

HUNT FOR THE GOLDEN SCARAB



M. G. LEONARD

NOTES FOR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

AGES 8+

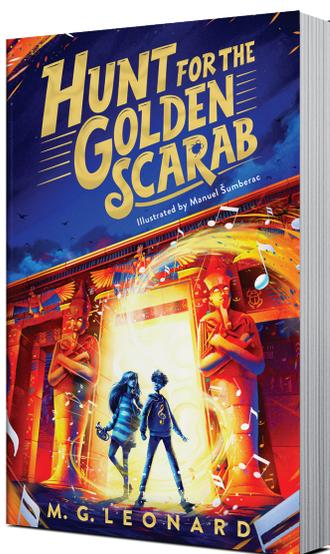
Explore themes of:

- ✓ Early civilizations
- ✓ Ancient Egypt
- ✓ Mummification
- ✓ Time travel and portal stories

Subject Checklist:

- ✓ History
- ✓ Literacy
- ✓ Art & Design
- ✓ Geography

The activities included here are suitable for the classroom or library sessions.



About the Book

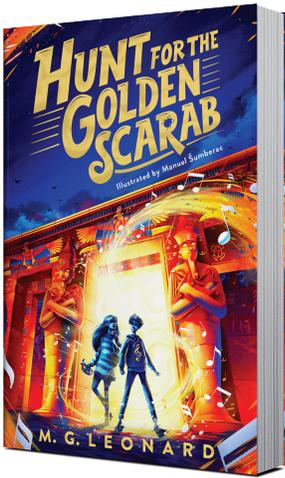
The action of Indiana Jones meets the time travel of Dr Who in *Hunt for the Golden Scarab*, the first title in the Time Keys series by bestselling award-winner M. G. Leonard. Perfect for children of 8 to 12 and fans of *Adventures on Trains*, *Beetle Boy* and *Twitch*. Illustrated in black and white throughout by Manuel Šumberac.

Sim and his mum never live anywhere long. When dangerous strangers appear one night, Sim discovers why. His mum has been keeping secrets: she has the power to open doors in time.

Running for their lives, Sim and his friends are determined to outwit the sinister Council of Keys and be the first to find Nefertiti's lost tomb and a powerful door to Ancient Egypt. They must piece together long-hidden clues if they are to solve the mystery of her golden heart scarab. Can they find it before the Council finds them?

Please share your Time Keys activities with us – we'd love to see them!

@macmillankidsuk @mglnrd #TimeKeys



Pre-reading Activities

Book Cover Discussion Questions

- What genre do you think the book might fit within? Why?
- Where and when do you think the book might be set? What makes you think this?
- What do you think a 'time key' might be?
- What information can you gather about the characters?
- Can you make any predictions about what might happen in the story?

Vocabulary

In the table below are some words you will encounter whilst reading the story. Can you find out what they mean?

| Word | Definition |
|---------------|------------|
| Archaeology | |
| Ancient Egypt | |
| Egyptologist | |
| Hieroglyphs | |
| Sarcophagus | |
| Amulet | |

Watch author M. G. Leonard read the first chapter here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eYdXxLwK2Vg>



Reading Group Discussion Prompts

- Can you find Egypt on a map? If you were to travel to Egypt today, how do you think you would get there and how long do you think the journey would take?
- How did Callidora and Emmett discover that they are keys? Would you like to be a key? Why or why not?
- Why were the council so desperate to find Nefertiti's heart scarab?
- What is your impression of Emmett?
- On page 175, Howard Carter and Sim discuss whether it would be bad to take Nefertiti's heart scarab out of her sarcophagus. What do you think? If Nefertiti's tomb were found, would it be right or wrong to remove the scarab? Do you agree with Howard Carter?
- On page 239, Tutankhamun asks Sim to tell him the future. What do you think the pros and cons of being able to see into the future would be? If you had the chance to see into the future, would you take it?
- How do you think Callidora feels at the end of the story? How do you think Sim feels?
- At the end of the story, Callidora must decide what to do with the golden scarab spell. Do you think she makes the right choice? If you had the golden scarab spell, what would you do with it?
- M. G. Leonard has included this quote at the start of the book: 'Study the past and you would define the future' – Confucius
 - What do you think this quote means. Do you agree?
 - Have a read of the other two quotes at the start of the book. Why do you think M .G. Leonard has chosen to include these quotes? How do they relate to the story?
- What have you learnt about Ancient Egypt from this book that you didn't know before?
- What more would you like to find out?
- If you could travel through time, when would you travel to and why?
- The next book in the Time Keys series is called, *The Legend of the Viking Thunder*. What do you think might happen in this book?



