

<b>Year Group: 4</b>	Worldview: Hindu Dharma (Hinduism)
<b>Strand:</b>	Beliefs & Questions - Theology
<b>Key Question:</b>	How do Hindus understand who God is?
<b>Focus of study:</b>	Qualities of God and the role of Murtis
<b>Background information for teachers:</b>	
<p><u>What is Hindu Dharma (Hinduism)?</u> The Hindu religion covers a wide range of beliefs from the Indian sub-continent, which has spread across the world.</p> <p><u>Do Hindus believe in one God?</u> Hinduism appears to be, and had often been classed as a polytheistic religion (many Gods), but most Hindus actually believe that there is one supreme Deity or God – Brahman. All the other deities are part of Brahman, different ways of understanding the all-encompassing nature of God.</p> <p><u>What is the Trimurti? What is the Tridevi?</u> The Trimurti is Brahma – the creator, Vishnu – the sustainer / protector and Shiva – the destroyer. The aum/om symbol, representing the sound that created the universe consists of the same three elements and is often chanted in prayer. Each member of the Trimurti has a consort, with her own special characteristics and they are called the Tridevi. The Tridevi consists of Saraswati, Laksmi and Parvati.</p> <p><u>What are Murtis?</u> Murtis are the colourful figures and pictures of the deities found at Hindu shrines and temples. These figures usually form the focus for prayer, as they are believed to be filled with the spirit of the God they represent. Each Murti represents one of the deities and are identifiable by the symbols surrounding them as well as certain physical features.</p> <p><u>What are avatars?</u> Many of the deities are believed to have come to earth in human and animal forms. Vishnu for example has appeared in 9 avatars, including Rama and Krishna and a 10<sup>th</sup> is expected – a rider on a white horse.</p> <p><u>How do stories help Hindus understand God?</u> There are many stories about the various deities and their avatars, which Hindus take as a whole to help them understand God and the world. But as with all stories there are different interpretations and in different parts of India there are varying traditions and practices.</p> <p><u>What do Hindus believe about creation?</u> Creation story – this is not the 1<sup>st</sup> incarnation of this universe and it will not be the last. It forms a circle of creation and destruction and recreation. This information is needed as base for the Year 6 unit about reincarnation.</p> <p><u>What qualities does the Hindu God have and what symbols are used?</u> *The belief that there is <b>one God, but in many forms</b> is often represented by the symbol of a <i>pomegranate</i>. One fruit with many pieces inside. *The belief that <b>God is in everything</b>, including water, stones, the earth and all people accounts for following: the vegetarianism of most Hindus; and the traditional greeting Namaste, which recognises God in the person to whom it is addressed. *The belief that <b>God is everywhere</b>, but unseen is often represented by the symbol of <i>salt water</i>. You can taste the salt and know it is there, but you cannot see it. *Incense – This is used during prayers and is offered to God. The smell symbolises the presence of God. *Aum/ om symbol – This is a sound and a written word. It is the first syllable in any prayer. It symbolises the universe and the three aspects of God – <b>creator, preserver and destroyer</b>.</p>	

\*Murtis – These are pictures or statues that represent the different forms of the one God. They are believed to embody God and so are treated with the respect given to God. They can represent the different qualities of the one God – **wisdom, kindness, creator, destroyer, preserver...**

\*Lotus flower – this represents **creation** and is often linked to Brahma and Lakshmi. Brahma emerged from a Lotus flower during creation.

