

Using drama for learning – The Big Debate

You are part of an archaeological dig in Egypt. You and the team have just discovered hidden alleyway within a collapsing tomb. You only have minutes to decide which of two objects can be excavated in that time to be conserved for others to see and learn about ancient Egypt.

- One object is a small figure shaped with a cats head and human body and legs. It is made with materials that are unknown and could lead to new understanding of materials the Egyptians used for their art and craft. An object like this has never been found before.
- The other is an exquisitely perfect mummy's death mask decorated in gold and with mysterious message in painted hieroglyphs. Discovering the identity of the owner of this mask would lead to fresh understandings of ancient Egyptian life and a newly discovered dynasty of Pharaohs.
- Break into two groups. One group is debating to keep the beautifully crafted cat/human figure, the other group to keep the priceless death mask.
- In your own group brainstorm all of the reasons why you should keep your object. (You may want to do some research yourself to back up your reasons.)
- Now brainstorm all the reasons that the other object should be left behind in the collapsing tomb.
- As a whole group take turns to present your best arguments for keeping your object. Listen to one another's main points and take notes.
- Take turns to respond to each other in a debate. Your teacher will help you to do this.
- At the end of the debate as a small group make your final concluding statement or argument.
- Think about whether you have changed your opinions based on what the other group said.
- You could try a class vote to see who feels which object should be saved.