

Animal Mummies Revealed



Spotlight on animal mummies

Discover, draw and do



What is so special about animal mummies?

Introduction

Archaeologists and scientists have long been fascinated by animal mummies. Millions of animal mummies have been found buried in catacombs across Egypt. Visitors to Egypt in the 1800s often brought back animal mummies as souvenirs, because most were small and easy to transport.

Most museums in the UK have at least one animal mummy in their collection, but until recently

little research has been done into these mummies. The Ancient Egyptian Animal Bio Bank at the University of Manchester studies these mummies using modern technology.



Why were animals important to the ancient Egyptians?

Animals were very much part of the ancient Egyptian world. Egyptians depended on them both as food, and as messengers to the gods. Animals were so important to the ancient Egyptians that they believed that one of the questions asked of them as they were judged for the afterlife concerned how well they had treated animals.

Why were animals mummified?

Researchers have discovered various reasons why animals were mummified:

- As beloved pets – in spite of popular belief, this covers a tiny number of animals
- Food for the afterlife – included in tombs to feed the dead person on their journey to the afterlife
- Religious purposes – there were cults that used animals to communicate with their gods. Animals were chosen to represent the god and were mummified when they died
- Votive offerings – most animal mummies fall into this category. Mummified animals were believed to be able to carry messages to the gods. Some Christians light votive candles to use in a similar way, while Hindus often offer flowers, incense and water to their gods

All sorts of animals were mummified, including cats, ibises, baboons, crocodiles, fish, dogs, birds and beetles. Each animal was associated with a particular god.

How have scientists learnt about what is inside animal mummies?

In earlier times, archaeologists and scientists unwrapped animal mummies to see what was inside, but this destroyed the mummies. Nowadays, scientists use X-rays, CT and micro-CT scans*. Some of these scans mean researchers can 3D print the contents of a mummy which gives them an even better idea of what's inside.

*See **What does that mean?** at the back of this pack for more explanation of these terms



Which animals were linked with these gods?

Beware: some of the gods had more than one animal linked with them!
Draw the answers in the empty boxes.

