

# World Faiths- Year 5

Judaism

Islam

Hinduism

## OVERVIEW FOR JUDAISM – YEAR 5

### BELIEFS AND FESTIVALS – PESACH

Judaism is taught for one week every year. Each year the pupils learn more about how their Jewish sisters and brothers live and what they believe as the theme develops. The themes are the same for all religions.

#### TEACHERS' NOTES

Pesach or Passover is a spring festival which last for 7 or 8 days. The name Passover comes from the story of the angel of death passing over the houses of the Israelites, Pesach comes from the paschal lamb which was once sacrifice when there was still a Temple in Jerusalem. It is a time when Jewish people thank God for their freedom and remember those who are enslaved today. Hospitality is important at Pesach.

AGE GROUP	THEME	TOPIC	LEARNING OUTCOMES		
			LOOK	DISCOVER	RESPECT
Early years N/R	Special days/ ritual objects	Hanukkah (Chanukah) The feast of lights	There are special days	Hanukkah. The story of the oil lamp in the Temple	God cares for his people
Year 1 FS 1	Stories	Abraham and Moses	We all have stories	Abraham and Moses, leaders of the Jewish people	How God led the Jewish people
Year 2 FS 2	Prayer/home	Shabbat	Families gather	Shabbat	Shabbat the day for God, the day of rest
Year 3	Places for worship	The synagogue	There are special places	The synagogue	The importance of the synagogue
Year 4	Holy Books	The Torah	Books are important	The Torah	The importance of the Torah
Year 5	<b>Beliefs and festivals</b>	<b>Pesach</b>	<b>There are times for remembering</b>	<b>Pesach</b>	<b>God cares for his people</b>
Year 6	Belonging and values	Yom Kippur	Making a new start	Yom Kippur	The value of atonement

#### RESOURCES

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/the-passover-story/6599.html>

*God's Story 3* pages 21-23

Pesach plate with symbols on it

#### KEY WORDS

remembering,  
Passover, seder,  
Pesach, kosher,  
Matzah, bitter herbs,  
Charoset, lamb,  
Shema, mezuzah

#### ATTAINMENT TARGETS

##### AT 1 Learning about religion

- i Beliefs, teaching & sources
- ii celebration and ritual
- iii social & moral practices & way of life

##### AT 2 Learning from religion

- i engagements with own & others' beliefs & values
- ii engagement with questions of meaning

#### RE CURRICULUM DIRECTORY

**Area of Study 1:** Knowing and loving God, the Scriptures

**Area of Study 3:** Prayer

**Area of Study 4:** The dignity of the human person, the human community, love of God, love of neighbour

# LOOK AND DISCOVER

There are times for remembering and the story of the Exodus.

## RESOURCES

God's Story 3 pages 21-23  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/the-passover>

## KEY WORDS

Remembering, Passover  
seder, Pesach

**LEARNING FOCUS:** There are times for remembering.

## CONTENT

### LOOK

When you gather together as a family for special occasions one of things that many people do is reminisce about past stories or events. Sometimes these are funny or serious stories about things that have happened. They are special to your family.

## SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q What are the stories which are told in your family at Christmas or birthday?
- Q How does that make you feel when you hear those stories?

## CONTENT

## DISCOVER

Every year during spring time the Jewish people get ready to come together as families to celebrate the festival of the Passover or Pesach. During Pesach Jewish people remember the story of how God delivered them from slavery in Egypt, how God still takes care of them and how they still need the need for freedom in some places of the world.

### The story of the Exodus

The Israelites had been living in Egypt. For a long time they were working as slaves for the pharaoh and had a hard life. The pharaoh made them work very hard. The Israelites prayed to God to rescue them from slavery. God chose Moses, to help rescue the people and lead them to freedom. Moses was a bit shy and timid he was not sure he could do it. God promised to help him. So Moses went to pharaoh asked him to let the Israelites go free. But pharaoh was very stubborn and only agreed to let the people go after a series of disasters had happen to the Egyptians. Moses told the people to get ready for a long journey, to kill a lamb and eat it

and put some blood on the doorposts of their houses and take with them some unleavened bread for the journey, (they would not have time to make leavened bread).

Pharaoh sent his soldiers after Moses and the people as they were leaving Egypt but God led them unharmed over the Red Sea towards the desert, so they got away safely. God had freed them from slavery. So today Jewish people celebrate Passover or Pesach (the Jewish word for Passover), to remember that God passed over his people, so no disasters had happened to them, and lead them to freedom.

## SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q How do you think the Israelites felt when they were freed?
- Q Why is this festival called Passover/Pesach?

## SOME SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- 8 Find out more about this story from Exodus 12.
- 8 Make a book of remembering for the class or your family of special events,
- 8 Find and listen Paul Robson singing *Let my People Go* on YouTube.
- 8 Write an information guide about the Passover for people wanting to find out more about Jewish people, describe the Biblical source for this event and what it means to the Jewish people.

# DISCOVER

## The celebration of Passover/Pesach.

### RESOURCES

Picture of a seder plate or a seder plate  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/the-passover-story/6599.html>

### KEY WORDS

**Passover, seder, Pesach, kosher, Matzah, bitter herbs, Charoset, lamb**

**LEARNING FOCUS:** The celebration of Passover/Pesach.

### CONTENT

#### **Teaching point**

*The following guidance is offered by the Bishops' Conference Committee for Catholic – Jewish Relations: The Jewish Passover (Seder) meal is not something of the past and neither has it been replaced by the Eucharist. If you plan to hold a "Demonstration Seder", invite a rabbi or an observant Jew to lead it. A preparatory talk from someone conversant with the Jewish tradition can be very helpful.*

Jewish families gather together to celebrate the Passover, No one is left out; those without families are welcomed into families. God has commanded the Jewish people to keep this festival see Exodus 12: 14-17

The house is cleaned and all leavened bread is removed. Kosher food (that is, specially approved according to the regulations that are in the Torah) is cooked and the table is laid with the best china. The meal is called a seder meal, the word seder means order. There is a special order of things that happened at the meal.

Certain foods are placed on a special plate called the Seder plate which are a reminder of the Exodus, the escape from Egypt.

- Matzah (unleavened bread) is eaten as a reminder of when the Israelites left Egypt with unleavened dough.
- Bitter herbs, horseradish or lettuce, used to symbolize the bitterness of slavery.
- Charoset: a mixture of apples, nuts, cinnamon and wine, as a reminder of the mortar used by the Jews in the construction of buildings as slaves.
- A roasted egg, as a symbol of life.
- A vegetable, preferably parsley or celery, representing hope and redemption; served with a bowl of salted water to represent the tears shed.
- A lamb shankbone, symbolizing the Passover sacrificial offering in the days of the Temple.
- Wine: four glasses of wine or grape juice are consumed during the service to represent the four-fold promise of redemption. During the meal, the youngest child asks 4 questions. The answers to the questions tell the story of the Exodus, so no one will ever forget it. The children search for a special piece of matzah which has been hidden.

Special songs are sung and the meal lasts for many hours. The feast of Pesach (Passover) is a joyful occasion full of hope, of thankfulness to God for protection, guidance and sustenance. It is a time that parents use to retell their children the story of the Jewish people. It is a time when families gather, when they feel a sense of belonging to a community which is specially loved by God and is also dependent upon him.

Jews think a lot about peace at this time. At the end of the Seder meal Jews pray that next year they can celebrate the Seder in Jerusalem in a time of peace.

### SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q What event does Pesach/Passover recall?
- Q What does the word Seder mean?
- Q How do you know it is a family occasion?
- Q Why would Jews want to celebrate Pesach in Jerusalem?

### SOME SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- 8 Watch a video of a family celebrating Pesach. Or ask a Jewish person to show you what happens at Passover and ask them what it means to them.
- 8 Read the reference in Exodus 12:14-17, describe this in your own words.
- 8 Decorate a Seder plate and draw the special food which goes on it.
- 8 Make some charoset.
- 8 Research Kosher foods. Is there a quick and easy way to find out what is kosher and what is not?
- 8 This is a Jewish song about peace. Find or make up a tune to sing this to.

*Shalom Chaverim,  
Shalom Chaverim,  
Shalom, Shalom,  
L'hitraot L'hitraot,  
Shalom, Shalom*

This means:

*Peace, my friends,  
Peace, my friends,  
Peace, peace.  
Until we meet again,  
Peace, Peace.*

Here is a similar song in English:

*Our hope is for peace  
Our prayer is for peace  
Shalom, Shalom  
Let all now be friends  
Let all now be free  
Shalom, Shalom*

- 8 Write a poem about peace.
- 8 Research the life of some who has worked for peace.

# DISCOVER AND RESPECT

Belief in one God: the Shema, God cares his people.