Activity 1: Sacred Heart Scarabs

Extract from pages 126-128

It was blissfully cool inside the museum. The building was made of polished stone. The historian Emmett was meeting introduced himself as Qusy and took them to a room that was used for giving talks and lectures. On a table, on the stage, was a tray. Sitting on the tray were six stone ovals. As they approached, Jeopardy could see they were carved into beetles.

'Sacred heart scarabs,' Qusy said, sweeping his hand over the tray. 'Scarabs are dung beetles. They had a special significance in Ancient Egypt. The sun god, Ra-Khepri, was depicted as a giant dung beetle that would roll the sun across the sky. Scarabs represented creation, rebirth, and were associated with the sun god.'

'They saw the sun as a giant ball of poo?' Jeopardy chuckled.

'Yes, Miss Jeopardy,' Qusy nodded. 'The god of the sun would sometimes take the form of a man, sometimes a falcon, and sometimes the scarab beetle.' He pulled a pair of white gloves from his pocket and put them on. Picking up the black heart scarab, he showed them the underside. 'The heart scarab refers to the *Book of the Dead*, chapter thirty.'

'The *Book of the Dead*?' Emmett became interested.

'What's that?' Jeopardy asked the curator.

'A collection of spells and texts that helps your spirit pass through the netherworld.'

'Netherworld?' Jeopardy frowned.

'When a mummy was put into a tomb,' Qusy explained, 'it was believed to enter the netherworld. The dead person's soul goes on a journey where it is tested. It must pass through twelve gates, deny a list of crimes, and have their heart weighed on a scale against a feather. This is how the life of the deceased is judged. During this journey, known as Duat, the job of the heart scarab is to stop the heart from telling tales on its owner.'

'The heart scarab keeps your darkest secrets?' Jeopardy stared at the egg-sized stone in the curator's gloved hand.

'Yes. The *Book of the Dead* tells us that the heart scarab amulets must be made of stone. This one is basalt. He put down the black stone and picked up a greenish one. This is green jasper.'

Find out more about Heart Scarabs in this video from author M. G. Leonard:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5DGNvWwRyzo>



Discussion Questions

- What is the *Book of the Dead*?
- What did the ancient Egyptians believe happened to a mummy once it was placed in a tomb?
- Have a look at this image of the [papyrus of Hunefer](#) from the *Book of the Dead*. Based on what you've learnt from the extract, what do you think might be happening in the picture?
- Why did the ancient Egyptians believe that it was important to be buried with a scarab?
- Why do you think Qusy wears white gloves when he is handling the scarabs?



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Make a Heart Scarab

Part 1: Explore different heart scarabs

Read on to the end of page 129 to learn more about Egyptian heart scarabs. You can find photographs of Hatnefer's scarab in the [Met Museum](#) collection and a picture of a heron scarab in the [Museo Egizio](#) collection. Further examples of heart scarabs like those the characters look at in the text can be viewed [here](#). Look closely at the different pictures and discuss the following questions:

- How are the heart scarabs similar and how are they different?
- What do you think Hatnefer's heart scarab might tell us about her?
- Which heart scarab do you like best?
- The scarabs are over 3,000 years old! Jeopardy feels a 'thrill' when she looks at them. How do you feel when you look at them?

Part 2: Create your own

You are going to design your own heart scarab! What will your heart scarab look like? What hieroglyph will it have on its base? Draw a sketch of your design.

