

# Museum explorers

## Ancient Egypt

The Open Futures family trails are funded by



## Welcome

This trail guides you on a fascinating journey of exploration and discovery around the Museum. On the way you'll track down some amazing treasures and experience tales of human history from around the world. You'll also need to search, look, pose and draw.

Whichever way you go, and whatever you discover, enjoy yourself! If you ever feel lost, just ask a member of staff for help.

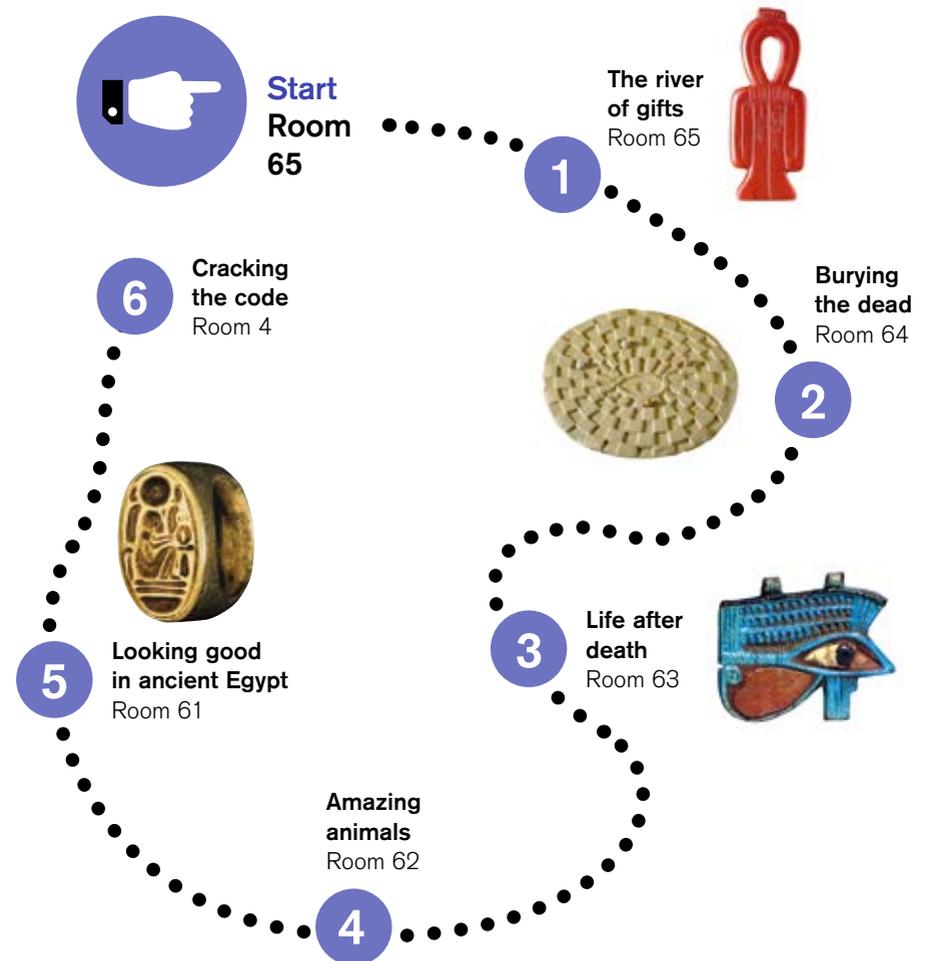
### Useful information for families

- You can pick up a map in the Great Court to help you get around the Museum.
- You can leave fold-up pushchairs in the cloakroom free of charge.
- Accessible toilets and baby changing facilities are available. You can breastfeed and bottle feed anywhere on the Museum's grounds but if you would like more privacy, the Museum has two feeding rooms. For details, ask at the Families Desk or Information Desk, or look at the map.
- You can find child-friendly food at the cafés. High chairs are available.
- You can use the Ford Centre for Young Visitors to picnic with your family at weekends and during school holidays.

# A trip to ancient Egypt

Take a trip down the Nile to discover why it was so important in ancient Egypt. You'll find out how ancient Egyptians lived and why they took so many precious things to their graves.

You'll need the sharp eyes of an archaeologist to track down everything you need.



# 1

## The river of gifts

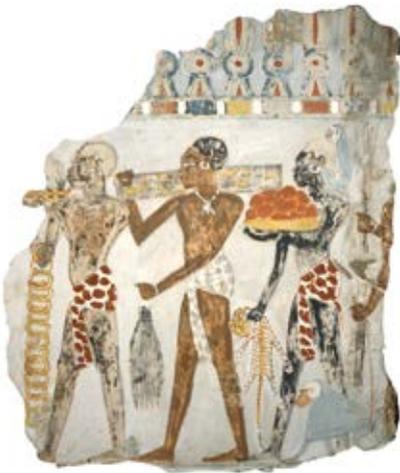
Head up to Room 65 on Level 3.



As you come into the room from Room 64, the painting is in a case to the left.

The River Nile gave ancient Egypt its power. Like a modern motorway, people used the Nile to transport goods across long distances. Boats loaded with gold, copper and ivory from Nubia in the south travelled to Egypt along the river.

Find this painting.



It shows people from Nubia taking presents to the Egyptian pharaoh to keep him happy.

