

# Burial Ritual in Ancient Egypt.

## Instructions :

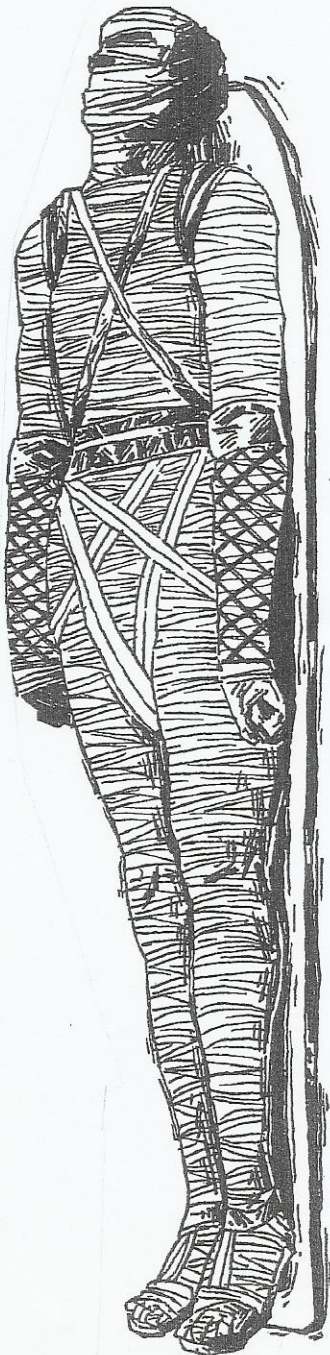
a) Answer the following in complete sentences (i.e. using some of the words from the question in your answer)

b) Quote two or three words from the text in each of your answers. Blend these words into your own sentences.

1. What was the Ka?
2. Why did the ancient Egyptians need their body to be preserved after death?
3. Why did the Egyptians build elaborate tombs?
4. Why was the Book of the Dead put into the tombs?
5. Why did the Egyptians put furniture and household items etc. into the tombs?
6. What were ushabtis and why were they included in the tombs?
7. Research: Find and photocopy a picture of an Egyptian ushabtis . Paste it in your book and colour it in the correct colours.

Use the passage by Dyson, R. for your answers.

Total marks: 20



## Burial Ritual

Burying the dead was of religious concern in Egypt, and Egyptian funerary rituals and equipment eventually became the most elaborate the world has ever known. The Egyptians believed that the vital life-force was composed of several psychical elements, of which the most important was the ka. The ka, a duplicate of the body, accompanied the body throughout life and, after death, departed from the body to take its place in the kingdom of the dead. The ka, however, could not exist without the body; every effort had to be made, therefore, to preserve the corpse. Bodies were embalmed and mummified according to a traditional method supposedly begun by Isis, who mummified her husband Osiris. In addition, wood or stone replicas of the body were put into the tomb in the event that the mummy was destroyed. The greater the number of statue-duplicates in his or her tomb, the more chances the dead person had of resurrection. As a final protection, exceedingly elaborate tombs were erected to protect the corpse and its equipment. See Egyptian Art and Architecture.

After leaving the tomb, the souls of the dead supposedly were beset by innumerable dangers, and the tombs were therefore furnished with a copy of the Book of the Dead. Part of this book, a guide to the world of the dead, consists of charms designed to overcome these dangers. After arriving in the kingdom of the dead, the ka was judged by Osiris, the king of the dead, and 42 demon assistants. The Book of the Dead also contains instructions for proper conduct before these judges. If the judges decided the deceased had been a sinner, the ka was condemned to hunger and thirst or to be torn to pieces by horrible executioners. If the decision was favorable, the ka went to the heavenly realm of the fields of Yaru, where grain grew 3.7 m (12 ft) high and existence was a glorified version of life on earth. All the necessities for this paradisiacal existence, from furniture to reading matter, were, therefore, put into the tombs. As a payment for the afterlife and his benevolent protection, Osiris required the dead to perform tasks for him, such as working in the grain fields. Even this duty could, however, be obviated by placing small statuettes, called ushabtis, into the tomb to serve as substitutes for the deceased.

Contributed by:  
Robert H. Dyson, Jr.