

What significant beliefs do origin stories reveal?

Please read pages thirty two and thirty three to answer the following questions.

1. Societies have been sharing oral stories for thousands of years. Ancient Egyptians believed that before time began, the world was a swirling chaos of water. From the water rose the deity Atum, whose name means “the complete one.” Atum gave birth to many creations, including earth. The painting at the top of page 33 depicts the ancient Egyptian belief that Nut, the goddess of the sky, swallowed the Sun every evening and gave birth to it again in the morning.

What phenomenon does the story in the painting explain?

2. Why would explaining this phenomenon be significant for ancient Egyptians?

3. The ancient mural at the top of page 32 shows the god Khnum. Egyptians believed that Khnum looked after the Nile River. People believed that Khnum used a potter’s wheel and clay from the Nile to mold the bodies of human children. Khnum then placed the body of a child in the mother’s womb and gave the child a spirit.

What phenomenon did this story try to explain?