

Name _____ Date _____ List #: ____ - ____

GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRI

The Greek Magical Papyri is a collection of writing about magic. After it was found in the Egyptian desert, it took experts years to decipher it. The text was written in at least three different ancient languages. After many years, experts realized it contained a number of spells that varied greatly in scope.

The most common types of magic in the collection dealt with healing illnesses like pneumonia. Some spells also gave advice for treating people with mental illnesses, such as those who became psychotic. Some spells asked for unusual things, like crocodile dung. But botany was an important part of the magic. Many healing spells gave instructions on how to use herbs and plants that were believed to be therapeutic. For example, in order to cure arthritis, the book says that the magician should build an ornate altar. Then he should mash different types of herbs and place them on top of it. At dusk, he is supposed to say a spell, so the gods would be gratified.

Other parts of the collection describe how to hone one's psychic abilities and how to give credible descriptions of the future. Often, the book advised people how to use different objects to tell the future, including tea leaves. Also, one part of the book tells what different dreams might mean. It gives advice for using dreams to tell the future.

A small part of the book, however, is more sinister than the rest. It is meant to cause strife and deception. For example, one tells how to give someone warts, while another will make all of the victim's farm animals die. However, if someone's farm animals died as a result of a curse, he could ask a magician to perform magic that makes the deceased come back to life.

Reading Comprehension

I.- **Part A: Mark each statement T for true or F for false. Rewrite the false statements to make them true.**

- ____ 1. The Greek Magical Papyri was hard to decipher because it was too large in scope.
- ____ 2. The book is about botany.

____3. The book gave advice for using crocodile dung to heal.

____4. A spell is spoken at dusk to become more credible.

____5. The book had instructions for honing one's psychic powers.

II.-Part B: Answer the questions.

1. What illnesses does the book have advice for healing?
2. What kind of plants does the book recommend using?
3. What should someone do if they want to cure arthritis?
4. What does the sinister part of the book focus on?
5. What could someone ask a magician to do if their farm animals died?