and emotion?
- What was the purpose of the Canopic jars?
- Which god was the god of mummification?
- Why did the ancient Egyptians include amulets with mummies? Which amulet is your favourite and why?
- What was the purpose of the funerary mask?
- What is one reason that animals were mummified?
- What technologies have helped researchers find out about mummification?
- What do you think of mummification? Would you like to be mummified? Why or why not?

A woman called Keku

Find the section in the exhibition titled 'A woman called Keku'. This section focuses on the mummy and sarcophagus (stone coffin) of Keku. Read the introduction on the wall.

'My dear Keku died much too young. Before this sad day, Keku, my wife Isetemkheb, and I lived together in Thebes among many other wealthy families. As Chief Butcher in the temple complex of the god Amun, I was able to provide well for Keku both in life and in death.'

Discussion topics

Explore this section. Then discuss some or all of the following questions.

- What are some things we know about Keku?
- What symbols can you find on her sarcophagus? What are some of their meanings?
- What sorts of make-up and jewellery would Keku have taken with her to the tomb and why?
- What technologies have helped researchers find out about Keku? What other techniques could be used?
- What do you think of the idea of mummifying pets?

Leaving the land of the living

Find the section in the exhibition called 'Leaving the land of the living'. Read the introduction on the wall.

'Keku's embalming process is complete. Today, her body will be collected for burial. The funeral procession will soon take place.

Isetemkheb and I are thankful that we can purchase an elaborate procession for Keku so that our status is clear to any onlookers. Relatives will be positioned at either end of Keku's coffin, with two female relatives acting the roles of the goddesses Isis and Nephthys. People will carry Keku's Canopic jars and other goods, and the hired mourners, dancers, musicians and priests will follow.

The procession has reached the edge of the Nile. Join us as we board boats and cross the river to the western side, the land of the dead and our favoured location for burials.'

Discussion topics

Explore this section. Then discuss some or all of the following questions.

- Why did the ancient Egyptians live on the east side of the Nile and bury their dead on the west? Does your culture set aside specific places for burials? Where?
- Why was the Nile so important? What part did it play in daily transport, agriculture, and religious activities?
- Do you have processions to mourn and/or celebrate the dead in your culture? What do you do? How does this compare with what the ancient Egyptians did?
- What do you think of the Opening of the Mouth ceremony?
- What are your impressions of the scenes in this section, including in the film (if you have seen it)?

Journey through the underworld

Find the section in the exhibition called 'Journey through the underworld'. Read the introduction on the wall.

'The underworld is a dangerous region that our spirits have to traverse in order to reach the paradise we long for. Keku's spirit will have to contend with gods, strange creatures and gatekeepers to reach Osiris and the Hall of Final Judgment. It is here that she will plead her case for entry into the afterlife. She was a good girl – of true voice. We are confident her heart will be found pure.'

The ancient Egyptians protected themselves with lucky charms and spells to overcome the dangers and challenges of the underworld and reach the eternal afterlife.

The judgment at the end of the underworld journey had two parts:

- Declaration of Innocence – where the dead person promised they had done nothing wrong in their lifetime.
- Weighing of the Heart – where the dead person's heart was weighed against the feather of truth. The person could enter the afterlife only if the scales were balanced.

Discussion topics

Explore this section. Then discuss some or all of the following questions.

- Who was Orisis, and what do you think of his story? What other gods can you see depicted in this section?
- The *Book of the Dead* contained spells for protection in the afterlife. Look at Spell 125, for the Declaration of Innocence. What do you think of the names of the gods and of the statements? Could you truthfully say all those things?
- What do you think of the other spells?
- Do you think your heart would pass the Weighing of the Heart test? Why or why not?
- How does the Field of Rushes (the afterlife) seem to you? What do you think of the work that has to be done there?
- What were the ba and the ka?

Maintaining the connection

Find the section in the exhibition called 'Maintaining the connection'. Read the introduction on the wall.

'Keku will not be forgotten. Her mortuary chapel connects her to our world of the living. Her ka (life force) is able to enter this space through the tomb's false door and inhabit a statue of her we had made. This means her ka can accept the food, drink and other essentials that we will place on the offering table every time we visit.

Keku's tomb will be well maintained and her spirit looked after. However, if there comes a time when our family or friends can no longer make offerings, her tomb decorations, inscriptions and objects are specially designed to ensure she will always be well supplied in the afterlife and remembered by our faithful gods.

Today, in the time of our King Psam-tek, I both sadly farewell my daughter and rejoice in the knowledge of her immortality.'

Discussion topics

Explore this section. Then discuss some or all of the following questions.

- After someone had died and been buried in ancient Egypt, living relatives visited their tomb to make offerings to them. Do people in your culture do similar things? Where do they go and what do they do?
- Why is the ka figure missing its face? Why were ka figures included in tombs?
- Why was the ba (soul) depicted as a bird? Did the ba have to stay in the tomb like the ka (life force)?
- What do you think the bowls were used for?

Background information

Exhibition overview

The ancient Egyptians feared and celebrated death. This exhibition reveals their preparations for death, how and why they preserved their bodies for burial, and what they believed happened when they died.

