

Classical Civilisation

Topic: Death and Burial

This topic covers the following:

- 1 Death and Burial Process in Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome
- 2 Role of the Family
- 3 Role of the State
- 4 Festivals to the Dead in Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome
- 5 Comparison of Greek and Roman Burial Processes

Name:

Scheme of Learning: Death and Burial

Topic Sequence:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Gods and Goddesses	Heracles: Universal Hero	Religion in the City	Myth and the City	Festivals	Myths and Symbols of Power	Death and Burial	Journey to the Underworld

Topic Overview:

This is the seventh topic on the Myth and Religion paper and is quite a short one. It very much focuses on the importance of death and burial in the ancient world, with a particular focus on the process that has to happen for the deceased. Pupils need to have an understanding of both the Greek and Roman processes as they may be asked to compare them. This topic very much in with other topics that have been covered such as Religion in the City. This topic will definitely be referenced, especially the concept of sacrifice, but also other topics will be referred to such as the death of Heracles/Hercules.

Lesson Sequence:

The lessons have been sequenced to build pupils' understanding and knowledge on how the process of death and burial is conducted in the ancient world. It very much focuses pupils on knowing the process that happens from the death to the preparation of the body following a death to the funeral procession to the burial of the body. Pupils have to be familiar with the process of all these different sections for both Ancient Greece and Rome.

The first few lessons focus on Ancient Greece and the process of death and burial. The first lesson uses the Knowledge Map for this topic as the basis. Pupils will explore this knowledge map so that they have an overview on which to hang their later learning. After reading through the knowledge map, both individually and collectively, pupils will answer some comprehension questions using the knowledge map to show understanding. The next lesson builds further by pupils exploring the different stages to the death and burial process and identifying key aspects of it. They will also have to identify these different stages through art and sculpture. The third lesson in the sequence focuses on the funeral process and uses extracts from the three different sources to explore their understanding of the process. These extracts are from the Iliad, the Odyssey, and Stephen Fry's Troy. They examine how accurate each extract is, and explore where the process has not been carried out correctly, and the ramifications for this.

The next series of lessons switch to Ancient Rome, and follow a similar approach to the above sequence of lessons for Ancient Greece. The difference here is that the extract from the third lesson in the sequence is from a Roman source, the Aeneid.

The final lesson in the sequence analyses the similarities and differences to the two civilisations in how they process death and carry out the burial process. This comparison is important as it cannot be carried out effectively without a thorough understanding of each.

Whilst a short topic it does bring together a number of topics and lays the foundations for the next one on the Underworld, but also a topic in the next paper when learning about death and burial in the Mycenaean Age.

Sequence of Lessons:

1	Burial Lesson 1 – Greece (Overview)
2	Burial Lesson 2 – Greece (Process)
3	Burial Lesson 3 – Greece (Funerals)
4	Burial Lesson 4 – Rome (Overview)
5	Burial Lesson 5 – Rome (Process)
6	Burial Lesson 6 – Rome (Funerals)
7	Burial Lesson 7 – Comparison of Greece and Rome
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Topic Resources:

Knowledge Map:	13. Knowledge Map: Death and Burial(Ancient Greece)	Prescribed Sources:	No prescribed sources for this topic.
	14. Knowledge Map: Death and Burial (Ancient Rome)		

Assessment:

Knowledge:	20 question knowledge test
Application of Knowledge:	Exam questions on: identifying a god/goddess, Heracles (metope), Parthenon, Festivals, a section on the Ara Pacis, and a 15 mark question on death and burial (Greek)

Supportive Reading:

The Iliad Homer	Extracts on the death of Patroclus and Hector
The Odyssey Homer	Extract on Odysseus visiting the Underworld
Troy Stephen Fry	Extract on Hector's funeral
The Aeneid Virgil	Extract of a burial that takes place on Aeneas' journey

In this topic you will learn about Greek and Roman practices and beliefs surrounding the death and burial process including the preparation, funeral procession, and burial of the body. Remembrance of the dead was also an important part of the family life and you will study some of the festivals of remembrance that the Greeks and Romans held.

Ancient Greece: Death and Burial

1	Death and Burial	Death was an important issue to the Greeks. It was incredibly important that the dead were treated with respect and that everybody, no matter their social status or wealth, received a proper burial.
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Preparation of the Body

2	Closure of Eyes	Once the person had died, their eyes and mouths were closed. 
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3	Body Washed	The body would be washed, perfumed, and wrapped in a long white shroud. 
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4	Payment for Charon	When this process was complete a coin would be placed on the deceased's mouth. This was payment for Charon, the boatman who ferried the dead from the land of the living to the underworld. 
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5	Prothesis	After the body was prepared, the prothesis, or laying out, took place. This means that the body would be laid out for two days to receive mourners. 
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6	Example of Prothesis	
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7	Pollution	As a death automatically polluted the house, a bowl of water was placed outside for people to wash themselves as they left. 
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8	Lament	Once respects had been paid, the women of the family would start their lament. To do this, they would cut their hair, dress in shabby black clothing, and wail beside the deceased, beating their chests and flailing their arms. 
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Funeral Procession

