

Howard Carter and The Tomb of Tutankhamun

CLASSROOM PREMIERE: April 11 at 6am ET/PT

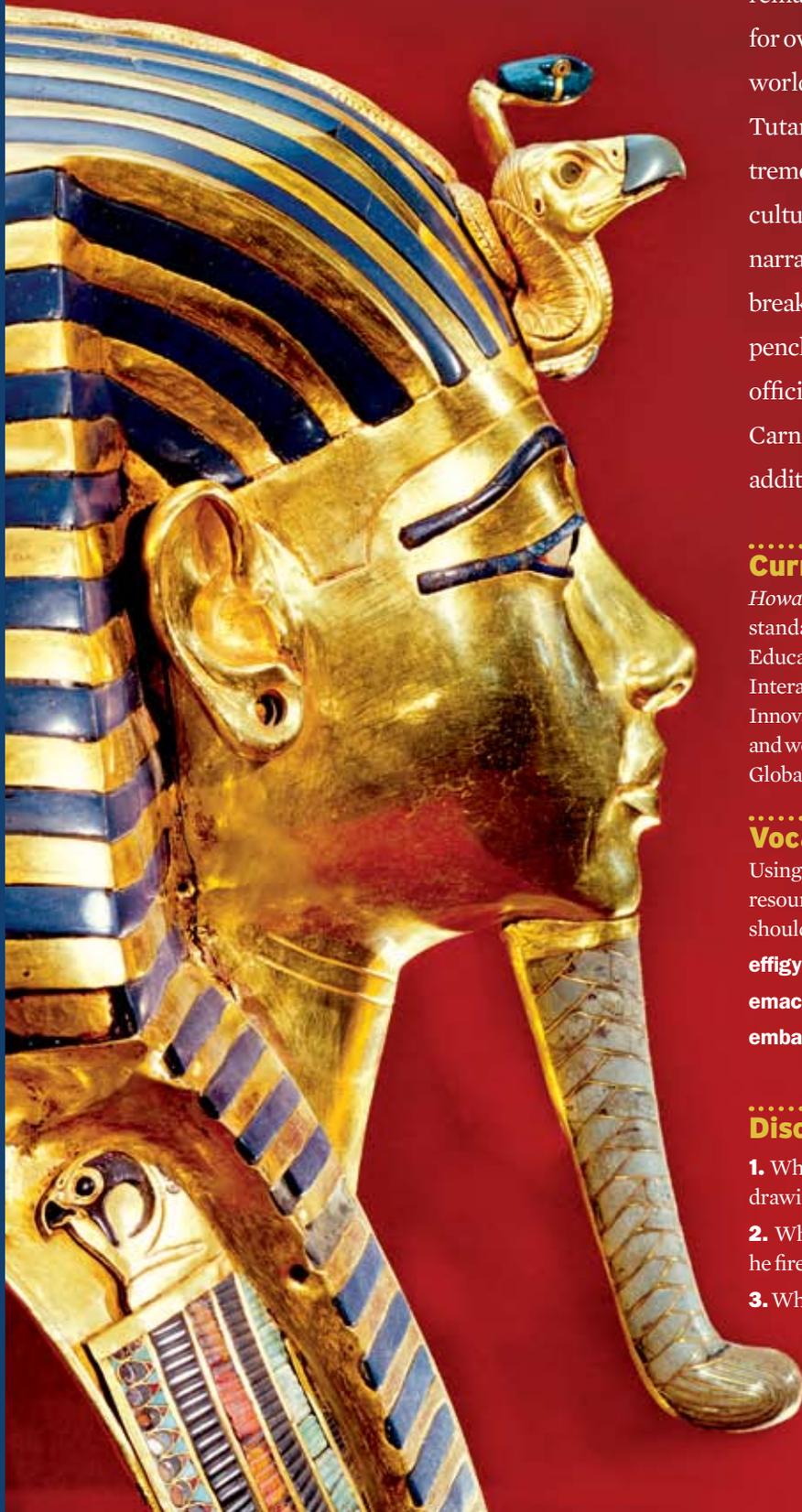
CLASSROOM ENCORE: July 11 at 6am ET/PT



EGYPT - 1922: Archaeologist Howard Carter removing oils from the coffin of Tutankhamun (lived around 1350 BC), ancient Egyptian pharaoh, which he discovered in 1922. (Photo by Mansell/Mansell/Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images)

On November 26, 1922, Howard Carter first peered into the treasure-filled tomb of Egypt's famous King Tutankhamun.

What he found in Egypt's Valley of the Kings would make headlines around the globe. In this nearly untouched tomb, Carter uncovered room upon room of stunning Egyptian artifacts – and meticulously recorded each object with the help of his fastidious team of excavators.



