

READING IS FUNDAMENTAL STORY SAMPLER

Reading Up on Ancient Egypt

FOR CHILDREN IN GRADES 2-5





Support for Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. comes from corporations, foundations, government, and other national service organizations. RIF is affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution and has been accorded tax-exempt status under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to RIF are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Reading Is Fundamental, RIF, and the logo design showing the open book with a smiling face on it and the words Reading Is Fundamental underneath it are all registered service marks of Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. All rights reserved.

Created and developed by Sara Horwitz,
Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.
and Kathy Broderick, Consultant

Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.
1825 Connecticut Avenue, N. W.
Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20009-5726
Toll free: 877-743-7323
Web site: www.rif.org

© 2001 Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.
All rights reserved.

What Is a Story Sampler?

A Story Sampler makes books come alive for children. It is a book-based thematic approach to reading designed to engage children in the book experience. Each Story Sampler includes hands-on, cross-curricular activities for books that are linked by a common theme.

Why Use a Story Sampler?

Motivational activities are an important part of every Reading Is Fundamental program. And these motivational activities are an easy way to excite children's interest in reading and help them associate books and reading with positive experiences and that means fun! The ideas you will find in each Story Sampler show you how to build anticipation and excitement in your RIF programs.

Scores of studies show that students learn more and do better in school when their parents are involved in their education. Different types of hands-on activities enable all children to learn in different ways. Particular questions before, during and after read aloud activities can develop high order thinking skills.

Family members can encourage children to become life-long readers by reading aloud with them everyday. Reading aloud to children is one of the most effective ways

to support language and literacy development. Children who are read to from infancy associate reading with pleasant, warm feelings. When you invite children to participate in reading, ask open-ended questions that promote creative thinking and learning, and plan activities and experiences that allow children to expand their understanding of the story, you help them develop a love of reading.

What Are the Standard Elements of a Story Sampler?

Each section of the Story Sampler includes a featured book plus additional titles and resources.* The activities that accompany each section will help you develop a literacy-rich environment that contributes significantly to a child's enjoyment of reading. The standard elements in the Story Sampler include:

- Questions to ask
- Family involvement
- Things to do
- Community connections

**The ISBN listed indicates a specific edition of the book. However, other editions may also be available through the public library or other publishers.*

Who Should Use a Story Sampler and Where?

Some Story Samplers are age-specific, but most can be adapted to a broad range of ages. Teachers, families, and child-care providers can use them in classrooms, community centers, homes, and in Head Start sites. And most importantly, parents can extend the story beyond the classroom with home-based projects and field trips.

Story Samplers can forge relationships and shared experiences within the family and the community. Through the family, children can be introduced to many kinds of books. Books can explain and reinforce concepts; allow children to build positive self-images; stimulate discussions and thinking; increase children's understanding of various concepts; and expand their imagination.

The age range for a Story Sampler is indicated at the beginning of each set of activities.

When and How Should I Use a Story Sampler?

Story Samplers can be used within or as a supplement to a curriculum or an after-school program. They can be part of reading challenges, reading weeks, and family involvement events. Your imagination and the interests of the children who participate in the RIF program will help determine the best way to use the Story Sampler. Enjoy and have fun!

Tips for Reading Aloud

Before You Read a Story...

- Make sure everyone is comfortable
- Show the cover and read the title and author of the book
- Ask the children about the cover
- Suggest things the children can look or listen for during the story

During a Story...

- Change your voice to fit the mood or action
- Move your finger under the words as you read them
- Show the pictures and talk about the book as you read
- Add information or change words to help kids understand more words and explain the meaning of a new word
- Ask children to make predictions about the plot, the characters, and the setting
- Share your own thoughts about the story
- Follow the cues of the children

After You Read a Story...

- Ask questions about what happened in the story
- Encourage the group to relate the story to their own experiences
- Ask children how they might feel or act if they were one of the characters
- Encourage children to share their thoughts about the story and pictures
- Extend the story with an activity or another book

Reading Up on Ancient Egypt

A STORY SAMPLER FOR CHILDREN IN GRADES 2-5

▶ EGYPT TODAY

The Day of Ahmed's Secret

by **Florence Parry Heide and Judith Heide Gilliland**, with illustrations by Ted Lewin. 32p. Morrow/Mulberry, 1990
ISBN: 0688140238

▶ MUMMIES UNWRAPPED

Cat Mummies

by **Kelly Trumble**, with illustrations by Laszlo Kubinyi. 56p. Houghton Mifflin, 1996
ISBN: 0395968917

▶ UNDERSTANDING ANCIENT EGYPTIAN ART

I Am the Mummy Heb-Nefert

by **Eve Bunting**, with illustrations by David Christiana. 32p. Harcourt/Voyager, 1997
ISBN: 0152024646

▶ PHARAOHS AND THEIR PYRAMIDS

Tutankhamen's Gift

by **Robert Sabuda**, 32p. Aladdin, 1994
ISBN: 0689817304

▶ STORIES THE EGYPTIAN WAY

The Egyptian Cinderella

by **Shirley Climo**, with illustrations by Ruth Heller. 32p. HarperCollins/Trophy, 1989
ISBN: 0064432793