9	Ephora	Before dawn on the third day, the ephora took place. This was the funeral procession from the house of the deceased to the burial ground. 
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10	Example of Ephora	
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11	Travel to the Burial Ground	Depending on the wealth of the family and distance they travelled, the deceased would either be carried by wagon or carried by pallbearers. 
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12	Participants	The procession included women, children and men from the family. It would also include musicians, particularly an aulos player. 
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Burial of the Body

13	Outside of City	The final resting place of the body was always outside the city to remove the chance of religious pollution. It also limited the spread of disease. 
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14	Kerameikos, Athens	The main burial ground in Athens was in Kerameikos, an area just outside the northwest walls of the city. 
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15	Funeral Pyre	The body would either be buried or cremated. In a cremation, a pyre would be built and the deceased laid on top. It would then be lit. After the body has been burnt, the ash would be collected in an urn and given to the family. This would then be placed in a shrine or grave. 
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16	Journey to the Underworld	To assist the deceased in their journey to the underworld, the family would add burial gifts to the grave. This may be an item that was important to the deceased in life, or even food for the journey. 
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17	Stele	Depending on the wealth of the family, a stele may be set up for the deceased so that they are remembered. This was a stone slab, similar to a grave stone, with patterns or images carved on them. 
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18	Sacrifice	Once the deceased had been buried or cremated a sacrifice would take place. This differed from a normal sacrifice, as the blood of the victim was released on the earth as an offering to Hades and Persephone. 
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19	Period of Mourning	Then began a 30-day period of mourning. There were three days the family were expected to visit the deceased: the third, the ninth, and the thirteenth. After this the family visited the grave annually. 
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Ancient Greek Festivals for the Dead

20	Communal Festivals	As well as private funerals, Athenians took part in other festivals to the dead, as it was vital their memory be maintained. There were two main festivals: Anthesteria and Genesia. 
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Ancient Greek Festivals: Anthesteria

21	The Festival of Anthesteria	The festival of Anthesteria took place in late January and lasted three days. The festival celebrated the maturing of wine and was held in honour of Dionysus. 
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22	The Festival of Anthesteria	The first day was believed to be a day the dead rose from the underworld and roamed the earth. During this day the wine from the previous year was opened and libations were poured for Dionysus. 
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23	The Festival of Anthesteria	On the second day, groups would gather for drinking contests and families would pour libations on the graves of their ancestors. 
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24	The Festival of Anthesteria	The final day was dedicated to the dead. Families of the dead would make offerings to the god Hermes, as he was the only god, along with Dionysus, who could travel in both the world of the living and the world of the dead. Unlike normal offerings, none of the family were allowed to eat the food. 
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Ancient Greek Festivals: Genesia

25	The Festival of Genesia	The Genesia took place in late September. During this single day, Athenians would decorate the graves of the deceased with ribbons and offer food and blood sacrifice in honour of all their dead ancestors. 
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Glossary: Death and Burial

	Keyword	Definition
1	Ritual	a religious ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to a prescribed order
2	Shroud	a length of cloth or an enveloping garment in which a dead person is wrapped for burial
3	Prothesis	During the preparation of the body in the Greek world, the deceased is laid out to receive mourners
4	Lament	A passionate expression of grief or sorrow
5	Ekphora	The funeral procession in Ancient Greece
6	Aulos	A double-reeded, Ancient Greek wind instrument
7	Religious Pollution	When a person has done something to make them impure in the eyes of the gods
8	Kerameikos	An area of Athens which included the main burial ground outside the city
9	Stele (pl.Stelai)	Stone slabs, often with patterns or images carved on them, most commonly used as tombstones
10	Mourning	The expression of sorrow for someone's death
11	Anthesteria	A Greek festival to Dionysus and the dead held over three days in late January or early February
12	Libation	A drink offering poured in honour of the gods
13	Genesia	A Greek festival to dead ancestors celebrated in late September
14	Atrium	The main room of the Roman house, where the family received friends and family
15	Funerary Mask	A mask made by placing wax on the deceased's face to take their image. When it was dry it was taken off and stored in the family shrine.
15	Sarcophagus (pl. Sarcophagi)	A stone coffin, especially one bearing sculpture and inscriptions
16	Marble Bust	A sculpture of a person's head, shoulders, and chest
17	Manes	Meaning the 'deified ancestors', these were the spirits of the dead in the Roman world
18	Funerary Clubs	A social club set up to support the less wealthy members of Roman society
19	Parentalia	A Roman festival held in February to honour family ancestors and deceased relatives
20	Rite	A religious or other solemn ceremony or act
21	Lemuria	A Roman festival in May held to ward off evil spirits
22	Lemurs	Spirits of the restless dead

Read the following information on **Death and Burial** in Ancient Greece. Using the information, answer the questions on the following page. This section of the topic is to make sure we have a firm grasp of the **process** of death and burial in Greece.

