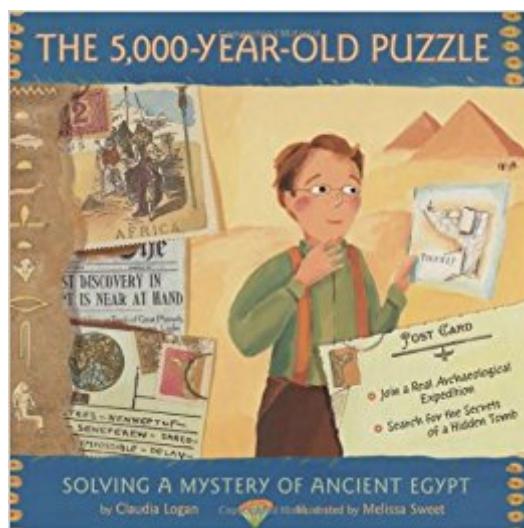


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# The 5,000-Year-Old Puzzle: Solving A Mystery Of Ancient Egypt



## **Synopsis**

Search for the secrets of a hidden tombIt is 1924, two years after the discovery of King Tut's tomb. Readers are invited to join a young boy, Will Hunt, as he and his family become part of an archaeological team led by world-famous Egyptologist Dr. George Reisner. Based on actual records of Reisner's history-making dig, Giza 7000X, this strikingly original picture book uses journal entries, funny postcards, and quirky cartoons to pull readers into an ancient unsolved mystery. Luminous paintings of the pyramids, informative sidebars and inventive collages, including authentic documents and archival photographs, help provide information and clues. When a secret tomb is uncovered, readers, along with Will, put together clues to discover: Whose tomb is this? Why was it hidden? And how can a mummy be missing from a sealed tomb?This illuminating book invites readers to participate in the process of archaeology as it provides a rare glimpse into the true stories that exist behind the objects in museums. The 5,000-Year-Old Puzzle is a 2003 Bank Street - Best Children's Book of the Year.

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 900L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 48 pages

Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux (BYR); 1st edition (May 8, 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0374323356

ISBN-13: 978-0374323356

Product Dimensions: 11.3 x 0.4 x 10.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #218,552 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #18 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Africa #18 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Archaeology #81 in Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Art > History

Age Range: 8 - 11 years

Grade Level: 3 - 6

## **Customer Reviews**

When King Tut's tomb was discovered in Egypt in 1922, the world was abuzz. What would be the next big, newsworthy archaeological find? Might it be Giza 7000X, a secret Egyptian tomb buried

deep within the earth? Claudia Logan and Melissa Sweet (with the cooperation of The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston) answer that question and ask a few more in *The 5,000-Year-Old Puzzle*, their truly splendid picture book for older readers. Readers follow a fictional family to Egypt in 1924 to an actual expedition led by Dr. George Reisner. Written in diary form from the perspective of young Will Hunt, who joins the expedition, the book is immediate and engaging, communicating the mystery and excitement of an archaeological dig like nothing we've seen. Illustrated with wonderful, color-soaked paintings as well as collages of authentic documents and artifacts from the Giza 7000X site, this richly visual diary is as entertaining as it is educational. Young readers will revel in the "you are there" glimpse of an archaeological dig, learning that excavation can sometimes be as much about fleas and dust as it can be about mummies or, say, a solid gold lion's leg. Sidebars about pharaoh's curses, cartouches, and heiroglyphs sit alongside enthusiastic postcards from the boy to his friends back home in Boston: "What are we doing? Picking up things hour after hour with TWEEZERS. If someone sneezes or trips--there goes 5,000 years of history down the drain." As Will lives behind the pyramids, he witnesses the discovery of a secret tomb... but whose is it? Can the team solve the mystery before Will and his parents return to America? Highly recommended.

(Ages 8 and older) --Karin Snelson

Logan (*Scruffy's Museum Adventure*) uses a fictional boy hooked on ancient Egypt to guide readers through a real archeological dig in this gripping and entertaining picture book mystery. Young Will Hunt cannot wait to travel with his parents to Giza in 1924 Egypt. There, living right behind the pyramids, he is eyewitness to the discovery of a secret tomb and an excavation led by Harvard archaeologist Dr. George Reisner. The author organizes the narrative into the boy's diary entries, and postcards home from Will to his friend Sam add immediacy and humor to the events (I hope something happens or I'm 'tomed' to eternal boredom). Readers get a taste of both the painstaking day-to-day grunt work of an archeological dig and the thrill of uncovering the tomb's contents. But the real hook of the book is its central mystery: Who lies in the tomb? As the team progresses, they find strange twists: the usual burial practices have not been followed. Sweet (*Ten Little Lambs*, reviewed above) toggles between a visual narrative, in which she develops the relationships among the various members of the dig, and a lively presentation of information, with abundant sidebars; the author here explains everything from mummification to the tools of an archeologist's trade to ancient grave robbing. The artist's own paintings, set against a sun-baked backdrop, share space with such archival materials as period photographs, object register notations and more (the book was written in cooperation with the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, which exhibits reproductions of the

expedition's yield). Ancient Egypt aficionados will find much to ponder here. Ages 8-up. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