## RESOURCES

Bible

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips>

A facsimile of a mezuzah or a picture of one

## KEY WORDS

Shema, mezuzah

**LEARNING FOCUS:** Belief in one God: the Shema.

## CONTENT

God proved his love and commitment by rescuing his people and staying with them on their journeys. God asks his people to return that love and commitment by worshipping him alone and caring for others as God would care for them. Jewish people are always aware that God is present in their lives, they pray at least three times a day and have many prayers to say throughout the day each which reminded them that God is there.

There are special prayers like the Shema. God gave Moses some commandments and rules for his people. These helped the people to love God and live in peace with each other. In the book of Deuteronomy 6: 4-9, which is part of the Torah, God gives his people a special reminder of their responsibility to love God.

It is a prayer called the Shema. It helps the Jewish people to focus on the day ahead and on the day that has just gone. It is a commitment to belief. It shows belief in God. The Shema is recited twice a day by Jewish people and is a special prayer in the synagogue.

*Listen Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one.*

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your souls and with all your might.*

*These words which I am commanding you today must remain in your heart.*

*Teach them to your children and speak of them when you are at home,*

*when you are travelling on the road, when you lie down and when you get up.*

*Tie these words as a sign on your hand; let them be a sign in the centre of your head.*

*Also write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates.*

The last commandment is kept by the use of a mezuzah. That is a little box containing a parchment with the Shema written on it which is fixed to the side of the front door of the house and sometimes on the door posts of the rooms in the house. The parchment has to be written by a specially trained scribe who uses a special quill and special ink. Many Jews touch the mezuzah with their fingers when they go through the doorway. Doing this helps them to show their love and respect for God and reminds them of God's laws.

### **SOME KEY QUESTIONS**

- Q What do you think the Shema means?
- Q How does it help Jewish people?
- Q What helps you during the day?

### **SOME SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES**

- 8 Find the Shema in the Bible and in pairs take one of the parts of the Shema and discuss how a Jewish person might observe that commandment.
- 8 Copy the text and decorate it (remember Jews never write the word God. It is too holy so they use G-d)
- 8 Read it aloud in pairs. What words do you remember? Discuss the importance of what you remember.
- 8 Look at a Mezuzah and make one. It needs to be capable of being attached to a doorpost. Decorate the outside of it. The Shema should be written on a card or paper 8cm by 4cm.

### **RESPECT**

Children gather around the display and have a quiet moment to reflect on what they have enjoyed about the topic. Encourage them to think about and appreciate God's love and care for his people and how he led them to freedom. Think about how we might bring peace and freedom to our world and show we care about each other.



## OVERVIEW FOR ISLAM – YEAR 5

### BELIEFS/ FESTIVALS – RAMADAN AND PILGRIMAGE

Judaism is studied by everyone and Islam one of the options of choice from the three other religions. It is taught for one week every year. The themes are the same for all religions.

#### TEACHERS' NOTES

Muslims are followers of the religion of Islam, which began in the Middle East around the seventh century. They believe in one God, Allah. There are two main groups of Muslims, Shi'ah and Sunni. The Sunnis are the larger group. Their beliefs are similar but they interpret the teaching of Qur'an differently. What the children learn in this programme of study is a middle way, offering what is most general in Islam.

If there are some Muslims children or adults in the school community use their experience to enrich this unit.

In the Qur'an there is mention of Jesus as a prophet and his Mother Mary. Some of the stories which are in the Old Testament are also found in the Qur'an, but with some differences.

AGE GROUP	THEME	TOPIC	LOOK	LEARNING OUTCOMES	
				DISCOVER	RESPECT
Early years N/R	Special days/ ritual objects	Prayer mats	Special objects	Prayer mats and the Qur'an	What is special for Muslims
Year 1 FS 1	Stories	Muhammad	Special stories	Muhammad	Muhammad is important for Muslim people
Year 2 FS 2	Prayer/home	Prayer at home	Quiet times	Prayer five times a day	Prayer is important for Muslims
Year 3	Places for worship	The mosque	Special buildings	Friday is a day of special prayer. Call to prayer	How Muslim people worship
Year 4	Holy Books	The Qur'an	Important books	The Qur'an. 99 beautiful names of God	The importance of the Qu'ran for Muslims
<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Beliefs and festivals</b>	<b>Ramadan and Pilgrimage</b>	<b>Special times</b>	<b>Shahadah Ramadan, Id-ul-Fitr, Id-ul-Adha, Hajj</b>	<b>Respect for the special occasions for Muslims</b>
Year 6	Belonging and values	Guidance for Muslims	Guidance in life	The 5 pillars Zakat	What is important for Muslims