Optional – Part 3: Make your heart scarab out of clay

You will need:

- A small ball of clay (air dry clay, modelling clay, plasticine or salt dough also work well)
- A clay sculpting tool (cocktail sticks make useful tools)
- If you are using air dry clay or salt dough you might like to add colour to your heart scarab using acrylic paint

Instructions:

- Sculpt your ball of clay into the shape of a heart scarab by rolling it into an ovoid shape then pressing it onto a hard surface to flatten the base.
- Smooth the surface of the scarab with your fingers (adding a small amount of water if necessary).
- Carve your design into the top of your scarab using your sculpting tool.
- When you have finished, turn your scarab over and carefully carve your chosen hieroglyph onto the base. Leave your scarab to dry (or bake in the oven if you are using modelling clay or salt dough).
- You have made your very own heart scarab!

 In the book, the characters are looking for Nefertiti's heart scarab. What do you think Nefertiti's heart scarab might look like? Perhaps it looks similar to yours! 



Activity 2: Mummification

Extract from pages 156-158

In this extract, Ayman is showing Sim and Jeopardy around the Temple of Hatshepsut.

'But maybe you will be interested to know that this was the place of the Per-Nefer, the house of vitality, for mummification of the kings and queens before they go into their tombs.'

'This is where they mummified people?' Jeopardy looked across the expanse of flat gravel and stone. An area was roped off and signs warned that archaeological excavations were taking place.

'Up the hill.' Ayman pointed. 'Over that way, maybe one kilometre, is the Valley of the Kings. And, in these hills, are found many tombs of the nobles. The embalmers did their work in tents, high up.' He waved his hand in front of his nose and chuckled. 'The wind takes away the smells.'

Sim grimaced.

'How did they make people into mummies?' Jeopardy asked.

'In a ritual with many magics. The priest wears the mask of the god Anubis. The body is washed with water from the Nile, then the embalmers cut.' He mimed with his hands as he spoke. 'Take out the liver, lungs, stomach and intestines. Put them in canopic jars. The body is laid on a tilted board and stuffed with a salt called natron, for one month, to dry it. Then begins the wrapping of the bandages, the adding of oils, the amulets, and the prayers spoken by the priest. They must finish before seventy days, which is when the body is taken to the tomb.'

'What about the heart?' Sim asked.

'The heart is left in the body, guarded by a special amulet.'

'The scarab,' Jeopardy said.

'Yes.' Ayman brought his hands together and nodded. 'The heart scarab.'

With revitalized interest, Sim and Jeopardy explored the Temple of Hatshepsut, talking about mummification. When they boarded the minibus to return to their boat, Ayman pressed an alabaster scarab the size of a golf ball into each of their hands. 'A gift for you.' He winked. 'To bring luck and good fortune.'

There were hieroglyphs on the underside and Sim wondered if they were a spell from the *Book of the Dead*.



Discussion Questions

- Why was mummification performed 'up high' in the hills?
- What were canopic jars used for?
- What other equipment was needed for mummification?
- Can you number these steps from 1 – 6 in the order that they were carried out during the mummification process:

