

**DEATH AND DYING: LESSON III**  
**Planning a Funeral/Writing an Obituary**

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**OBJECTIVES/RATIONALE**

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Planning for the end of one's life is a sensitive and difficult task for some people; it can be left undone, leaving the grieving family to make arrangements. The student will plan a funeral and write an obituary.

TEKS: 121.23 (c) 7J

TAKS ELA 1, 4, 5, 6

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**KEY POINTS**

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***Teacher Note:** Arrange for the students to visit a funeral home as a field trip. Ask the mortician to address the following:*

- I. Qualifications of a Mortician
- II. Differentiate between the titles Funeral Director, Mortician, Embalmer
- III. Services offered by a funeral home
  - A. cultural adjustments
  - B. process of embalming
  - C. burial vs. cremation
  - D. cost of a funeral
    1. burial
    2. cremation
  - E. State and other regulations for handling bodies and disposal of bodies
- IV. Variety of funeral situations and responsibility of the mortician
  - A. Services at the mortuary
  - B. Church services
  - C. Graveside services

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**ACTIVITIES**

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- I. Plan a funeral. See Guidelines for Planning A Funeral.
- II. Write an obituary.

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**MATERIALS NEEDED**

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Guidelines for Planning A Funeral  
Newspaper examples of obituaries

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## **ASSESSMENT**

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Project Rubric will be used for the plan of the funeral.

Writing Rubric will be used for the obituary.

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## **ACCOMMODATIONS**

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For reinforcement, the student will read the entry for Morticians in *HOT Jobs*, and compare and contrast the services each one offers, and display the findings on a poster.

For enrichment the students will research the histories of burial versus cremation, compare and contrast the findings, and prepare a multimedia presentation.

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## **REFLECTIONS**

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## **GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING A FUNERAL**

- I. When at the funeral home, select a casket.
  - A. What is the cost?
  - B. Is there any other cost that would be included with the casket, i.e. for steel liners?
  
- II. Determine additional costs that will be faced from the funeral home.
  - A. embalming
  - B. arrangements for funeral
  - C. any other service included by the funeral home
  
- III. Do you wish the funeral to be at a religious facility: church, synagogue, hall, etc.?
  - A. If so, is there a cost?
  - B. If a religious leader is officiating, is there a cost for that?
  - C. Do you want music? Is there a cost for the musician?
  - D. For any clean up after the funeral, a janitor would be needed. Is there a cost for those services?
  
- IV. Do you wish the body to be present at the funeral, or do you want a memorial service?
  
- V. Do you want the funeral to be a small, private affair, or open to all?
  
- VI. Do you want any special music, reading of a poem or passage, etc.? Do you want a special person to read or sing or play an instrument? If so, who?
  
- VII. Do you want the body to be buried? If so, how much is a burial plot? If not, what is the cost of cremation?
  
- VIII. Do you want the obituary to appear in the newspaper? Is there a cost for that? If so, what is it?
  
- IX. What is the total cost of this funeral?