Preparation of the Body

Death was an important issue to the Greeks. It was incredibly important that the dead were treated with respect and that everyone, no matter their social status or wealth, received a proper burial. Once the person had died, their eyes and mouth were closed. The body would be washed, perfumed, and wrapped in a long white **shroud**. When this process was complete a coin would be placed on the deceased's mouth. This was payment for Charon, the boatman who ferried the dead from the land of the living to the underworld.

After the body was prepared, the **prothesis**, or laying out of the body, took place. The prothesis lasted two days and gave friends and family of the deceased a chance to come and pay their respects. As a death automatically polluted the house, a bowl of water was placed outside for people to wash themselves as they left. Once respects had been paid, the women of the family would start their **lament**. To do this they would cut their hair, dress in shabby black clothing and wail beside the deceased, beating their chests and flailing their arms.

Funerary Procession

Before dawn on the third day, the **ekphora** took place. This was a funerary procession from the house of the deceased to the burial ground. Depending on the wealth of the family and the distance travelled, the deceased would either be carried on a wagon or carried by pallbearers. The procession included women, children and men from the family. The funerary procession often involved music and the procession would be accompanied by an **aulos** player.

Burial of the Body

It was vital that the final resting place of the deceased was outside the city to remove the chance of **religious pollution**. Additionally, burial outside the city reduced the spread of any disease. In Athens, the main burial ground was in **Kerameikos**, an area outside the northwest walls of the city. Once the body reached the burial ground, it was either buried or cremated. In a cremation, a pyre would be built and the deceased laid on top. It would then be lit. After the body had burned, the ash would be collected in an urn and given to the family. This would then be placed in a shrine or grave. To assist the deceased in their journey to the underworld, the family would add burial gifts to the grave. This may be an item that was important to the deceased in life or food for their journey.

Depending on the wealth of the family, a **stele**, may be set up for the deceased. This was important as it was vital that the deceased be remembered. If a family neglected the deceased's grave, they would dishonour their family memory. A stele may be equated to a modern gravestone and acted as a monument to the dead. The family of the deceased would employ a sculptor to carve a relief on the stele that reflected the deceased in life. This could be a display of the family's wealth and status as much as a commemoration of the deceased.

Once the deceased had been buried or cremated, a sacrifice would take place. This differed from a normal sacrifice, as the blood of the sacrificial animal was released on the earth, as an offering to Hades and Persephone.

Maintaining respect was very important to the Greeks. Once the deceased had been buried a period of **mourning** began that lasted for thirty days. There were three days in which the family were obliged to visit the deceased: the third, the ninth, and the thirteenth. After this, the family visited the grave on an annual basis.

Task: Answer the following questions using the two previous extracts.

1. In Ancient Greece, who was entitled to receive a proper burial?

2. Why was a coin placed on the mouth of the deceased?

3. What was prothesis?

4. The lament is an important moment in preparing the body for the next stage. List what happens during the lament.

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2

3

5. What was ekphora?

6. Why was the body always buried outside the city walls?

7. What is a stele?

8. How did the sacrifice at the burial differ from a normal sacrifice, and why?

9. On what days were the family obligated to visit the deceased?

Task: Using the knowledge map: Death and Burial (Greece) and the reading from the previous page, we need to be able to identify the process which a deceased's body goes through at each stage. Your task is to complete the diagram's below using the information from the reading materials, and the pictures as a clue to each step. The first has been completed for you.

Stage 1: Preparation of the Body

Identified Part of the Process

1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

Stage 2: Funerary Procession

Identified Part of the Process

1		
2		
3		

Task: Below is an example of an Ancient Greek stele, it is called the Grave Stele of Hegeso. Study the grave stele carefully, and then answer the questions below.



The Grave Stele of Hegeso

One of the best surviving examples of a grave stele from Ancient Greece. It depicts a Greek woman called Hegeso who is seated and accompanied by a slave girl. Hegeso is admiring a piece of her jewellery.

We do not know how old Hegeso was when she died.

1. Make a list of everything we can learn from this stele about the deceased supporting this with evidence from the stele itself.

What can we learn about the deceased from the stele?	Supporting evidence
	10

Task: Read the following extract from *The Odyssey*. The scene is from when Odysseus is visiting the land of the dead and Odysseus is recounting his experience in meeting several 'ghosts', one of which was one his crew, Elpenor, who recently died.

BK XI:51-89 ODYSSEUS TELLS HIS TALE: THE SOUL OF ELPENOR

The first ghost to appear was that of my comrade *Elpenor* [p. 492]. He had not yet been buried beneath the broad-tracked earth, for we left his corpse behind in *Circe's* [p. 479] hall, unburied and unwept, while another more urgent task drove us on. I wept now when I saw him, and pitied him, and I spoke to him with winged words: "Elpenor, how came you here, to the gloomy dark? You are here sooner on foot than I in my black ship."

