

Religion in South Africa

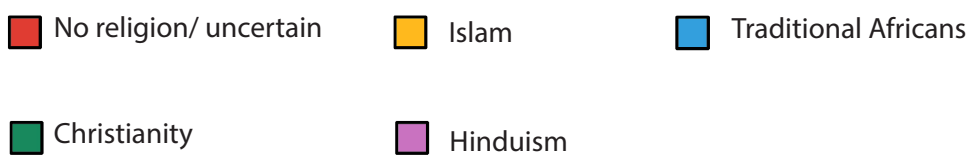
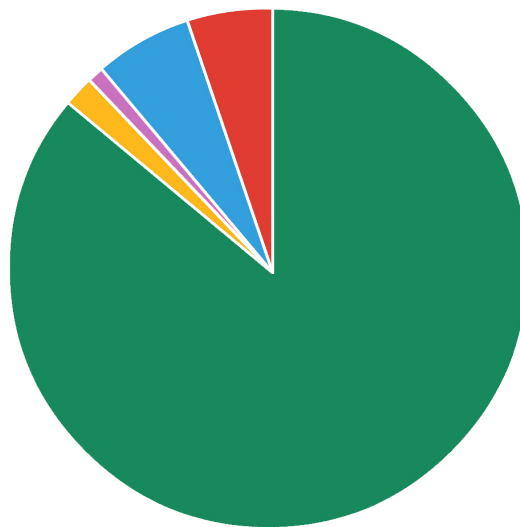
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Respecting Others' Religions

Religion is the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power that most people refer to as God or different gods. In South Africa, there are many different religions and whilst we may believe something different to the person next to us, we can still respect their beliefs and choose to get along with them and build our country together.

You can see the main religions in South Africa shown in the pie chart below:

Percentage



Christianity is the major religion as 86% of South Africans consider themselves to be Christian. This is followed by traditional African religions making up 5.4% of South Africans. Almost 2% of South Africans are Muslim and almost 1% are Hindu. A very small percentage of South Africans are Jewish. Over 5% of South Africans say that they do not follow any particular religion.

(Source: Statistics South Africa, 2015)

<https://bit.ly/37AJHRI>

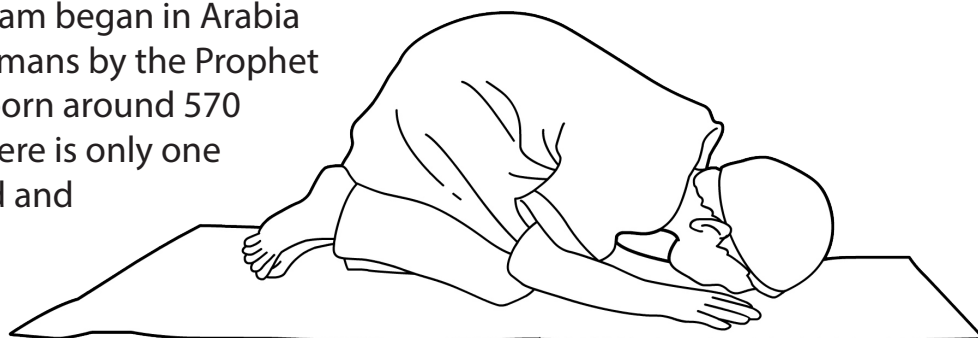
Christians believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and they follow his teachings. They believe that God sent his Son to earth to save people from being punished for the things they do that are wrong (sins). Jesus did this for all people when he was crucified. He died on a cross as punishment for saying that he was God's son. Christians believe that Jesus came alive again a few days after his death, proving that he was indeed God's son, and this is why they celebrate Easter. Christians follow the Bible and they worship God in churches.

Most Christians believe that when they die, they go into God's presence in Heaven forever. Many Christians also believe in Hell where people who don't believe in Christ or those who are sinners, are punished.



In many traditional African religions, people believe that there is a supreme God who created the world and also a number of spirits who mostly live in nature including animals, water and the earth. Ancestral spirits - the spirits of dead ancestors - are to be honoured, and sometimes sacrifices are made to the ancestors such as food or drinks or even live animals. It is also believed that traditional healers can provide herbs and remedies to heal the sick and can tell someone's future by throwing bones to see where they fall.

Muslims believe that Islam began in Arabia and was revealed to humans by the Prophet Muhammad who was born around 570 A.D. Muslims believe there is only one God, Allah, who created and rules over everything. They worship Him in mosques and read scriptures from The Qur'an. Muslims are expected to pray five times a day and to give a fixed amount



of their money to charity. They also stop eating during the hours of daylight in the month of Ramadan in order to focus on their spiritual lives. This is called fasting. Muslims believe that when someone dies, their soul goes on to live in the afterlife which may be Heaven or Hell or a sleeping state until a great resurrection of all the souls happens.



Hinduism is based on the texts of the ancient people who settled in India around 1500 BCE. It is a religion of many gods with one supreme being who created all the other gods to be his helpers. Hindus believe that God is in each person waiting to be discovered. They believe in reincarnation which means that a person is reborn in a different form after death.

Finally, Jewish people believe in one God who wants people to behave in ways that are fair and kind because each person is made in the image of God and should be treated with respect. Their laws and teachings come from the Torah which is the first five books of the Hebrew Bible and they worship in places called synagogues.



Instructions / Questions

1. Colour in the different pictures that represent aspects of each religion
2. Do you follow any of the religions mentioned above and if so, which one?

3. Write down the names of the religion of three people that you know.

Name of person	Their Religion
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____