The Day of Ahmed's Secret

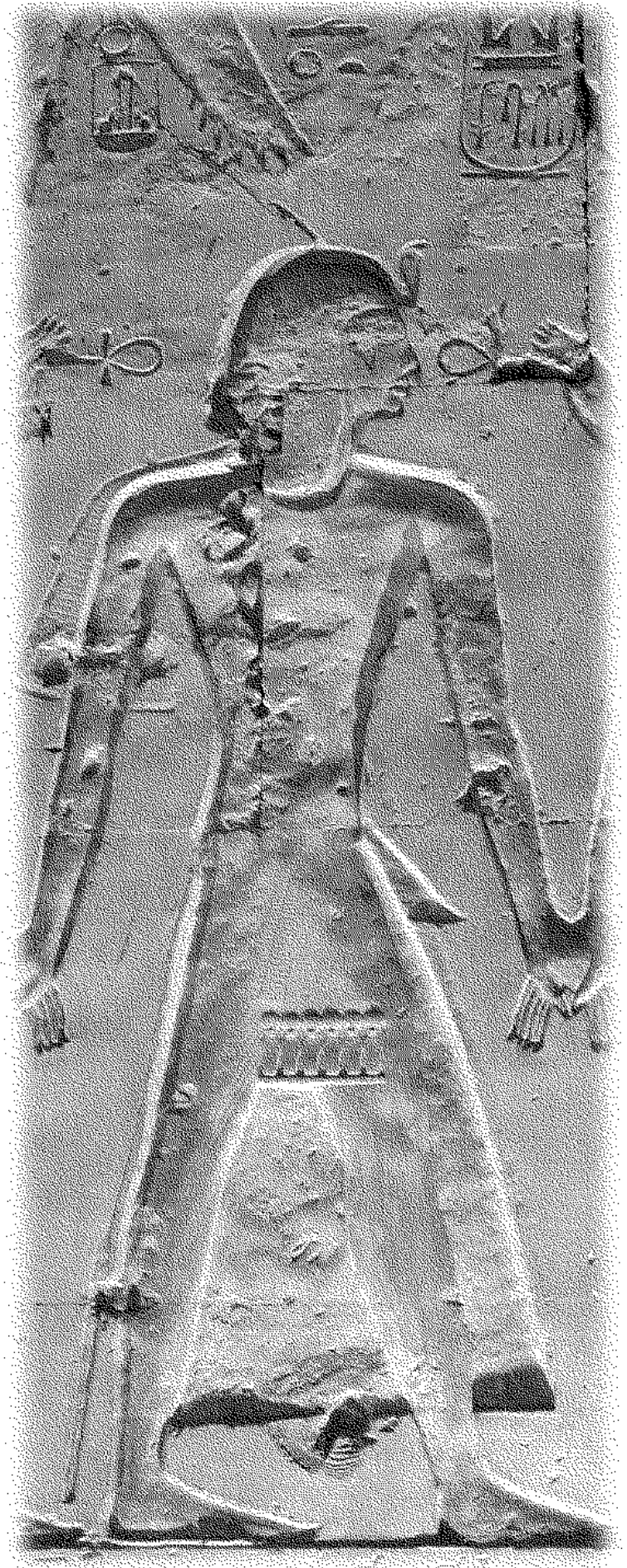
by **Florence Parry Heide** and
Judith Heide Gilliland

with illustrations by Ted Lewin
32p. Morrow/Mulberry, 1990
ISBN: 0688140238

In this story, realistic illustrations, which almost look like photographs, portray modern-day Cairo. The story, told from a young boy's point of view, reflects a culture, philosophy, and way of life that differs from modern America and is influenced by thousands of years of history.

What To Do Before Reading the Story

- Read the title of the story to the children and show them the cover. Ask them to predict what they think Ahmed's secret will turn out to be. What kind of predictions do they come up with?
- Give the children a chance to look closely at the cover, then ask them if they think the story takes place in America. Why or why not?
- Following some discussion, grab a map and locate the country of Egypt, pointing out where Ancient Egyptian civilization existed and where the city of Cairo is located. Explain to the kids that the story they are about to hear takes place in modern day Egypt.
- Arabic is the official language of Egypt today, and the official religion is Islam. Ancient Egyptian culture was lost when different cultures invaded — the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans, for example. Finally Arab culture invaded, and it remains the culture of Egypt to this day.



What To Talk About During the Story

- Lewin's art almost looks like photography. Ask the children if they think this artist ever visited Cairo. What evidence of the desert and the Nile exists in the text and illustrations of this story? Do people dress differently in Egypt? How are the buildings or the streets unlike those in America?
- The boy makes reference to other children working. Is this surprising to the children in your group? Discuss how Ahmed's work is different from the work that children in America do.
- Throughout the story Ahmed continues to refer to his secret. Do the children have a better idea of what they think the secret is now than before the story began?



What You Can Do When You Finish Reading the Story

- At the end of the story Ahmed finally shares his secret. Were any of the children's predictions correct? Ask them what they think of Ahmed's secret. Were they just as excited when they learned how to write their name for the first time? Why is learning how to write your name such a big deal? What does knowing how to read and write allow you to do?
- The story ends with Ahmed saying
"I write my name over and over... and I think of my name now lasting longer than the sound of it, maybe even lasting, like the old buildings in the city, a thousand years."

This last line of the book is a good lead-in to talking about how old Egypt is as a country. Discuss how archeologists have been able to uncover artifacts and written tablets from thousands of years ago that help us learn about life in ancient times.

Depending on what the children already know about ancient civilizations, you may want to provide some general information on what life was like in Ancient Egypt. Emphasize the fact that the written word and the ability to read have allowed us to discover many things because writing immortalizes us.

- Ask the children in your group what role they think children played in ancient Egypt. How has life changed for children over time? Why does Ahmed need to work?
- Have children ask their grandparents, for example, or great-grandparents about school and work when they were children years ago.
- Ask the children if their parents would allow them to deliver goods around the city by themselves. Follow up the question with a discussion about child labor issues.

What's In A Name....

