

Name: _____

Date: _____

Santeria and Voodoo

When African slaves were imported to America, they were taught Christianity, but some people continued to hold their traditional beliefs. The result was a blending of traditional West African beliefs with Christianity. Today, many Afro-American folk religions continue to be practiced in the Caribbean, particularly among the poor and less educated people. They include Voodoo in Haiti, Santeria in Cuba, Shango in Trinidad, and Kuminia or Pocomania in Jamaica.

The Afro-American folk religions emphasize magical practices designed to bring good luck to their devotees or harm to their enemies. Ceremonies often include the ritual sacrifice of animals. The religions worship the spirits of the dead, but the spirits given the names of Christian saints. This blending of beliefs allowed the

Africans to retain their native faith while appearing to convert to Christianity.

The folk religions also provide an additional function, particularly in the remote sections of Haiti. Many practitioners of the religions are able to use tropical plants to relieve pain and cure illnesses. This is the only medical care available to some people.

Many people of the Caribbean profess to be Christians, but feel comfortable with the rituals of the folk religions. In 1998, Pope John Paul II visited Cuba, where he urged Catholics to reject the practice of Santeria. In addition to the Caribbean, the folk religions are also practiced in American cities with large Caribbean populations. They include New Orleans, Miami, New York City, and Los Angeles.

Fill in the Blanks

Santeria and V_____ are folk r_____ practiced in the C_____. They are known as A_____ -American religions because they blend t_____ beliefs of A_____ with C_____. The folk r_____ are generally p_____ among the p_____ and less e_____ people of the Caribbean. The Afro-American f_____ religions stress m_____ practices that bring good l_____ to their *f_l_owe_s and b_____ luck to e_____. Ceremonies often include the r_____ sacrifice of a_____. The r_____ worship the s_____ of the d_____, but the spirits are often given the names of C_____ saints. Many devotees of the r_____ are able to use tropical p_____ to relieve p_____ and cure i_____.

Many Ch_____ of the C_____ feel c_____ with the r_____ of the f_____ religions. Pope John Paul II urged C_____ to reject S_____ when he visited C_____ in 1998. In addition to the West *I_____, the A_____ -American f_____ religions are also p_____ in A_____ cities with many people from the C_____. They include M_____, New O_____, Los A_____, and N_____ York C_____.

Answer in Complete Sentences

*In addition to any spiritual benefits, how are practitioners of the Afro-American folk religion able to help people in remote regions of the Caribbean?

*This is a higher order learning question. You must answer the question to the best of your ability, but any reasonable answer will be graded as correct.