Making mummies

27 Making a mummy was difficult and skilled work. First the brain, stomach, lungs and other organs were removed, but the heart was left in place. Next, the body was covered with salts and left to dry for up to 40 days. The dried body was washed and filled with linen and other stuffing to keep its shape. Finally, it was oiled and wrapped in layers of linen bandages.

28 Animals were made into mummies too. A nobleman might be buried with a mummy of his pet cat. Mummification was expensive, so people only preserved animals in this way to offer them to the gods. One mummified crocodile discovered by archaeologists was over 4.5 metres long!

29 Body parts were removed from the dead person and stored in special containers. The stomach, intestines, lungs and liver were cut out and stored in four separate jars, called canopic jars.
30 A mask was fitted over the face of a mummy. The ancient Egyptians believed that the mask would help the dead person's spirit to recognize the mummy later on. A pharaoh's mummy mask was made of gold and precious stones.

31 When ready for burial, a mummy was placed inside a special case. Some cases were simple wooden boxes, but others were shaped like mummies and richly decorated. The mummy case of an important person, such as a pharaoh or a nobleman, was sealed inside a stone coffin called a sarcophagus.

MAKE A DEATH MASK

You will need
- a play mask (made of plastic or stiff card)
- PVA glue
- newspaper
- white paint
- a paintbrush
- poster paints

Use an inexpensive play mask, such as a Halloween one, as your basic mask. Cover the mask with a thick layer of PVA glue. Spread layers of torn newspaper strips over the mask and leave to dry. Cover the mask with white paint. When dry, use the poster paints to create an amazing death mask of your own! If you haven't got gold-coloured paint, you can use gold glitter to create the same effect.