

**Year 2 Unit 5:**  
**Title: Introduction**

## HINDUISM

**Week 1**

### **Learning Intentions:**

**AT1:** To know that Hinduism comes from India and is strongly influenced by this cultural link.

**AT2:** To make comments and ask questions about the material studied.

Background: To appreciate that India has contributed to our rich cultural diversity.

### **Assessment:**

AT1 L2: I can suggest meanings for religious actions and symbols, such as Hindus bathing in sacred rivers and/or the symbol of a coconut.

AT1 L3: I can make links between beliefs and sources, such as beliefs about the sacred River Ganges and the god Shiva.

AT1 L2: I can talk about some things in stories that make people ask questions and I can talk about what is important to me and to others in the class

AT2 L3: I can ask important questions about religion and beliefs, making links between my own ideas and those of others in the class.

### **Key Words:**

coconut  
Hindu  
Hinduism  
holy  
India  
ritual  
River Ganges  
River Indus  
sacred

### **Resources:**

Globe and map of India

Indian cultural artefacts, especially from pupils' and teachers' homes and local shops.

<http://home.freeuk.net/elloughton13/eday.htm>

*Lots of information, maps and video of Hindus bathing in the R.Ganges at Varanasi (Benares).*

A coconut – and something to open it safely with.

### **NB Note to teacher on Hinduism**

Encourage pupils to ask questions about Hinduism in this introductory lesson and jot them down. Don't worry if you can't answer them yet. Explain that Hinduism is a very old religion, the oldest of the main world religions and has had thousands of years in which to develop. As this unit progresses, hopefully the answers to these questions will emerge.

(For the teacher: Hinduism describes the many religious beliefs and practices that developed across the vast subcontinent of India – and has been influenced by invaders at various times. It is therefore a very complicated religion, with vast differences within it. Hinduism has so many religious scriptures that one person could not read them all in a lifetime! Unlike the Qur'an of Islam, which many Muslims learn by heart)

### **Activities:**

- Using a globe and map, show pupils where Hinduism comes from. Identify the main rivers: River Indus (from which the names 'India' and 'Hinduism' come) and the R.Ganges (called 'Mother Ganga' by Hindus because it is so important to them). (ATI)
- Background to the study of Hinduism:- Gather together anything that the class already knows about India eg. Indian food, textiles, dress, art and crafts, music, incense etc. Make a display. Help pupils to realize the Indian influences in multi-cultural Britain and to appreciate our rich cultural diversity.
- Explain to pupils that many aspects of Hinduism only make sense when we realize that this religion comes from India eg. importance of water and rivers in religious rituals because India is a very hot country and Indians depend on water for life. Therefore all rivers are sacred/holy for them. If possible, show a video clip of Hindus bathing in the sacred river Ganges. Encourage pupils to suggest reasons why Hindus perform these rituals eg. What are Hindus saying about God through these rituals? (That God gives life.) What might they feel like inside having performed these rituals? (Purified of their sins.) (ATI)
- Tell the story of powerful Shiva (a very ancient god) whose thick hair is said to have held back the force of the River Ganges from flooding the world. There is a legend that, during a terrible drought, people prayed to God to send down a river from heaven. God was afraid that the force of the water would crush the earth, until Shiva agreed to hold back the force of the water in his hair. Find a picture of Shiva with his long, thick black hair (Westerners often mistake him for a female deity, but look at his powerful body). (ATI)

*Contd.*

- Ask pupils to sit on the carpet in a circle and close their eyes. Pass a coconut round. Can they guess what it is? What does it feel like? Open the coconut and

show them the moist, silky, smooth, white inside. Explain that coconuts grow in many parts of India and are important in Hindu rituals eg. they may be offered at the temple, they are roasted on a bonfire at the New Year festival of Holi. They are a symbol of each one of us. Ask pupils to guess how. (We may be a bit rough on the outside, but we each have a pure spirit within.) (AT1/2)

**Year 2 Unit 5:  
One God or many?**

**HINDUISM**

**Week 2 Title:**

**Learning Intentions:**

**AT1:** To understand why Hindus have many deities.

**AT2:** To understand that people see us in different ways.

**Assessment:**

(AT1 on Hindu deities will be developed further next lesson)

AT2 L2: I can respond sensitively to questions about my own identity and that of others.