At this he groaned and answered me, saying: "*Odysseus* [p. 533], man of many resources, scion of *Zeus* [p. 584], son of *Laertes* [p. 517] some god's hostile decree was my undoing, and too much wine. I lay down to sleep in *Circe's* house, and forgetting the way down by the long ladder fell headlong from the roof. My neck was shattered where it joins the spine: and my ghost descended, to the House of *Hades* [p. 503]. I know as you go from here, from *Hades' House*, your good ship will touch again at *Aeaea's* [p. 452] Isle, and I beg you, by those, our absent ones we left behind, by your *wife* [p. 546], by your father who cared for you as a child, by your only son *Telemachus* [p. 573] forsaken in your halls, I beg you, my lord, remember me. When you sail from there, do not leave me behind, unwept, unburied, and turn away, lest I prove a source of divine anger against you. Burn me, with whatever armour I own, and heap up a mound for me on the grey sea's shore, in memory of a man of no fortune, that I may be known by those yet to be. Do this for me and on my mound raise the oar I rowed with alive and among my friends."

He spoke, and I replied: "Man of no fortune, all this I will remember to do." So we sat, exchanging joyless words, I on one side of the trench, holding my sword above the blood, my friend's ghost on the other, pouring out his speech.

Then there appeared the soul of my dead mother, *Anticleia* [p. 461], daughter of noble *Autolycus* [p. 474]: she who was still alive when I left to sail for sacred *Troy* [p. 581]. I wept at the sight of her, and my heart was filled with pity, yet I could not let her approach the blood, despite my grief, till I had questioned *Teiresias* [p. 572].²

Task: Read the following extract from *The Iliad*. The scene is from when King Priam of Troy has just returned with the body of his son, the famous Trojan hero, Hector. Hector was killed by Achilles in battle and up to this point, Achilles had refused to return the body to King Priam or bury the body. This is the very last words from the book, *The Iliad*.

BK XXIV:776-804 HECTOR'S FUNERAL



So *Helen* [p. 621] lamented, and the whole crowd wept. But the old king, *Priam* [p. 706], gave his orders: 'Gather wood now, men of Troy, and bring it to the city, and have no fear of some crafty ambush by the Greeks. *Achilles* [p. 517] promised me, before I left the black ships, that he would restrain their army till the twelfth dawn comes.'

So they harnessed oxen and mules to the wagons, and assembled outside the city. For nine days they gathered huge piles of logs, and when the tenth dawn brought light to mortals they carried brave *Hector* [p. 617], and, in tears, laid his body on the summit of the pyre and set the wood ablaze.

Next day, when rosy-fingered *Dawn* [p. 600] appeared, the people gathered at glorious Hector's pyre. Then when all had assembled they worked together, quenching the embers with red wine, wherever the fire had reached. Then Hector's brothers and his friends collected his ashes, still mourning him, their cheeks wet with tears. They placed the ashes, wrapped in a purple robe, inside a golden urn, and laid the urn in a hollow grave, covering it with large close-set stones. Then over it they piled the barrow, posting sentinels on every side, lest the bronze-greaved Greeks attacked them before the promised time. When they had heaped the mound, they returned to Troy, and gathered in Zeus-beloved Priam's palace for the glorious funeral feast appointed.

And such were the funeral rites of Hector, tamer of horses.

Task: Answer the following questions using the previous extract.

1. Annotate the extract with any evidence you can identify that matches your understanding of the process of death and burial in Ancient Greece.
2. What can we learn from the extract about the importance of death and burial to the Ancient Greeks?

Source E: An extract from a Greek writer discussing Greek burial practice.

The deceased shall be laid out in the house in any way one chooses, and they shall carry out the deceased on the day after that on which they lay him out, before the sun rises. And the men shall walk in front, when they carry him out, and the women behind. And no woman less than sixty years of age shall be permitted to enter the chamber of the deceased, or to follow the deceased when he is carried to the tomb, except those who are within the degree of children or cousins; nor shall any woman be permitted to enter the chamber of the deceased when the body is carried out, except those who are within the degree of children or cousins.

Source F: A piece of pottery showing a scene from a Greek burial



Study Source E and F

9 In what ways were the family an important part of the Greek burial process? Use **Source E** and **Source F** and your own knowledge to answer the question.

Preparation of the Body	Funerary Procession	Burial of the Body

A series of horizontal dashed lines for writing.

Task: Read the following information on **festivals for the dead and the ancestors** in Ancient Greece. Using the information, answer the questions on the following page. This section of the topic is to make sure we have a firm grasp of the **role of the state** in the death and burial process in Ancient Greece.

Festivals for the Dead and the Ancestors

Beyond private funerals, Athens also celebrated other festivals to the dead, as it was vital that their memory be maintained. If grave stelai were left to become overgrown or damaged, the memory of that person would be damaged.

The first festival is called the **Anthesteria**, and it took place in late January and lasted for three days. The festival celebrated the maturing of wine and was held in honour of Dionysus. The first day was believed to be a day the dead rose from the underworld and roamed the earth. During this day, the wine from the previous year was opened and **libations** were poured to Dionysus. On the second day, groups would gather for drinking contests and families would pour libations on the graves of their ancestors. The final day was dedicated to the dead. Families of the dead would make offerings to the god Hermes, as he was the only god, along with Dionysus, who could travel in both the world of the living and the world of the dead. Unlike normal offerings, the living were not allowed to eat any of the food. The ceremony marked the period that the dead had to leave Athens and return to the underworld.

