

LET'S TALK ABOUT DEATH

CULTURAL PRACTICES AND EXPRESSIONS

1 - Watch the video and match the cultures with the practices.

- a. Madagascar () Exhuming bodies, rewrapping them, and dancing with the corpses around the tomb to live music.
- b. Tibet () Leaving bodies to be consumed by vultures based on Buddhist beliefs of impermanence and rebirth.
- c. Ghana () They practice endocannibalism, mixing the ashes and bones of the deceased with plantain soup.
- d. South Korea () Displaying "death beads" made from cremated remains.
- e. Indonesia () Funerals are grand festivals that can last up to a week.
- f. Yanomami tribe () Customized coffins representing the deceased's profession.

2 - Complete the sentences with the words from the box:

murderer	cremation	grief	passa away	graveyard
funeral	coffin	to die	euthanasia	kill
death	ashes	to mourn	die a natural death	to bury

1. The family gathered to say goodbye at the _____.
2. After the ceremony, they went to the _____ to visit the grave.
3. It is common to feel deep _____ after losing someone you love.
4. Some people prefer _____ instead of being buried.
5. The body was placed inside a _____ before the burial.
6. They decided _____ their pet in the backyard.
7. After the cremation, the family kept the _____ in a special urn.
8. Many cultures have different ways _____ the dead.
9. The old man _____ in his sleep.
10. The villain planned to _____ the king and take the throne.
11. Some people use the expression " _____ " instead of saying "die."

12. The police finally caught the _____ responsible for the crime.
13. In some countries, _____ is legal under strict conditions.
14. Everyone knows that one day we all have _____.
15. The sudden _____ of the young actor shocked everyone.

3 - Read the following short story:

SURPRISING HONESTY AT FUNERAL

Family and friends at the funeral of George Ramsbottom in Honley, West Yorkshire, were stunned when his brother, Frank, stood up in the church and told everyone that his brother would not be missed.

Describing his brother as the meanest man he had ever met, he went on to list all the people who would be glad to know that George had died, and gave the reasons why. He claimed that George was a liar, a cheat, a womaniser and a drunk. "He owed money to half the people in the village; he had ruined a number of marriages; and he was often incredibly rude for no good reason. No one will be sad that he has gone." said Frank Ramsbottom.

Mr Ramsbottom's unexpected speech was followed by complete silence. Eventually Margaret Dudley, the minister in charge of the service, stood to say, "Let us give thanks for George's life with our final song." She then sang on her own while everyone else stood in silence. The service ended shortly afterwards.

Discuss the questions below in pairs:

1. Was Frank Ramsbottom right to make the speech?
2. "You should never speak ill of the dead." Do you agree?
3. What would you *like* people to say about you when you die? And what do you think people will *actually* say about you?
4. Do you think it is important to be remembered after death? Why or why not?
5. How would you feel if someone spoke badly about you at your funeral?
6. In your opinion, what is the best way to honor someone's life?
7. Have you ever been to a funeral? What was it like?
8. Why do you think people avoid talking about death?
9. Do you think Frank was brave or disrespectful? Why?
10. Is it better to be honest or kind in sensitive situations?