Thoth - The god of wisdom and writing



Ra - The god of the sun



Bastet - The goddess of war



Horus - The god of the pharaohs



Mongoose



Cat



Ibis



Dung beetle

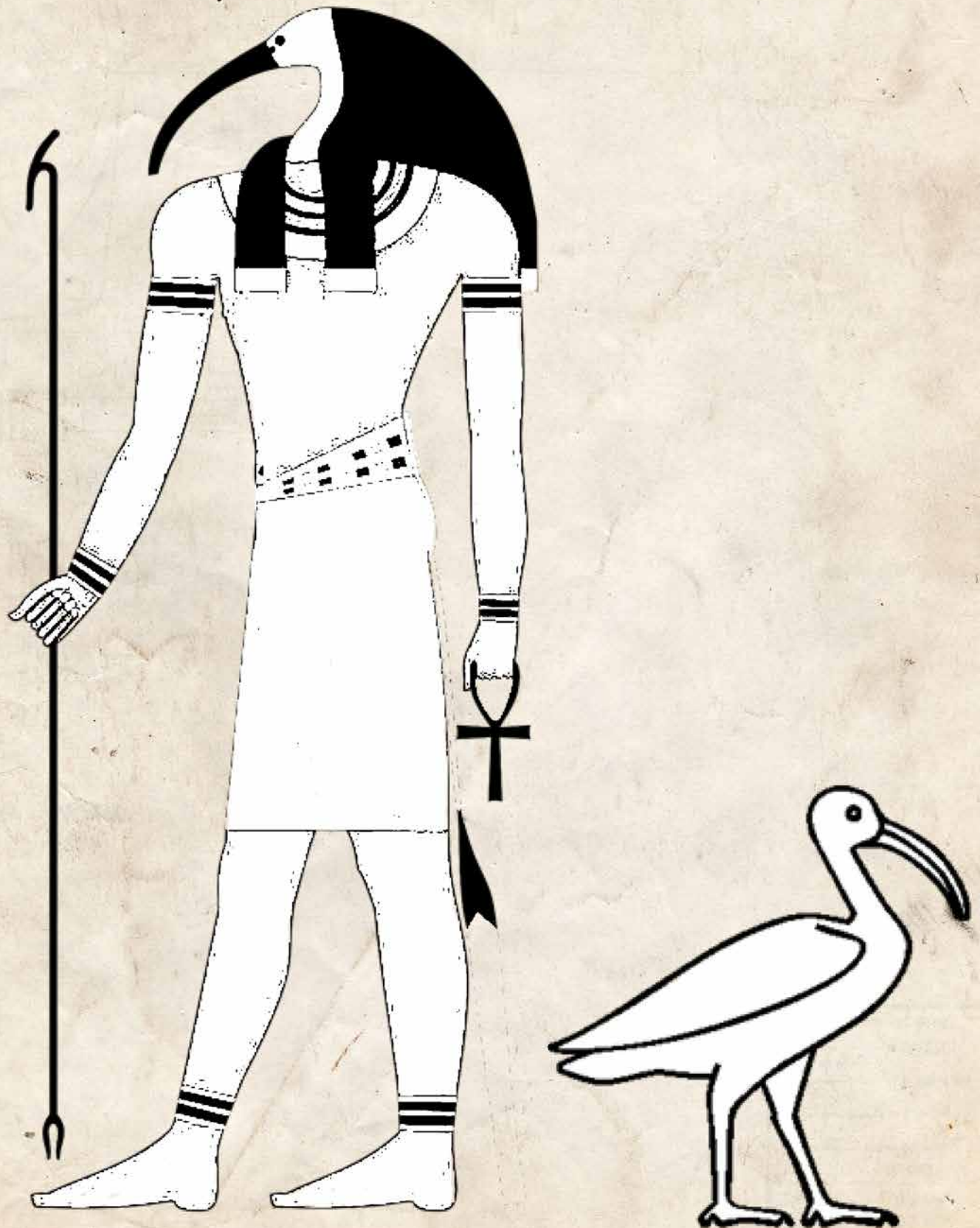


Baboon

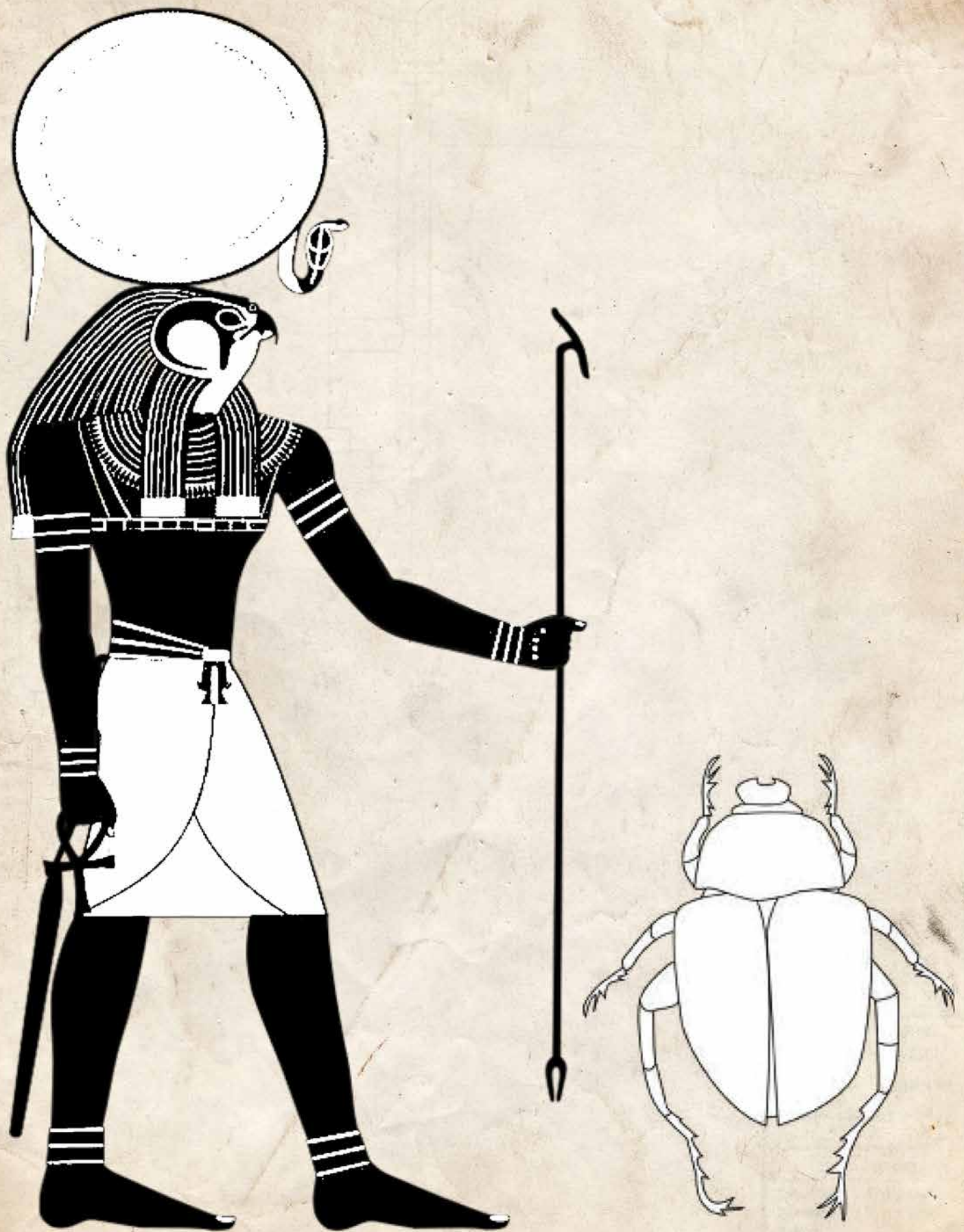


Falcon

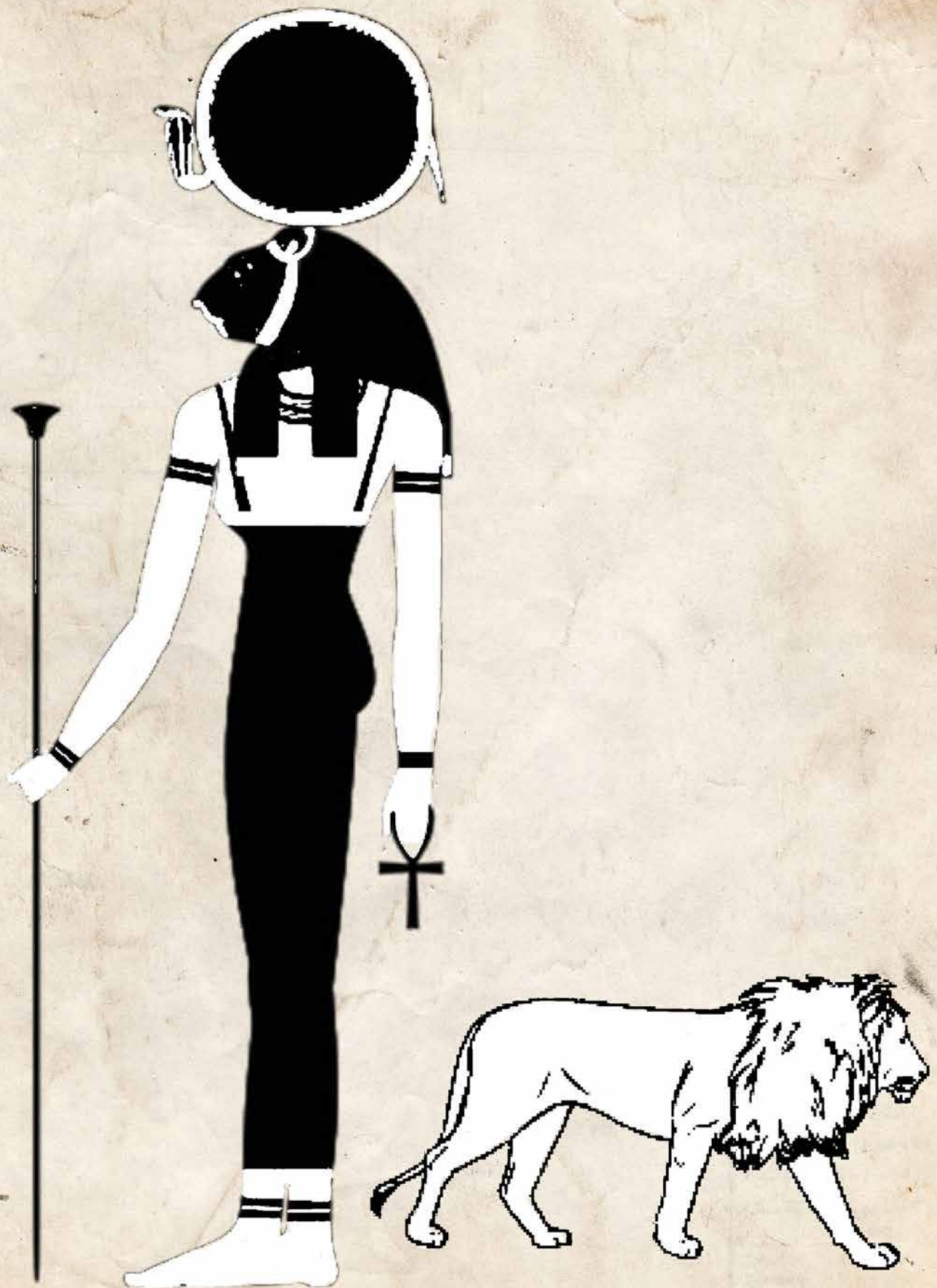
Colour in the god and their animal



Colour in the god and their animal



Colour in the god and their animal



Secret messages

The Ancient Egyptians left secret messages for the gods, sometimes by using hieroglyphs. Here are some ways you can make your own secret message.

