

## **Title:** Chicken Mummies- Egyptian/Salt

**Problem:** How does the process of mummification used by the Egyptians work?

**Hypothesis:** If the steps used by the Egyptians to mummify their dead are recreated and used on a chicken, then the results will be the same.

### **Materials Needed:**

- One Cornish hen for your group
- Rubber surgical gloves for everyone in the group
- Container of Salt (each week)
- 1/2 cup spices per group (each week)
- Paper Towels
- Electronic Scale
- Zip-loc freezer strength bags (gallon size)
- Gauze strips
- Plastic containers to hold chicken in bag (in case of leakage)
- One data sheet

### **Procedure:**

1. At a sink, thoroughly rinse both inside and outside of chicken. Do this until the liquid runs clear. Make your initial observations on the data sheet.
2. Using paper towels (many will be needed,) dry the chicken thoroughly inside and out, especially under the legs and wings. This is critical, since any moisture can create problems with the mummification process.
3. Weigh your chicken with the scale provided.
4. Rub the 1/2 cup of spices all over the chicken (inside and out). Any mixture of sweet-smelling/spicy (and cheap) spices will do. The purpose is to mask the odor of the decay which is about to take place.
5. Rub salt over the entire chicken, making sure that every inch is covered (and very dry).
6. Fill the cavity with salt.
7. Place the chicken in a Zip-loc bag. Seal the bag, squeeze all of the air out, and place in a plastic tub (or bowl) in case the bag begins to leak. (As the process

occurs, liquid will drain from the carcass.) You may also want to use freezer tape to help seal the bag.

8. Once a week for 4 or 5 weeks, open the bag and remove the chicken (be sure to wear gloves!) Dry off as needed. Weigh the chicken each time and record the weight and your observations. The chicken must be re-spiced, re-salted (inside the cavity and out), and replaced in a clean bag.

9. Repeat this process each week until no more liquid accumulates in the bag.

10. When the chicken is done, remove it from the bag. Weigh it one last time. Then wrap it in gauze strips or ripped muslin strips. Decorate with handmade "authentic" Egyptian amulets, medallions, jewels, etc.

11. Create a sarcophagus for the mummy using shoe boxes. Spray box with gravel paint. Decorate with hieroglyphics and pictures of Egyptian gods.

12. Students can bury the sarcophagus (with mummy inside) and dig it up later in the year.

### **Conclusion:**

1.) Was your hypothesis correct?

2.) What happened in your experiment?

3.) What did you learn?

4.) Complete the Venn diagram comparing the original mummy to the mummy you created.

Type of Mummy: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Initial Observations	
Look	
Smell	
Feel	
Weight (g)	

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Weekly Observations	
Look	
Smell	
Feel	
Weight (g)	

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Weekly Observations	
Look	
Smell	
Feel	
Weight (g)	

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Weekly Observations	
Look	
Smell	
Feel	
Weight (g)	

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Weekly Observations	
Look	
Smell	
Feel	
Weight (g)	

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Weekly Observations	
Look	
Smell	
Feel	
Weight (g)	