

Main Idea Practice

The stories of ancient Egypt have survived for thousands of years. One reason we know so much about their civilization 4000 years later is because of the mummies they preserved so carefully. A mummy is the body of a person that has been preserved after death. Egyptians believed that if they preserved their bodies, they could use them in the afterlife, where they would journey to another world to lead a new life. They also believed that they would need all of the things they had used when they were alive, so their tombs were packed with their belongings. When these tombs were discovered, they were filled with artifacts that told us stories about life in ancient Egypt.

5

What is the main idea of this passage?

5A

- A. Some mummies are 4000 years old.
- B. Mummies were buried in tombs.
- C. Ancient Egyptians believed in an afterlife that existed after they died on Earth.
- D. Egyptian mummies and their tombs have provided us with clues about life in ancient Egypt.

Which of the following would be the best title for the passage?

5B

- A. Mummies: Clues to the Past
- B. Life in Ancient Egypt
- C. Egyptian Beliefs
- D. The Fall of Ancient Egypt

Which of the following detail sentences best supports the main idea and could be added to the paragraph?

5C

- A. Poor Egyptians were buried in the sand.
- B. Tomb walls can tell a story, as well, because they were often painted with scenes from the dead person's life.
- C. The ancient Egyptians lived along the Nile River, using its rich soil for farming.
- D. Egypt is located in the northeast corner of Africa.

The ancient Egyptians followed a lengthy process to preserve dead bodies. Mummification, or the process of preserving a body, took seventy days. First, the body was washed and purified. Then, all organs except the heart were removed (they believed the heart was the center of intelligence and emotion). Next, they filled the body with stuffing and then covered it with natron, a salt-like substance that dried the bodies. After 40-50 days had passed, the stuffing was removed and replaced with linen or sawdust. Finally, the body was wrapped in strips of linen and placed in the stone coffin, called a sarcophagus. Now the mummy was ready to travel to the afterlife.

6

What is the main idea of this passage?

6A

- A. Egyptians preserved dead bodies so that they could travel to the afterlife.
- B. Egyptians believe that the heart was the center of intelligence and emotion.
- C. Natron was used to dry out a mummy's body.
- D. Egyptians followed a series of steps to properly preserve a dead person's body.

Which of the following would be the best title for the passage?

6B

- A. Why Natron was Important in Egypt
- B. Ancient Egyptian Customs
- C. Mummies
- D. The Process of Mummification

Which of the following detail sentences best supports the main idea and could be added to the paragraph?

6C

- A. Pyramids were built to protect an Egyptian pharaoh and his belongings.
- B. The mummy of King Tutankhamen (King Tut) was discovered in 1922.
- C. The organs were put in special jars and placed with the body in the tomb.
- D. Only scribes and priest were taught to read and write in ancient Egypt.