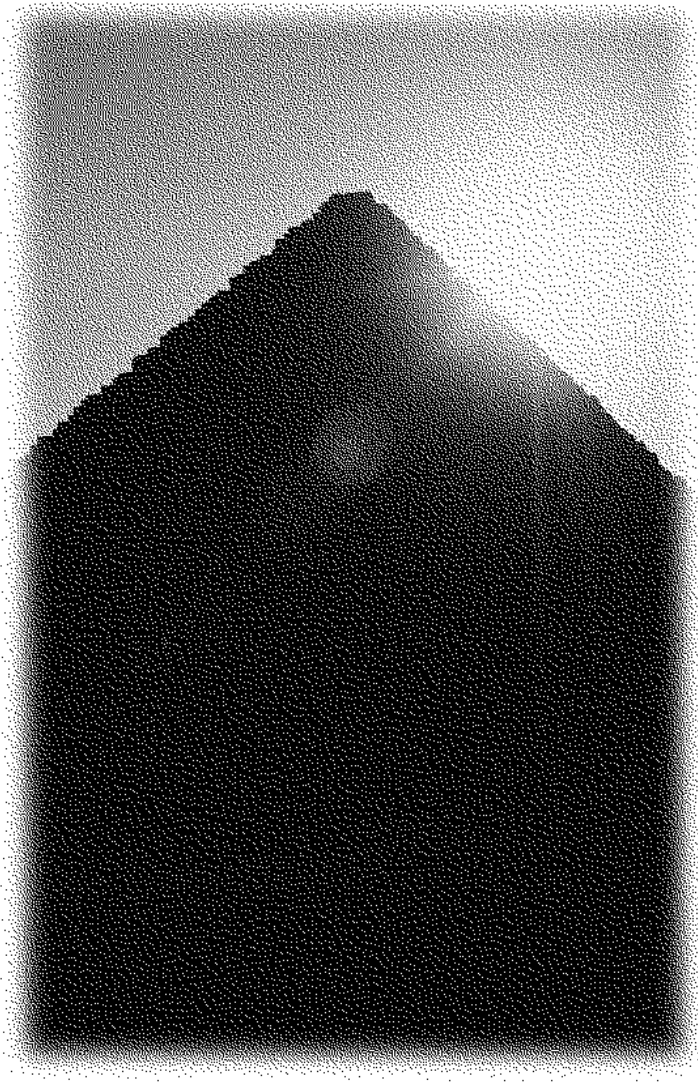
Encourage children to write a story about when they first learned to write their names (or when they learned to write them in cursive). What was it like for them? How did they feel? Was it difficult or empowering?

Have children write an acrostic poem with the letters in their name. For example:

CREATIVE
AMIABLE
TRUTHFUL
HAPPY
YOUNG

Ancient Times... Modern Times

Take a visit to the library and check out some books on ancient civilizations. Read more about what life was like in ancient times. Pick out several things to look at, such as food, work, homes, religious worship, that children can relate to in their own lives. Compare ancient times to modern times and ask the children which time period they would prefer to live in and why.



The Power of the Pen

Ahmed's secret is that he can write his name. He also recognizes that his written name has the possibility of continuing on after he is gone.

- Together with the children, create a list of how life can be preserved through the written word. Ask them if their parents have ever saved some of their artwork from when they were very young or if they have ever won an award or received a certificate and kept it as a memento. Explain to the group that if these items were found by someone hundreds of years from now, they might help to tell the person about life in present day America. What other things can they think of that are recorded today that might provide clues to someone in the future?
- If you have time, generate a list of items that your group would place in a time capsule. Ask them to think about why they would include the items, and what it would tell someone opening the time capsule in the future.

Family Involvement

- The boy in this book buys “a dish of beans and noodles” from a man with a cart. Ask children what kind of food they think the Ancient Egyptians may have eaten. Learn about the kinds of food Egyptians eat today.

- Eat an Egyptian-style meal together. Serve “Ful Mesdames,” the national dish of Egypt. It is as old as the pyramids and said to have been eaten by the pharaohs.

Heat 2 Tablespoons of olive oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Add 2 cups cooked brown fava beans, 3 cloves peeled and finely chopped garlic, and salt and pepper to taste. Mix well. Cook until heated, about 8 minutes. If beans seem dry, add oil to prevent sticking. Serve in individual bowls. Put a hard-cooked egg in each bowl, cover with hot beans, sprinkle with fresh parsley, and serve lemon wedges on the side. (from *The Multicultural Cookbook* by Carole Lisa Albyn and Lois Sinaiko Webb. Oryx Press).

Community Connection

- Study a current travel guide to Egypt. Contact a local travel agency and invite a travel agent in to speak about Egypt, ask them to bring in some posters or brochures as well. Or try contacting the tourist bureau for more information about Egypt.
- Talk to relatives or people in your community who have visited Egypt. Find out what they say and what their impressions were of Egypt. Brainstorm a bunch of questions to ask them about their trip.

Additional Titles

The Children of Egypt by Matti A. Pitkänen. 40p. Carolrhoda, 1991
ISBN: 0876143966

This book (from the *World's Children* series), explores the lives of real children such as Said, Hamed, Aziza, Samira, Aida, Efra, Muhammad, who reflect modern Egyptian life in different regions of the country.

Early Civilizations: Egyptian Life by John Guy. 32p. Barron's, 1998
ISBN: 0764106287

An interesting text with many photographs, this book gives a strong introduction to the culture of Ancient Egypt and discovered artifacts.

Adventures in Ancient Egypt by Linda Bailey. 48p. Kids Can Press, 2000
ISBN: 1550745484

The Binkerton children wander into the Good Times Travel Agency only to find themselves traveling back to the time of the pyramids and the great pharaohs. This fun and fascinating book is written with plenty of factual information about Ancient Egypt and contains an entertaining comic book look to the illustrations.

Hieroglyphs from A to Z: A Rhyming Book with Ancient Egyptian Stencils for Kids by Peter Der Manuelian. Scholastic, 1996
ISBN: 0590400088

Co-published with the Museum of Fine Arts - Boston, this clever book pairs one hieroglyph with each letter of the alphabet. More detailed text in smaller print follows the main rhyme. Understanding what hieroglyphics mean enhances one's viewing experience of objects from Ancient Egypt.