The visitor experiences all this from the perspective of Namenekhamun, a wealthy father from Thebes, as he relates the final journey of his young daughter Keku. These were real people who lived and died nearly 2700 years ago. Their story is supported by evidence from scientists and researchers, who have been able to piece together the past from the artefacts, writings, and bodies that this civilisation left behind.

The beliefs and practices are those of the ancient Egyptians living in the Late Period (664–332 BCE).

Dates used in the exhibition

The terms BCE (Before Common Era) and CE (Common Era) have been used throughout the exhibition and are interchangeable with BC (Before Christ) and AD (Anno Domini). Archaeologists and historians increasingly use the terms BCE and CE over the exclusively Christian BC and AD.

Before 664 BCE, dates in the chronology of ancient Egypt are all approximate. Not all historians agree on the exact dates of the earlier periods. The exhibition uses the most widely accepted dates, but these may differ from those found in some reference books.

Ancient Egyptian religion

Common themes

Ancient Egyptian religion was based on the cycles of nature, including the rise and fall of the Nile. Fertility, birth, death, and resurrection were common themes in beliefs and practices. Death was simply a natural part of the cycle and was seen as a gateway to a new life.

These themes remained generally constant throughout most of ancient Egypt's history, but the actual beliefs and practices did not. The ancient Egyptians tended to merge new beliefs with old ones rather than simply replace the old. This tendency has made it difficult for modern scholars to fully understand the ancient beliefs, and much remains a mystery today.

Gods

The ancient Egyptians worshipped hundreds of gods and goddesses. Many of these deities had the same or similar roles, both because of the complex nature of the religion as well as the political organisation of the state.

Each city or region worshipped its own gods. If a city came to prominence, the local gods rose to prominence as well, becoming 'state' gods worshipped by the wealthy and the elite. The general population would

continue to worship their local gods. As a result, some gods were worshipped only by certain classes of people, in certain areas, or in certain periods.

A walk through the exhibition

Egypt: Beyond the Tomb is divided into sections that follow the chronology of death.

Preparation for death

The ancient Egyptians believed that when they died, their spiritual body would continue to exist in an afterlife very similar to the living world. However, entry into the afterlife was not guaranteed. The dead had to negotiate a dangerous underworld journey and face the final judgment before they were granted access. If successful, they were required to provide eternal sustenance for their spirit.

A person could achieve these things if they prepared properly during their lifetime. The preparations included the following.

Purchasing funerary items

Before the Late Period, people usually purchased individually made funerary items from specialist shops and temples. By the Late Period, mass-produced funerary items could be obtained from the marketplace (although wealthy people would also commission items such as furniture, expensive coffins, and jewellery). This mass-production meant that the poorer classes could afford to take more items to their graves.

The funerary items fell into two main classes:

- those to protect and guide the dead person on the underworld journey and in the afterlife, for example, amulets, stelae (memorial stones), and the *Book of the Dead* or other funerary texts
- those to provide nourishment, leisure, and comfort for their eternal spirit, for example, food, clothing, and shabtis (small funerary statuettes).

Buying a coffin

Coffins, which the ancient Egyptians called 'chests of life', were the most important funerary items. The wealthy often purchased two coffins – an inner coffin and an outer coffin, which protected the inner one. Every aspect of a coffin was designed so that it would protect the physical body in the living world and the spiritual body in the afterlife.

The iconography and shapes of coffins changed over the 3000 years they were used. Early coffins were rectangular in shape. Mummy-shaped coffins appeared in the Middle Kingdom, about 1900 BCE. Despite such changes, the general purpose of the coffins remained the same.

Building the tombs

The ancient Egyptians often spent many years building and preparing tombs, which they called 'houses of eternity'. They usually built them on the west bank of the Nile, in the land of the dead, using non-perishable material such as stone – a contrast to the mud-brick and straw houses they occupied in life.

The tombs of wealthy people in the Late Period (664–332 BCE) generally consisted of two parts: the burial chamber and the mortuary chapel.

- The burial chamber was under the ground. It housed and protected the body and was decorated with scenes and spells that would help the person in the afterlife.
- The mortuary chapel was above the ground. It was accessible to visitors, who would perform rites and make offerings such as food and drink for the dead person's spirit.

In the tent of the embalmers

This section deals with all aspects of the mummification process – the origins of mummification, why the ancient Egyptians believed it was so important, and the processes and rituals involved.

What is a mummy?

A mummy is a dead body (either human or animal) that has not decayed because of specific natural or artificial conditions.

The word 'mummy' derives from the Persian/Arabic word *mummiya*, meaning tar or bitumen. When the Arabs encountered the Egyptian mummies in the seventh century CE, they thought they were covered in tar. Although the Egyptians did occasionally use tar in the mummification process, they mostly coated mummies in dark resin, which gave the skin a black colour.

The origins of mummification

Until relatively recently, the accepted view was that artificial mummification began with the preservation of Old Kingdom royals about 2600 BCE and that it developed from observing bodies that had been preserved naturally in hot desert sands. However, new evidence shows that artificial mummification began much earlier. Recent excavations of 'working class' burials at Hierakonopolis in Upper Egypt show that various complex burial practices existed about 3500 BCE. These practices included ritually extracting the internal organs and wrapping specific parts of the body.