Write your message on white paper with a white crayon or the end of a white candle (don't light it!).



How to read your message:

Paint over the message with some watercolour paint and there it is!



Write your message on white paper with lemon juice or milk.

How to read your message:

Hold the paper near a warm radiator or ask a parent to hold it over a candle. The juice or milk will heat up at a different rate to the paper and then you'll be able to see the message!

Ask a parent to help you mix baking soda and water together (there needs to be about the same amount of each). Use a brush and some of the mixture to write your message.



How to read your message:

Paint over the message with some dark juice and you'll be able to read it.

Code wheels

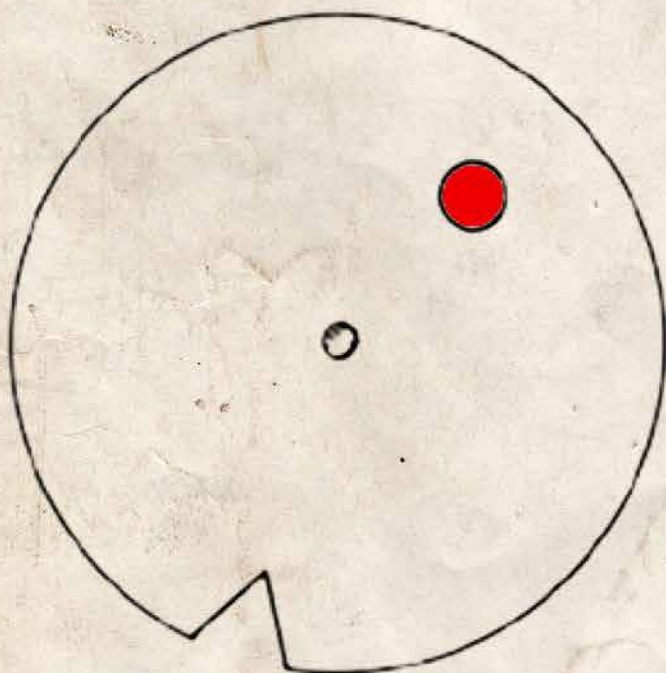
Cut out the two discs. Ask an adult to help you cut out the small red circle on the plain disc.

Put the plain disc on top of the other one. Ask an adult to help you push a split pin through the middle to join them together.