Mummies Unwrapped

Cat Mummies

by **Kelly Trumble**

with illustrations by Laszlo Kubinyi

56p. Houghton Mifflin, 1996

ISBN: 0395968917

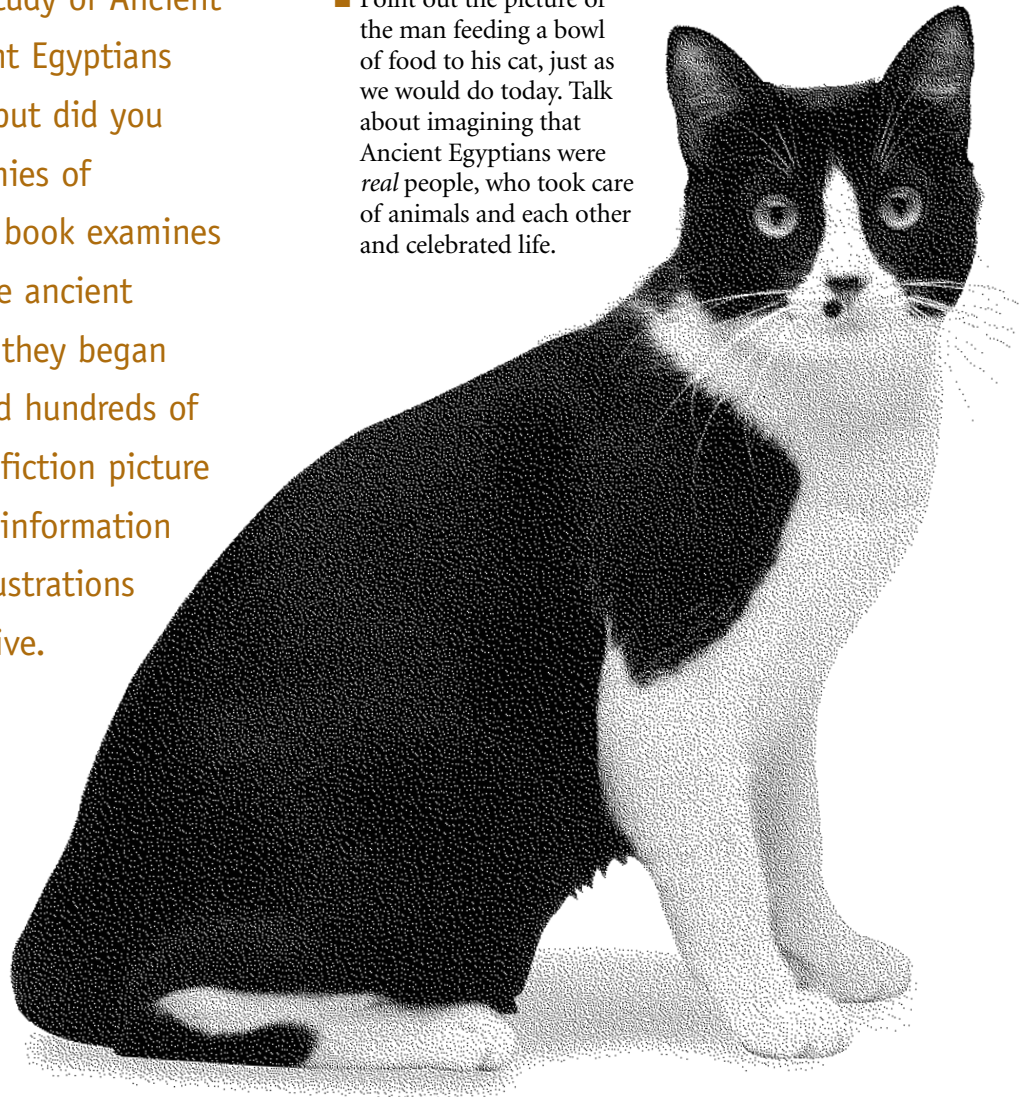
Mummies, mysterious and hard to comprehend, are often the first things that come to mind in the study of Ancient Egypt. We know that Ancient Egyptians mummified human beings, but did you know they also made mummies of animals? This extraordinary book examines the religious beliefs of these ancient people and focuses on why they began mummifying people . . . and hundreds of thousands of cats! This nonfiction picture book has plenty of specific information with detailed watercolor illustrations that bring Ancient Egypt alive.

What To Do Before Reading the Story

- Ask children what they know about mummies. Do they know, for example, that Ancient Egyptians mummified animals?
- Archaeologists have discovered mummified woolly mammoths in Siberia and mummified Ancient Incas in South America. Natural mummification requires conditions of dry heat or dry cold. Point out on a world map or globe the geographic areas where we have discovered mummies.
- Since the book is nonfiction and contains several chapters of very interesting information, choose a few chapters, rather than the entire book, to share with the children.
 - Preview the book beforehand and decide how much you will read, or base your decision on what the children know or don't know about mummies from your initial discussion.
 - The first three chapters are probably the most useful in discussing the process of, and incentive for, mummification as well as the reasons why ancient Egyptians worshiped cats.

What To Talk About During the Story

- Find Beni Hasan (resting place of the cat mummies) on a map of Egypt.
- The illustrations in this book recreate what life may have been like for the Ancient Egyptians.
- Point out the picture of the man feeding a bowl of food to his cat, just as we would do today. Talk about imagining that Ancient Egyptians were *real* people, who took care of animals and each other and celebrated life.



What You Can Do When You Finish Reading the Story

- Briefly discuss the fact that Ancient Egyptians believed that their gods were embodied in cats or other animals. Ask the children what purpose they think the gods served in ancient Egypt. (The gods were an explanation for many unknown phenomena such as rain or lightning as well as for their livelihood, good harvests, personal wealth, or health).
- The book tells what happened to the cat mummies discovered in 1888. Encourage children to think about what happened to all the other human mummies that Ancient Egyptians made (as well as to the objects in their tombs).
- Discuss the importance of the few mummies that remain today . . . out of hundreds of thousands.

Timelines...

Have children construct a timeline of Ancient Egyptian dynasties. Then, with the help of other books in this story sampler, they can check off which of the pharaohs' mummies have been found and which have not.

Expand on the timeline, making a book out of it. Drawings (or photocopies) of objects found in other print and on-line resources can be grouped together and attached to pages about the various pharaohs. Gaps in the archaeological records may encourage children to dream about one day finding some of these missing treasures!

Symbolism in Animals

Towards the back of the book, the author provides a page on some animals and the gods they symbolized in Ancient Egyptian times. Take a look at some of the animals mentioned and talk about why these animals stood for certain powers of nature. What was it about them that determined their unique power? Give the children some paper and crayons to draw their favorite animal and ask them to talk about why it is they like that particular animal.

The Mystery of the Tombs

Suggest that children write a story about what happened to some of these missing tombs. Are they still buried deep underground? Are they still intact, and in someone's private collection?