The embalmers' tent

The embalmers' tent was where the body was taken after death to be washed and mummified. The embalmers preserved the body, ensuring that the person's ba (soul) would always have the physical base it needed in the afterlife. The embalmers also carried out many religious rituals as part of this process. These rituals ensured that the dead person would be associated with Osiris, god of the underworld.

How were the dead mummified?

At different times in history, the Egyptians used different methods to mummify people. By Keku's time, mummification was a major industry and affordable to most classes. This was not the case in earlier periods, when the bodies of those who couldn't afford embalming were generally 'preserved' by drying them in hot desert sands or by covering them with resin.

The best and most complicated mummification technique (and so reserved for the wealthy) was practised from the New Kingdom to the start of the Late Period (about 1550–664 BCE). The first step in this technique involved removing and preserving most internal organs. The lungs, stomach, liver, and intestines were separately embalmed and stored in Canopic jars – vessels especially made for this purpose. The heart, which represented the centre of all knowledge and emotions, was usually left inside the body while the brain was often thrown away.

Natron (a salt from desert lakes) was used to absorb water from the body and prevent decay. After forty days, the natron was removed and the body cavities were filled with linen, natron pouches, herbs, sawdust, sand, or chopped straw.

The skin and first few layers of linen bandages were covered with molten resin and then the body was wrapped, often with amulets. A mask was usually placed over the head of the mummy. The whole process lasted about seventy days.

Animal mummies

Almost every kind of animal that lived in ancient Egypt has been found as a mummy – from bulls, birds, snakes, and crocodiles to fish, cats, and scarab beetles. Many animals were seen as manifestations of gods. These animals appeared to share similar qualities with the gods so were considered sacred.

Three main categories of animal mummy existed:

- pets buried with their owner in a tomb
- animal mummies sold to the public as offerings to the gods
- temple animals preserved for religious reasons (such as the Apis bull).

In the later periods, sacred animals were specifically bred for use as offerings to the gods. X-rays show that numerous mummified animals had broken necks or battered skulls, indicating that they were deliberately killed for mummification. Many were not well mummified, and some supposed mummies contained only rubble or only parts of an animal. This could mean that some buyers were deliberately deceived or that the religious significance of the mummies was related to the way they looked rather than to their contents.

Usually, only one temple animal was alive at one time. This animal was believed to be the physical manifestation of a god. Priests would travel throughout the country in search of the right creature with the proper markings on its body. Once identified, the animal was fed and nursed in the temple until its death, when it received extensive mummification and an individual burial.

A woman called Keku

Who was Keku?

Keku was the daughter of Namenekhamun, Chief Butcher in the temple complex of the god Amun, and of Isetemkheb, the mistress of the house. She lived in Thebes during the early Late Period (about 660 BCE) and probably died there, aged in her early twenties.

Keku's tomb has not been located, although it is likely that her family had a fairly elaborate communal tomb. Much about Keku's life has been pieced together by looking at how other wealthy Egyptians of the time lived and died.

Keku's coffins

Keku's outer coffin (a luxury that only the wealthy could afford) protected her more highly decorated inner coffin. The hieroglyphs in the centre column of the lid identify Keku as the owner of the coffin and also tell us her title and the names and titles of her parents. (Names were important to the ancient Egyptians because they held the essence of a person. Preserving and remembering a dead person's name would help them survive in the afterlife.) The horizontal band along the side of the case contains offering formulas and prayers to the gods.

Keku's inner coffin has a painted head with the feminine characteristics of pale skin and a segmented wig. This painting served as a mask and helped Keku's spirit recognise her body. It also provided her with an idealised face for the afterlife. Other parts of the inner coffin are covered with prayers and spells from the *Book of the Dead*, important religious symbols, and scenes of gods and goddesses associated with death, protection, and the underworld.

Keku's mummy

X-rays have confirmed that Keku was female and that she was aged between 21 and 23 when she died. It is not known exactly how she died, but the most likely cause is disease. The x-rays also reveal that there are no amulets inside her bandages.

Computerised Tomography (CT) scans of Keku show that both her heart and brain were not removed. It was quite unusual for Egyptian mummies to retain their brains. The fact that Keku still has hers could mean that the mummification technique she purchased, though expensive, was not the best available at the time. Alternatively, the embalmers may have taken shortcuts.

Leaving the land of the living

This section contains a simulated trip from the land of the living (the east bank of the Nile) to the land of the dead (the west bank of the Nile).

Funeral processions and burial rites

The embalmed body and coffin were collected for the day of burial, probably from the embalmers' tent. Wealthy Egyptians, like Keku, had elaborate funeral processions to display their status to onlookers.

Relatives were positioned at either end of the coffin, which was usually drawn along by oxen. Two of the female relatives or priestesses acted the roles of the goddesses Isis and Nephthys, chief mourners in ancient Egyptian religion. The procession included hired mourners, dancers, musicians, and priests. Some participants carried Canopic jars and other goods for the tomb. The procession continued to the edge of the Nile, where all the participants were required to board boats and cross the river to the western side, the favoured location for burials.

