

# EGYPTIAN GODS



**Nephthys** was the goddess of mourning, night, rivers and sleep.

**Amun** was the ancient Egyptian god of the air, sun and the sky.

**Osiris** was the Egyptian god of death, the Underworld and Rebirth.

**Isis** goddess of protection, healing, motherhood, children and nature.

**Seth** was known as the god of chaos.

**Sekhmet** was the goddess of power and might.



**Anubis** was linked to the mummification process as well as the journey to the afterlife.

**Horus** was the Egyptian god of the Sky.

**Ra** was the Sun god.

**Thoth** was the god of knowledge, wisdom and hieroglyphs.

**Ptah** was the god of creation and craftsmen.

## PART 2: THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN BELIEF SYSTEM

### What did the ancient Egyptians believe?

Ancient Egyptians believed that the world was flat and made of clay. They thought that the earth floated on a large sea of water and that the Nile River was one of the springs from this water.

Like the ancient Greeks and Romans, the ancient Egyptians were **polytheistic**. This meant that they believed in more than one god. The people of ancient Egypt developed their religion based on gods and goddesses and the powers that they had. They had a deep belief in the supernatural and thought that their lives were controlled by their **deities**.

For example, the annual flooding of the River Nile was thought to represent the tears of the goddess Isis who was crying over the death of her husband Osiris. He was killed by his brother Seth, who wanted the throne!

In reality, these yearly floods were caused by heavy rain and melting snow in the Ethiopian mountains flowing into the river.



Which other ancient civilisation have you studied that had lots of different gods and goddesses? Which ones can you remember? What were they the gods and goddesses of?

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### How were gods and goddesses worshipped?

The ancient Egyptians thought that it was very important to please the gods and goddesses. For that reason, worshipping the deities was a large part of life in ancient Egypt.

Gods and goddesses were worshipped as part of a daily routine. They were worshipped and celebrated at temples and within Egyptian myths. This lesson, we will be introduced to some important gods and goddesses and we will explore how they were presented in myths.



## PART 3: ANCIENT EGYPTIAN TEMPLES



The Luxor Temple constructed approximately 1400 BCE

### Temple worship

The ancient Egyptians believed that **temples** were the homes of gods and goddesses. Every temple was dedicated to a god or goddess and he or she was worshipped there by the temple priests and the pharaoh.

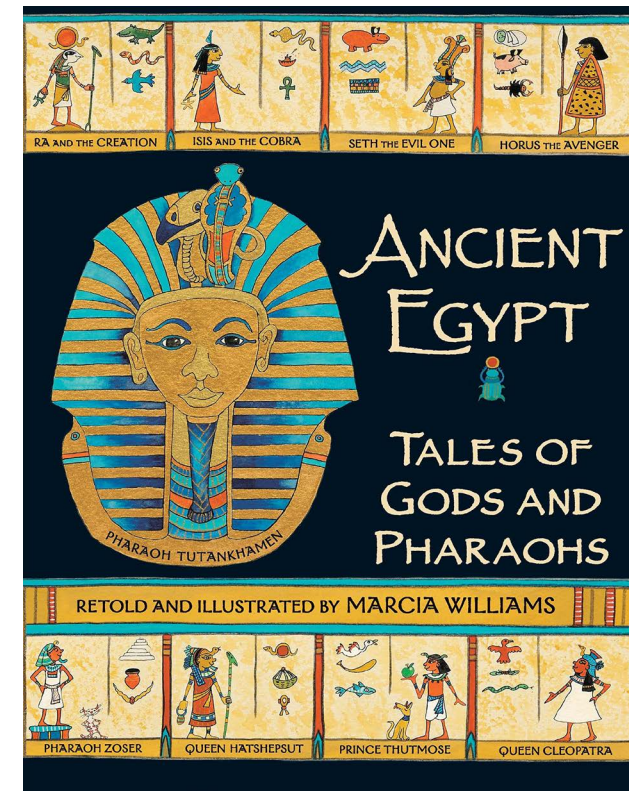
The large temple buildings were made of stone so that they would last forever. Their walls were covered with scenes that were carved onto the stone then brightly painted. These scenes often showed the pharaoh fighting in battles and performing rituals with the gods and goddesses.

The gate of the temple (**the pylon**) was often elaborate. The walls were decorated with carved and painted scenes of the pharaoh, gods and goddesses. In front of the pylon were obelisks and large statues of the pharaoh.

**Obelisks** were tall, thin, four-sided monuments with a pyramid shape at the very top. As you can see in the image below, they were often inscribed with hieroglyphics that served as dedications to the god or goddess of the temple.



## PART 4: HOW WERE GODS AND GODDESSES DEPICTED IN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN MYTHS?



Over the next two lessons, we are going to read two ancient Egyptian myths.

The first is called 'Isis and the Cobra' and the second is entitled 'Horus the Avenger'.

In these myths, you will meet Isis, her brother Osiris and her son Horus. You will also meet the evil Seth whose power-hungry nature drives him to murder!

We will use these myths to consider what the ancient Egyptians thought of their gods and what they believed about the afterlife.

Firstly, listen carefully to your teacher reading 'Isis and the Cobra'.