Family Involvement

- View the recent movie *The Mummy* to see how artists reconstruct and present Ancient Egypt to modern audiences. Let children talk about the accuracy of this movie, based on what they have learned. (Please be aware that this movie has been rated "R" and may contain some violent scenes. If you are planning on sharing it with young children, please preview the movie beforehand.)
- Discuss the "curse" of the mummy. Talk about why the "mummy's curse" was (or is) easy for people to believe.

- Follow the progress of the Bahariya Oasis excavation. It will be years before a museum tour is arranged to highlight the artifacts (including at least 60 mummies) found in this vast catacomb of Egyptian tombs.

Community Connection

- Research the science of mummies. Contact a local university or museum to see if there is an Egyptologist who can speak to your group.
- The author of the book, Kelly Trumble, says that some of the cat mummies discovered in 1888 are still available for viewing today. Try to track down the closest cat mummy to your home or school.

Additional Titles

Mummies Made in Egypt by Aliko. 32p. HarperCollins/Trophy, 1979
ISBN: 006446011-8

Aliko's matter-of-fact text does not try to frighten or focus on the gruesome. Her stunning art, combined with a good introduction to the Ancient Egyptian gods and goddesses of the dead, make this book a favorite among children.

Eyewitness Activity Files: Mummy Designed by Joanne Connor. DK, 1998
ISBN: 0789427915

This file folder design — filled with a collection of, among other things, photographs, reproduction documents, a poster, and an information booklet — will be great fun for report writing.

Secrets of the Mummies: Uncovering the Bodies of Ancient Egyptians by Shelley Tanaka. 48p. Hyperion, 1999
ISBN: 0786815396

Color photographs draw readers into the text, which reveals how science helps us learn about the real lives of Ancient Egyptians. Here, scientists recreate the lives of four Ancient Egyptians, according to information gathered from their mummies.

Mummies, Tombs, and Treasures: Secrets of Ancient Egypt by Lila Perl. 120p. Clarion, 1987
ISBN: 0395547962

Black-and-white photographs show what lies under the bandages, and a fascinating text explains the history of mummification. The author also includes a list of the dynasties of Ancient Egypt and many clues to understanding the imagery of Ancient Egyptian art.

Mummies by Sylvia Funston. Illus. by Joe Weissman. 40p. Firefly, 2000
ISBN: 1894379047

This "Strange Science Book" looks in detail at the process of making mummies, through nature or otherwise. Funston focuses on such famous mummies as The Iceman and some not-so-famous mummies as well.

Understanding Ancient Egyptian Art

I Am the Mummy Heb-Nefert

by **Eve Bunting**

Illus. by David Christiana. 32p. Harcourt/
Voyager, 1997

ISBN: 0152024646

This “autobiography” of a mummy helps readers imagine the real person behind the mummy and what her royal life was like. Written in lyrical prose and illustrated with beautiful, soft watercolors, this is an imaginative (not creepy) look at mummies. As the mummy narrates her story, she makes a powerful commentary on beauty and how it eventually fades, reminding us that “all things change.” She relates her enjoyable royal life in Ancient Egypt and then her afterlife in a sarcophagus, which is moved from a pyramid to a museum for eternity.

What To Do Before Reading the Story

- What does the title of this book suggest about who will be telling the story?
- Ask children if they have ever seen a mummy before. Can they remember the name of the person? Was the name even known and written down for the exhibit?

What To Talk About During the Story

- Read the first page slowly and ask the children what they think some of the phrases mean:
 - “I am the mummy Heb-Nefert, black as night, stretched as tight as leather on a drum...”
 - Why is she so dark, and why is she stretched as tight as a leather drum? During the mummification process the body was treated with salts and wrapped tightly in linen to get all the moisture out, in order to prevent decaying.
 - “My arms are folded on my hollow chest.”
 - Why is her chest hollow? Part of the mummification process was the removal of the heart and other internal organs from the body before it was wrapped up in linen.
- A bit later in the story, the mummy says
 - “I rose above myself and watched...”
 - Discuss with the children the fact that people in Ancient Egypt mummified the dead because they believed in the afterlife. If the body was preserved, then the spirit, or the Ka, would be able to recognize the body and come back to life.

What You Can Do When You Finish Reading the Story

- The process of mummifying a body could take up to 70 days. Ask the children if they think everyone in Ancient Egypt was mummified or just the wealthy.
- The mummy in this book came from a royal family. Ask children how they think the life she describes differs from the lives of other Ancient Egyptians.
- See if children can imagine themselves in the time of Ancient Egypt. Discuss their feelings about what it would have been like to live in that time period.

Step Back In Time....

Encourage children to write about what they would enjoy seeing or doing in Ancient Egypt. Have them write about what they would miss about their current lifestyle.

Messages From Egypt

Have children send a postcard (usually available from museums with pieces from an Egyptian collection) to a friend or relative, explaining briefly why they liked the object on the postcard. Have them sign their name in hieroglyphics.

I am the Mummy

Gather the materials for a paper mache project. Create masks like those worn by the mummies of Heb-Nefert and other wealthy Ancient Egyptians. Have the children sketch out what the masks will look like, then make paper mache masks and paint them when they have dried.

Family Involvement

- Suggest children interview their grandparents, great grandparents, or other older relatives. Children can ask their interviewees to tell stories about some of their treasured objects — why these objects are important to them. They could also ask to see the oldest thing in this person's home and learn about whom it belonged to before they acquired it.
- Visit a museum that contains ancient artifacts. Have children and adults discuss their favorite museum pieces. Let children talk about their impressions of who owned the object (wore the object, etc . . .), or what kind of person would treasure the object.



- Try to listen to the recording called *Ankh: The Sound of Ancient Egypt* by Michael Atherton (Celestial Harmonies Recordings). This musician and scholar gives his version of what he believes the music of Ancient Egypt sounded like. Since the Ancient Egyptians left no musical recordings or musical notation, Atherton worked from only descriptions of instruments and some historical artifacts. See which family members are convinced, or if they even enjoy the music.
- As a family, watch “Antiques Roadshow” on PBS to hear the stories of the people behind the art objects.

Community Connection

- In a small group, visit a nursing home and spend some time talking to the people who live there. Or, set up a program where each child can be matched with one elderly person over a period of time. When the elderly are removed from the rest of society, their histories and stories may be lost instead of being shared.
- Take a tour of a local cemetery and learn about the history of your community.