Water from the Nile is used to wash the body

The Pharaoh's body is taken to the Per-Nefer

The organs are taken out and put in canopic jars

The mummy is taken to the tomb

Bandages are wrapped around the body

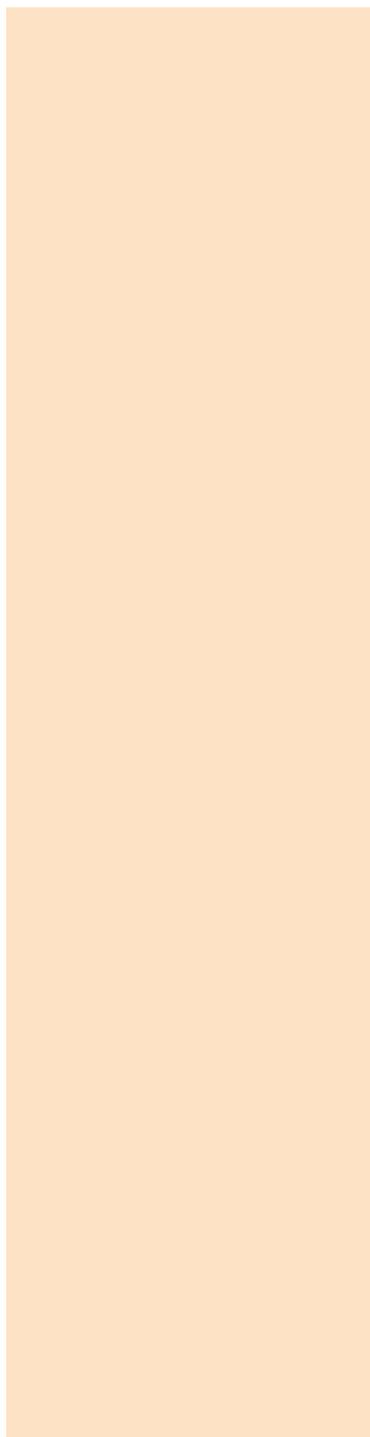
Natron is placed inside

- Why do you think the process of mummification was important to the ancient Egyptians?



You are an expert embalmer in Ancient Egypt! Grand Vizier Ay has asked you to share your knowledge and skills by writing a set of instructions for how to mummify a Pharaoh. You'd better get started as you don't want to upset Ay! Begin by listing all the equipment you use to carry out mummification. Then, draw a picture for each step of the process and write clear instructions explaining how to carry it out. Be as precise as possible and don't skip any of the gruesome details – a Pharaoh's journey to the afterlife depends on you!

You will need:



Instructions:



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.

Further Activity Ideas

- Create a timeline to show the dates of key events in Ancient Egypt. You could include: the arrival of the first settlers in the Nile valley, the development of hieroglyphs, the building of the Giza pyramids, the beginning of the Valley of Kings and the end of the civilization. Now, use the information at the back of the novel to add the approximate birth dates of Tutankhamun and Nefertiti to your timeline. Can you work out approximately how many years between the building of the first pyramid and the birth of Tutankhamun? How many years between Tutankhamun's death and the end of the civilization?
- On page 14, we learn that Penhooligan is looking for Nefertiti's heart scarab. Carry out some further research into Nefertiti. Why was Nefertiti important? What do you wonder about her?
- On page 143, Jeopardy and Sim enter Tutankhamun's tomb. Read this chapter and carry out some research into Tutankhamun's tomb. How many rooms did it have? What kind of decoration was on the walls and what items did it contain?
- Qusy tells the group that Nefertiti's tomb is likely to have more gold in it than Tutankhamun's! Based on what you've learnt about Nefertiti and about Tutankhamun's tomb, what do you think Nefertiti's tomb looks like and what do you think it contains? Create a labelled diagram or write a description then give a friend a tour of Nefertiti's tomb!
- The illustrator, Manuel Šumberac, has created beautiful black-and-white pictures for the book. Create a picture of Tutankhamun's mask in the style of Manuel Šumberac. Use graphite or charcoal to create light and shade in your picture.
- On page 162, Sim stands on the riverbank and stares at the silhouette of a pyramid against the night sky. Create a silhouette painting of an Egyptian pyramid. Begin by blending a mix of reds, yellows and oranges to create a sunset. Then use black paint or paper to create the shape of a pyramid standing against the sky. You could create the shape of Egyptian plants or animals to add detail.
- On page 164, Sim and Jeopardy learn about cartouches. A cartouche contains the name of a royal person or God. Draw your own cartouche or make one using clay or plasticine. Can you write your name inside using hieroglyphs?
- On pages 189–191, Jeopardy meets a young Egyptian girl called Băbă. What kind of life does Băbă have? Re-write this scene from the point of view of Băbă. How do you think she feels? What does she think of Jeopardy?
- If Tutankhamun or Băbă travelled forward in time to the modern day, what do you think they would make of it? Write a scene in which one of these characters travels through a door back to the present day with Sim and Jeopardy. How do they react? What happens?
- Write your own time-travel story inspired by *Hunt for the Golden Scarab*! What time period would you travel to and how would you get there? What adventures might you get up to on your travels?

