

Exploring the Traditions of Hinduism

Learning objective: To understand core beliefs and practices within Hinduism, including the concept of Brahman and the significance of festivals.

Read the text carefully with Ellie the elephant, who remembers the history of these ancient traditions. Answer the questions in full sentences, using evidence from the text to support your ideas.

Hinduism is one of the world's oldest religions, originating in the Indus Valley thousands of years ago. Unlike many other faiths, it does not have a single founder. At the heart of Hindu belief is the concept of Brahman, the ultimate reality or divine spirit that exists in everything. Hindus believe that this spirit is present in all living things, which encourages a deep respect for nature and animals.

Many Hindus worship various deities, such as Ganesha, the elephant-headed god who is known as the remover of obstacles. These deities are seen as different expressions of the one supreme Brahman. Worship, or puja, often takes place in the home at a small shrine or in a mandir (temple). A central part of life is Dharma, which refers to one's duty or the righteous way of living. This involves acting with kindness and integrity. Festivals are also vital to Hindu life; for example, Diwali, the festival of lights, celebrates the victory of light over darkness and good over evil. During this time, families light clay lamps called diyas to welcome goodness into their homes, demonstrating the community's shared devotion and joy.

Word bank: Brahman · deities · Dharma · Diwali · shrine · tradition

1. According to the text, what is the role of Ganesha within Hindu belief? (2 marks) (2 marks)

2. Name two places where Hindus might perform the act of puja. (2 marks) (2 marks)

3. Explain why the belief that Brahman exists in all living things might influence how a Hindu treats the natural world. (3 marks) (3 marks)

4. What might happen if a person ignores the concept of 'Dharma' in their daily life? Use the text to support your inference. (3 marks) (3 marks)

5. Do you think festivals like Diwali are important for bringing communities together? Justify your answer with reasons. (3 marks) (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a brightly lit diya lamp surrounded by patterns, similar to the ones Zara the zebra might paint during a festival celebration.



Extension challenge: Compare and contrast the concept of 'Dharma' with your own understanding of personal responsibility. Write a short paragraph justifying why having a sense of duty is beneficial for society. If you were designing a new festival, what values would you choose to celebrate and how would you represent them visually?