

# Magical Shabtis

Many of the ancient Egyptian objects found in museums today, including everything in *The A-Mazing Mendes Cohen*, originally came from tombs. The ancient Egyptians believed that death was much like life, so they would need many of the same things, including a body! This is why mummification was so important.

The small figurines that were displayed in the exhibit are called *shabtis*. The Egyptians believed that by reading the spell on the *shabtis* they could magically come alive and do work for the tomb owner. At the height of their popularity Egyptians would be buried with three hundred and sixty five shabtis, one for each day of the year.



## What you will need:

- Print out of the shabti template or paper
- Pencil and markers

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## What to do:

- Print a copy of the shabti on the next page or draw your own version. Now decorate your shabti, they could be made from a variety of materials including stone, wood and pottery, which could be painted with bright colors. Alternatively one of the most popular materials used was faience, a type of ceramic with an especially shiny surface which the Egyptians would often make bright blue to resemble lapis lazuli a precious stone.
- Once you have finished decorating your shabti write on his back the magical spell that will bring him to life, you can use the one below or make your own.

## Shabti of Irtu

The Illuminated One, The Royal Scribe, The Overseer of the Horses of the Lord of Two Lands, He says: O' these shabtis who are numerous, if this one is assembled to any work in the Necropolis, to cultivate the fields, to irrigate the riverbanks, to ferry sand of the east to the west, or any unpleasant task that is imposed upon him there, as a man at his duties. "I am here," shall you say, The Royal Scribe, Keeper of the Horses [for the Lord of the Two Lands, Irtu.