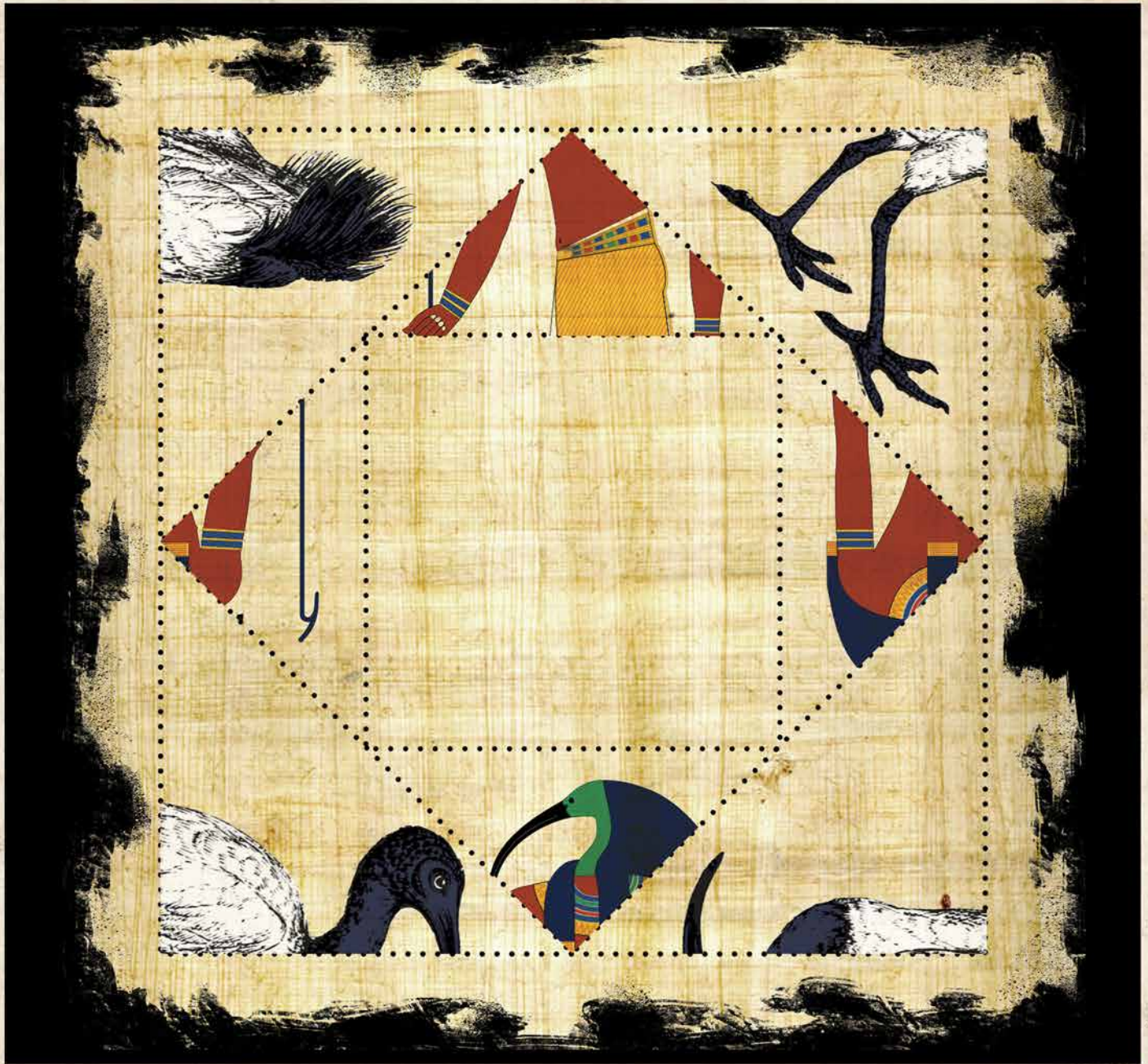
Write down your message to the Egyptian gods.

Turn the back disc until the next letter of your message appears in the triangle. Change it into the red letter in the small circle.

See if an adult can work out your message!



Make your own votive offering



Ever begged your parents for something you really, really want? If the ancient Egyptians wanted to ask their gods for something, they would make a votive offering—often a mummy made from an animal.

1. Cut out the square.

2. Turn over to the blank side and write or draw what you want.

3. Turn back over so you can see the pictures. Fold along the four long dotted lines, so the corners go into the middle.

4. What animal will be the mummy for your offering?

5. Make sure you can still see the animal. Now fold along the four short dotted lines, so the corners go into the middle.

6. Which god will accept your offering?

Sadly, we can't promise that your Egyptian god will answer your prayer!

What does that mean?

What are X-rays?

X-rays are a type of radiation which pass through soft materials and bounce back off of harder ones (e.g. bones). The picture, a bit like a photo, shows the hard bits of the inside of something.

What is a CT scan?

CT scans are X-ray 'slices' taken from many different angles around an object and often turned into a 3D model by computer. Hospitals use these to scan people for injuries and diseases.

What is a micro CT scan?

A micro-CT scan is like a CT scan but there are a lot more pixels, which gives a much more detailed picture – it's like the difference between ordinary TV and HD TV.

What is 3D printing?

CT scans are clear enough that 3D prints of the inside of an animal mummy can be made. Scientists can then hold a copy of the inside of the mummy!

What is a votive offering?

A votive offering is an object which is left in a special place for religious reasons, often to send a message to a god.

Some Christians light votive candles in a church to remember someone who has died. Some Hindus leave presents of flowers, incense and water for the gods.