Pronunciation Guide:

Hinduism – hin-doo-i-zm

Hindu – hin-doo

Brahman – braa-muhn

Trimurti – try-mor-tee

Tridevi – try-dev-ee

Murtis – mor-tee

Brahma – braa-muh

Vishnu –vish-noo

Shiva – shee-va

Saraswati – sa-ruh-swo-tee

Lakshmi – luhksh - mee

Parvati – paa-vuh-tee

Aum/om - om

<p>Prior learning:</p>	<p><u>God and Qualities of God</u>  <u>Reception</u>                  Who are Christians and what do they believe?                  *This will teach the concept of a God and the quality of <b>caring</b> for people as believed by Christians.  <u>Year 1</u>                  Why do most Christians call God ‘Creator’?                  *This will add the quality of <b>creator</b> to God as believed by Christians.                  What do different Jew believe about God?                  *This will teach that there is <b>one God</b>, he is a <b>creator</b> and he <b>sets rules</b> for life as believed by Jews.  <u>Year 2</u>                  How do Christians find out what God is like?                  *This will add the qualities of God being <b>loving, kind, just, Lord, King and Creator</b>.  <u>Year 3</u>                  What do Muslims believe about God and where did Islam Start?                  *This will teach that there is <b>one God</b> called <b>Allah</b> and Muhammad was his prophet. It will teach the <b>99 names</b> and so qualities of Allah as believed by Muslims.  <u>Year 4</u>                  Who do Christians believe Jesus is?                  *This teaches that Jesus is one part of the <b>Trinity</b> as believed by Christians.</p>
<p>Building Blocks:</p>	<p>Many Hindus believe in one God, Brahman.                  Brahman is in everything and everywhere.                  There are many Murtis that express different aspects of Brahman.                  Many Hindus see Murtis as helping them to focus on different aspects of God.</p>
<p>Outcomes:</p>	<p><b>Pupils will be able to describe some of the qualities of the God as understood by Hindus.</b>                  Pupils will know:                  *That the one God for Hindus is called Brahman and he is represented in many different forms / deities.                  *The names of the Trimurti (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva) and their consorts - the Tridevi (Saraswati, Laksmi and Parvati).                  *They will be able to describe characteristics of these deities and thus draw conclusions about qualities of the one God.                  *Key stories connected to the Trimurti, Tridevi and other deities and what they teach Hindus about the qualities of the one God.</p>

	<p>* Know some of the other symbols that are used for God (salt water, incense, pomegranate, aum/om) and what qualities they represent for the one God.</p> <p>* Know what the term avatar means in the Hindu faith and name some of the avatars for Vishnu.</p> <p>* That Hindus choose which deities they wish to focus on and that they will turn to different deities at different times and occasions. This comes in the form of the Murtis they worship.</p> <p>* How the various avatars for Vishnu link to the qualities of the one God.</p>
Suggested Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Murtis - lots of pictures available on the internet and physical statues available from school suppliers.</li> <li>• Salt water, Pomegranate, incense sticks, om symbol, om sound file, lotus blossom ...</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.reonline.org.uk">www.reonline.org.uk</a></li> <li>• Avatars of Vishnu</li> <li>• RE Today publication: Opening up Hinduism – section on Durga Murti</li> <li>• The heart of Hinduism website – <a href="http://iskoneducationalservices.org/HoH/">iskoneducationalservices.org/HoH/</a></li> <li>• BBC bitesize</li> <li>• BBC Teach – class clips</li> </ul>

### Engagement

What symbols are there for God or religion and what do they tell followers about the qualities of God?

\* Display various symbols (picture and/or artefacts) for God and religion from a variety of faiths without telling them what they are. Get the pupils to explore the symbols. They could do this silently by adding post-it note thoughts to the symbols or in pairs and small groups discussing the symbols. There could be key questions near the symbols to structure the comments / thoughts. After this, discuss the pupil's initial thoughts and questions they may have. Explain to the children how they all represent God in different faiths.

#### Possible symbols to use:

Christianity: cross, crucifix, alpha, omega, dove, Holy Trinity symbol, fish

Islam: star and crescent, Allah in Arabic

Judaism: Star of David, Torah, Mezuzah

Hinduism: salt water, pomegranate, incense stick, Murtis, om (sound and symbol) and lotus flower.

#### Possible Key questions:

Did you recognise any of the symbols? From where?

What do you think the symbols represent? Why?

Could you group the symbols together? For what reason?

Are some symbols more similar than others? Why?

