

The Book of Initia, Chapter Eight

Self-Test

Famous Witches & Magicians



Helena Petrovna Blavatsky
1831 - 1891

Born in Southern Russia, daughter of a novelist, granddaughter of a princess who was also a writer, she came to be known as Madame Blavatsky. She is known as one of the most controversial figures of the nineteenth century. Her contribution to modern esotericism is inestimable and may best be summed up in this quote:

... Madame Blavatsky ... stands out as the fountainhead of modern occult thought, and was either the originator and/or popularizer of many of the ideas and terms which have a century later been assembled within the New Age Movement. The Theosophical Society, which she cofounded, has been the major advocate of occult philosophy in the West and the single most important avenue of Eastern teaching to the West. - J. Gordon Melton, Jerome Clark and Aidan A. Kelly, editors, New Age Almanac, Detroit, Michigan, Gale Research Inc., 1991, p. 16.

The objects of The Theosophical Society are the same today as they were in the beginning.

1. to form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color.
2. to encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.
3. to investigate unexplained laws of Nature, and the powers latent in man.

She is one of the cornerstones of modern occult theory. Certainly, this course would not be possible without her contribution. Her philosophy was shaped by extensive travels, beginning at age eighteen, to Turkey, Egypt, Greece, Cyprus, Syria, Japan, the West Indies, Ceylon, India, Kashmir, Tibet, Canada, the U.S., Mexico, South America, Italy, France, Germany, England, The Caucasus, The Balkans. Her amazing journeys included shipwreck and crossing the Rockies in caravan in 1854.

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SELF-TEST INSTRUCTIONS:

Take this self-test at your leisure.

Do not look at the answers until the entire test is complete. The test does not need to be completed at one sitting or during any time frame, but you must finish before you look at the answer section.

If you do not know the answer to a question, leave it blank and proceed to the next.

STUDYING FOR THE TEST:

It would not benefit you to study for the test because the result would be information committed to short-term memory and short-term memory is not our goal.

BENEFITTING FROM THE TEST:

The only way to benefit from this test is to take it without cheating the instructions. The point is to learn what you know **and** what you *don't* know. The results of the test will reveal areas of strength and weakness. If you discover that you have missed a detail or underlying concept, this check point gives you a chance to fill in the holes before we proceed.

I recommend that you do not proceed until you are able to answer the questions with confidence and without reference.

ANSWERS: For those of you who want to print out the lesson, I have left extra room for writing your answers and making notes.

The test begins here.

It consists of two sections. True or False is self-explanatory. Short Essay may be anything from one sentence to three paragraphs.

Section I: True or False

Section II: Short Essay

Section I: True or False

1. Witches prefer to perform magick in spirit (ethereal body) rather than physical form.
2. Seven is the ideal number of times you should chant a rhyme or quatrain.
3. You must have a cauldron to practice Witchcraft.
4. If your psyche and your perspective are healthy, you will find that you do not need to perform Spells of Binding often.
5. Once you have set up a property protection spell, you will not need to repeat the exercise so long as you live in that same place.
6. A sigil converts words that describe the object of a spell into a symbol for that spell.
7. Developing a relationship with a spirit guide is a prerequisite to astral travel.\
8. Astral travel is easier at night.
9. The astrological characteristics of magickal personality are determined by one's Sun Sign.
10. A physical reaction to magick such as vibrating or tingling is an indication that you have tapped the Source.

Section I: True or False (cont'd.)

11. You cannot become an Adept without mastering astral travel.
12. A moon mirror is used for the purpose of repelling evil.
13. The faculty through which you receive magickal, or intuitive, messages looks and feels the same as imagination.
14. The term “esbat” means a romp in the woods with The Devil.
15. It is unnecessary to make choices regarding spell work because your magickal resources are without limits.
16. Casting with a coven will produce bigger and better results than casting as a solitary.
17. You should leave a small gap in your Circle so that Elementals can escape.

Section II: Short Essay

1. What role do reflective surfaces play in magick?
2. When would you plan a ritual working using Circle magick and when would you enclose the Circle within a sacred triangle?
3. For what type of spell would you use a four compass point template for your Circle (north, east, south, west) and when would you use a five pointed pentagram?
4. Describe the “push-pull” system.
5. What is a Witch’s Rosary?
6. You are performing a spell of evocation and become frightened, alarmed or suspicious. What is your “failsafe” to end the spell abruptly, without incident or consequences?
7. What is your ethereal body?
8. Are the gods actual entities who exist independently or are they simply a way to name, identify and express archetypes of human personality?