For our summer homeschool unit on Egypt - this book is fascinating. I have a family of boys -- the youngest is 6 - and we all enjoyed and used this book. It describes an archaeological adventure undertaken by a boy (11 years old?) and his family in 1924. (The boy is fictitious, the dig was a real event.) The scrapbook style shows money and postage stamps, maps, brochures, and timetables. The information is broken into chunks, with letters and postcards from the boy to a friend back home carrying the plot forward. Very fine illustrations and descriptions of how a systematic archaeological dig works. Best of all: the mystery about this particular burial still persists. It's a very engaging book - problem solving, adventure, great illustrations, and a very good text. (Book tie-in: Let's-Read-and-Find-Out-Science has a very good archeology book called "Archaeologists Dig For Clues") Older children can try their hand at producing hieroglyphics in this book; younger children can copy shapes and patterns from Egyptian artifacts or even string beads in some of the colors shown in the book. Vocabulary builders; vizier, sarcophagus, natron, amulets, jumble

I bought this book because it is recommended on the Livingmath.net booklists. Although there's not a lot of actual math in the book, it's a great living book for touching on archaeology, critical thinking, and Ancient Egypt (specifically burial practices). I am not disappointed with my purchase. It's laid out somewhat like a scrapbook with lots of sidebar notes, postcards, and sketches adorning the basic story's text. Plenty of other reviews have covered the story itself, so I won't go into that. What I liked about the book is that it's a view of Ancient Egypt from an early 19th century archaeologist's perspective. The modern Egyptians also play a part in the story; it's not all about the American scientists. If you have a child who loves archaeology and solving mysteries, this book will be a winner. My daughter enjoyed coming up with her own explanations as we read through the book. Actually the mystery is not definitively solved. There are two possibilities, but the open-ended nature of the tomb's discovery is a great opportunity to practice logical thinking - does your explanation fit the facts?

Really well done book. We enjoyed reading it. Love how photos from the actual dig were incorporated into the book.

Great book! Supplier shipped quickly. Thank you!

Bought this book to go along with my son's lessons on Ancient Egypt. Just a really cute book. I would definitely recommend it.

In 1924, two years after the famous discovery of King Tut's tomb with its amazing treasures, Dr. George Reisner, a world-famous Egyptologist, is exploring an archaeological site known as Giza 7000X. Joining the dig is young Will Hunt. The conceit here is that while Will and his family are fictitious, the rest of the information about Giza 7000X is true. Reisner was the director of the Harvard University/Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and everything you see in "The 5,000-Year-Old Puzzle: Solving a Mystery of Ancient Egypt" is based on the actual records of a history-making dig (diaries, object registers, photographs, and drawings) of the his expedition. Author Claudia Logan, a former museum educator and teacher, made this book with the cooperation of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. We follow Will's adventures through his journal entries and postcards back home to his friend Sam, another member of the King Tut Club. Artist Melissa Sweet's illustrations, created in acrylic and watercolor, consist of luminous paintings of the pyramids and inventive collages of authentic documents and artifacts. Throughout the book there are sidebars providing information on ancient Egypt regarding the layout of the Great Royal Cemetery at Giza, cartouches, and hieroglyphs, as well as explaining the tools and tricks of the archeological trade. From pouring over "The 5,000-Year-Old Puzzle" young readers will come to appreciate the process by which archeologists unearth the past. Logan and Sweet also provide a sense of the time involved; Will saves a postcard telling about all the digging he has to do and there is a point where everyone sits around and waits for four months Dr. Reisner to return so they finally open the alabaster sarcophagus that has been found. Even more impressive is the revelation that the puzzle of this title is one still waiting to be solved. Consequently, after suffering with Will through the tedious and painstaking tasks that are involved in discovering and opening an Egyptian tomb, young readers get to exercise their minds as well to come up with an explanation that fits the eight clues revealed through the book (do not worry; they are listed at the end to help). Dr. Reisner and a modern archeologist offer their own explanations, but the key thing here is that no one knows for sure. Whether teachers find a way of using this book for a class discussion or assign a bright student to do a report on it for class, "The 5,000-Year-Old Puzzle" is a great opportunity for challenging young minds to make their own judgments about each clue and come up with their own conclusions about "what really happened." The rests of us can hazard our own guesses as well.

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