

The Legend of Isis and Osiris

Long ago, ancient Egypt was ruled by a pharaoh named Osiris. Osiris and his wife, Isis, were just and fair rulers and were loved by many. However, Osiris's brother, Seth, was jealous of Osiris's popularity and wished that he were pharaoh instead.



One day, Isis and Osiris were out walking when, suddenly, Seth appeared in front of them. "Hello brother," Seth announced. "I am having a party next week. It would be wonderful if our beloved pharaoh could attend." Seeing no reason to refuse, Osiris agreed and told Seth that he looked forward to seeing him. As Seth walked away, his face shifted to form a menacing grin; he had a plan.

Late that night, as Osiris slept, Seth crept into his room and measured him from head to toe. As Osiris slept undisturbed, Seth disappeared into the darkness of the night.

The night of the party arrived and hundreds of brightly clothed guests made their way through the doors of Seth's home. Throughout the night, Isis and Osiris dined on the finest foods and had a wonderful time. Towards the end of the night, Seth sought everyone's attention. "Thank you all for coming," he said, looking across the crowd of people. "Before you go, I have one final surprise."

With a click of his fingers, a group of servants carried in an ornate, golden box. Gasps echoed around the room; it was clear that the box was the work of master craftsmen and that it was very valuable. A hush fell across the room and Seth declared, "If anyone can fit perfectly inside this box, they can keep it."



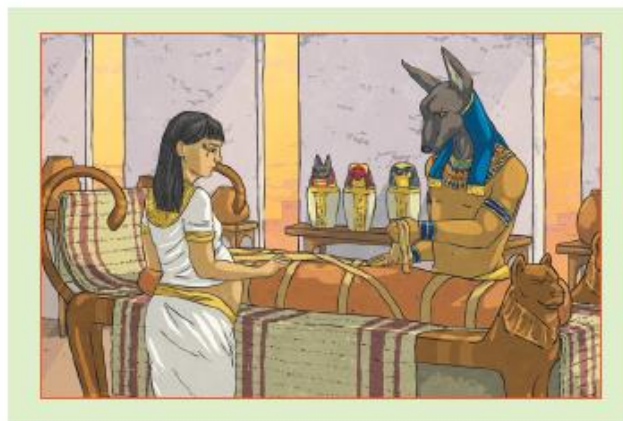
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Immediately, people queued to climb inside the box and lie down. Each person was declared to be too tall or too short. Before long, it was Osiris's turn. As soon as he lay down in the box, it was clear that he fit inside perfectly. Delighted that he was to be the new owner of the golden box, Osiris began to sit up when everything went dark.



Isis looked on helplessly as Seth secured the lid on the golden box and ordered his servants to throw it in the river. Instantly, it was dragged out of sight by the current.

Over the coming weeks, Isis scoured the banks of the river for the golden box. Eventually, she found it trapped between the reeds. However, try as she might, there was nothing that she could do to open it. She leant over the box and began to weep. Just then, a shadow fell over her. With the help of his spies, Seth had tracked her down. He flew into a fit of rage. He tore the box and Osiris into 14 pieces before scattering them across the whole of Egypt.



Isis vowed to find all of the pieces and spent the next few months gathering them from the vast deserts of Egypt. Eventually, with the help of the god Ra, she was able to make Osiris whole again. Once he had been mummified, Osiris began his journey to the underworld. Isis hoped that they would see each other again one day.

Questions

1. What was Seth jealous of? Tick one.

- Osiris being a fair ruler
- Osiris being popular
- Osiris being wealthy
- Osiris holding better parties

2. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they occurred in.

- Everything went dark for Osiris.
- Seth tracked down Isis.
- Osiris began his journey to the underworld.
- Isis and Osiris arrived at Seth's party.

3. Look at the paragraph beginning **With a click...**

Find and copy one word that means the same as 'highly decorated'.

4. Who threw the box and Osiris into the river?

5. Add in the missing words to complete the sentence.

Ra and Isis made Osiris whole again. He was _____ before
he began his journey to the _____.

6. Discuss the characters of Osiris and Seth.

How are they **different**?

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7. Summarise the legend of Isis and Osiris using 30 words or fewer.

8. Do you think that Osiris would have been safe if he didn't go to the party? Tick one.

yes

no

Explain your answer.

Answers

1. What was Seth jealous of? Tick one.

- Osiris being a fair ruler
- Osiris being popular**
- Osiris being wealthy
- Osiris holding better parties

2. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they occurred in.

- 2** Everything went dark for Osiris.
- 3** Seth tracked down Isis.
- 4** Osiris began his journey to the underworld.
- 1** Isis and Osiris arrived at Seth's party.

3. Look at the paragraph beginning **With a click...**

Find and copy one word that means the same as 'highly decorated'.

ornate

4. Who threw the box and Osiris into the river?

Seth's servants threw the box and Osiris into the river.

5. Add in the missing words to complete the sentence.

Ra and Isis made Osiris whole again. He was **mummified** before
he began his journey to the **underworld**.

6. Discuss the characters of Osiris and Seth.

How are they **different**?

Pupils' own responses, such as: In the text, it says that Osiris is loved by many which must mean that he is kind to people. Seth locks Osiris in a box which shows that Seth is not kind to others.

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7. Summarise the legend of Isis and Osiris using 30 words or fewer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: Seth was jealous of Osiris so he trapped him in a box. When Isis found the box, Seth tore it up. Isis found the pieces and put Osiris back together.

8. Do you think that Osiris would have been safe if he didn't go to the party? Tick one.

Accept either 'yes' or 'no' provided that an explanation is given, such as: No, I don't think that Osiris would have been safe because Seth was able to go into his bedroom while he was sleeping so he might have tried to capture Osiris there instead.