The second of the festivals dedicated to the dead was called the **Genesia**, which took place in late September. The word Genesia means anniversary in Ancient Greek. This was a public festival of the dead held in Athens, where families would honour their departed ancestors. The festival lasted just one day but during this day Athenians would decorate the graves of the deceased with ribbons and offer food in honour of all their dead ancestors. Sometimes special vases were left at graves and these vases would often be illustrated with depictions of funerary practices. A blood sacrifice would also be carried out by families and dedicated to their ancestors. The festival originally had been a private family affair, but it developed and turned into a public city-wide event due to the belief that caring for the dead was the responsibility of all citizens.

1. Describe what happens on each day of the festival of Anthesteria.

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

2. Which gods were involved in the festival of Anthesteria, and why were they particularly associated with the dead?
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3. During the festival of Genesia, what did the family do to honour the dead?
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In this topic you will learn about Greek and Roman practices and beliefs surrounding the death and burial process including the preparation, funeral procession, and burial of the body. Remembrance of the dead was also an important part of the family life and you will study some of the festivals of remembrance that the Greeks and Romans held.

Ancient Rome: Death and Burial			Burial of the Body		
1	Death and Burial	Like the Greeks, death was an important issue to the Romans. It was incredibly important that the dead were treated with respect and that everybody, no matter their social status or wealth, received a proper burial.	17	Outside of City	The final resting place of the body was always outside the city to remove the chance of religious pollution. It also limited the spread of disease. 
2	The Wealthy	As in many aspects of Roman life, status and wealth were important, the same was true for death. The wealthy invested heavily in the funerals of their dead. With is in mind, most of our evidence comes from the rich.	18	Tombs and Wealth	A family's wealth determined the size of their tomb. A wealthy person could expect to be buried in the family tomb or an individual monument. The wealthy built their tombs along the roads that ran into a town, ensuring they would be remembered. 
3	The Poor	The poor of Rome could not afford to invest as much as the wealthy in funerals, but did need to still make sure they provided one so loved ones were not forgotten.	19	Sarcophagi	The super-rich would also place their dead in elaborately carved sarcophagi. These would contain relief sculpture of mythological battles and heroes. 
4	Funeral Clubs	Funeral clubs were one way the less wealthy could provide for loved ones in their death. Those that could afford it, paid a monthly fee to be part of a club who met regularly for meals and to socialise. Upon the death of one of its members, the club would pay for the funeral and provide mourners.	20	Busts of the Deceased	Once the dead were buried, they were not to be forgotten so busts of the dead were made and placed in the house. The Romans believed they turned into Manes (meaning the 'spirits of the dead'). The Romans expected gifts and food to be left for the Manes. 

Preparation of the Body

5	Greek Influence	Roman burial practice was very much based on Ancient Greek influences. 
6	The Last Breath	One thing that differed to the Greeks was that, if possible, just before the moment of death a relative would try to capture the last breath of the person with a kiss. 
7	Dead Person's Name	After the person has died, it was important that those present at home call out the deceased's name. If the person died unaccompanied it had to be done ceremonially afterwards. 
8	Body Washed	The body would be washed, perfumed, and wrapped in a long white shroud. 
9	Payment for Charon	When this process was complete a coin would be placed on the deceased's mouth. This was payment for Charon, the boatman who ferried the dead from the land of the living to the underworld. 
10	Atrium	After the body was prepared, and similarly to the Greeks, the body was laid out, but this time in an Atrium (the main room of the house) for eight days. This would give friends and family the chance to pay their respects. 
11	Pollution	As a death automatically polluted the house, a bowl of water was placed outside for people to wash themselves as they left. 
12	Lament	Throughout the period of mourning, women of the house would lament the deceased by screaming the name of the deceased, and beating their own chests. 

Funeral Procession

13	Funeral	The funeral would take place eight days after the death, and the body would be carried to outside the city, similar to the Greeks. 
14	Participants	The procession included women, children and men from the family, and any slaves the family owned. It would also include musicians, particularly a flute or horn player. 
15	Funerary Masks	Members of the family wore funerary masks of family ancestors. A funerary mask was made by placing wax on the deceased's face to create a mould. When it was taken off, it was stored in the family shrine. They were worn to symbolise acceptance of the deceased into the afterlife. 
16	Wealthy Funerals	If the family were small, but wealthy, they could pay for professional mourners to attend to increase the size of the congregation. 

Ancient Roman Festivals: Parentalia

21	The Festival of Parentalia	The Parentalia took place over nine days between the 13 and 21 February.
22		During this time, people were not permitted to marry, temples were closed and no official business was allowed to take place.
23		The first day was the only state aspect to it: there was a blood sacrifice carried out by a Vestal Virgin.
24		The rest of the festival was a domestic one, one that centred on the family rather than the state.
25		Families were expected to pay respects at the tombs or graves of their loved ones by decorating their graves with garlands, scattering food, a few grains of salt, and bread soaked in wine.
26		On the ninth day, the family would meet and share a meal in the home.

