

WHO IS A HINDU AND WHAT DO THEY BELIEVE?

Summary

You will begin to understand what a Hindu believes about gods and their importance. Through a focus on a few gods/goddesses you will learn that they believe there are different ways of looking at one single, powerful god.

You will also look at where and how Hindus worship and at one of the festivals (Holi) they celebrate.



Facts

1. Hindus may worship in a Temple/Mandir but they will also have a Shrine at home. Home worship is as important as collective worship at the Mandir.
2. There are many different Hindu gods and goddesses, all with their own specific qualities, but Hindus believe that all those gods and goddesses are just different ways of looking at the same single powerful god.
3. An image of a god or goddess is known as a murti. There will be many murtis in a Mandir but often only family specific ones on a shrine at home.
4. Murtis of gods and goddesses give clues about their qualities e.g. a lotus flower denotes purity, fire denotes power, beads denote prayer.
5. The sound made by Hindus at prayer is called Aum and is said to be the first sound of the universe. It is used in prayer as a sound of peace, power and strength.
6. Puja is the Hindu for prayer. Items such as a bell, incense, kum kum powder and a candle are all important parts of puja.
7. The festival of Holi is also known as the Festival of Spring or the Festival of Colour. It is celebrated in March, in the Hindu month of Phalgun.

Questions We Will Ask

1. Who is a Hindu and what do they believe?
2. What do Hindus believe about gods/goddesses?
3. Who are Hindu gods/goddesses and what do they represent?
4. Where and how do Hindus worship?
5. What is Holi and why is it important to Hindus?

Key Vocabulary

Places of Worship - Temple, Mandir, Shrine

Some Hindu Gods/Goddesses - Brahman, Shiva, Ganesh, Lakshmi (there are many more)

Worship - Puja, Murti, Diva Lamp, Kum-Kum Powder, Incense

Celebrations - Holi