AT2 L3: I can identify my own idea of God and the influence this has on my life.

**Key Words:**

deity/ deities  
images  
murti – a Hindu  
image

**Resources:**

(You may want to find another version of the Indian story about the elephant and the blind men, as well as the one here.)

[http://www.noogenesis.com/pineapple/blind\\_men\\_elephant.html](http://www.noogenesis.com/pineapple/blind_men_elephant.html)

Resources for pupils to find pictures and names of a range of Hindu deities. These could be books or internet.

(Leave artefacts until next lesson.)

<http://hinduism.iskcon.com/index.htm>

*Useful information if you're new to Hinduism*

The Primary RE Series: Hinduism by Jan Thompson

**NB: Sensitivity:** Do not let Muslim pupils draw any images of God.

**Activities:**

- Introduction. Preferably, the teacher should show pupils photographs (eg as a Powerpoint presentation), of themselves in different roles eg. as teacher, mother, daughter, sister, cook, sportsperson etc. Or this can be done with an anonymous person or another person that pupils know in the school eg. the Vicar. The purpose is for pupils to understand that one and the same person can be seen in different ways. Pupils could then draw a quick picture of themselves

in their book and write around it the different persons that they are, as seen by different people at different times. (AT2)

- Tell pupils the story about the blind men who came across an obstacle in the jungle. One said it was a tree trunk. One said it was a snake. One said it was a mountain. One said it was a fan. One said it was a rope. But their guide, who could see, saw the elephant blocking their way. Ask pupils to guess which parts of the elephant felt like a tree trunk (its leg), a snake (its trunk), a mountain (its body), a fan (its ear) and a rope (its tail). This is another way of understanding that people experience God in different ways. (AT1)
- Explain that people see God in different ways eg. some picture God as a kindly helper, others 'see' God as a just judge. Some think of God as Creator. Some think of God as a healer etc.
- Explain that – because God is so great, Hindus believe that He cannot be shown in just one way – Hindus have many, many ways in which they show Him and show what He is like. This is why there are so many images of God in Hinduism. Hand out some pictures of Hindu deities (but not Ganesh) or display on IWB. Ask pupils to write some questions about the images in groups. These will be explored in the next lessons.
- Plenary. Explain that Hindus often have a favourite image of God, just as we may have a main idea about God (which we depicted earlier). Explain that Hindus use their images to help them worship God – a bit similar to the way that some Christians may use statues of Jesus or a symbol like the cross to help them to concentrate on God and worship Him. (AT1)

**Year 2      Unit 5:                    HINDUISM**  
**Weeks 3 and 4      Title: Ganesh and other deities**

**Learning Intentions:**

**AT1:** To learn how to decipher some of the meaning of Hindu images.

**AT2:** To respond to some of the ideas related to the image of Ganesh.

**Assessment:**

AT1 L2: I can suggest meanings for religious symbols.

AT1 L2: I can begin to show awareness of similarities between Hinduism and Christianity.

AT1 L3: I can begin to identify the impact religion has on the way Hindus live their lives.

AT1 L3: I can recognise some similarities between Hindu and Christian values, giving examples from the life and teaching of Jesus.

AT2 L2: I can explore what happens to myself and others with respect for their feelings

AT2 L3: I can make links between values and the way I live my life.

**Key Words:**

Ganesh (or Ganesha)

murti – a Hindu image of a deity

**Resources:**

Artefacts of the Hindu deity Ganesh – the elephant headed god eg. as pictures, cloth hangings or statues.

Provided: a black and white outline drawing of Ganesh to photocopy.

Information Sheet on Hindu images.

