

Hinduism: Symbols and Beliefs with Ellie the Elephant

Learning objective: To identify and explain the significance of key symbols and concepts within Hinduism, such as Brahman, Aum, and the concept of diversity in unity.

Ellie the Elephant is visiting a mandir and needs your help to organise her notes! Read the definitions provided for each Hindu term. Match the correct term from the word bank to its description. For the final questions, use your deeper understanding to justify why these symbols are meaningful to followers of Hinduism.

Word bank: Brahman · Aum · Mandir · Puja · Dharma · Moksha

1. 1. This is the sacred sound and symbol representing the essence of the universe. It is often chanted during meditation. Which term is this? (1 mark)

2. 2. This is the place of worship where Hindus gather for prayer and offerings. Which term is this? (1 mark)

3. 3. This represents the ultimate, unchanging reality or the supreme spirit that exists in all things. Which term is this? (1 mark)

4. 4. Explain why 'Dharma' is considered a vital concept for how a Hindu person lives their daily life. How does it influence their choices? (3 marks)

5. 5. Compare and contrast the purpose of a Mandir with other places of worship you have studied. What might happen if a community did not have a shared space to perform Puja? (4 marks)

6. 6. Justify why the symbol 'Aum' is often placed at the beginning of prayers and sacred texts. What does this reveal about Hindu beliefs regarding the beginning of life or thought? (3 marks)

Draw: Draw the symbol 'Aum' in the centre of your page. Around it, draw four things that represent harmony and peace in the natural world, as requested by Ellie the Elephant.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a drawing. It occupies the upper half of the page below the drawing instruction.

Extension challenge: Write a short poem or a reflective journal entry from the perspective of someone visiting a Mandir for the first time. Describe the sensory experience—what might they see, hear, or smell? Use at least four of the words from the word bank in your writing.