

Year Group 4	Worldview: Christianity and Hinduism
Strand:	Reality and Truth (Philosophy)
Key Question:	How and why do people argue that some places can be spiritual?
Focus of study:	Buildings of worship and places of pilgrimage. How and why have they become spiritual places?
Background information for teachers:	
<p>The meaning of spirituality differs from one person to another. The dictionary definition says spirituality means relating to people's thoughts and beliefs, rather than to their bodies and physical surroundings. So, spirituality means being concerned with the spirit, soul or what is inside rather than the physical side. It is expressed in the way an individual feels comfortable. For instance, some feel spiritually connected when in churches or religious temples, while others may feel it when they are meditating. Some people say, spirituality involves the recognition of a feeling, sense or belief that there is something greater than myself; something more to being human than sensory experience and that the greater whole of which we are part of is cosmic or divine in nature. For some, it is having a relationship with God and religion. While for others, it is an appreciation of the world they live in. For some, it is often a conscious appreciation of the ultimate mystery that is life, the universe and everything in it. Spirituality is important because it deals with how people feel. Many humans think about keeping the physical body well, but should also think about what keeps them well spiritually too.</p> <p>What makes a place spiritual? A site can become spiritual if people view the location as worthy of respect and dedication, and/or is believed to be holy. This causes people to care for and protect the sacred spaces. People may also make pilgrimages to worship and celebrate in these places.</p> <p>Hindu dharma – Most Hindus worship at home with a shrine, at the mandir with arti and puja, but will also go on pilgrimages to places considered sacred. Hindu dharma accepts all ways of worship - ways of seeking the divine. Many Hindus believe all faiths lead to the same divine. When some Hindus attend churches, mosques and synagogues they feel no different than entering a Hindu temple. It is a faith of tolerance, oneness and universal consciousness (though this is not always lived out in practice – there are Hindu extremists who persecute those of different faiths and backgrounds. This is often political as much as religious.) Pilgrimage in Hindu dharma, as in other religions, is the practice of journeying to sites where religious powers, knowledge, or experience are deemed especially accessible. There is no requirement for Hindus to do pilgrimage, but it is rooted in ancient scriptures and some Hindus do make pilgrimages to grow spiritually.</p> <p>According to the holy scripts of Hindus, there are seven sacred cities called Sapta Puri, which you must visit to attain <i>Moksh</i> (salvation). Moksha means that you can skip the circle of life and death and attain Nirvana. The seven holy cities of Sapta Puri are Ayodhya, Mathura, Maya (Haridwar), Kasi (Varanasi), Kanchi (Kanchipuram), Avantika (Ujjain) and Dvaravati (Dwarka). These are also considered to be the holiest Hindu Teerths. Each city has a strong connection with Hindu deities.</p> <p>Christian – Christians worship at churches. There is no requirement on Christians to do a pilgrimage, but many Christians also visit places of importance to them such as places mentioned in the Bible, places connected to religiously important people and places connected to places of miracles. This helps them to grow spiritually. This is more common in Celtic forms of Christianity, with places such as Iona and Lindisfarne.</p> <p>Non-religious – Many people make journeys to places of interest e.g. homes of famous people such as Elvis's home 'Grace-lands' Tennessee.</p>	

<p>Famous tourist spots, natural beauty sites or historical significant places e.g., Machu Picchu, Peru. Ground Zero memorial for the 9/11 twin towers. Non-religious people also often complete pilgrimage walks even if they are not religious.</p>	
<p>Prior learning:</p>	<p>Hindus worship at home and in the mandir. Arti and Puja. Christians worship in churches. The role of the synagogue for Jews.</p>
<p>Building Blocks:</p>	<p>For many people there are places connected with their beliefs that are important to them. Different people recognise different places as spiritual. There isn't always agreement on what makes a place spiritual. Some people think that only what they can see is real. Learn that spiritual places can include places of worship, places of pilgrimage and can be different for different people.</p>
<p>Outcomes:</p>	<p>Name features of a church and a Mandir and explain reasons for the features. Name places of pilgrimage for Christians and for Hindus and why these places are important places of pilgrimage. Explain why people go on pilgrimage. Explain what people might do on a pilgrimage. Explain why some places are places of pilgrimage. Describe how churches and mandirs are built to be spiritual. Compare and contrast places of worship for Christianity and Hinduism Compare and contrast places of pilgrimage for Christianity and Hinduism. Explain how a place can become spiritual. Explain what could be a spiritual place for them and why.</p>
<p>Suggested resources:</p>	<p>https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zvrsv9q/video (useful for teacher's knowledge) https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-my-life-my-religion-hinduism-inside-hindu-temple Twinkl for ppts https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=o-s0mN5P8jo&t=2s Space-makers https://www.oxford.anglican.org/space-makers-the-contemplative-toolkit-for-schools.php Space-makers tool kit https://www.oxford.anglican.org/everyday-faith/contemplative-toolkit/</p>
<p>Engagement:</p>	<p>Show images of different churches and different mandirs. Sort them and discuss their differences and similarities. Who goes to them and why? How it makes them feel? What do you think it is about the buildings that makes people feel that way? Why do they think the buildings have different special features? e.g. churches built in the shape of a cross and with towers. Mandirs are seen as a place where heaven meets the earth so many mandirs are tall buildings which reach up into the sky. Buildings reflect the people who have build them and they have changed over time, but they are all designed in a special way to make people feel special or spiritual. Buildings can make people feel spiritual because of their magnificence and style. Examine how the features of churches, cathedrals and mandirs and explore how they make people feel and why?</p> <p>Activities Label the features of a church – windows, bell towers, cross shape, gargoyles, candles, statues, alter etc and consider the symbolism. Mention the fact that there are different styles of churches. Label the features of a mandir – often tall buildings, bell, murtis, shoe rack, flowers etc. Compare church and mandir - could use Venn diagrams.</p>