Ancient Roman Festivals: Lemuria

27	The Festival of Lemuria	The Lemuria was held over three days in May: the 9th, the 11th, and the 13th.
28		During this time, people were not permitted to marry, temples were closed and no official business was allowed to take place.
29		Unlike the Parentalia which focused on honouring the family's deceased, the Lemuria was held to ward off evil spirits.
30		The ritual that took place which included, washing, taking black beans, throwing them, chanting sayings ("With these beans I throw I redeem myself and my family.") This has to be said nine times, bronze symbols are sounded, and then a final cry is said nine further times, "Ancestral spirits, depart."

Read the following information on **Death and Burial in Ancient Rome**. Using the information, answer the questions on the following page. This section of the topic is to make sure we have a firm grasp of the **process** of death and burial in Greece.

Preparation of the Body

Much of Roman burial practice was similar to that of the Greeks. If possible, just before the moment of death a relative would capture the last breath of the person with a kiss. The Romans believed that the breath was the spirit and so by this method the final farewell to the spirit was made. If at home those present would then call out the name of the deceased. If the person died unaccompanied, this would be done ceremonially afterwards. The body was then washed, perfumed, and then dressed in the deceased's finest clothes. How the body was dressed depended on the rank of the departed: if a male citizen he would be dressed in his toga, a Senator in his senatorial toga, or if a military leader in his military uniform. If the person had achieved a wreath, for instance, for a military accomplishment, this would also be placed with the deceased. A coin was then placed inside the deceased's mouth to pay the ferryman, Charon, for safe passage to the underworld. The body would then be laid in a state of prothesis for eight days in the **atrium** of the family home. This would give friends and family the opportunity to pay their respects. During this time the women of the family would **lament** the deceased which included beating their chests.

Funerary Procession

The funeral would take place eight days after death and involve a variety of people, including flute and horn players, the deceased's family, friends, and slaves. Members of the family would wear wax **funerary masks** of the family ancestors. This was done to symbolise the acceptance of the deceased into the afterlife by their ancestors. If a family was wealthy, but small, they would pay for professional mourners to join the procession, mourning and lamenting the dead. Wealthy families would also pay for actors to mimic the deceased as they were in life. The size of the funerary procession was often a good indicator of the wealth and status of the deceased.

Burial of the Body

Once outside the city the body would either be buried or cremated. The Romans followed the same custom as the Greeks with their cremations and burials. Like the Greeks, it was important to the Romans that the final resting place of the deceased was outside the city to remove religious pollution and reduce risk of disease. In Roman towns, the wealthy were buried in tombs along roads that led into the city or town, which allowed passers-by to pay their respects. Again, the family's wealth determined the size of the tomb. A wealthy person could expect to be buried in the family tomb or an individual monument. The Romans built their tombs along the roads that ran into a town; this ensured the deceased would be remembered. It also meant that people avoided uniformity as they wanted their tomb to stand out. One of the main streets that led into Pompeii were lined with tombs that resemble homes and temples. The super-rich would also place their dead in elaborately carved **sarcophagi**. These would contain reliefs of mythological battles and heroes. Once the dead were buried, they were not to be forgotten. To ensure the family member was correctly honoured, a **marble bust** would be made and placed in the house. The Romans believed that they turned into **Manes**. They needed to be fed, and the deceased's family were expected to leave food and wine offerings at the tomb.

Wealth and status in Rome

As in many aspects of Roman life, status and wealth were important. The same was true in death. Wealthy families would invest heavily in the funerals of their dead. With this in mind, the vast majority of evidence for funerals come from the rich. However, the majority of the Roman population were working-class citizens, freedmen, and slaves. These people did not always have the spare money or social connections to spend on a funeral and so they sought other ways of ensuring that they were provided for in death.

The main option open to the less wealthy were **funerary clubs**. Those who could afford it would pay a monthly fee to join the club. The club met for meals and gatherings, giving members an opportunity of making social connections. Frequently, workers of the same trade would set up their own clubs, such as the baker's guild or blacksmith's guild. As the names suggest, these were only open to those craftsmen. Upon the death of one of its members, the club would pay for a funeral and provide mourners to ensure the deceased was not forgotten. In the case of larger clubs, members may be buried in a club tomb or section of a burial ground. Not all forms of death were covered though. If a member committed suicide they waived their right to a funeral.

Task: Answer the following questions using the two previous extracts.

1. What was the 'last kiss' and why was it important to Romans?

2. In preparing the body for the funeral procession, the deceased would be dressed in their finest clothes. Give some examples of what this may look like to different citizens.

3. How long was the stage of prothesis for the Ancient Romans?

4. Who accompanied the deceased during their procession to the burial ground?

5. What were funerary masks and what did they symbolise?

6. How and why were funerary clubs important to certain Romans?

7. How could a wealthy Roman family show off their status through a funeral?

Task: Using the knowledge map: Death and Burial (Rome) and the reading from the previous pages, we need to be able to identify the process which a deceased's body goes through at each stage. Your task is to complete the diagram's below using the information from the reading materials, and the pictures as a clue to each step. The first has been completed for you.

