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# Mummy

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Book

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Mummies are a source of great fascination to many young and not so young readers who will not be disappointed by this latest addition to the Eyewitness stable with its familiar format of high quality full-colour illustration and integrated text. Mummification sometimes occurred by accident, like the recently discovered Iceman who died between 3350 and 3300 B.C. and has thus become the 'oldest well-preserved mummy in the world'; more often it was by design, usually for religious reasons. Whilst briefly reviewing customs world-wide, notably in North and South America, and, astonishingly, Sicily, the majority of the book is devoted to the best known and most accomplished exponents, the Ancient Egyptians. The whole of the elaborate ritual of preparing the dead for a better future life, from the 70-day embalming process, the bandaging of the mummy and its placing in inner and outer mummy cases before being consigned to the tomb, is described in absorbing and meticulous detail by the author, who is a curator in the British Museum's Department of Egyptian Antiquities. Thanks to modern technology, scientific studies of mummies can be achieved without disturbing the remains, which would be both 'destructive and disrespectful', and their findings provide valuable evidence not only about how people died but also about how they lived.

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