#### RESOURCES

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/ramadan-and-id/4605.html>  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/the-story-of-abdullah-during-ramadan/4607.html>  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/a-trip-to-mecca/3920.html>  
 Islamic calendar  
 BBC Pathways of Belief

#### KEY WORDS

Ramadan, fasting,  
 Eid-ul-Fitr,  
 Pilgrimage,  
 Makkah, Hajj,  
 Eid-ul-Adha

#### ATTAINMENT TARGETS

##### AT 1 Learning about religion

- i Beliefs, teaching & sources
- ii celebration and ritual
- iii social & moral practices & way of life

##### AT 2 Learning from religion

- i engagements with own & others beliefs & values
- ii engagement with questions of meaning

#### RE CURRICULUM DIRECTORY

**Area of Study 3:** Prayer

**Area of Study 4:** The dignity of the human person, the human community, love of neighbour

# LOOK AND DISCOVER

## Special times and Ramadan.

### RESOURCES

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/ramadan-and-id/4605.html>

### KEY WORDS

**Ramadan, fasting**

**LEARNING FOCUS:** Special times.

### CONTENT

#### LOOK

There are special occasions in everyone's life, times when something happens which is different from normal life, times when you do something special, are with people you don't often see or a time of making a special effort for some reason. Discuss this as an introduction.

**LEARNING FOCUS:** Ramadan.

### CONTENT

#### DISCOVER

The ninth month in the Muslim calendar (which is different from the one used in the UK), is called Ramadan. It is the month when Allah first gave his message to Muhammad. Muslims commemorate this special event by fasting for the whole month of Ramadan. If you are very old or very young, or unwell you do not have to fast. Children are introduced to it gradually. It means that Muslims do not eat or drink during daylight hours. It does not just mean not eating or drinking but also trying to do good deeds too, to spend more time praying and thinking about Allah.

It also helps Muslims to share the experience of many people in the world who do not have enough to eat. It is hard for Muslim children at school where there are non-Muslims and everyone is eating lunch and having snacks. When it is night time Muslims first eat some dates and then have meal together. Sometimes the local Mosque puts on meals.

Watch the BBC learning clip about a Muslims family:  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/ramadan-and-id/4605.html>.

### **SOME KEY QUESTIONS**

- Q How do you think fasting helps Muslims?
- Q What would you find most difficult about Ramadan?
- Q Ramadan happens at different times of the year, which would you prefer summer or winter and why?

### **SOME SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES**

- 8 Design a collecting box which could be in used Ramadan, write on the outside a slogan which says why anyone should give.
- 8 Write a diary from the point of view of a Muslim child during Ramadan.
- 8 Make a fruit drink, many Muslims particularly in hot countries break their fast with a fruit drink. (Be aware of allergies.)

# DISCOVER

## Eid-ul-Fitr.

### RESOURCES

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/the-story-of-abdullah-during-ramadan/4607.html>

Islamic calendar, it is possible to download from the internet

### KEY WORDS

**Eid-ul-Fitr**

### LEARNING FOCUS:

Eid-ul-Fitr (Id-ul-Fitr).

### CONTENT

*Look at the learning zone clip <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/the-story-of-abdullah-during-ramadan/4607.html>*

The first day of the month after Ramadan is called: Eid-ul-Fitr, which means 'festival of fast-breaking', it starts when there is a new moon. The Islamic calendar is based on the moon.

Muslims are not only celebrating the end of fasting, but thanking Allah for the help and strength that he gave them throughout the Ramadan to help them practise self-control. Eid is also a time of forgiveness, and making amends. At Eid it is expected that Muslims will give a set amount of money to charity to be used to help poor people buy new clothes and food so they too can celebrate.

It is a time when family and friends get together, it lasts for 3 days. Everyone puts on their best clothes and people often buy new clothes. They go to the Mosque for special prayers and come together for a feast. Eid-ul-Fitr is a time for celebrating with good food and presents for children, and giving to charity. Special foods eaten on this day are lamb and sweet dishes. Presents are given and some people have fireworks and decorate their homes.

### SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q How do you Muslims feel when they celebrate iEid-ul-Fitr?
- Q What activity links Eid-ul-Fitr with Ramadan?
- Q Why is Eid a good opportunity for Muslims to renew their faith?
- Q What do Muslims thank Allah for?

### SOME SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- 8 Use a Muslim calendar to check when Ramadan and Eid will happen this year. What will that mean for Muslims?
- 8 With a talk partner discuss the opportunities that Eid give Muslims to change their lives and to start again and why that is important for any believer, record the discussion and share the findings.
- 8 Continue the diary started in the previous session, this time recounting what happens at Eid-ul-Fitr.
- 8 Make an Eid-ul-Fitr card or download one from the web.

# DISCOVER AND RESPECT

## Pilgrimage to Makkah.

### RESOURCES

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/a-trip-to-mecca/3920.html>

### KEY WORDS

**Pilgrimage, Makkah, Hajj  
Id-ul-Adha, Ka'bah**

**LEARNING FOCUS:** Pilgrimage to Makkah.

### CONTENT

*Watch the BBC video  
clip of a trip to Makkah.*

Every year during the month of Hijja (that is ahul-hijja, 2 months after Ramadan), some Muslims will make a pilgrimage to Makkah. All Muslims are expected if possible to make a pilgrimage to Makkah at least once in their life time.

First of all there is day of preparation when the pilgrims have a thorough bath. Then all the male pilgrims put on the ihram, that is two seamless white sheets one of which covers the head. Special shoes are worn with no back to them. Women cover their body except for hands, face and feet. The dress is a symbol of peace, self-denial and obedience to Allah, everyone wears the same as everyone is equal before Allah.

There are several stages of the pilgrimage, spread over a few days. The first is the day of preparation, which is not included in the actual Hajj. On this day pilgrims walk seven times round the holy house known as the Ka'bah, which Muslims believe Ibrahim built. As the pilgrims walk, they say the following prayer: Here I am at your service, O God, here I am!

Then they go to Mina, three miles (4.8km) from Makkah and say prayers in the Mosque there. On the second day, stage four; the pilgrims journey to Arafat to pray. This was where Ibrahim took Isma'il for sacrifice and where Muhammad preached his last sermon. This is the main part of the Hajj. They then travel to Muzdalifa, five miles (8km) away and spend the night there.

Finally pilgrims collect pebbles at Muzdalifa, this is stage five. They return to Mina where they throw the pebbles at three pillars to remember that 'Ibrahim and Isma'il threw stones in their rejection of the devil. Finally the pilgrims return to Mecca, for the feast of Id ul-Adha. A goat or sheep is sacrificed. The pilgrims circle the Ka'ba again.

Hajj helps pilgrims to feel a sense of community, of belonging to Islam, of everyone working together. Everyone who completes this pilgrimage may add the word Hajji to their name or Hajjah if they are a woman pilgrim. When they return home from this very special event in their lives, they often have a celebration with their friends and relations. At the end of Hajj there is a symbolic cutting of hair and nails to show a return to everyday life. There are three days of relaxation before they return home, often with souvenirs of their pilgrimage.

#### **SOME KEY QUESTIONS**

- Q How is Hajj like our journey through life?
- Q Why do pilgrims wear a special garment?
- Q What does this symbolise?
- Q Why Muslims would what to celebrate on their return from Hajj?
- Q How do you think a pilgrim feel when they return?
- Q What might they tell other people about their experience?
- Q How do you think it might affect their belief?

#### **SOME SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES**

- 8 Chart the stages of Hajj, some children draw picture of what happens, other write sentences about the stages and then try to match them.
- 8 Look on a map and find out where Mecca is, work out a route you might take to get there.
- 8 Explain what Muslim pilgrims might have brought back with them from the Hajj, not just souvenirs but what it will mean in their daily lives in the future.
- 8 Continue the diary this time including Hajj.

#### **RESPECT**

Children gather around the display and have a quiet moment to reflect on what they have learnt. Ask the children what they enjoyed about the topic. Encourage them to think about how Muslims come closer to Allah through fasting and going on pilgrimage.

## OVERVIEW FOR HINDUISM – YEAR 5

### BELIEFS/ FESTIVALS – BELIEF IN ONE GOD

Judaism is studied by everyone and Hinduism one of the options of choice from the three other religions. It is taught for one week every year. The themes are the same for all religions.

#### TEACHERS' NOTES

Hinduism is one of the oldest religions of the world, it has no known founder, but is deeply rooted in Indian culture, having begun in the Indus Valley about 5,000 years ago.