Who uses the symbols? For what reason?

What do they symbols mean?

Could there be a way to link all the symbols together?

What is a symbol? Why do people use symbols?

Do any link with a particular faith or religion?

#### Possible follow up activities:

\* Get the pupils to sort the symbols into the different faiths. Can they discuss what they might mean? What they are used for?

\* You could get the pupils to create a list of words or a wordle to describe God, drawing their ideas from the symbols and their representations of God.

\* The pupils could create their own symbol for God and explain their reasons for it. What aspect of God does it represent? What do they think God should be like?

What symbols are there for the Hindu God and what do they teach Hindus about the qualities of God?

Then, focus on the symbols that are used in the Hindu faith only. Do they know any already? Can they discuss what qualities of God they represent? Explain the different meanings behind the symbols and how they all represent qualities of the One God in the Hindu faith.

#### Possible follow up activities:

- \*Get the pupils to match the symbols with the quality of God it represents.
- \*Have a diamond 9 with all the symbols or qualities of God represented by the symbols. Which symbols or qualities are most important and why. Which is least important and why?
- \*Create a word list or Wordle to represent the qualities of the Hindu God they have learnt about from the symbols.
- \*Get the pupils to create a new symbol for the Hindu God that represents one of the qualities they have learnt about so far.

### **Enquire and Explore**

#### Who is the Hindu God?

\*Could start by showing an image of the Holy Trinity and discussing what the symbol represents (the three parts of the Christian God). Can the pupils name the different parts? What do they know about the three parts? What are their roles? What are their characteristics? What are their qualities?

God the Father – creator, protector, powerful, wise, destroyer

God the Son (Jesus) – guide, teacher, human-like

God the Holy Spirit – everywhere, kind, powerful, messenger

\*Then, go on to explain that Hindus also believe that there is one God, but that God comes in different forms and representations. Explore the concept of the Trimurti and their consorts – The Tridevi. Look at the language of ‘Tri’ and its similarities with Trinity. Discuss the three main qualities represented by the Trimurti and Tridevi – creator, preserver and destroyer.

#### Possible follow up activities:

\*The pupils could research the 6 Gods.

\*Try to pair up the Trimurti and Tridevi counterparts.

\*Explore the shared symbols they have and what they mean.

\*Could list all the symbols that link to creator, preserver and destroyer.

\*Create a God to represent creator, preserver or destroyer using symbols they researched from the Trimurti and Tridevi.

#### What do stories teach Hindus about the qualities of God?

\*Explain how Hindus use stories to learn more about the qualities of the one God. Discuss with the pupils other stories they know that teach a lesson or moral. Could discuss non-religious stories such as fables (Aesop Fables – The Tortoise and the Hare) and/or religious stories such as parables (Jesus’ parables – The Good Samaritan)

\*Move onto Hindu stories and how they teach Hindus about God:

-The Blind Men and the Elephant. Could start by having a bag filled with an unknown object. Get different pupils to feel, but not look at one part of the object. Can they describe it to the class? What is it? Finally, reveal the object and discuss why they found it hard to identify the object. They could only feel one part. They didn’t have the whole picture. Read or show the pupil the story of ‘The Blind Men and the Elephant’. What is the meaning of the story? How does it link to the feely bag game we played? What quality of God does it teach Hindus? (One God that comes in many parts that look different. God is vast and too complicated for one person to know all of them).

#### Possible follow up activities:

\*Get the pupils to explore stories about the various Gods. They could read the stories and highlight parts that show a quality of God. They could act out the stories to the class and then discuss the quality of God it depicts. They could have written versions of the stories to compare with each other. They could discuss which stories show the quality best and why?

#### Possible gods and their stories:

-Brahma and the creation story (God as creator). When exploring about the creation story, you may need to explore how Hindus believe that creation is a cycle of creation, destruction and re-creation.

-Shiva and Daksha (God as destroyer).

-Vishnu as Vamana the dwarf defeating Bali, or Vishnu as Lord Krishna (God as protector).