The concluding funerary rites took place in front of the tomb. The mummy was raised upright for the Opening of the Mouth ceremony. Priests performed this elaborate ritual, which allowed the dead person to use all their senses in the afterlife. The rituals included purifying, anointing, reciting prayers, and touching the mummy with ritual objects to restore the senses.

Afterwards, food and clothing were offered to the dead person and mourners participated in the funerary banquet. The mummy was then placed in the burial chamber of the tomb, fully prepared for the afterlife.

Journey through the underworld

What was the underworld?

To the ancient Egyptians, the underworld was a dangerous region that one's spirit had to traverse to reach the paradise that was the afterlife. In the underworld, the dead person's spirit would have to contend with gods, strange creatures, and gatekeepers to reach Osiris and the Hall of Final Judgment. There, they would plead their case for entry into the afterlife.

Who was Osiris?

Osiris was the god and chief judge of the underworld. He was also the god of vegetation and the annual Nile flood and was closely associated with death, resurrection, and fertility. The ancient Egyptians believed him to be a dead king miraculously restored to life after being murdered by his brother Seth. For this reason, he came to symbolise the hope for eternal life.

Osiris is usually depicted as a mummiform human figure. In his hands, he holds a crook and a flail, signs of royal dignity. On his head, he wears the atef crown, a white crown flanked by ostrich feathers and sometimes adorned with the horns of a ram. Occasionally, Osiris' skin is green or black, a reference to vegetation and fertile earth.

Funerary texts

Funerary texts acted as 'travel guides' for the journey through the underworld. These texts were written on walls, coffins, statues, or papyri (writing material made from the papyrus plant). They contained all the required passwords and spells for use in the underworld. In the burial chamber, they were placed so that the dead person could reach them when necessary.

Initially, funerary texts were only available to royals. Such texts have been found written inside pyramids of the Old Kingdom (about 2575–2134 BCE) and are today known as 'pyramid texts'. As part of the 'democratisation of the afterlife', the texts were revised at the start of the Middle Kingdom (about 2100 BCE) so that officials and nobles could use them. The texts became known as the 'coffin texts' because they were mostly written on coffins.

The Book of the Dead

Eventually, at the start of the New Kingdom (about 1500 BCE), a funerary text was made available to the general population of Egypt. The ancient Egyptians knew it as the *Spells for Going Forth by Day*, but today we call it the *Book of the Dead*.

This text was not a book in the modern sense of the word. Rather, it was a collection of spells, passwords, and images to be used by the deceased in the underworld. The spells were normally written on papyri (which made them affordable to most people) but also on grave goods, coffins, walls, and mummy bandages.

The complete collection contains about 200 spells, although no papyrus includes all of them. This suggests that not all the spells were required in the afterlife and that the number of spells purchased depended on the needs and wealth of the buyer.

The Amduat

The *Amduat* (meaning 'that which is in the underworld') is one of several funerary texts that belong to a separate literary tradition from that of the *Book of the Dead*. These texts include the *Book of Heavens*, *Book of Night*, and *Book of the Celestial Cow*. Rather than containing passwords or spells, these books provide descriptions and images of the underworld.

The *Amduat* focuses on the journey of the sun god through the twelve regions of the underworld. Each region corresponds to an 'hour' of the night. The sun god is reborn each morning as the rising sun, symbolising the hope of the deceased for rebirth. The *Amduat* has mostly been found written on the walls of royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings. However, it occasionally appears on papyri in the tombs of wealthy people.

The final judgment

At the end of the underworld journey, the dead person reached the Hall of Final Judgment. Judgment was a two-part process.

Part 1: Declaration of Innocence – The dead person pleaded their innocence of any wrongdoing during their lifetime. The *Book of the Dead* provided them with the correct words to use for each of the forty-two divine judges.

Part 2: Weighing of the Heart ceremony – The heart, which contained a record of all the dead person's actions in life, was weighed against the feather of the goddess Ma'at, symbol of truth and justice. If the heart was heavier than the feather, it was fed to Ammut, the Devourer, and the soul was cast into darkness. If the scales were balanced, Osiris welcomed the dead person into the afterlife. Spell 30B from the *Book of the Dead* helped to prevent the dead person's heart from 'betraying' them.

The afterlife

The Field of Rushes was the afterlife for the ancient Egyptians. Life in the Field of Rushes was a reflection of the living world, with blue skies, rivers and boats for travel, and crops that needed to be ploughed and harvested.

The dead were granted land in the Field of Rushes and were expected to maintain it. They could either perform the labour themselves or get their shabtis to work for them. Shabtis were small funerary statuettes that were placed in tombs for this purpose. They came to life by reciting a spell. The shabtis often carried agricultural tools like hoes and, after about 1000 BCE, were sometimes led by an overseer, who carried a flail instead of tools.

Ba and ka

To the ancient Egyptians, an individual's personality was made up of several parts, which continued to exist after death. The ba and ka were the most important of these.