Hinduism possesses no authoritative body to define the limits of orthodoxy. There are many shared beliefs among Hindus but it is a flexible religion which allows people to express their belief and worship in different ways. The programme of study here is a *middle way*, offering what is most general in Hinduism but not necessarily what every Hindu would believe or live

AGE GROUP	THEME	TOPIC	LEARNING OUTCOMES		
			LOOK	DISCOVER	RESPECT
Early years N/R	Special days/ ritual objects	Diwali	We all celebrate	Diwali	Diwali is important for Hindu people
Year 1 FS 1	Stories	Krishna and Ganesh Raksha Bandan	Stories we enjoy	Krishna and Ganesh Raksha Bandan	Shared stories bring people together
Year 2 FS 2	Prayer/home	Prayer at home Puja	Quiet times	Puja	Prayer is part of Hindu life
Year 3	Places for worship	The Mandir	Special places	The Mandir	How Hindu people worship
Year 4	Holy Books	Vedas and Bhagavad-Gita	Special books	Vedas and Bhagavad-Gita	Sacred writings guide people's lives
Year 5	<b>Beliefs and festivals</b>	<b>Brahman Belief in one god Pilgrimage</b>	<b>What is important?</b>	<b>Hindus believe in one God, pilgrimage</b>	<b>Respect for the beliefs of Hindus</b>
Year 6	Belonging and values	Karma	Rules for life	Karma and Dharma	Hindus care for creation

#### RESOURCES

BBC learning zone video clips  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/belief-in-God>  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/4798 and 4796](http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/4798-and-4796)  
 A picture of Brahman

#### KEY WORDS

Brahman,  
supreme God,  
pilgrimage,  
Ganges

#### ATTAINMENT TARGETS

##### AT 1 Learning about religion

- i Beliefs, teaching & sources
- ii celebration and ritual
- iii social & moral practices & way of life

##### AT 2 Learning from religion

- i engagements with own & others beliefs & values
- ii engagement with questions of meaning

#### RE CURRICULUM DIRECTORY

**Area of Study 3:** Prayer

**Area of Study 4:** The dignity of the human person, the human community, love of neighbour

# LOOK AND DISCOVER

What is important? Brahman, the supreme Hindu God.

## RESOURCES

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/4798>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/4796>

A picture of Brahman

## KEY WORDS

**Brahman, supreme God**

**LEARNING FOCUS:** What is important?

### CONTENT

#### LOOK

Talk about what is important in life? What will stay with you throughout your life? That may be family, it may be some key value. Many things seem important for a while but they pass, some things are of value always.

**LEARNING FOCUS:** Brahman, the supreme Hindu God.

### CONTENT

#### **Teaching point**

*To avoid confusion it is important to emphasise that what is being learnt here about Brahman is what Hindus believe, Christians have different beliefs but do not judge the beliefs of others  
Note the different spellings: Brahman refers to the supreme being. Brahma refer to Brahman's form as part of the trimurti.*

#### DISCOVER

Introduce the concept of the Hindu belief in one supreme Being called Brahman, who takes many different visible forms and how all the gods and goddesses represent different aspects of Brahman. For Hindus Brahman is neither male nor female but is in everything including all of Creation and is the source of the origin of the world.

Brahman has three major qualities or trimurti (tri = 3 murti = gods) Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Vishnu came to earth to destroy evil and Shiva is the destroyer, the source of good and bad. Shiva is usually represented as the Lord of the Dance with a wheel behind him and he controls the movement of the universe.

Show the video clip(s) and talk about what the children have to say. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/hindu/4796> about the Hindu gods especially Ganesh another useful clip is <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/hindu/4798> about the explanation of the Hindu gods.

## SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q Where do Hindus find God?
- Q What does it mean for Hindus?
- Q How is Brahman made visible?

## SOME SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- 8 Research a story about Brahman
- 8 Look at the picture of Brahman and say what you think the symbols that surround the him might mean.



# DISCOVER

## A story of Brahman.

**LEARNING FOCUS:** A story of Brahman.

### CONTENT

There are no written rules about what Hindu must believe, children learn much of the religion at home and learn from their parents, from teachers who are called gurus and stories are important too in shaping belief. Here is a story about Brahman.

Long ago the evil people, made this earth uninhabitable, they even got rid of the gods, The gods spoke to the Brahma, the creator of the universe and asked Brahma to help them defeat the bad people and bring peace back to the earth. Brahma blessed them and told them to fight off the evil people. The evil people were then finally defeated.