Does the building (church or mandir) make pupils and worshippers feel spiritual? (i.e. feeling of awe, thoughtful, reflective). What features of the building makes them (or people) feel spiritual? Is it the size of the building, beauty, statues, behaviour in buildings? e.g. respectful, thoughtful, contemplative, rituals, music or prayers. Is it because they go to the place with the intention of praying or being spiritual?

Are there any non-religious buildings that make people feel spiritual e.g. castles, museums, galleries, palaces, stadiums or ruins?

Also, many non-religious people can still feel spiritual in religious buildings too.

Pupils could draw and label their own ideal spiritual building.

What would it look like and why? What special features would the spiritual place have? e.g. art, statues or images. What would happen at that spiritual building? e.g. prayers, songs, speeches or readings from important books. Who would go to the spiritual building and how would it make them feel? Would the spiritual building be large, spartan and austere, made of marble, wood etc. or cosy, calm and comfortable with lots of material? What would make it a thoughtful place? Think of the effect on the senses e.g. smell and incense, songs, images or food.

Enquire and Explore:

Show videos and images of special places of pilgrimage and of beauty spots e.g. Lourdes, Canterbury, Compostela, Jerusalem, Varanasi or Machu Pichu. Ask them to sort them and then ask what they see. What does it make them think of? Why might people go to these places? How might people feel at these places? Ask pupils what they see. What connections can they make and what do they want to know or find out about. How does it make the pupils feel? Who do they think would like it and why?

What is special about these places? – Could get pupils to research some places of pilgrimage finding out where they are and why people go there.

Discuss the term pilgrimage – special type of journey to a special place with a purpose.

Each place is important for specific reasons. Usually, place of beauty or somewhere that has a connection to something important to people.

Look at different places of pilgrimage and reasons why they are special places of pilgrimage.

Usually, there is a connection to religion such as the birthplace of a spiritual leader, a place mentioned in a holy book or a place associated with miracles.

Christian –

- 1) Places mentioned in the Bible such as the Holy Land e.g. Mount Sinai where Moses got the 10 commandments.
- 2) Places mentioned in the New Testament e.g. Nazareth where Jesus grew up, Jerusalem where Jesus died, Bethlehem where Jesus was born, Lake Galilee.
- 3) Places associated with saints or miracles e.g. Lourdes in France (St Bernadette) or Santiago de Compostela in Spain where one of the apostles James is supposed to be buried. Canterbury in England – where St Thomas Becket is buried and also where one of the first purpose-built churches is still standing, Rome for Popes and St Peter, Lindisfarne and St Cuthbert.

Hindu –

- 1) Ayodhya – It is considered to be the birthplace of Rama.
- 2) Mathura – It is considered to be the birthplace of Lord Krishna.
- 3) Maya (Haridwar) – Home to a temple called Maya Devi Temple.
- 4) Kasi (Varanasi) - The land of Varanasi (Kashi) has been the ultimate pilgrimage spot for Hindus for ages as it is believed to be the oldest city in India. Hindus believe that one, who is graced to die, on the land of Varanasi would attain salvation and freedom from the cycle of birth and re-birth. It is also considered to be the home of Lord Shiva and Parvati. It is famous for its ghats (steps down to the River Ganges). The whole of the River Ganges is considered holy.

- 5) Kanchi (Kanchipuram) – Has a selection of divine temples.
- 6) Avantika (Ujjain) - Ujjain has deep-rooted connection with Lord Krishna as it is said that Krishna along with his elder brother Balram came to Ujjain to get their education by Muni Sandipani.
- 7) Dvaravati (Dwarka) - Dwarka, which is said to be the place where Lord Krishna spent his life after the assassination of King Kansa, it is another sacred destination in India to visit for mental peace. Dwarka depicts the tale of part of Krishna's life.

