



0. MUMMIES of PHARAOHS - Story Preface

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This image depicts the mummified head of an Egyptian Pharaoh known as Rameses V. Reigning during the 20th Dynasty, circa 1196-1070 B.C., Rameses died in his early 30s. Scholars tell us that Rameses had smallpox since they can see evidence of smallpox scars on the mummy's face, neck and chest. Photo [online via PBS](#), courtesy University of Chicago Library.

Of all the mummies in the world, the most famous are Egyptian pharaohs from the land of [pyramids](#). (Follow the link to be a "Pyramid Builder.")

Say the word "archeology," and many people think "King Tut." Had that young pharaoh (and those who lived before and after him) been buried in a sand pit, however, their bodies would have undergone much less decay.

Even so, what remains is interesting to see.

Because grave robbers (who also stole artifacts from royal tombs) were such a problem, the mummies of pharaohs were buried in hidden places in the Valley of the Kings. Even those graves were often plundered, although the mummies were not desecrated.

If the final resting place of a pharaoh had been robbed, mummies would sometimes be moved to Western Thebes. Of the bodies hidden there, the most famous pharaohs were:

- [Ramesses I](#) whose mummified remains (for a time) were believed to be "[owned](#)" by a museum in Atlanta, Georgia.

- [Seti I](#), father of Ramesses II, who was a great pharaoh and warrior.

- [Ramesses II](#), also known as [Ramses the Great](#), was unusual in many respects. He was about [six-feet tall](#) at a time when his countrymen were just over five feet. Ruling sixty-seven years (1279-1212 B.C.), he lived until he was [nearly ninety](#) (more than double the average life span of a then-healthy Egyptian). He built a monument to himself (known, today, as [Abu Simbel](#)) on the west bank of the Nile. Percy Bysshe Shelley * wrote a poem about him, called "[Ozymandias](#)" (at least ... some scholars believe that a bust of the youthful Ramesses was Shelley's inspiration).

- Tuthmosis III who was unwrapped, in 1882, by Emile Brugsch.
- Sadly, there are no known records about a Pharaoh named Ahkmenrah (or Merenkahre).

Although not the most important pharaoh, King Tut is the most famous. The treasures in his tomb, still completely intact when they were rediscovered in 1922, have been exhibited in many places outside Egypt. Today, Tut's mummy resides at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. Let's take a look.

* Percy Shelley was married to Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin Shelley, the inventor of a thinking monster who comes alive in her still-popular book *Frankenstein* (a tale about "The Modern Prometheus"). Film adaptations of the story - which portray the monster as a lumbering, illiterate, moronic giant who kills for the sake of killing - do not completely follow the source material. Shelley's monster is an intelligent (albeit unaccepted) creature who turns to violence when he realizes he is living in a world to which he will never belong.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/MUMMIES-of-PHARAOHS-Night-at-the-Museum>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/MUMMIES-of-PHARAOHS-Night-at-the-Museum>

Media Stream



Mummy - Seti I

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Mummy - Ramses II (The Great)

Image online, courtesy the ancientneareast.org website.

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Ramses The Great - A Tall Pharaoh

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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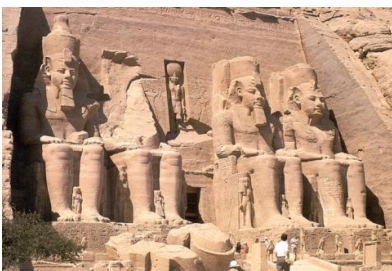


Ramses the Great - Dead at Nearly Ninety

Image online, courtesy National Geographic.

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Monument to Ramses II - Abu Simbel

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Tutankhamun - A Mummy's Face

Photo, from *The Royal Mummies*, published in 1912 by Dr. Grafton Elliot Smith - online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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