Additional Titles

Visiting the Art Museum by Laurene Krasny Brown and Mark Brown. Puffin, 1989
ISBN: 0140548203

A family walks through an art museum comparing various styles of art, from primitive to modern, including Ancient Egyptian art. A good book for putting time into perspective.

The Riddle of the Rosetta Stone: Key to Ancient Egypt by James Cross Giblin. HarperCollins/Trophy, 1993
ISBN: 0064461378

Giblin slowly and masterfully reveals the mystery of hieroglyphics and how they were finally decoded. Photographs are included.

Seeker of Knowledge: The Man Who Deciphered Egyptian Hieroglyphics by James Rumford. 32p. Houghton Mifflin, 2000
ISBN: 039597934X

A biography of Jean-Francois Champollion, the man who deciphered the Rosetta Stone. In 1802, at age 11, Champollion vowed to be the first person to read the Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics, and he fulfilled his dream! The book's endpapers contain a secret message in hieroglyphics that readers can try to crack.

Eyewitness: Ancient Egypt by George Hart. 64p. DK, 2000
ISBN: 0789457849

From the *Eyewitness* series, this book is almost like going to a museum. Color photographs of the highest quality show objects from all aspects of Ancient Egyptian culture with spot text to identify and clarify.

Pharaohs and Their Pyramids

Tutankhamen's Gift

by **Robert Sabuda**

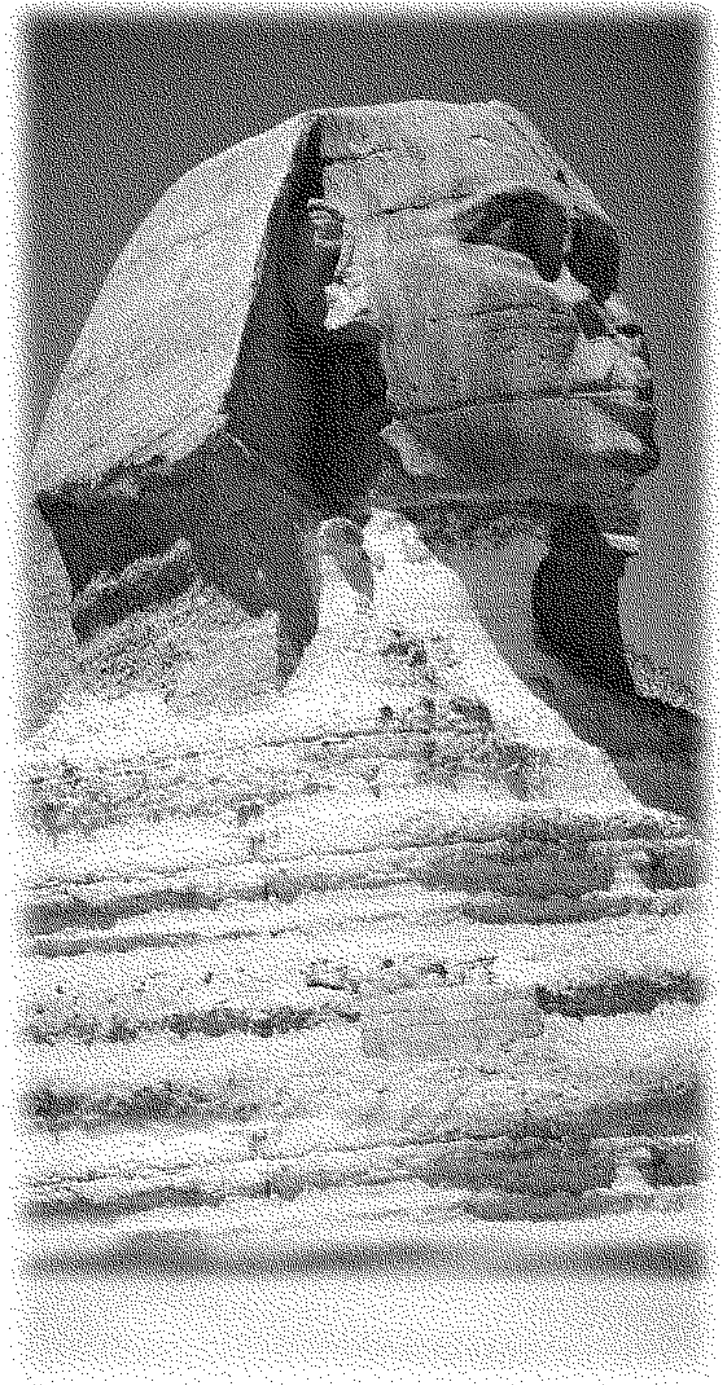
32p. Aladdin, 1994

ISBN: 0689817304

Pyramids would not have existed were it not for the pharaohs. This fictionalized account of King Tut reveals a sensitive boy. Young Tut watches Amenhotep IV become Pharaoh, destroying the temples to the gods so that he may worship one god. When Amenhotep dies mysteriously and Tut becomes pharaoh, the boy king begins to rebuild the temples — his gift to his people. Sabuda's brilliant illustrations highlight black cut paper applied to real, hand-made papyrus from Egypt.

What To Do Before Reading the Story

- Ask children if they have heard of Tutankhamen, or “King Tut.” Why is his name familiar? Talk briefly about the Ancient Egyptian empires and how they were ruled by the wealthy. When a pharaoh died, the throne was often passed on to the next male in the family.
- Pharaohs were usually mummified in quite an elaborate manner. Since the Ancient Egyptians believed that they came back to life, they were buried with many of their possessions in the hope that they would come back with all their material goods as well.
- Explain that King Tut's tomb was one that was broken into, but not raided of its treasures. Relate the story of its discovery.



What To Talk About During the Story

- Discuss how Sabuda constructed the illustrations in this book. He is an artist who went the extra mile — using real papyrus (children may not know it is still available today).
- Ancient Egyptians buried their pharaohs with papyrus scrolls. Papyrus grew plentifully on the banks of the Nile River. Because there were no trees in Egypt, the Egyptians did not use paper, but developed this equivalent.

