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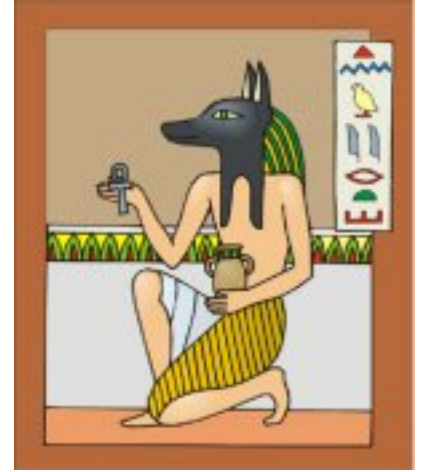
Directions: Read Ancient Egypt and answer questions 1-10.

## Animals of Ancient Egypt

By Phyllis Naegeli

Animals were an important part of ancient Egyptian life. Ancient Egyptians had pets in their homes and livestock on their farms. They also hunted animals for sport and food. Many animals symbolized their gods, who were shown as part animal and part human. Animals were used in art and as writing symbols. There were make-believe animals, too. Let's look at some of the animals that were important in ancient Egypt.

Ancient Egyptians loved their pets. They kept cats, dogs, monkeys, gazelles, and geese. Their beloved pets represented some of the Egyptian gods. Bastet, a cat goddess, controlled the sun. She was believed to have the power to ripen crops. Dogs were sacred to the god Anubis. Anubis was the god of embalming and had the head of a jackal. Dogs and cats were great companions. They even went with their masters on hunting expeditions to retrieve the game a hunter killed. The "Father Earth" god, Geb, was said to take on the form of a goose. Geese were sacred to Geb and had sacred lakes of their own! Ancient Egyptians loved their pets so much that many were mummified. Owners wanted their pets to enjoy the afterlife, too!



Many ancient Egyptians were farmers. They grew crops and kept livestock. Cattle were one of the most important animals to own. Many different kinds of cattle are shown in artwork found in Egypt. Cattle pulled carts and plows to till the fields. Cattle were also used in religious ceremonies as sacrifices. The cattle were decorated with flower wreaths and marched to the temple. After the animal was killed, the meat was then eaten by the priests of the temple. Other animals kept by farmers included sheep, goats, pigs, and ducks. Sheep provided milk and wool. Goats provided meat, milk, and leather. Pigs were used to trample down the fields after the harvest. Farms were busy places for animals.

Ancient Egyptians loved to hunt and fish. Most of the time, it was for fun. Sometimes, it was to provide food. The Nile River was an important hunting location. There they would hunt crocodiles and hippos and go fishing. Fish were a staple in the diet of many Egyptians. The Nile was home to many species of fish, including catfish, carp, and perch. Men of ancient Egypt also hunted in the desert. They sought birds, hyenas, lions, and elephants for sport. They also hunted wild gazelles and desert hares for meat. One pharaoh bragged of killing one hundred lions! Hunting was a favorite pastime in ancient Egypt.

Egyptians had great imaginations. Works of art depict make-believe animals the Egyptians believed existed. Leopards with long necks, winged giraffes, two-headed bulls, and winged griffins are frequently pictured in tombs. Some of these make-believe animals became gods with evil intents.

From make-believe, to pets, to livestock, animals were an important part of the culture of ancient Egypt.

## Animals of Ancient Egypt

**Questions**

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- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Which type of animal was the most important farm animal?
- A. monkey
  - B. cattle
  - C. sheep
  - D. pig
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Which kind of animals were mummified?
- A. pets
  - B. wild animals
  - C. livestock
  - D. none of the above
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Bastet was the \_\_\_\_\_ goddess.
- A. cat
  - B. dog
  - C. sheep
  - D. monkey
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Pigs were used on farms to plow the fields.
- A. true
  - B. false
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Which animals did ancient Egyptians hunt for sport?
- A. lions
  - B. hyenas
  - C. elephants
  - D. all of the above
  - E. A and C only
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Which animals did hunters take with them on hunting expeditions?
- A. pigs and goats
  - B. monkeys and cats
  - C. cats and dogs
  - D. dogs and cattle
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Where did the ancient Egyptians go to hunt?
- A. the Nile River
  - B. the desert
  - C. the forest
  - D. all of the above
  - E. A and B only
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Make-believe animals sometimes became gods with good intents.
- A. true
  - B. false

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**9-Ancient Egyptians loved to keep cats and dogs as pets. Why do you think Egyptians kept them as pets? Support your answer using your own knowledge and experiences.**

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**10-Draw a picture of a make-believe animal from ancient Egypt. Write a description of this animal. What kind of god is this animal? What powers does this god have? Why did you give this god these powers?**

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