-Ganesha (wisdom...)

#### What do Murtis teach Hindus about the qualities of God?

You could start by having a range of Murtis (pictures and statues) for the pupils to explore and discuss. You could have key questions around to support. What are they? Who are they? What colours have been used and why? What symbols can you see? What do they represent? Do you recognise any from previous lessons? Do they compare to other faiths? What might they be used for?

You could explore one of the Murtis, teaching the pupils that it represents the one God and discussing what form it has taken to represent one quality of that one God. Explore the symbols used within that Murtis to show that quality. Discuss how Hindus will use the Murtis in prayer. They will choose a Murtis for what they need at that time (wisdom, luck, protection...). Explain that Hindus will change what Murtis they pray to, depending on the time of the year or occasion. Try to not go into much detail about how Murtis are used in Prayer as this is cover in a later unit.

Possible follow up activities:

\*The pupils could explore one other Murtis and research about it. What is it called? What symbols does it have? What do they represent? What qualities of God does it show?

\*The pupils could explore two or three Murtis and compare and contrast them. What do they represent? When would a Hindu pray to them? For what reason?

\*The pupils could match Murtis with the symbols and qualities of God they represent.

\*The pupils could complete a diamond 9 for the Murtis ordering them by most useful quality of God, clearest symbols for God, most important quality of God...

\*They could describe something about a Murti that they find spiritual and inspiring.

What are Avatars and what do they teach Hindus about the qualities of God?

Show the pupils the word Avatar. Discuss what it means. Could show me... act it out... antonyms for it... synonyms for it... draw it.. You could use a dictionary and / or thesaurus to help explain the concept of Avatar.

You could use the following to help explain the concept of Avatar:

\*Use the clip in the film Avatar of the main character being transported into his Avatar body.

\*Use the concepts of God becoming main in the form of Jesus.

\*Gamer Avatars.

Then, explain how for Hindus, one aspect of God – Vishnu – visited the Earth in different Avatars (different forms). 10 in total, but only 9 have already visited and they are waiting for the 10<sup>th</sup>. You could show the images and names of the different Avatars and discuss their views. What do the images and name say about that Avatar? Why do you think they visited earth? What symbols could help you work this out? You could focus on one of the Avatars and read the story that matches them. Discuss what that Avatar did? (protect) How did they do it? What does this say about the one Hindu God?

Possible follow up activities:

\*The pupils could research one or more of the other Avatars' stories and find out what they did to protect the Earth and how this is shown in their image. What symbols are used? What form did they take and why?

\*They could compare the different stories and / or images to find similarities and differences.

\*They could focus on the one Avatar – Krishna as he has many stories about his visit to Earth.

**Evaluate**

How do Hindus understand who God is?

Get the pupils to reflect on all they have learnt about the Hindu God and their qualities:

- How do the Murtis help Hindus understand God?
- Why do Hindus think the Murtis are important?
- Does it matter that not all Hindus worship all the deities? Is it right to choose which aspects of God you worship?
- How many ways can you name how Hindus understand God?
- Which ways do you think are more important or less important?

**Reflect and communicate**

What is my view about God?

Get the pupils to reflect on their own view about God:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does it matter that different people have a different view of God? How does your view of God affect other people? Does it matter if you think that there is no God? How would this idea change things for yourself and others?</li> <li>• Do the symbols help you understand God? In what ways?</li> <li>• If you designed your own Murti, what would it look like? In what ways is it similar to the Hindu Murtis and in what ways is it different?</li> </ul>	
<p>Assessment opportunities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Create a poster / fact file about the Hindu God.</li> <li>*Great a new Murti to represent the Hindu God.</li> <li>*Write a reflection about the how Hindu's know God.</li> <li>*Write all, most, some Hindus believe... statements about the Hindu God.</li> <li>*Create a diamond 9 about the best ways Hindus know God.</li> <li>*Create a wordle to describe the qualities of the Hindu God.</li> </ul>
<p>Notes</p>	