



Ancient Egyptian Treasures Mistaken for Garden Ornaments

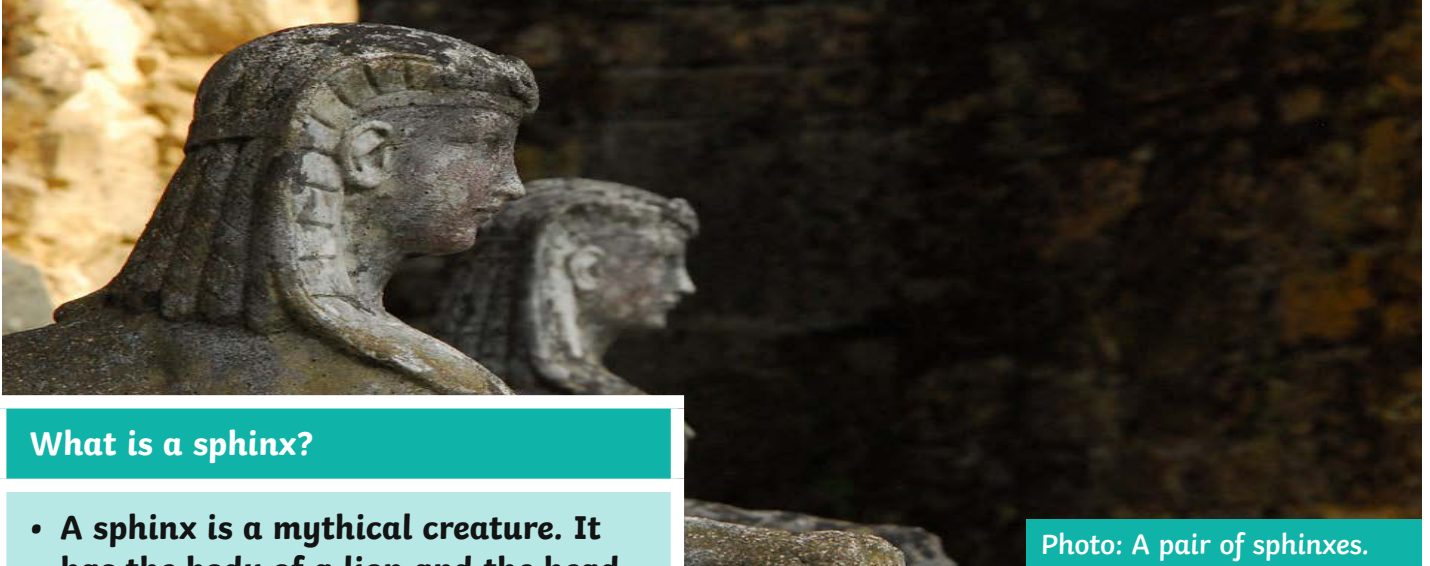


Photo: A pair of sphinxes.

What is a sphinx?

- A sphinx is a mythical creature. It has the body of a lion and the head of a human.
- Ancient Egyptians sculpted many statues of the sphinx. The largest example in Egypt is The Great Sphinx found near the pyramids in Giza.

Have you ever heard the saying 'one man's trash is another man's treasure'?

Well, that's certainly the case for a UK couple who sold some old garden ornaments at auction in preparation to move house.

Or at least that's what they thought they were selling...

Once the auction was underway, it became clear that these weren't just any old ornaments.

The **initial valuation** for the sphinxes was £200.

After 15 minutes, the sale finally ended. They sold for an astonishing £195,000! That's almost 1000 times more than they were expected to make.

The moss-covered, **weathered** statues are in fact ancient Egyptian artefacts.

The pair of sphinxes are thought to be around 5,000 years old!

The couple who owned the statues thought that they were just **replicas**.

The condition of the ornaments was quite poor with some damage to them. The owners had patched them up with cement.

They had even used cement on the bottom of them to stop them falling over!

Now we know what they really are, it's thought the sphinxes are worth nearly a quarter of a million pounds!

Just imagine how much they could have been worth if they hadn't spent years outside in the garden...

Glossary

initial	Happening at the start of something.
valuation	How much something is worth.
weathered	Worn by the weather over time.
replicas	A copy.

Questions

1. Give the meaning of the word 'underway' as it is used in this sentence: **Once the auction was underway, it became clear that these weren't just any old ornaments.**

2. Find and copy **two** facts about sphinxes from the article.

1. _____

2. _____

3. Using information from the story, fill in the missing words to complete the sentences.

A pair of ancient Egyptian sphinx sculptures have sold at auction for _____.

The couple selling them thought that they were just _____.

4. Tick to show whether the statement is true or false according to the article.

	True	False
The garden ornaments were damaged.		
The statues were valued by the auction house at £200.		
The statues are now thought to be worth £195,000.		
The statues belonged to a couple in Egypt.		

5. What do you think the author meant when they used the phrase 'one man's trash is another man's treasure'?

6. Write an alternate headline that could be used for this story using 8 words or fewer.