The ba resembled the modern concept of a soul and was depicted as a human-headed bird. When a person died, their ba could move about the tomb and even leave it to visit relatives in the land of the living.

The ka was the actual life force, symbolised by a pair of raised open arms. Unlike the ba, it was restricted to the tomb, where it would receive the food and drink it needed to survive in the afterlife.

Maintaining the connection

The dead were not forgotten. One way in which they stayed connected to the living world was through the mortuary chapel. The dead person's ka (life force) was able to enter this space through the tomb's false door and take a physical form by inhabiting a statue of the dead person. This allowed the ka to accept the food, drink, and other essentials that visitors placed on the offering table.

Every ancient Egyptian would have hoped that their tomb would be well maintained when they died. But if living relatives stopped making offerings to their spirit, the tomb decorations, inscriptions, and other objects ensured that the dead person would still be well supplied in the afterlife.

For most of ancient Egypt's history, the mortuary chapel and tomb were normally situated near each other. This tradition changed in the New Kingdom (about 1550–1069 BCE). Rulers started burying their bodies in hidden tombs in the Valley of the Kings and building their mortuary chapels elsewhere. This trend became popular with other wealthy Egyptians. It wasn't until the Late Period (664–332 BCE) that mortuary chapels and tombs were again built close to each other.

Classroom activities

This section gives ideas for research projects that your students can do. The activities link to the curriculum areas indicated in the table below. Only the strongest links are indicated – there may be others.

You could also use the discussion topics in the exhibition guide as research starters. The Australian Museum's website (www.amonline.net.au/life) will help students in their research.

Curriculum links

	Social Studies	The Arts	Technology	Science	English
1. Digging up the past	✓		✓	✓	
2. New Kingdom religion	✓				
3. Gods and goddesses	✓	✓			✓
4. Tomb treasures	✓		✓		
5. Funerary texts	✓	✓	✓		✓
6. The king and Keku	✓				
7. Mummies through the ages	✓	✓	✓	✓	
8. Changing funeral rites	✓				

Research projects

1. Digging up the past

Today's scientific methods allow scientists to study artefacts without destroying them like they did in the past. Outline some non-destructive methods that archaeologists use today to understand ancient Egyptian beliefs and practices relating to death.

2. New Kingdom religion

Describe the religious beliefs and practices of the New Kingdom that continued into the Late Period (664–332 BCE). Think about things like:

- gods and goddesses
- amulets
- magic.

3. Gods and goddesses

Investigate beliefs in gods and goddesses in a particular period of ancient Egypt's history. Think about:

- what the gods and goddesses symbolised
- how they were depicted
- the legends about how and why they became gods or goddesses.

4. Tomb treasures

Investigate the way wealthy people prepared for death in a particular period of ancient Egypt's history.

Think about:

- how the tombs were built
- how they organised a coffin
- what they chose to be buried with
- why they chose certain objects.

5. Funerary texts

Investigate the funerary texts in a particular period of ancient Egypt's history. (Funerary texts were sometimes called 'books of the underworld' or 'books of the netherworld'. An example of a funerary text at Keku's time is the *Book of the Dead*.) Think about:

- which Egyptians had funerary texts in their tombs
- the purpose of the texts
- the content of the texts
- what the texts were written on
- where in the tomb the texts were placed.

6. The king and Keku

Keku's mummification, funeral procession, and burial were very different from Tutankhamun's.

(Tutankhamun was a boy pharaoh, or king, about 1000 years before Keku lived.) Compare the customs and summarise the main similarities and differences. Why do you think there were differences? Use evidence from the exhibition to illustrate your answer. Think about:

- the status of the dead person
- the period in which they lived.

7. Mummies through the ages

Compare mummification practices in the Late Period (664–332 BCE) with those in another period of ancient Egypt's history. Think about:

- who or what was mummified and why
- how the body was embalmed
- how the body was wrapped
- any adornment on the outside of the mummy (for example, mask, netting, or amulets).

8. Changing funeral rites

Compare funeral processions and burial rites in the Late Period (664–332 BCE) with processions and burial rites in another period of ancient Egypt's history. Compare practices for people of similar wealth and status to Keku, not for pharaohs (kings) or poor people. Think about:

- who took part in the funeral procession
- how the dead were transported to their tombs
- where the dead were buried

- the rituals associated with the burial.

