**QB365-Question Bank Software** 

## **11th Standard - English**

## Hornbill-Discovering Tut: the Saga Continues Summary

It was 6 p.m. on January 5, 2005 when the mummy of Tutankhamun moved smoothly and quietly into CT scanner which had been carried to Tut's resting place. The aim was to probe the persisting medical mysteries of this young ruler who died more than 3,300 years ago. His dead body was embalmed and buried in a royal grave in the Valley of the Kings.

Howard Carter, a British archaeologist discovered Tut's tomb in 1922 after years of futile search. Its contents remain the richest royal collection ever found. They include extremely attractive artifacts in gold as well as everyday things like board games, a bronze razor, linen undergarments, cases of food and wine.

Carter first recorded the Pharaoh's funeral treasures. Then he began investigating his three nested coffins. The first one had a shroud covered with garlands of willow and olive trees, wild celery, lotus petals and cornflowers. These proved that he was buried in March or April. Carter ran into trouble when he reached the mummy. The ritual resins had hardened. These had cemented Tut to the bottom of his solid gold coffin. The solidified material was removed with the help of chisels. Then the mummy was cut free. Carter's men removed the mummy's head and severed nearly every major joint. Once they had finished, they reassembled the remains on a layer of sand in a wooden box with padding that concealed the damage. The team of scientists found it resting there. Zahi Hawass, Secretary General of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities observed that the mummy was in very bad condition because of what Carter had done in the 1920s.

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Archaeology has changed a lot during the last few decades. Now it pays less attention to treasure and more to the fascinating details of life and puzzling mysteries of death.

It uses more sophisticated tools including medical technology. In 1968 an Anatomy Professor X-rayed the mummy. He revealed a startling fact. The breast-bone and front ribs are missing. Now CT scanning was employed to answer two questions: (i) how did he die? and (ii) how old was he at the time of his death?

On the night of the scan, workmen carried Tut from the tomb in his box. They climbed a ramp and a flight of stairs into the swirling sand outside. Then they rose on a hydraulic lift into a trailer. This trailer held the scanner. Initially, there was some problem because of sand in a cooler fan. Then the technicians scanned the mummy head to toe. 1700 digital X-ray images in cross section were created. Tut's head was scanned in 0.62 millimetre slices to register its complicated structures. Tut's entire body was sirnilarly recorded. Then a team of specialists in radiology, forensics and anatomy began to probe the secrets.

A technician displayed astonishing images of Tut on a computer screen. A gray head took shape from a scattering of pixels. The technician spanned and tilted it in every direction, Neck vertebrae appeared quite clearly. Other images revealed a hand, several views of the ribcage, and a narrow cross section of the skull. Zahi Hawass smiled. He felt relieved to see that nothing had gone seriously wrong.