This nearly intact tomb was a remarkable discovery; it had been nearly unscathed for over 3,000 years. Carter's contribution to the world of archaeology is profound – the riches of Tutankhamun's tomb are virtually priceless, offering tremendous insights into ancient Egyptian society and culture. *Howard Carter and the Tomb of Tutankhamun* narrates Carter's tumultuous path to this archaeological breakthrough, from his boyhood in England and his penchant for drawing to his bitter conflicts with Egyptian officials and his friendship with the eccentric Lord Carnarvon. This short documentary would be a great addition to a lesson on Egyptian history and archaeology.

Curriculum links

Howard Carter and the Tomb of Tutankhamun fulfills several standards as outlined by the National Council for History Education including: (1) Patterns of Social and Political Interaction; and (2) Civilization, Cultural Diffusion, and Innovation. It is appropriate for middle and high school students and would be useful for courses in Archaeology, Social Studies, Global Studies and World History.

Vocabulary

Using the dictionary at www.merriamwebster.com, an Internet resource such as www.history.com, or an encyclopedia, students should define or explain the significance of the following terms:

effigy	hieroglyphics	ornate	sarcophagus
emaciated	methodical	plunder	subsidize
embalm	mummify		

Discussion questions

1. What was Howard Carter's unique talent? What made his drawings so impressive?
2. What did the Egyptian government hire him to do? Why was he fired soon after?
3. What fortuitous meeting dramatically changed Carter's fate?

4. What was Carter's greatest strength? What seemed to be his most glaring weakness?
5. How did Carter respond when Lord Carnarvon asked him what he could see upon opening the dark tomb? Why was his response such a gross understatement?
6. What happened to Lord Carnarvon that prohibited him from ever seeing the incredible shrine? What did journalists say about this untimely death?
7. In what ways was the preservation work that Carter and his staff undertook of Tutankhamun's tomb so meticulous? Why was this so important?
8. How did Carter's stubbornness tarnish his moment of triumph upon the opening of the shrine?
9. What is unique about the gold mask that covered the pharaoh's head and shoulders in the last of the many coffins? Why do archaeologists and historians believe this young pharaoh was buried with such opulent riches?
10. What remains the largest mystery surrounding Tutankhamun?

Extended activities

1. When Howard Carter opened Tutankhamun's tomb, he found a wealth of priceless treasures. Research the artifacts found in Tutankhamun's tomb. Choose three you find interesting and imagine you are Howard Carter, coming upon them for the first time. Draw each artifact with as much detail as possible, and then write a thorough description of the artifacts' characteristics. Combine your architectural drawings and accompanying descriptions with those from the rest of the class on posterboards to display the ornate array of Egyptian riches from Tutankhamun's tomb.
2. Imagine that you are a newspaper reporter living in the early 1920s. Write an article describing Carter's discovery of King Tutankhamun's tomb, Lord Carnarvon's mysterious death, the conflict between

Carter and the Egyptian authorities over Tutankhamun's sarcophagus, or the wave of Egyptian mania sweeping the United States. Include photographs, timelines, drawings and quotes. Then, put your article together with the rest of the class on display in a special edition newspaper devoted to Tutankhamun's tomb.

3. Pretend you are an apprentice to the great Howard Carter – make a list of the various items you would need to bring along with you on the excavation. Then, write a glossary of archaeological terms that would be useful for reference and include drawings and photographs to highlight your terms.

Websites & books

WEBSITES

The Field Museum's excellent online exhibit on King Tutankhamun's tomb: www.fieldmuseum.org/tut/exhibition.asp

BBC History photographs of artifacts found in Tutankhamun's burial site: www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/egyptians/tutankhamun_gallery.shtml

New York Times biography of archaeologist Howard Carter: www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/bday/0509.html

Smithsonian article describing how Egyptian pharaohs were mummified: www.si.edu/Encyclopedia_SI/nmnh/mummies.htm

BOOKS

Allen, Susan J. *Tutankhamun's Tomb: The Thrill of Discovery* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2006).

Carter, Howard. *The Tomb of Tutankhamun* (National Geographic, 2003).

James, T.G.H. *Howard Carter: The Path to Tutankhamun* (Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2001).

Reeves, Nicholas. *The Complete Tutankhamun: The King, The Tomb, the Royal Treasure* (Thames & Hudson, 1995).



Horizontal, Indoors, Mural, Fresco, Ape, Baboon, Tomb, Color Image, Death Mask of Tutankhamun, God, Gold, Coffin, Goddess, Afterlife, Pharaoh, Ancient Egyptian Culture, No People, Photography, Catacomb, Capital Cities, Sarcophagus, Scarab Beetle, Egyptian Dynasty, New Kingdom. ©The Bridgeman Art Library.