

Life After Death

Name: _____

Core: _____

Date: _____

The Egyptians believed that there was a life after death. They thought that people had two important parts: a "ka", or life force that they only had while alive, and a "ba" which was more like a soul. If the "ka" and "ba" could be united in the afterworld the person would live in the afterlife. A key component was that the body be preserved for this to happen. This is why the Egyptians used the embalming process, or mummification, to preserve the dead.

The Egyptian afterlife was known as the Field of Reeds and was a mirror-image of life on earth down to one's favorite tree and stream and dog. Those one loved in life would either be waiting when one arrived or would follow after. The Egyptians viewed earthly existence as simply one part of an eternal journey and were so concerned about passing easily to the next phase that they created their elaborate tombs (the pyramids), temples, and funerary inscriptions (the **Pyramid Texts**, the **Book of the Dead**) to help the soul's passage from this world to the next. The gods cared for one after death just as they had in life from the beginning of time. The goddess **Qebhet** brought water to the thirsty souls in the land of the dead and other goddesses such as Selket and Nephthys cared for and protected the souls as they journeyed to the Field of Reeds. An ancient Egyptian understood that, from birth to death and even after death, the universe had been ordered by the gods and everyone had a place in that order.

Discuss with a shoulder buddy, then write your response to this statement:

* How did believing in the afterlife impact the everyday lives of ancient Egyptians?