

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Religion in Ancient Egypt

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Religion was important in the daily life of Egyptians. They worshiped many gods. This is known as **polytheism**. During the New Kingdom period, the people of Egypt worshiped more than sixty gods and goddesses!

Egyptians pictured their gods and goddesses in different ways. A few of the gods and goddesses were thought to be like ordinary men and women. Some were like animals. Many were thought to be half-human and half-animal. One god could appear in different forms.

Gods and goddesses often symbolized the sky, wind, sun, or earth. The people believed that gods made the sun rise in the morning and set at night. They believed the gods watched over everything that happened on Earth and in the afterlife.



Temples were built for the most important gods and goddesses. Temples were not like our modern churches. Ordinary people could not go inside. The temple was the home of the god. Inside the temples were sacred statues. The statues were cared for by priests. Priests were servants of the gods. Every morning, the high priest washed the statue with sacred water. The statues were dressed. The high priest put fresh makeup on the statue. The statue was served food. Ordinary people could not see the sacred statues. People visited the temples, but they said prayers and left gifts outside. Only the priests and the pharaoh could go inside. The people brought the food that was offered to the gods by the priests. These offerings were made to keep the gods happy.

In their homes, people kept statues of their favorite gods and goddesses. They made shrines in their homes for them. Offerings were made to the gods in the home shrines. People prayed to the gods for help with their daily lives.

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## Questions

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1. The ancient Egyptian religion had more than \_\_\_\_\_ gods and goddesses.

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2. *They worshiped many gods. This is known as **polytheism**.* The root word "theism" means "belief in god." What do you think the prefix "poly" means?

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- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Who could enter the sacred temples?

A. everyone  
B. scribes  
C. no one  
D. the priests and the pharaoh

- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Temples were believed to be the homes of the gods. Which of these answer choices best supports this main idea?

A. Statues of the gods in the temples were treated as if they were alive. Statues were washed, dressed, and given food.  
B. People prayed to the gods for help with their daily lives.  
C. Egyptians pictured their gods and goddesses in different ways.  
D. none of the above

- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Some gods and goddesses were thought to be \_\_\_\_\_.

A. like ordinary men and women  
B. like animals  
C. half-human and half-animal  
D. all of the above

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Why did the people make offerings to the gods?

A. to keep the gods happy  
B. to the sun rise in the morning  
C. to make it rain  
D. none of the above