Section II: Short Essay (cont'd.)

9. What is a Heptagon Ward?

10. The principle that “like attracts like” expresses the essence of what subset of magick?

11. Why is magick space cast as a Circle as opposed to a square, rectangle or random shape?

12. Why is self-awareness so critical to a successful practice of magick?

13. Why are there few absolutes in magick?

The test ends here.

**The next section contains the ANSWERS.
Do not proceed until you have answered the questions.**

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Section I: True or False **ANSWERS**

1. Witches prefer to perform magick in spirit (ethereal body) rather than physical form?
FALSE. While some Witches become skilled in the performance of certain specialized magickal tasks in spirit form, Witches, in general, are comfortable in physical and enjoy the physical aspects of communing with Earth's elements.
2. Seven is the ideal number of times you should chant a rhyme or quatrain.
FALSE. The ideal number of times is nine. Nine is one of a Witch's Arts most magickal numbers. The square root of nine is three which is sacred to Witches who believe in the Rule of Three. If I want to give a spell extra boost I include the phrase three times three in my chant.
3. You must have a cauldron to practice Witchcraft.
FALSE. Your mind is the only tool you *must* have.
4. If your psyche and your perspective are healthy, you will find that you do not need to perform Spells of Binding often.
TRUE. In fact, you may never need to exercise this skill, but, at the very least, you would use it rarely and as a last resort.
5. Once you have set up a property protection spell, you will not need to repeat the exercise so long as you live in that same place.
FALSE. Barrier Spells for protection are subject to rapid entropy and must be given a booster whenever you sense the energy weakening.
6. A sigil converts words that describe the object of a spell into a symbol for that spell.
TRUE. A sigil is a unique work of art made by using the first letter of each word of a sentence or letters from a single word eliminating repeated letters.

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Section I: True or False **ANSWERS** (cont'd.)

7. Developing a relationship with a spirit guide is a prerequisite to astral travel.
TRUE.

8. Astral travel is easier at night.
TRUE.

9. The astrological characteristics of magickal personality are determined by one's Sun Sign.
FALSE. Witchcraft is aligned with the energies and movements of the Moon. It is your Moon Sign that reveals information about your magickal personality traits.

10. A physical reaction to magick such as vibrating or tingling is an indication that you have tapped the Source.
TRUE. It does not happen often which makes it all the more precious.

11. You cannot become an Adept without mastering astral travel.
FALSE. Witches may be masters of accomplishment in a variety of specialized areas. Astral travel is a skill that is optional and not mandatory.

12. A moon mirror is used for the purpose of repelling evil.
FALSE. Moon Mirrors are used for scrying (divining by gaze).

13. The faculty through which you receive magickal, or intuitive, messages looks and feels the same as imagination.
TRUE. The part of the brain that imagines is the same as the conductor of magickal or intuitive messages which is why it can be hard to learn to trust them.

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Section I: True or False **ANSWERS** (cont'd.)

14. The term “esbat” means a romp in the woods with The Devil.

TECHNICALLY TRUE. It is an old French word meaning frolic or romp. It was used during the Witch Trials to mean cavorting with Satan. Modern Wiccans adopted it and adapted it to mean full moon ritual. (Traditional Witches would call this a Full Moon Sabbat instead.)

15. It is unnecessary to make choices regarding spell work because your magickal resources are without limits.

FALSE. Your ability to cast is finite. If you’re doing it right you are burning personal resources when you cast. Complete replenishment requires nothing more than rest in between.

16. Casting with a coven will produce bigger and better results than casting as a solitary.

FALSE. A group chant for a common purpose such as the greening of the Earth may bolster that energy and be beneficial. But, serious magick for personal results, requires intensity of focus. Perhaps you can control your thoughts for a few minutes without having your mind wander to your grocery list or the bank teller’s purple hair, but what about the person standing next to you in Circle? The energy responds to them as well.

I have a personal fantasy about someday being privileged to sit in a Circle of Witches who have transcended envy and ego or are able to set it aside for an hour for a common good or purpose. Unless and until you can be certain of that, I recommend you engage with others of like mind socially, but save the real magick times of solitude.

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Section I: True or False **ANSWERS** (cont'd.)

17. You should leave a small gap in your Circle so that Elementals can escape.

FALSE. When you enclose your Circle within a sacred Triangle, you should leave a small gap in the Triangle so that the Elemental can leave when asked to go. The Circle should be sealed tight.