The gods began to celebrate their victory and became very boastful about their power, forgetting that their victory came from the Brahma's blessing. So, to teach them a lesson, Brahman sent a Yaksha (a supernatural being.) to the place where the gods were celebrating. Indra, the king of the gods and the god of weather, saw a Yaksha approaching them. He asked Agni, the god of fire to find out who he was.

Agni came near the Yaksha and introduced himself as the powerful god capable of burning off anything that touches him.

The Yaksha said "Oh, is that right?" Then he picked up a small dry grass and said, "Can you burn this?"

"Of course I can," laughed Agni, the Yaksha replied, "Why don't you try it?"

Agni took the grass in his hand and tried to burn it. But strangely enough, he could not burn it. Agni returned to the party without telling anyone what had happened.

After a while, Indra asked the wind god Pavan to go to the Yaksha and find out why he was there. When Pavan approached the Yaksha, the Yaksha asked him, "Who are you?"

"I am Pavan, the wind god" he said. "I can blow every thing away when I want to."

"Really!" said the Yaksha and gave him the small blade of grass to blow away. "Could you blow away this blade of grass?"

"Of course I can," laughed Pavan. He tried to blow it away but couldn't.

Then Indra came himself. As he approached the Yaksha, it disappeared and there stood a woman. She was Indra's conscience, called Uma.

"Did you see the Yaksha standing here?" asked Indra.

Uma said, "Indra, being the king of the gods you could not recognize the messenger of Brahman, the Yaksha? The Yaksha carried the message that Brahman is the one and only source of power and none else. You have celebrated enough now return quietly to the duties given you by Brahman."

The gods were ashamed of their stupid behaviour. They returned to their senses and peace once again was restored on earth.

### **SOME KEY QUESTIONS**

- Q Why did Brahman need to teach the gods a lesson?
- Q What do you think the blade of grass taught the gods about power?
- Q Who was Uma?
- Q What do you think you can learn from the story?

### **SOME SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES**

- 8 Reproduce the story in cartoon form for a younger class, include how a Hindu might be changed by that story.
- 8 Find out more about Indra.
- 8 Write a story with a meaning about someone gets too proud to remember who has helped them

# DISCOVER AND RESPECT

Hindu search for truth through their stories and sacred writings guides their lives.

## KEY WORDS

Pilgrimage, Ganges

**LEARNING FOCUS:** Pilgrimage.

## CONTENT

Hindus do not have to make a pilgrimage but many choose to do. For many Hindus pilgrimages to holy places are an important part of life. A pilgrimage is a spiritual time, it might be made in thanksgiving for the birth of a baby, to gain religious merit, to show devotion to a particular god or it might be a way of being sorry for something.

The pilgrimage gives the opportunity for a person to be close to god and to receive a blessing. Whatever the reason, the journey can be difficult and tiring; sometimes it might be by bullock cart, train or bus. Sometimes small groups of villagers set out together. Most villagers work seven days a week for most of the year, so when the crops are harvested, a pilgrimage is like a holiday.

Hindus might go to a temple; rivers and mountains are also considered sacred. The river Ganges is the most popular. Hindus believe that the Ganges washes away a person's sins. Many Hindus want their ashes scattered in the Ganges when they are dead. So a Hindu might take on that task for a relative. Those going to the Ganges believe they receive a blessing from Shiva, the lord of the universe through whose hair the river Ganges flows.

## SOME KEY QUESTIONS

- Q Why do you think the journey to the Ganges is often difficult, what sacrifices do you think Hindus have to make to get there?
- Q Why do people make a pilgrimage to the river Ganges?
- Q How do you think a pilgrimage is like a life journey?

## **SOME SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES**

- 8 Describe a pilgrimage journey, the reason why the Hindu goes on a pilgrimage, how they might feel, what they would experience both on the journey and when they arrive and explain how you think it might help them in their daily life as a Hindu
- 8 Trace the river Ganges on a map of India, where does it start and finish, which cities does it pass by, especially Varanasi. Find out why is there concern in India about the condition of the river.
- 8 Find out about the story of the creation of the river Ganges.

## **RESPECT**

Children gather around the display and have a quiet moment to reflect on what the children have enjoyed about the topic. Encourage them to think about and appreciate that Hindu holy books have an important message for Hindus and they help them to search for Truth and find guidance for their lives.