Could also mention or look briefly at other religions;

Islam – Haji – One of the pillars of Islam is that Muslims have to make at least one pilgrimage to Mecca in their lifetime. They dress in white and walk 7 times anti clockwise around the Kaaba, which is considered to be the holiest place of Islam.

Buddhism – Eight great places.

Judaism – Wailing (Western) Wall in Jerusalem.

Humanistic – (Non-religious) Retreats and places of natural beauty.

Activities:

Could have different places of pilgrimage around the room – pupils to find information like a scavenger hunt. Collect information cards and match them with reasons for making the pilgrimage and then sort them into religions e.g., Christian and Hindu.

Where else might people go to help them think about themselves or something that is important to them?

Take pupils to different places around school e.g. playground, forest schools or sensory gardens and they could say prayers or read passages there. How do pupils feel? Does it make a difference going to a different place to pray? Imagine taking a long journey to a place and how do they think they would feel?

Could make a visit to a church, mandir, cathedral and discuss how pupils feel there.

Evaluate:

Discuss why people go on pilgrimages.

What do they do on pilgrimage? How do they feel? What makes them feel that way? Is it the importance of the location? Is it the connection to their religion in some way? Is it the beauty of the place? Is it the fact that lots of people have travelled there too? Is it the feeling of community at the place? Is it the respectful feeling they feel there, by association to a religious belief?

Watch videos of people on pilgrimage to different places and discuss what they might have felt about the experience. If possible, interview someone who has been on a pilgrimage. See what difference it means to them.

How is a pilgrimage different from a holiday? Discuss differences.

Do you think they gain more by going somewhere a long distance away to worship? Does the journey add to the experience? Is it more meaningful if they travel with others? Are some places more important than others?

Activities

Could create a Venn diagram to compare the differences between tourism and pilgrimage.

Compare and contrast the similarities and differences between Hindu and Christian pilgrimage.

Discuss the idea that some people do not need to go into a church, mandir or on a pilgrimage to feel spiritual and that non-religious people can feel spiritual too.

Could create a poster to explain why people go to a specific place or generally why people go on pilgrimage. Order where you think the most important place to be spiritual is and discuss why.

E.g. you might say anywhere because God is everywhere.

You might say on a pilgrimage because you are closer to aspects of the religion.

You might say in a place of worship e.g. church or mandir because they have been specifically built for worship.

<p>Reflect and communicate:</p>	
<p>Reflect on the Big Question – How and why do people argue that some places can be spiritual?</p> <p>Do you have to be religious to go on a pilgrimage or can anyone go? Would you feel spiritual even if you were not religious or the site was not your own religion? Can you still gain from the experience? Where might you go? What might you do? How might you feel? Is there anywhere you think is a good place to go to be spiritual? Do you have to go anywhere special to be spiritual? Do you think it is important to have special places that make people feel spiritual? Why? Where do you go, or would you like to go to, when you want to feel quiet, calm, thoughtful, spiritual and why?</p> <p>Activities Draw, label or describe your ideal spiritual place. Make an advert for your spiritual place.</p> <p>Could we make a certain area of the school a spiritual place? How could we do it? What could we do to make it feel special? Think of rules we could have for the place. How could we make it special? Could we make it spiritual – is that possible?</p> <p>Plan where in the school we could have a spiritual place and what you would include in it and why?</p> <p>NB this is not specifically RE but may help pupils to understand what spirituality is. Could Introduce Space-makers to help pupils feel more spiritual and contemplative and includer parts. <i>Stilling – remember we are human beings not human doings.</i> <i>Filling – opening up to the flow of God’s life-bringing Spirit.</i> <i>Noticing – Recognising small details of life as signposts to personal and spiritual truths.</i> <i>Dwelling – How to make the Bible ‘come alive’ as you read it.</i> <i>Mending – Touching on some of the more difficult aspects of life.</i> <i>Blessing – Using the tree of life to consider how we can be blessed and be a blessing to others.</i></p>	
<p>Assessment opportunities:</p>	<p>Give pupils different pictures of different impressive buildings e.g. cathedrals, churches, mandirs, palace, stadiums and get the pupils to say or record which ones they think would make them feel spiritual and why? What features would affect them or would affect other people.</p> <p>Create your own spiritual place explaining what makes it spiritual.</p> <p>Create a poster explaining what makes a place spiritual and why it is important to be spiritual.</p>
<p>Notes</p>	<p><i>Space Makers</i> is a resource for schools and churches from the Diocese of Oxford. It is accessible to pupils and young people of all faiths and worldviews. It contains five contemplative practices that help schools and churches to embrace some of the ancient wisdom of the Christian tradition and assist pupils in navigating the world around them.</p>