Walk On Water

St. Paul's C of E VA Primary and Nursery School

RE Curriculum Coverage Year 5

Hinduism

How do questions about Brahman and atman influence the way a Hindu lives?

Key Vocabulary
arti
Atman
Bhagavad Gita
Brahman
deity
dilemma
divine
guru
moksha
monotheistic
murti
plural
puja
reincarnated
scripture

Key Knowledge
Hindus believe in Brahman (the one Supreme Being or cosmic principle) and Atman (the true self in each human).
Hindus believe that the **Atman** is eternal and indestructible and
Hindus live with very different ideas of God, but see each as part of something much bigger.
A Hindu's understanding of God is defined as pluralism, rather than polytheism.
Hindus worship several deities but affirm belief in one Supreme Being, Brahman.

INSPIRE

- Listen to and annotate the lyrics for 'Colours of the Wind' from Disney's 'Pocahontas'.
- What ideas underlie this song?
- What lessons is Pocahontas trying to teach John Smith? e.g. there is life in everything, all things are connected, we don't know everything, the world isn't just about humans, we must care about the world, all creatures are important.
- Why is Pocahontas trying to show Smith these ideas?

IMPACT

- How do people envisage God? How do Hindus envisage God?
- For Hindus, the idea of God is so vast, it makes sense that God can be thought of in many different ways.
- Use different pictures or models of Hindu gods. What if this was God? Or this? Or this? How can they all be God?
- How do Hindus explain their ideas of God?
- Watch Vraj and Simran show worship of the deities and explain their relationship to Brahman (https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02n5xj7)
- Learn the words: **murti**, **arti** and **puja**. What do these words mean?
- Revise what puja is (revision from Year 3)
- Using a variety of resources, identify key information about one deity e.g. Ganesh.
- Hindus believe that the **Atman** is eternal and indestructible and continues to exist after the body dies. Its goal is to be merged with **Brahman** like how salt dissolves in water or a drop of water merges into the sea, and, at death, either achieves this union (**moksha**) or is **re-incarnated**.
- Do you know who you are? What is your atman?
- For Hindus, your 'self' is not a body part but the most real bit of you. What do you think that might mean? What makes you 'you'?
- Hindus believe this real 'self' is your 'atman' and it is indestructible – a **divine** spark, part of **Brahman**. When your body dies, your 'atman' joins up with Brahman or comes back to life in a new body (**reincarnation**).
- How does belief in **Brahman** / **Atman** affect the way Hindus live?

ENQUIRE
TEXTS /STORY/QUESTIONS/VISITS/VISITOR/RESOURCE

- Can you retell the traditional Indian story of 'The Blind Men & the Elephant'?
- Does it help explain why Hindus have different views about God? e.g. no human mind can come close to the whole truth about reality / God
- What different ideas are there about God? In the Hindu religion, there are many ideas about God and they are not all the same. It depends who you ask and what aspect of the religion you look at.
- What do the words monotheism, atheism, pantheism, polytheism, henotheism and theism mean?
- What ideas do you know about God in other religions? Christianity and Islam are both '**monotheistic**' but in Islam, God never takes any 'form' whereas in Christianity, God is incarnated as Jesus.
- Most people of a faith agree what their religion says about God; Hinduism is different. It had no single founder and has many different holy books.
- Who helps Hindus think about God? Many Hindus today follow spiritual teachers or **gurus** who help them think about God in different ways.
- Watch Hinduism: My Life, My Religion from BBC Learning Zone online 'What is Hinduism?'.
- Which 'theism' word fits best for Hinduism? Introduce an umbrella term: pluralist. This is one way of describing how Hindus approach the idea of God. Connect with '**plural**'.
- Can you retell the story 'The Salt and the Water' and ' from the **Bhagavad Gita** (7:8, 9)?
- What does this text from a Hindu **scripture** make you think about?
- Would people see the world differently if God was in everything? How would people treat others? Would they eat meat? Would they look after themselves better? Would they have a higher opinion of friends and their parents?

MAKING CONNECTIONS

- Read the newspaper article about Shambo the Bull (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shambo#Sanctity_of_life_in_Hindu_tradition).
- Listen to the fable of 'The Magpie and the Bull' by Michael Morpurgo in response to the story in the news.
- What questions do you have about the story?
- What **dilemma** did Shambo the bull create for his owners?
- Listen to a monk at Skanda Vale (2.5 mins) explaining the situation. Gather his reasons for wanting to keep Shambo alive (https://www.truetube.co.uk/film/shambo-cow) and discuss.