Spot these precious gifts:

- Gold rings
- A monkey
- Leopard skins
- Dark wood



Look on the other side of this case. Which of the real gifts can you find?



What's the best gift you've ever received? What about the rest of your group?

# 2

## Burying the dead

Go to Room 64 and look for Cases 9, 10 and 11.



You'll find case numbers at the top of each case.

The Egyptians wanted to live forever and believed life continued after death. A proper burial was the best way to guarantee a ticket to the afterlife.



Spot these objects found in tombs in the city of Abydos. This was a famous cemetery where the first kings of Egypt were buried. Can you guess what each object is for?



1.



2.



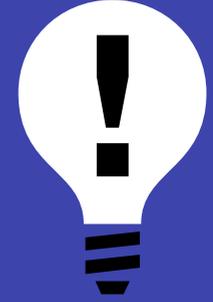
3.

1. A snake-pattern board game. Egyptians loved to play. They used marbles as counters.

2. A flint knife. This could have been used for shaving hair, cutting papyrus or even as a tool by an embalmer (that's someone who prepares and preserves a body after death).

3. A wine stopper from the king's vineyard. Only the richest people were lucky enough to drink wine.

### Answers:



Find the body of an Egyptian man in a case in the middle of the room. He died over 5,500 years ago. What objects were buried with him?

Egyptians were buried with items that said something about them and how they lived their lives.

What have you brought with you today? What does it say about what you like doing?

# 3

## Life after death

Now go to Room 63 and find Case 5.

**i** It can be difficult to see the case numbers in this room. Sobekhotep (Sebek-hotep) may also be spelt Sebekhetepi.

If ancient Egyptians could reach the afterlife, they believed they would find a perfect version of their life on earth. It wasn't easy to get to though. People buried things in tombs to help them make the journey.

**Look** for Sobekhotep's tomb.

Find:

- Something to wear on your feet
- Something to rest your head on
- People making something to eat and drink



Eyes were painted on coffins so the dead could look out into the world. **How many** eyes can you see staring at you in this room?



If your family could only take four things with them to the afterlife what would they be? Make sure everyone agrees.

# 4

## Amazing animals

Now go to Room 62 and find Case 29 at the far end of the room.

**i** Animal mummies could be fakes. CT scans have found rats inside some animal mummies, or just random collections of bones!

Do you have pets? In Egypt some animals were considered sacred. People thought they represented gods or goddesses. Cats were associated with the goddess Bastet, who had a soothing and peaceful nature.

People left mummified animals at temples as presents for the gods. **Find** a mummy of each of these six animals.



■ Baboon



■ Crocodile



■ Cat



■ Ibis



■ Cow



■ Falcon

**What** other animals can you spot in this room?



The Egyptians thought different animals had different qualities. What characteristics do you think the crocodile represented? See how many different words you can think of.

# 5

## Looking good in ancient Egypt

Head to Room 61 and find Cases 4b and 4c.

Women and men wore make-up and jewellery to look their best. Only rich people could afford fancy materials like gold and precious stones. Ordinary people used copper and coloured pottery beads.

Ancient Egyptians wore jewellery so they would look attractive to the gods. Expensive jewels also showed just how rich they were.

**Find** these objects. Who do you think might have worn them?



This jewellery is over 3,000 years old.  
**Would you wear any of it today?**

Egyptian men and women used black kohl to line their eyes and make their eyelashes darker.



**Find** a pot for holding kohl. It might be brightly coloured.



# 6

## Cracking the code

Go downstairs to Room 4. Take the West stairs or the nearest lift is just outside Room 59.



The Rosetta Stone sometimes gets very busy. You can see a model of it in Room 1.

The sculptures in this room are covered in ancient Egyptian writing called hieroglyphs. There are over 700 different hieroglyphs representing different objects, ideas, words and sounds. It took archaeologists until the 19th century to work out how to read them.



**Explore the room** to look for this shape. It's a cartouche, a symbol that tells you the word inside is the name of a king or queen.



**What's the highest number** of cartouches you can find on a single sculpture?



**Find** the Rosetta Stone at the middle of the gallery. It has three different types of writing carved into it, which helped experts crack the hieroglyph code.



**How many** different types of codes do you know how to use?



# You've completed the **Ancient Egypt** trail!

What a journey you've been on. You've travelled along the Nile from Nubia to the Mediterranean Sea and explored what life was like in Egypt thousands of years ago. **Of all the things you discovered, what was your favourite?**

As a reward for completing the trail, a goddess awaits you! See if you can spot the head and body of a hippo and the rest of the body made up of two other animals.



Taweret statuette, Room 65.



You can find out even more about life in ancient Egypt in other parts of the Museum:

- **Strike a pose** like one of the statues in Room 4.
- **Look inside** a mummy with the virtual autopsy table in Room 64.
- **Draw** a colourful Egyptian coffin in Room 63.



Other things you could do when you get home:

- **Design your own Egyptian coffin**  
What will you put inside?
- **Create your own code**  
Test it out on your friends and family.
- **Write your name in hieroglyphs**  
Share the key so other people can read it too.

a	b	d	f	g	h	i
j	k	l	m	n	o, u, v, w	p
q	r	s	t	y	z	

## See you back at the British Museum soon!