Section II: Short Essay **ANSWERS**

1. What role do reflective surfaces play in magick?

Reflective surfaces are magick expressed in three important ways.

1. A reflection is the element of Water whether liquid or not.

2. A reflection may catch and absorb full moon afterglow and consequently become a magickal tool.

3. Reflections sometimes serve as revolving-door gateways to other dimensions or modes of being. As a result of this phenomenon, natural Witches may be drawn or repelled by such a surface on occasion, but both conditions should be approached with caution and regarded as potentially hazardous. Attraction tells very believable lies.

2. When would you plan a ritual working using Circle magick and when would you enclose the Circle within a sacred triangle?

A Circle is the standard for the practice of Witchcraft. Nothing more is needed unless you plan to invoke or evoke nonhumans. In that case, the area outside the Circle, but within the boundaries of the triangle is a safety precaution. It provides an area for containment. You may engage the entity in a limited way without giving it free access to you or our world-at-large.

3. For what type of spell would you use a four compass point cornerstone template for your Circle (north, east, south, west) and when would you use a five pointed pentagram?

In the final analysis you will use what works best for you. My general rule of thumb is compass points for manifestation of tangible things and pentagram for attracting essences, protection or reversing/repelling.

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Section II: Short Essay **ANSWERS** (cont'd.)

4. Describe the “push-pull” system.

The “push-pull” system refers to using the waning and waxing energies of the Moon efficiently and to best advantage. The waxing energy is used to attract that which you want. The waning energy is used to repel or deconstruct blocks or barriers that may form obstacles to getting what you want.

5. What is a Witch’s Rosary?

A length of cord with twenty-seven, moveable beads which may be manually slid along the cord when chanting.

6. You are performing a spell of evocation and become frightened, alarmed or suspicious. What is your “failsafe” to end the spell abruptly, without incident or consequences?

You throw a handful of dried parsley on the fire and say the word, “DESINO!” with authority.

7. What is your ethereal body?

The essence of your spirit. When detached from your physical body it will look like a filmy, shadow version of yourself so long as you are corporeal.

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Section II: Short Essay **ANSWERS** (cont'd.)

8. Are the gods actual entities who exist independently or are they simply a way to name, identify and express archetypes of human personality?

The short answer is, "Who knows?" The gods may be:

a.) actual, independent entities

b.) a way to name, identify and express archetypes

c.) This is not a trick question, but the third option is tricky. It is also the most likely of the three options to be true. The third answer is that the gods are as real as you make them meaning that we, as Witches or Magicians, may call non-beings into being by invocation. The magick is in the belief. The stronger the belief, the more likely are proofs by manifestation and phenomena.

9. What is a Heptagon Ward?

See Book of Novicia, Chapter Ten.

10. The principle that "like attracts like" expresses the essence of what subset of magick?

Sympathetic Magick.

11. Why is magick space cast as a Circle as opposed to a square, rectangle or random shape?

In honor of the Moon and its governance of magick.

Section II: Short Essay ANSWERS (cont'd.)

12. Why is self-awareness so critical to a successful practice of magick?

The purpose of magick should be to enhance your experience of life in a body. Enhancement may mean happiness, fulfillment, accomplishment and the satisfaction of reaching your potential whatever it may be. Succinctly put, this is self-actualization.

It is highly unlikely that self-actualization means acquiring a Ferrari although it could be possible, I suppose. What I do know for sure is that magick must be given very specific and concrete direction in order to help you reach self-actualization. A goal of "happiness" will fall completely flat because it is random to the point of meaning nothing. You must be able to point your power directly at something -- take aim and mean it! You can take aim at something you don't really want or need, but you can never *mean* it in an authentic way and magick requires both authenticity and passion; meaning that you can't be emotionally detached or blase about the outcome.

For magick to be useful to you, you must know what you *really* want which requires advances studies in self.

Section II: Short Essay **ANSWERS** (cont'd.)

13. Why are there few absolutes in magick?

The answer can best be expressed as one of the keys in Novicia, Chapter Eleven.

“Magick is like a perfume or essential oil. It mixes with the wearer’s personal chemistry to become unique to each individual.”

Magick takes on the unique flavor of the individual who is accessing the power. Generalizations won’t work in actual practice because something in the Witch’s or Magician’s background, genes or personality will require more of this, less of that or none of a particular thing. Our individuality is never more confirmed than in the practice of Witchcraft.

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Initia, Chapter Nine.

Next time we will delve deeper into theory, the use of herbs and oils in magick and touch on glamour technique.