Stage 1: Preparation of the Body

Identified Part of the Process

1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

Stage 2: Funerary Procession

Identified Part of the Process

1		
2		
3		
4		

Task: Read the following information on **festivals for the dead and the ancestors** in Ancient Greece. Using the information, answer the questions on the following page. This section of the topic is to make sure we have a firm grasp of the **role of the state** in the death and burial process in Ancient Greece.

Festivals for the Dead and the Ancestors

The Parentalia

The **Parentalia** took place over nine days between the 13th and 21st February. Parentalia means 'Ancestral Days'. During this time people were not permitted to marry, temples were closed and no official business was allowed to take place. Apart from a blood sacrifice by a Vestal on the first day, the Parentalia was a domestic festival, that is, one centred around the family rather than the State. Saying that, the fact there was a public sacrifice on day one demonstrates the importance of family and remembering the dead to the Roman State. Despite the apparent extravagance given to the deceased during their burial, the Roman poet, Ovid, states:

Their shades (dead) ask little, pietas they prefer to costly offerings: no greedy deities haunt the Stygian depths. A tile wreathed round with garlands offered is enough, a scattering of a meal, and a few grains of salt, and bread soaked in wine, and loose violets.

Ovid, Fasti, 2.535-539

These offerings were taken to the tombs of the deceased during the first eight days of the festival. It was believed that the dead rose and mingled with the living. On the ninth day the family would meet and share a meal in their home. This gave them an opportunity to undo any wrongs that had taken place.

The Lemuria

The **Lemuria** was held over three days in May: the 9th, 11th and 13th. It was supposedly established by Romulus as atonement for killing his brother, Remus. Like the Parentalia, it was a predominately private family **rite**. Like the Parentalia, people were not permitted to marry, temples were closed, and no official business could be conducted. This was essentially due to the festivals connection to death and the concern for bad omens for things like marriages. The **lemurs** were a type of restless spirit in Roman mythology from where this day gets its name. Unlike the Parentalia, which was aimed at honouring the family's deceased ancestors, the Lemuria was held to ward off evil spirits.

Ovid describes the ritual as follows:

He who remembers ancient rites, and fears the Gods, rises and makes the sign with thumb and closed fingers, lest an insubstantial shade meets him in the silence. After cleansing his hands in spring water, he turns and, first taking some black beans, throws them with an averted face, saying, while throwing: 'With these beans I throw I redeem myself and my family.' He says this nine times without looking back: the shade is thought to gather the beans, and follow behind, unseen. Again he touches water, and sounds the bronze symbols and asks the spirit to leave his house. When nine times he's cried: 'Ancestral spirit, depart.' He looks back, and believes the sacred rite's fulfilled.

Ovid, Fasti, 5.431-444

Task: Answer the following questions using the two previous extracts.

1. When did the Parentalia take place?

2. What does Parentalia mean?

3. Describe the events of the Parentalia.

4. When did the Lumeria take place, and why is it named as such?

5. According to Ovid, during the Lemuria, particularly sacred rites are carried out. Describe these rites.

This questions will be asked in Section C, the Greece and Rome section of the exam. You will be given a series of questions that will ask you to identify something relevant from the sources attached, and then, most importantly, to analyse what you have recognised by explaining it. To indicate this, they all use the command word 'Explain', suggesting you need to expand a little more on your analysis and explain your ideas fully.

As the section is on Greece and Rome, it is likely you will be given sources from both Greece and Rome, and asked to write about both – the example answer below shows this.

These questions will add up to a total of 15 marks. Usually, each answer you give is worth two marks, one for identifying something, and another for explaining it. Occasionally though, each answer you give might be worth three marks and that requires you to explain your answer even further.

Study Source K: The Greek historian Thucydides discusses Athenian burial customs in war

Three days before the ceremony, the bones of the dead are laid out in a tent which has been erected; and their friends bring to their relatives such offerings as they please. In the funeral procession coffins are carried on carts. . . the bones of the deceased being placed in the coffin. . . Any citizen or stranger who pleases, joins in the procession: and the female relatives are there to wail at the burial. The dead are laid in the public tomb in the most beautiful suburb of the city, in which those who fall in war are always buried. . . After the bodies have been laid in the earth, a man chosen by the state, of approved wisdom and great reputation, pronounces over them an appropriate public speech. . . Such is the manner of the burying; and throughout the whole of the war, whenever the occasion arose, the established custom was observed.

Study Source L: A main street into the Roman town of Pompeii, lined with tombs



Study Sources K and L

22 Explain two reasons why events before the funeral procession were important.

- One event that was important before the funeral procession was the preparation of the body. The family would clean and wash and perfume the body so it was ready to be laid out for the prothesis stage. This was important as it marked the stage of the process where visitors could come and pay their last respects.
- Another event that was important was the placing of a coin in the deceased's mouth. This was important as it would be this coin that would be used to pay Charon to cross the River Styx. Without the coin being placed there, the deceased would not be able to enter the Underworld and remain in limbo.

(6)

The above answer shows how the pupil's response builds on an initial point being made about events *before* the funeral procession, by adding further explanation as to why it is important. Each of these answers is worth 3 marks and each of the blue, red and green sentences are worth 1 mark each.

