

# Death and the afterlife

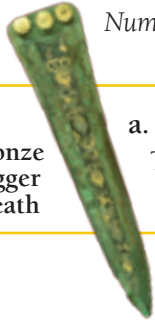
Greeks had various ideas about death and the afterlife. Some thought that the ghosts of the dead lived in a miserable underworld named after its god Hades. Funeral rites were very elaborate. This was partly to ensure that the dead person's soul did not come back to haunt the living.

## Did you know?

It was thought that Hermes the messenger god took the dead person to the underworld. He handed them to an old boatman called Charon who ferried them across the River Styx to the kingdom of Hades. The dead had to pay Charon a small fee to cross the river, so a coin was placed in the mouth of the dead during funeral preparations.

## Funeral rites

Number the statements below to create a proper Greek funeral.



Bronze dagger sheath

a. The body was cremated or buried. The body or its ashes were buried with some possessions.



Flask of oil

b. Once buried, the dead person was given offerings of water, honey, oil, and wine.

c. On the day of death, the body was laid out by female relatives. It was washed, perfumed, dressed, and adorned with flowers.



Myrtle

d. The Greeks believed that anyone in contact with a dead body needed purification. After the funeral the mourners washed with spring water. The house was also purified with water and sprigs of hyssop.



Hyssop sprig

e. Those who could afford it set up a memorial on the site of the loved one's tomb. This was a small carved stone slab called a stele. A stele could show a touching scene of the dead saying goodbye.



Gravestone

f. Before dawn on the third day after death, the body was wrapped in a shroud and taken to the graveyard on a cart, with a procession following it.



Hades kidnapping Persephone

## Hades and Persephone

1. Hades was god of the .....
2. His brother was .....
3. Persephone's mother was .....
4. She stopped the growth of .....
5. Persephone was released from Hades for the seasons ..... and .....

# Activity Answers

## Death and the afterlife

### Funeral rites



### Hades and Persephone

- 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5
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- A large black rectangular redaction box covering the text for the 'Hades and Persephone' section.