

Mummification

The body of a dead person was preserved by a complicated embalming process known as mummification.

- The embalmers took the body to a beautiful house, where they worked.
- The embalmers first made a cut in the left side of the body and removed the liver, lungs, intestines and stomach. These were dried out and stored in special vessels called canopic jars. They were put in the jars under the protection of the 4 gods.

The brain was also removed but the heart was left in the body so that it could be weighed in the afterlife.

- Then the body was covered with a salt called natron so the body could dry and would not decay. After 40 days, the body was then packed with linen, sawdust and spices, and wrapped in linen bandages soaked in resins.
 - Magic charms and scraps of linen with spells written on them were placed between the layers of bandages. This took 30 days. The whole process took over 70 days.
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- The mummy was then placed in a coffin of wood or stone. The coffin was known as Sarcophagus.

The World of the Living and the Dead

- ❖ Egyptians believed firmly that with proper preparation a person could live again after death.
- ❖ This preparation involved preserving the body of the dead person through mummification, and by providing it with all the items required in the afterlife (tools, food, gold).
- ❖ Even the poor attempted to leave items for their journey into the afterlife. Egyptians dreaded the thought that one-day their world would not exist anymore.

The Journey Begins

- ❖ The soul of the dead person is about to embark on a long, yet very hazardous journey before it can enjoy the pleasures of the afterlife.
- ❖ It was believed that the soul would have to pass a series of obstacles before it would reach Anubis, god of the Underworld. Obstacles included passing a giant serpent and crocodile, avoiding being caught in fishnets or fiery furnaces, escaping people trying to drown you, and even people attempting to chop your head off. Not the easiest passage into the afterlife!
- ❖ When the soul finally made it to the underworld, the god Anubis would measure its heart against the "Feather of Truth." If they balanced, the soul would be greeted into the afterlife. However, if they did not balance, the soul would be devoured by a monster which was part crocodile, part lion, part hippopotamus. The monster's name was "The Devourer."