You will notice in these questions a couple of important points:

- The answers are short and concise – they are not lengthy. This is important to remember. Keep your answers to the point and use key pointers to show explanation: "This was important because...", for example.
- The answers do not need to reference the sources specifically, but if you can, you should.

The next example was from the same series of questions, and required the pupil to now focus on the events of the funeral procession. Notice in this answer, how the answer is well-explained but also where they have used the source to support their answer as it was appropriate.

Task: Your task is to now use the sources and your own knowledge to answer the question below.

Study Sources K and L

23 Explain two reasons why the funeral procession was important for the dead person and their family.

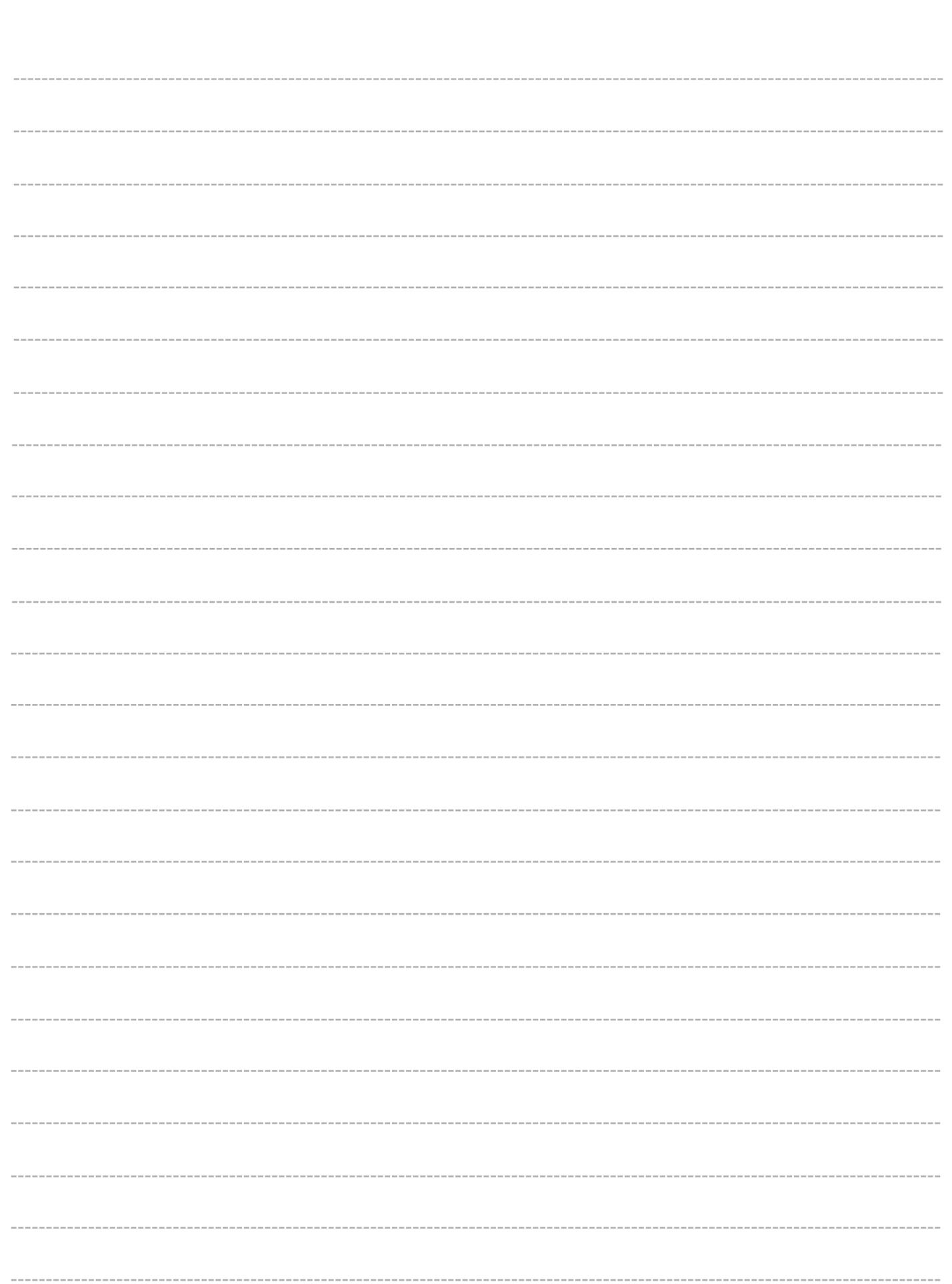




19 ‘The best way to show off the wealth and social status of a family during a Greek **and** Roman funeral was during the funeral procession.’

How far do you agree with this statement?

Evidence that the funerary procession allowed Greeks and Romans to show off a family's wealth and status.	Evidence that the preparation of the body allowed Greeks and Romans to show off a family's wealth and status.	Evidence that the burial of the body allowed Greeks and Romans to show off a family's wealth and status.





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Additional Notes Section

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