What You Can Do When You Finish Reading the Story

- Many of the Ancient Egyptian pharaohs built large temples with sculptures and murals that showed their devotion to and belief in the gods. Talk about the religion of Ancient Egypt. All pharaohs before Tut's brother, Amenhotep IV, worshipped a large number of gods, as did Tut. Amenhotep IV changed all that by throwing away the old religion and trying to establish the worship of one god — the Sun god. However, when Tut came to power at the early age of 9, following the death of his brother, he rebuilt the temples and sculptures and returned to worshipping multiple gods.
- Think about countries today and if any have a pharaoh-like ruler.
- Try to name other rulers throughout time that were young when they took the throne (Queen Elizabeth, the Dalai Lama).
- Egyptologists and historians have been able to learn a lot about ancient civilizations from various excavations and scholars. The author of the story describes the life of King Tut with details about how he felt as a young child. Describe for the children how the author has taken the historical information and added some fictional text to create a more interesting story, what can be called “historical fiction.”

What Would You Do?

Let children write down what they would do if they were to become the ruler of their country.

Making Paper...

5000 years ago, Ancient Egyptians made a kind of paper called papyrus for writing, which is where the word “paper” comes from. Papyrus is not actually paper. Paper is in fact made with a mush and formed on a screen, while papyrus is made of green stems layered criss-cross and pounded with a hammer. Allow children to make paper by hand. Then try to look at real papyrus, so they can compare it with what they made.

*If you need a recipe and some instructions for making paper, try *Kidtopia: Round the Country and Back Through Time in 60 Projects* by Roberta Gould, Tricycle Press, 2000.

Encourage children to try ordering some real papyrus, or at least find out if they can order it. Ask them to find out how much it costs and then compare the cost of papyrus to other handmade papers.

Family Involvement

- Visit a quarry to see the gigantic size of cut rocks and the massive trucks that carry them away. Then, compare this with the way Ancient Egyptians moved huge pieces of rock by human force alone. Think about how much the Ancient Egyptians must have loved their gods and pharaohs to build these kinds of monuments, temples, and pyramids.

Community Connection

- Contact a local architecture firm to see if an architect can visit your group and discuss the design and construction of buildings. Perhaps they can share some theories about how the pyramids were built.

Additional Titles

The Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt by Elizabeth Payne. 192p. Random House, 1992
ISBN: 0394846990

Beginning with the discovery of the Rosetta Stone, Payne reveals how such archaeological discoveries have taught us about Ancient Egypt. The author also discusses what we know about such pharaohs as Akhenaten, Ramses II, and Cheops.

Cleopatra by Diane Stanley and Peter Vennema. 48p. Morrow/Mulberry, 1994
ISBN: 0688154808

Here is a picture-book biography of the most famous Queen of Egypt (the last of the reigning pharaohs of Egypt). It discusses the Greek and Roman influences on Ancient Egyptian culture and offers an absorbing account of her last days.

I Wonder Why Pyramids Were Built: And Other Questions about Ancient Egypt by Philip Steele. 32p. Kingfisher, 1995
ISBN: 1856975509

The unique format of this book introduces the topic of Ancient Egypt by mixing realistic drawings with humorous drawings.

Pyramid by David Macaulay. 80p. Houghton Mifflin, 1975
ISBN: 0395321212

Macaulay successfully shows the gigantic size of the pyramids dwarfing human beings as they rise up out of the desert.

What You Can Do When You Finish Reading the Story

- Discuss with children how *The Egyptian Cinderella* differs from the Cinderella story they know.

Give Your Opinion

Have children write a letter to the publishers of this book (the publisher can forward it to the author or illustrator), explaining what they like about the story or illustrations.

The Egyptian Cinderella

by Shirley Climo

with illustrations by Ruth Heller
32p. HarperCollins/Trophy, 1989
ISBN: 0064432793

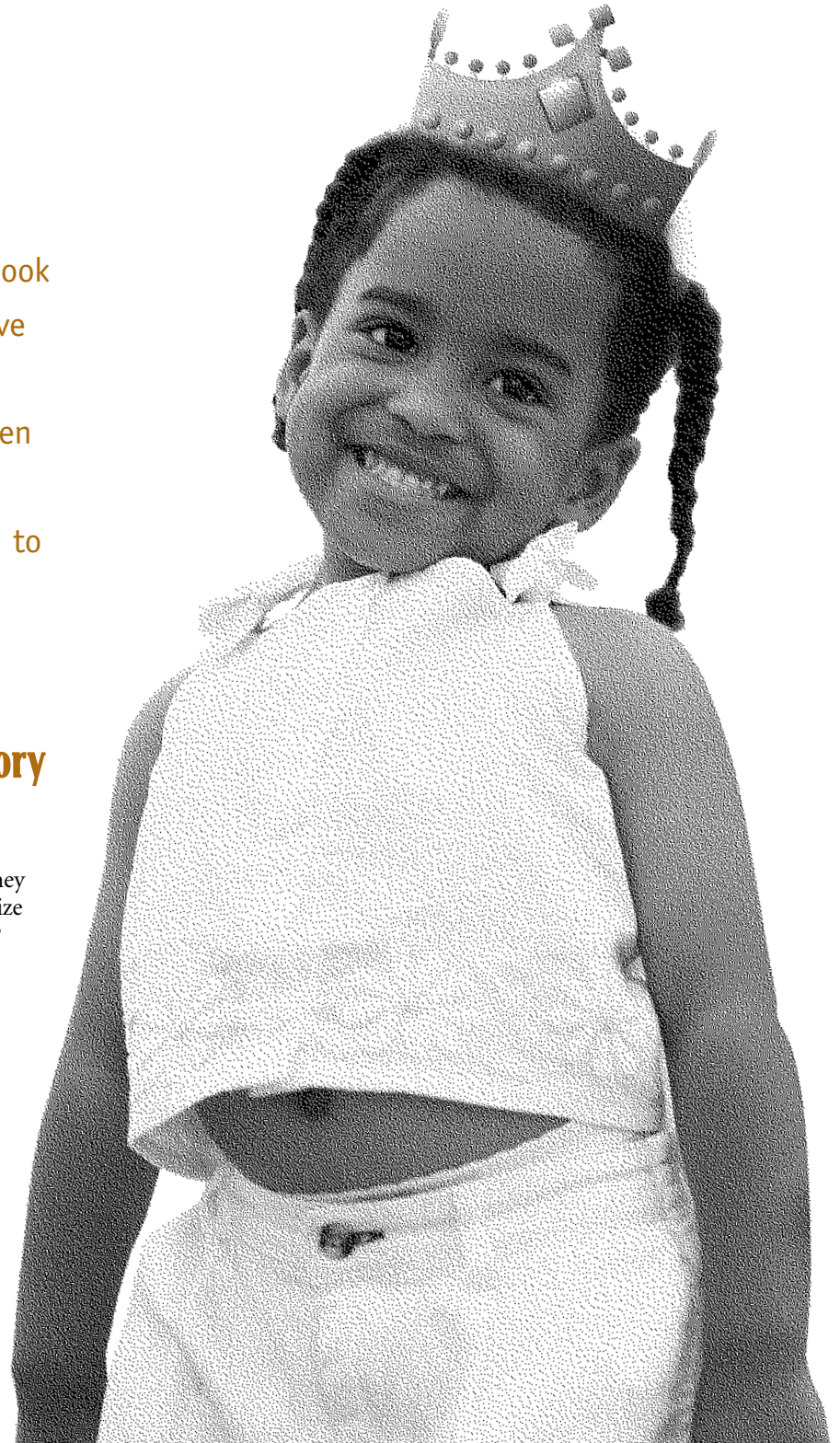
Based on Egyptian myth, this picture book tells the story of Rhodopis, a Greek slave girl whose red slipper is snatched by a falcon and brought to Pharaoh, who then desires her as his queen. The beautiful language of this story brings readers in to the lifestyle of Ancient Egypt, and the illustrations reflect that culture.