Timeline of ancient Egypt

Years	Periods and dynasties	Significant events
Before 3100 BCE	Predynastic period	Egypt divides into Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt.
3100–2686 BCE	Early Dynastic Period Dynasties 1–2	Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt unify. The first pyramid is built – the Step Pyramid at Saqqara.
2686–2181 BCE	Old Kingdom Dynasties 3–6	The Great Pyramids are built at Giza.
2181–2125 BCE	First Intermediate Period	Egypt splits into two smaller states.
2125–1650 BCE	Middle Kingdom Dynasties 11–13	The states of Egypt reunite.
1650–1550 BCE	Second Intermediate Period	The Hyksos kings seize power in the north.
1550–1069 BCE	New Kingdom Dynasties 18–20	Elaborate hidden tombs are built in the Valley of the Kings. The female pharaoh Hatshepsut rules. Akhenaten attempts to introduce worship of a single god. Tutankhamun briefly reigns. Ramesses II rules for 67 years. Deir-el Medina, a workers village, is built near Thebes.
1069–664 BCE	Third Intermediate Period	There is disunity in Egypt. The Nubians and Libyans set up their own dynasties.
664–332 BCE	Late Period Dynasties 26–30	Keku lives in Thebes around 650 BCE.
332–30 BCE	Ptolemaic Period	Alexander the Great conquers Egypt and his general, Ptolemy, founds a dynasty.
30 BCE – 395 CE	Roman Period	Cleopatra dies in 30 BCE and Egypt becomes a province of the Roman Empire. Egypt provides wheat, papyrus, and textiles for the Romans.

This timeline uses the terms BCE (Before Common Era) and CE (Common Era), which are interchangeable with BC (Before Christ) and AD (Anno Domini). Archaeologists and historians increasingly use the terms BCE and CE over the exclusively Christian BC and AD.

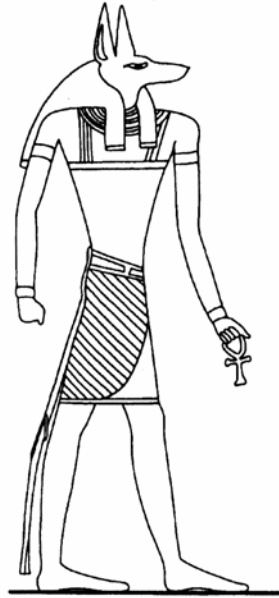
Some of the information above is from the timeline by John Baines, Professor of Egyptology, University of Oxford, on the BBC website (www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/egyptians/timeline.shtml).

Gallery of the gods

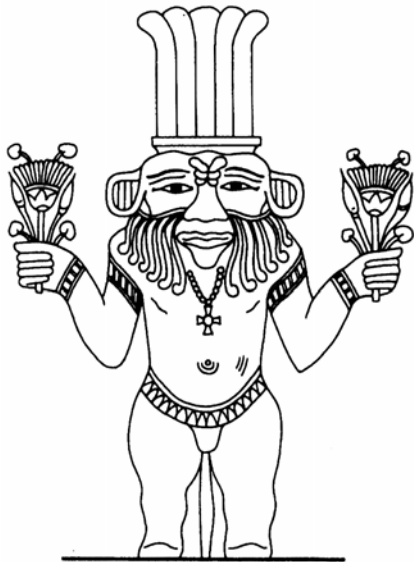
This is a selection of ancient Egyptian gods only. There were many others.



Amun-Re – King of the gods



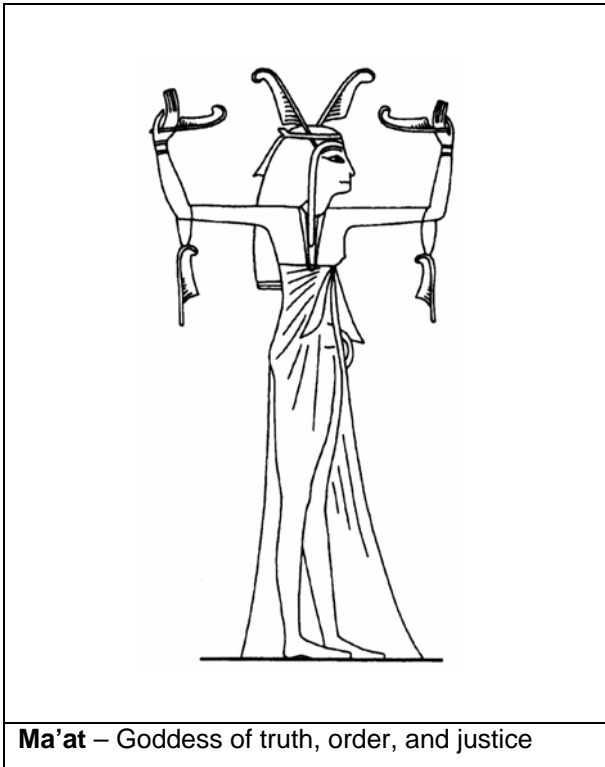
Anubis – God of embalming and mummification



