

## **MASK OF THE JACKAL**

**By Christine Harris**

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### **Write your own story**

*Mask of the Jackal* is set both in Ancient Egypt and modern times.

To write your own 'historical' story:

- Choose an event in history that interests you, and write two pages of facts about that time or person.
- Imagine you are an eyewitness to this event or time and write the first draft of a short story as though you were there, using the facts you researched.
- Swap your story with someone else in the class and read theirs. What other information would you like in their story? Which parts did you like best? Did the beginning catch your attention? Talk about this together, then use the feedback to polish your own story.
- Design a cover that would attract readers.
- Write a marketing plan (one page of ideas) about how you would promote your story if it were a published novel.
- Work in pairs, perhaps with the person whose story you read earlier. Imagine the two of you are on TV. One is the interviewer and the other is the author, talking about his or her book. Work out six interesting questions. Then conduct the 'interview' in front of the class (who are now the TV crew).
- Write a review of your own story, as if it will be published in the Arts Section of a newspaper. It would help to read several reviews and note what they include and what they leave out (don't give away the ending, for one thing!). Go to

<http://www.christineharris.com/youngwriters.htm#reviews>

for hints on writing reviews.

- Your story is nominated for an award. Now you are a judge. Write half a page on why it should win the award, then half a page on why it should not.
- Finally, write half a page on what you have learned about writing from doing these exercises.

The following tips for young writers on Christine's website might help you with your story

<http://www.christineharris.com/youngwriters.htm#writingtips2>

### **Now and Then**

List things that are different and similar between now and the Ancient Egypt of Rahotep's time in these areas:

- Games
- Treatment for snake bite
- Parties
- Clothing and cosmetics
- Friendship.

Morgan and Jordy use sign language to communicate with each other. Morgan thinks sign language is like hieroglyphics. Write a paragraph explaining why.

Research how to fingerspell the alphabet.

One resource is the Australian Sign Language (AUSLAN) website. It shows the two-handed alphabet (used in Australia) and the one-handed (American). You can even watch it on a video.

<http://www.auslan.org.au/fingerspellingtwohanded.html>

Learn how to sign your own name, then share that with a friend.

Imagine you can't talk (as with many deaf people because they can't hear the words). Pick a topic like one of these:

- Asking your friend over to your house to play a computer game.
- Arranging to go shopping on Saturday.
- Telling your friend that he or she has hurt your feelings.
- Asking your friend to lend you a book.
- Giving directions to the library.

Try to communicate this topic/feeling to your partner without using any spoken words or writing it down.

(Hint: use body language, facial expressions, gestures like pointing etc.)

Write a paragraph on how you felt during this exercise.

Write 6 important things to remember when you communicate with a hard-of-hearing person who lip-reads your words.