News Shorts: Tomb Raiders

American archaeologists\(^1\) recently did something that would make their mummies proud: They discovered a hidden Egyptian tomb!

Otto J. Schaden and his team found the burial chamber\(^2\) underground in Egypt’s Valley of the Kings. It holds five mummies in sarcophagi (sar-KAH-fuh-gigh), or coffins. The tomb also contains 20 jars in which Egyptians stored food and drink for the afterlife.

This marks the first time an intact tomb has been discovered in the valley in 84 years. The last tomb found there was that of Tutankhamen, the boy king. Tut’s tomb is just feet from the newly found chamber.

"It was just so amazing to find an intact tomb here after all the work that’s been done before," Edwin Brock, one of the project leaders, told reporters.

Archaeologists suspect that the tomb is about 3,000 years old. The scientists will study the sarcophagi to determine the mummies’ identities and social status.

One of the sarcophagi has the features of a woman with black hair, dark-lined eyes, and a gold necklace.

Schaden says the mummies may be members of a pharaoh’s court, but some people have speculated that the tomb may hold the mummy of Nefertiti—one of Egypt’s most beautiful and powerful queens. Even if the tomb doesn’t hold Nefertiti’s remains, it’s still the find of a lifetime, archaeologists say. "This cache...proves that the Valley of the Kings is not exhausted," Mansour Bouriak, an Egyptian official, told reporters.

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\(^1\) archaeologist: scientist that studies past human life as shown by fossil relics and the monuments and tools left by ancient peoples

\(^2\) burial chamber: an enclosed space that holds one or more bodies
1. The newly found tomb contains all of the following EXCEPT

A five mummies in sarcophagi  
B 20 jars in which food was stored  
C the mummy of King Tut  
D a gold necklace

2. How do archaeologists describe the tomb?

A as an ordinary burial chamber  
B as a tomb that has been raided  
C as the find of a lifetime  
D as a place where people live

3. In the first paragraph ("American archaeologists recently did something that would make their mummies proud...") , why did the author choose the phrase “make their mummies proud”?

A The author thought that the mummies were happy to be found.  
B The author knows what an important role mothers play.  
C The author wanted to show how serious the discovery is.  
D The author was being funny by using a play on words.

4. Read this sentence from the passage: “Schaden says the mummies may be members of a pharaoh’s court, but some people have speculated that the tomb may hold the mummy of Nefertiti—one of Egypt’s most beautiful and powerful queens.”

In this sentence, the word speculated means

A thought  
B discovered  
C broadcast  
D forgotten

5. Which statement best describes the main idea of this passage?

A Queen Nefertiti was a beautiful and powerful ruler.  
B Scientists recently found a hidden Egyptian tomb.  
C Egypt’s Valley of the Kings is a place rich with history.  
D Being an archaeologist is challenging but rewarding.
6. What are sarcophagi?

7. How do you think the author feels about the discovery? How do you know? Cite an example from the text.

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

   ________ many archaeologists had been to the site before, this was the first time the hidden tomb was discovered.

   A  Because
   B  Although
   C  During
   D  When
9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

Archaeologists recently discovered a hidden tomb in Egypt’s Valley of the Kings.

Who? archaeologists

(did) What? ________________________________________________________________

Where? __________________________________________________________________

When? ____________________________________________________________________


Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: ______________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________
Teacher Guide and Answers

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 980

Featured Text Structure: Descriptive – the writer explains, defines, or illustrates a concept or topic

Passage Summary: "News Shorts: Tomb Raiders" describes an Egyptian tomb that American archaeologists recently discovered in Egypt’s Valley of the Kings.

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2. How do archaeologists describe the tomb?
   
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   B as a tomb that has been raided
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   In this sentence, the word speculated means
   
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5. Which statement best describes the main idea of this passage?
   
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   B Scientists recently found a hidden Egyptian tomb.
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   D Being an archaeologist is challenging but rewarding.
6. What are sarcophagi?

**Suggested answer:** Sarcophagi are coffins. [paragraph 2]

7. How do you think the author feels about the discovery? How do you know? Cite an example from the text.

**Suggested answer:** The author is excited about the discovery. You can tell because the author ends the first paragraph with an exclamation mark – “They discovered a hidden Egyptian tomb!” [paragraph 1]

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

_______ many archaeologists had been to the site before, this was the first time the hidden tomb was discovered.

A. Because  
B. Although  
C. During  
D. When

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

Archaeologists recently discovered a hidden tomb in Egypt’s Valley of the Kings.

Who? archaeologists  
(did) What? discovered a hidden tomb  
Where? in Egypt’s Valley of the Kings  
When? recently

10. **Vocabulary Word:** intact: not damaged.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: answers may vary.
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"It was just so amazing to find an intact tomb here after all the work that’s been done before," Edwin Brock, one of the project leaders, told reporters.

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1 archaeologist: scientist that studies past human life as shown by fossil relics and the monuments and tools left by ancient peoples

2 burial chamber: an enclosed space that holds one or more bodies
“News Shorts Tomb Raiders” Questions

____ 1. The main idea of this passage is:
   a. The remains of Nefertiti were found.
   b. Archaeologists recently found a hidden Egyptian tomb.
   c. Sarcophagi were coffins that hold Egyptian mummies.
   d. Egyptians store food and drink in coffins.

____ 2. The main idea of the last paragraph is
   a. Scientists are hypothesizing who might be in the tomb.
   b. Nefertiti was the most beautiful of Egyptian women.
   c. Social status can be determined by the way someone was buried.
   d. Even though they do not know who is in the tomb, it is still an important discovery.

____ 3. Egyptians stored food and drink in their tombs, because
   a. they wanted to feed their dead as they enter the afterlife.
   b. they wanted to feed workers that were building the tomb.
   c. they wanted to preserve the food for later use.
   d. tombs were cold and acted as refrigeration for ancient Egyptians.

____ 4. The author included the quote from Edwin Brock
   a. to add additional facts about the findings.
   b. to show the archaeologists' perspective.
   c. to encourage the reader to study archeology.
   d. all of the above.

____ 5. List one detail that supports the main idea. Explain how it supports the main idea.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
“News Shorts Tomb Raiders” Answer Sheet

_**MI**_ 1. The main idea of this passage is:
   a. The remains of Nefertiti were found.
   b. **Archaeologists recently found a hidden Egyptian tomb.**
   c. Sarcophagi were coffins that hold Egyptian mummies.
   d. Egyptians store food and drink in coffins.

_**MI**_ 2. The main idea of the last paragraph is
   a. scientists are hypothesizing who might be in the tomb.
   b. Nefertiti was the most beautiful of Egyptian women.
   c. social status can be determined by the way someone was buried.
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   a. to add additional facts about the findings.
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   c. to encourage the reader to study archeology.
   d. all of the above.

_**MI**_ 5. List one detail that supports the main idea. Explain how it supports the main idea.

   Answers will vary. Students should include a detail and what it has to do with the recent discovery.

Additional Suggested Vocabulary:
*intact, identity, social status, speculate, cache*