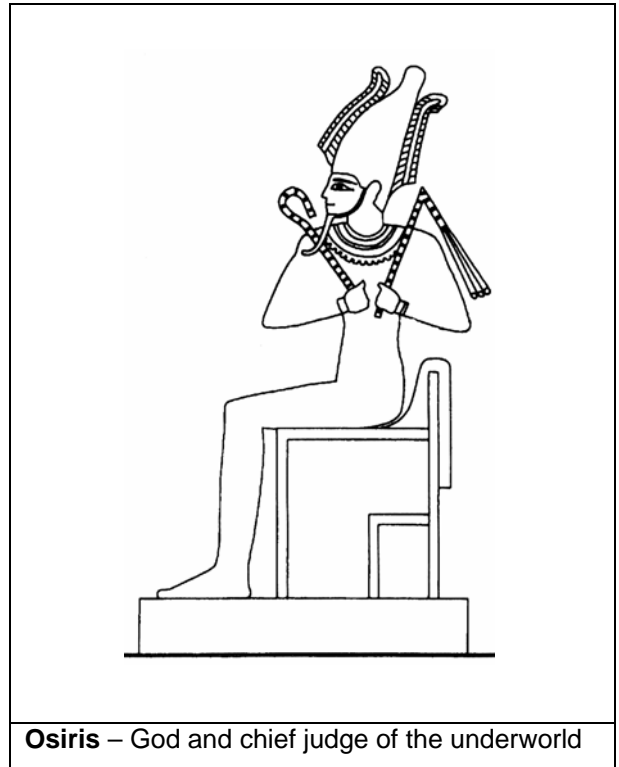
Bes – God of fertility



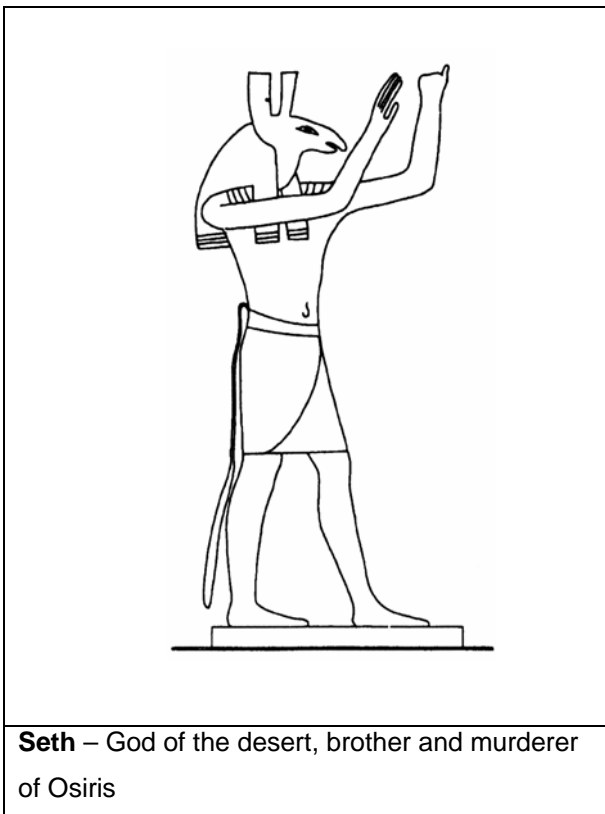
Horus – God of the sky, son of Isis and Osiris



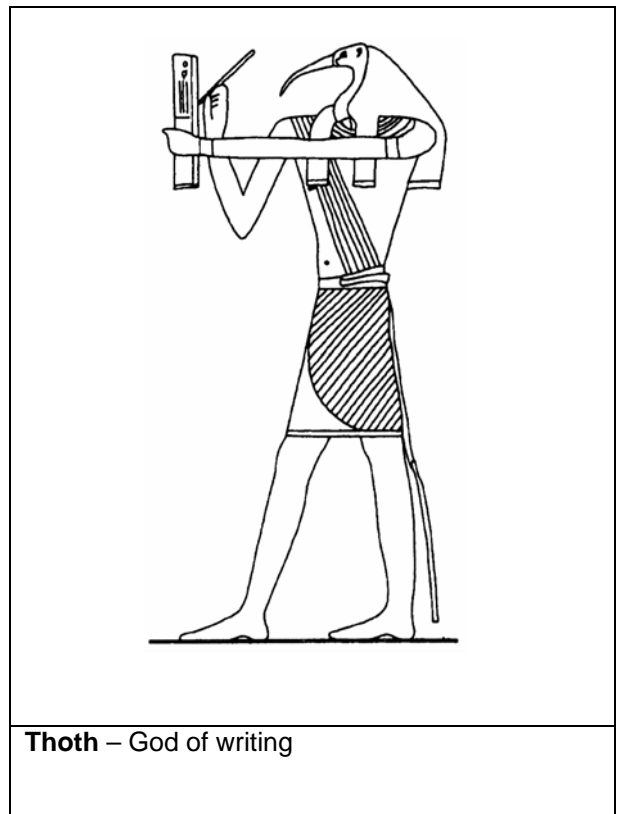
Ma'at – Goddess of truth, order, and justice



Osiris – God and chief judge of the underworld



Seth – God of the desert, brother and murderer of Osiris



Thoth – God of writing

Related websites

Australian Museum

www.austmus.gov.au/life

This website relates directly to *Egypt: Beyond the Tomb* and provides information on each section of the exhibition. (Note that the website was created for the exhibition as it appeared in Australia. Some changes were made for the New Zealand context, including to the exhibition name and to the education kits.) For more background information on ancient Egypt, see

www.amonline.net.au/teachers_resources/background/ancient_egypt.htm

BBC

www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/egyptians

This site features extensive information on pyramids and monuments, mummification, gods and beliefs, pharaohs and dynasties, daily life, and hieroglyphs, along with a detailed timeline. It also includes a Mummy Maker game, which takes place in the embalmers' tent and shows how the ancient Egyptians made mummies. (Requires Flash.)

Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery

www.schoolsliaison.org.uk/kids

Go to the Interactive Zone and then Ancient Egypt for a kid-friendly timeline, a mummy game that explains concepts including Canopic jars and shabtis (ushabtis), and printable activities. (Requires Flash.)

British Museum

www.ancientegypt.co.uk/menu

The British Museum explains everything you want to know about ancient Egypt, using a 'Story, Explore, and Challenge' approach.

Cleveland Museum of Art

www.clevelandart.org/kids/egypt

This website has information on pyramids, mummies, hieroglyphs, pharaohs (kings), Egyptian animals, and more. There is also a fun Egypt quiz and a colouring book.

Daily Papyrus

www.virtual-egypt.com

Find the latest on ancient Egypt – plus spells, hieroglyph translators, magic, games, timelines, news bulletins, and more.

Guardians – Ancient Egypt Kid Connection

www.guardians.net/egypt/kids

Here you can find links to websites with information and games relating to ancient Egypt, including those of major organisations like the Smithsonian Institution, the British Museum, and National Geographic.

Neferchichi's Tomb

www.neferchichi.com

This website has lots of information about mummies, pharaohs (kings), hieroglyphs, gods, and more – plus games, Egyptian stories, clip art, and classroom activity ideas.

PBS

www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/pyramid

Budding archaeologists can go on virtual tours of pyramids and read about an archaeological dig. This site also contains general information about ancient Egypt.

Pop Cap Games

www.popcap.com/gamepopup.php?theGame=mummymaze

Have fun avoiding a mummy and escaping from a maze.

Shira – Ancient Egyptian Art

www.shira.net/ancient-scenes.htm

This website provides examples of ancient Egyptian images that have been found on tombs and temple walls and explains what they depict.

Te Papa

www.tepapa.govt.nz/Egypt

Check out the Te Papa website for exhibition highlights, information on Te Papa's mummy (Mehit-em-Wesekht), podcasts on Te Papa's Egyptian collection, and more.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art – Art Connections

www.metmuseum.org/explore/newegypt/htm/a_curart.htm

You can use this website to introduce ancient Egyptian art to your students. The website gives examples of ancient Egyptian art, discusses concepts associated with the pieces, and provides related activities.

Glossary

afterlife

The paradise that the ancient Egyptians believed people went to after they died – as long as they passed the final judgment in the underworld. (See underworld.)

amulet

An ornament or small piece of jewellery believed to give protection against evil or danger. The ancient Egyptians wore various amulets and also wrapped them with mummies to provide protection for the underworld journey and the afterlife.

ankh

The ancient Egyptian symbol for eternal life, often worn as an amulet.

artefact

An object made by a human being, especially one of archaeological interest.

ba

The soul of a person, which continued to exist after death. The ancient Egyptians believed that the ba could leave the tomb and move about. In art, they depicted it as a human-headed bird.

Book of the Dead

The modern name for a collection of about 200 spells that enabled the dead to travel through the underworld and enter the afterlife. The ancient Egyptians knew this collection as the *Spells for Going Forth by Day*.

Canopic jar

A jar made to store a dead person's organs after removal in the embalming process. The ancient Egyptians made Canopic jars in sets of four to contain the lungs, stomach, liver, and intestines.

cartonnage

A painted whole-body decoration placed over a mummy. Cartonnage was made from a mixture of papyrus or linen coated with plaster.

cartouche

An inscription showing the name of a god or pharaoh (king).

Declaration of Innocence

Part of the final judgment in the underworld in which the dead person declared their innocence of any wrongdoing when they were alive.

embalm

To preserve a dead body.

Egyptian faience

A blue–green powdered quartz paste, which the ancient Egyptians modelled, glazed, and fired – for example, to make funerary statuettes like shabtis. (See shabti.)

ka

The life force of a person, which continued to exist after death. The ka required the mummified body to survive and was restricted to the tomb. The symbol for the ka was a pair of extended arms.

kohl

A black substance that the ancient Egyptians used as a type of eyeliner.

linen

A cloth woven from flax.

mummy

A dead body, either human or animal, that has not decayed because of specific natural or artificial conditions, for example, the embalming process. (See embalm.)

Opening of the Mouth ceremony

An ancient Egyptian ritual in which priests symbolically opened the mouth of the mummy so that the dead person could use all their senses in the afterlife.

Papyrus (plural papyri)

A writing material made from the stalks of papyrus plants.

sarcophagus

A stone coffin.

shabti (or ushabti)

A small funerary statuette placed in ancient Egyptian tombs to perform labour on behalf of dead people in the afterlife.

stela (plural stelae)

An upright stone slab inscribed with religious or historical texts or images – similar to a memorial stone or gravestone.

tomb

A burial place. In ancient Egypt during Keku's time, tombs generally consisted of two parts: the burial chamber (below the ground) and the mortuary chapel (above the ground).

underworld

A dangerous region that the ancient Egyptians believed dead people had to pass through to reach the eternal afterlife.

wedjat (or Eye of Horus)

An eye with stylised falcon markings symbolising revitalisation after death.