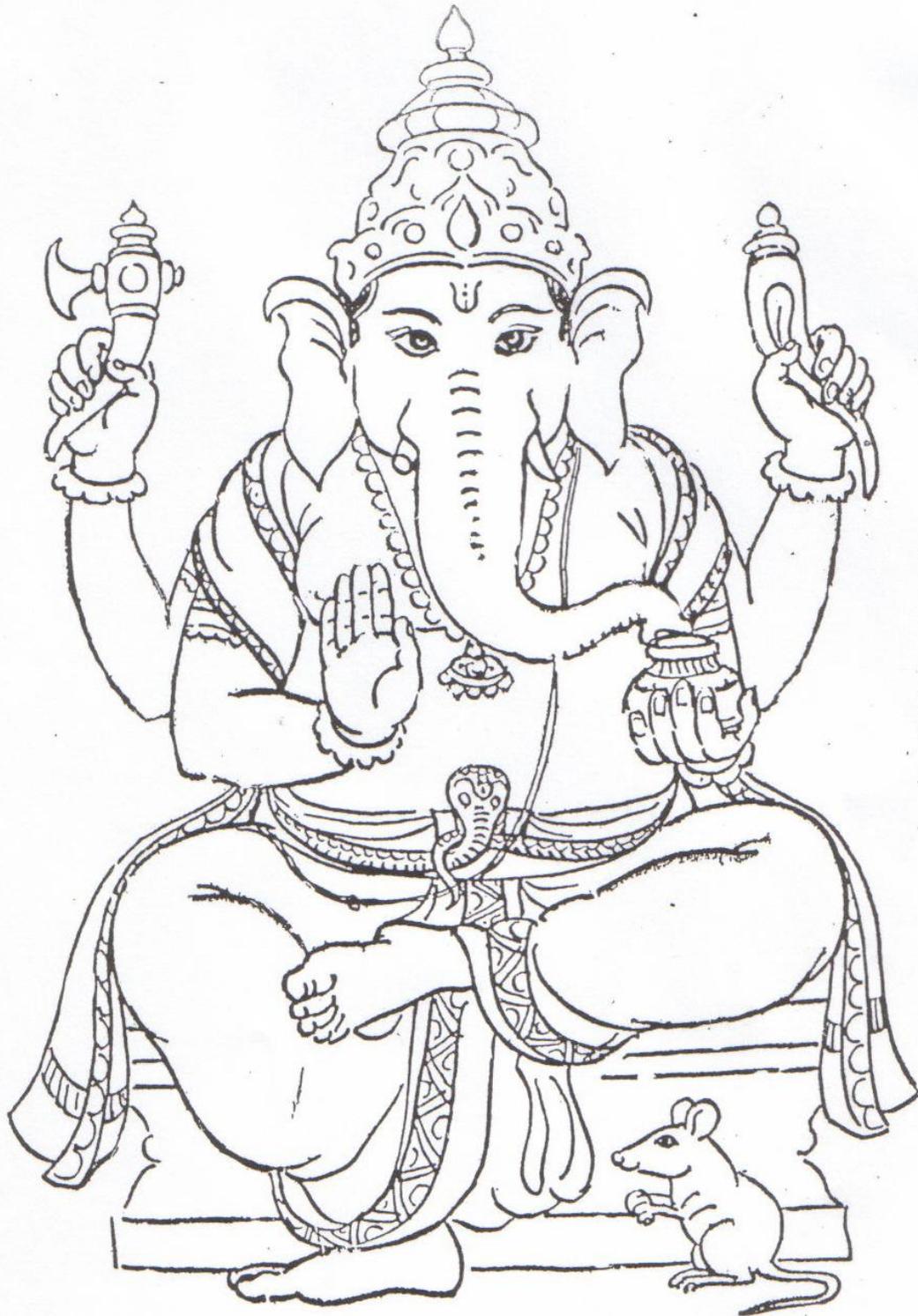
Religion in Evidence Hindu artefacts photopack – Jan Thompson

Bromley Primary RE Series: Hinduism by Jan Thompson, available from The RE Centre.

A story of how Ganesh got his elephant head.