What To Do Before Reading the Story

- Make sure children are familiar with the story of Cinderella.
- Ask children to make some predictions about what they think will happen in this book. How will they recognize “Cinderella”? Who do they think will be the “prince”? Where do they think Rhodopis and Pharaoh Amasis will finally meet?

What To Talk About During the Story

- See if children can point to specific details that identify Ancient Egyptian culture (such as Ra, Horus, the lotus flower, the royal barge, etc.).



Egyptian Fairy Tales

Using Ancient Egyptian imagery, let children select a different fairy tale to adapt. They can then illustrate and publish their “Egyptian _____.”

Family Involvement

- Read one of the following novels aloud to your children: *Tut's Mummy: Lost...And Found* by Judy Donnelly; *A Place in the Sun* by Jill Rubalcaba; *The Egypt Game* by Zilpha Keatly Snyder; or *The Mystery of King Karfu* by Doug Cushman. Since these are all examples of fiction revolving around the topic of Ancient Egypt, encourage your children to discuss the story in light of what they have learned about the topic.
- View the recent animated movie, *The Prince of Egypt*, which tells the story of Moses. What do the children think seems accurate about the way Ancient Egypt is portrayed? What do they think seems inaccurate?
- Go to the library or bookstore together and encourage your children to locate and read some other versions of the Cinderella story.

Community Connection

- Attend a performance of *Cinderella* in your community. If there is none, suggest to a teacher, school, or community center that *The Egyptian Cinderella* could be produced.

Additional Titles

The Winged Cat: A Tale of Ancient Egypt by Deborah Nourse Lattimore. HarperCollins/Trophy, 1995
ISBN: 0064434249

When a sacred cat is drowned, a temple servant named Merit is drawn into an adventure based on the Ancient Egyptian story of weighing one's heart against the feather of truth. The beautiful illustrations for this picture book reflect the symbols and look of traditional Ancient Egyptian art.

Gift of the Nile: An Ancient Egyptian Legend by Jan M. Mike. Illus. by Charles Reasoner. 32p. Troll, 1993
ISBN: 0816728143

From the *Legends of the World* series, this picture book has illustrations with an authentic Ancient Egyptian look and tells of Mutemwia, who proves her love for Pharaoh.

Baby Moses by Linda Hayward. 32p. Random House, 1989
ISBN: 0394894103

As a *Step into Reading* book, new readers will quickly be able to master the Old Testament story of Moses. This is a simple retelling of the famous story, with lush watercolors.



Bill and Pete Go Down the Nile by Tomie dePaola. 32p. Putnam/PaperStar, 1987
ISBN: 0698114019

This is an imaginative way to introduce the most basic facts about Ancient Egypt to the youngest audience and have fun along the way!

Croco'Nile by Roy Gerrard. 32p. Farrar, 1994
ISBN: 0374316597

This is another fun way to present Ancient Egypt to a modern audience. Gerrard sets his story in Ancient Egypt and includes ten secret hieroglyphic messages for readers to decode.

RIF'S MISSION

Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. (RIF) develops and delivers children's and family literacy programs that help prepare young children for reading and motivate older children to read. Through a national network of teachers, parents, and community volunteers, RIF programs provide books and other essential literacy resources to children at no cost to them or their families. RIF's highest priority is the nation's neediest children, from infancy to age 11.

ABOUT RIF

Founded in 1966 in Washington, D.C., RIF is the nation's oldest and largest nonprofit children's literacy organization, with programs operating nationwide in 16,500 schools, child-care centers, libraries, hospitals, clinics, migrant worker camps, Head Start and Even Start programs, homeless shelters, and detention centers.

RIF serves more than 3.5 million children through a network of more than 240,000 volunteers. Two-thirds of the children served by RIF have economic or learning needs that put them at risk of failing to achieve basic educational goals.

Through a contract with the U.S. Department of Education, RIF provides federal matching funds to thousands of school and community-based organizations that sponsor RIF programs. RIF also receives private support from hundreds of corporations and foundations, thousands of local organizations and businesses, and countless individuals.

RIF distributes about 13 million books a year. By the end of 2000, RIF will have placed more than 200 million books in the hands and homes of America's children.



Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.
1825 Connecticut Avenue, N. W., Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20009-5726
Toll free: 877-743-7323
Web site: www.rif.org

©2001 Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.
All rights reserved.