Exploring Hindu Beliefs and Traditions

Learning objective: To understand core concepts of Hinduism, including Brahman, the diversity of deities, and the concept of dharma.

Read each question carefully and use your knowledge of Hinduism to provide detailed answers. Remember to use the word bank to help you express your ideas clearly.

Hinduism is one of the world's oldest religions. Hindus believe in one supreme cosmic spirit called Brahman, who is present in everything. While there is one supreme reality, it is represented through many different deities, each symbolising different aspects of life and the divine. Hindus also believe in living a life guided by dharma (duty or righteous living) and understand that their actions, known as karma, influence their future. Many Hindus visit a mandir for worship or maintain a small shrine at home.

Word bank: Brahman · Dharma · Karma · Deity · Aum · Shrine · Mandir

1. Explain the Hindu belief regarding Brahman. How does this connect to the idea that the divine is present in everything? (2 marks)

2. What is meant by the term 'dharma'? Give one example of how a person might follow their dharma in daily life. (2 marks)

3. Why do you think Hindus might choose to have a shrine at home in addition to visiting a mandir? (2 marks)

4. Max the monkey is confused. He thinks Hindus worship many different gods instead of one. How would you explain to him that Hinduism sees many deities as different faces of the same supreme reality? (3 marks)

5. In your own words, describe how the concept of 'karma' encourages people to make positive choices. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a peaceful home shrine. Include items that might be used for worship, such as a small lamp (diya), flowers, or a picture of a deity, and label the items you have drawn.

Extension challenge: Research the festival of Diwali. Write a short paragraph explaining why it is known as the 'Festival of Lights' and what it symbolises for Hindu families.