## Activities

- In groups, explore an artefact of Ganesh and write a list of questions to ask about the artefact eg. Why has he got an elephant's head? What is he holding in his hands? (You could set targets of 6, 8 or 10 questions.) Pupils could guess what the answers might be. (AT1)
- Using the Information Sheet, the teacher should go through with the class some common symbols in Hindu artefacts, to see how many of the pupils' questions can be answered. In particular, notice how Ganesh is seated and identify the animal that accompanies him. Pupils could record some of the meanings of these symbols on an outline picture of Ganesh. (AT1)
- Tell the class a Hindu story of how Ganesh got his elephant head. Emphasise the importance of elephants in India and that they are held in high esteem. (AT1)
- Now focus on the rat or bandicoot that accompanies Ganesh. This shows that the almighty God is a friend of the small and despised. Ask pupils to suggest what this might teach Hindus about how they should treat each other (eg. All should be treated with respect: the little, the least, the lowest and the lost.) Who can they think of in another religion who teaches something similar? (Jesus – give examples.) (AT1)
- Now help pupils to explore what these values might mean in their own lives. Either take and discuss ideas from them eg. be a friend to someone on their own in the playground; choose someone to be in their team who might not normally be chosen. Or, in groups, give them different scenarios to act out, asking them to decide the outcomes if they follow these Hindu/Christian values. (AT2)
- Plenary: Draw the lesson together with a brief summary. Ask pupils to consider if what they have learnt will make any difference to the way they behave. Spend a few moments in quiet reflection on this. (AT2)
- For the following lesson, become 'detectives' looking at other deities in a similar way. In each case, ask pupils to consider if what they have learnt will make any difference to the way they behave. Spend a few moments in quiet reflection on this. (AT2)



- 1 Images may have many arms. This shows how powerful God is and how much he has to do.
- 2 Images may hold special things in their hands eg. a weapon to fight evil.
- 3 The hand positions are important. A hand may be raised in blessing, as if to say "Have no fear."
- 4 The head of the image may be in a circle of light (like a Christian halo). This shows that they are very special.
- 5 Images may have garlands of flowers around their necks. This is how Hindus worship them.
- 6 Colours have meanings too eg. red is for life and good luck.
- 7 Images are usually dressed in beautiful clothes and decorations to show how special they are.
- 8 They may be shown as a king or queen. They may be sitting with one leg tucked under them, known as 'royal ease.'
- 9 Most have a bird or animal with them. These also have meanings.

**Year 2      Unit 5:                    HINDUISM**  
**Weeks 5 and 6                    Title: Divali**

**Learning Intentions:**

**AT1:** To know how the Hindu festival of Divali is celebrated and to understand its symbolism and meaning.

**AT2:** To make links between values and commitments.

**Assessment:**

AT1 L2: I can tell the story of Divali and say what Hindus believe about Divali

AT1 L2: I can talk about the symbolism of Divali

AT1 L3: I can describe how Hindus celebrate Divali.

AT1 L3: I can begin to identify the impact religion has on the way Hindus live their lives.

AT2 L2: I can explore what happens to myself and others with respect for their feelings

AT2 L3: I can make links between values and the way I live my life.

**Key Words:**

diva (lamp)

Divali ('string of lights')

Rama and Sita

Lakshmi (goddess of good fortune)

**Resources:**

BBC Active *Celebrations and Special Times*:  
Divali

The story of Rama and Sita

Books on Divali

Artefacts: Divali cards, possibly an image showing Rama & Sita.

Divali boxes are available on loan from  
The RE Centre.

New year cards

**Activities:**

- Introduction:- Explain that just as Christians celebrate Christmas in mid-winter, so Jews celebrate Hanukkah, and Hindus and Sikhs celebrate Divali. All these, being mid-winter festivals, make a lot of use of lights. Ask pupils to think of all the different types of lights used at Christmas time (eg. coloured street lighting,

lights on the Christmas-tree, Christingle, candle-lit carol services in church .....).  
(ATI)

- Explain that 'divali' means 'string of lights'. Show or tell the story of Rama and Sita – and how they were welcomed back to their kingdom with rows of lights. (ATI) Explain that Hindus still decorate their homes, streets and temples with divas (lights) for Divali, although sometimes these are now coloured electric lights.
- Show the video of how Hindus celebrate Divali, including their preparations, gifts and cards. Look together at some Divali cards and identify the meaning of the symbols on them. Pupils could make their own traditional clay divas and put T-lights in them instead of purified butter and a cotton wick. They should be able to describe how these are used at Divali. (ATI)
- Focus on aspects of the Rama & Sita story that inspire good values in those who listen. You could divide the class into 6 groups: 2 each to think about Rama, Sita and Hanuman. List all the good things about them (eg. Rama didn't complain when he was sent into exile; Sita remained faithful to Rama; Hanuman put everything he had at God's service). (ATI) Discuss what we can learn from them.