

RE SCHEME OF WORK  
KEY STAGE 2  
Mid-term planning

**Year 4: Unit 1**                      **Term: Autumn 1**                      **Year:**  
**Do Murtis help Hindus understand God?**

**Key Concepts:** God; Brahman; Trimurti; Murtis; Avatars

**Learning Objective:** to explore how Hindus express their beliefs through images of deities and symbols

**Brief Background Knowledge for teachers**

The Hindu religion covers a wide range of beliefs from the Indian sub-continent, which has spread across the world. It appears to be, and had often been classed as a polytheistic religion, but most Hindus actually believe that there is one supreme Deity or God – Brahman. All the other deities are part of Brahman, different ways of understanding the all-encompassing nature of God. Murtis are the colourful figures and pictures of the deities found at Hindu shrines and temples. These figures usually form the focus for prayer, as they are believed to be filled with spirit of the god they represent. Each Murti represents one of the deities and are identifiable by the symbols surrounding them as well as certain physical features. The Trimurti is Brahma – the creator, Vishnu – the sustainer and Shiva – the destroyer. The aum/om symbol, representing the sound that created the universe consists of the same three elements and is often chanted in prayer. Each member of the Trimurti has a consort, with her own special characteristics. Many of the deities are believed to have come to earth in human and animal forms. Vishnu for example has appeared in 9 avatars, including Rama and Krishna and a 10<sup>th</sup> is expected – a rider on a white horse. There are many stories about the various deities and their avatars, which Hindus take as a whole to help them understand God and the world. But as with all stories there are different interpretations and in different parts of India there are varying traditions and practices. The belief that god is in everything, including water, stones, the earth and all people accounts for the vegetarianism of most Hindus, and the traditional greeting Namaste, which recognises God in the person to whom it is addressed. The Heart of Hinduism website is a good source of additional material.

**Expected Learning**

Pupils will know the names of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva and their consorts; they will be able to describe the characteristics of these deities and draw conclusions about Hindu views of God; they will know the key stories connected with them (e.g. how Ganesh got his elephant head, Krishna and the butter, the creation of the Ganges) and what Hindus learn about God from the stories; they will know some of the other symbols that are used for god – e.g. salt water, incense, pomegranate and aum/om. They will know that Hindus choose which deities they wish to focus on and that they will turn to different deities at different times and occasions.

**Developing**

Pupils will know that Hindus believe that God has many different characteristics and that the Murtis reveal these in symbolic form. They will be able to identify the three key deities and know a story about them.

**Excelling**

Pupils will be able to explain why different Murtis are the focus at different times; they will be able to compare and contrast the different views of god and show how the ideas impact on the lives of Hindus; they will know how Hindus worship and home and in the Mandir

**Engage:**

- Display various symbols for God – salt water, pomegranate, incense stick, Murtis, om (sound and symbol) without explaining. Pupils have to look at all of them and decide what they have in common, what they might represent. Share ideas. Make a list of words that might be used to describe God, and draw symbols to represent their view of God. Discuss what the symbols tell them about God and compare the symbols the Hindu use to their own.

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**Enquire & Explore: (AT1)**

- Read the story of the blind men and the elephant; explore the om symbol and sound.
- Explore various deities, looking at the Murtis and reading the appropriate stories – Krishna, Durga, Shiva, Ganesha.
- Look at how the Murtis are used in worship – Get someone in or visit a Mandir.
- Look at the avatars of Vishnu and explore what Hindus learn about God from the avatars.

**Evaluate: (AT2 Impersonal)**

- How do the Murtis help Hindus understand God?
- Why do Hindus think the Murtis are important?
- Does it matter that not all Hindus worship all the deities? Is it right to choose which aspects of God you worship?

**Reflect & Communicate: (AT2 Personal)**

- Does it matter that different people have a different view of God? How does your view of God affect other people? Does it matter if you think that there is no God? How would this idea change things for yourself and others?
- Do the symbols help you understand God? In what ways?
- If you designed your own murti, what would it look like? In what ways is it similar to the Hindu Murtis and in what ways is it different?

**Evaluation:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What went well?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Even better if:</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

**Some suggested resources:**

- Murtis - lots of pictures available on the internet
- Salt water, Pomegranate, incense sticks, om symbol, om sound file, swastika, lotus blossom etc.
- Puja set
- [www.reonline.org.uk](http://www.reonline.org.uk)
- Avatars of Vishnu
- Stockport Christians in Schools Trust Lesson plans: [www.cist.org.uk](http://www.cist.org.uk)
- RE Today publication: Opening up Hinduism – section on Durga Murti
- The heart of Hinduism website – [iskoneducationalservices.org/HoH/](http://iskoneducationalservices.org/HoH/)

RE SCHEME OF WORK  
CLASS RECORD SHEET  
Assessment opportunities & activities

Year 4: Unit 1

Term: Autumn 1

Year:

## Do Murtis help Hindus understand God?

**Some pupils will have made more progress and be using a developing religious vocabulary to:**

- Describe three Hindu Murtis, linking the figures to Hindu teaching about God
- Describe the way that Hindus use Murtis in worship, showing whether worship in the home and Mandir differ
- Compare two Murtis, showing how they help Hindus understand the different facets of God
- Devise questions to ask a Hindu about their reasons for worshipping a particular Murti/deity
- Create a statement of their own beliefs about God and compare them to Hindu Murtis
- Describe something about a Murti that they find spiritual and inspiring

**Most pupils will be able to use an increasing religious vocabulary to:**

- Describe three Hindu deities/murtis and what they reveal about God
- Use the correct words to describe four ways in which Hindus use Murtis in worship
- Describe some symbols of that Hindus use when they worship at home or in the Mandir
- Ask questions and suggest answers about why Hindus choose to worship particular Murtis
- Make a link between their own views of God and Hindu Murtis

**Some pupils will have made less progress but will be able to use religious words and phrases to:**

- Match two or three Murtis to the characteristics of God that they represent
- Retell a Hindu story showing how the story links to the traditional representation of the deity as a Murti
- Say why a particular symbol – om or salt water e.g. – is a good representation of God
- Talk simply about how a particular Murti might help a Hindu to worship God
- Suggest three things about Murtis that they find puzzling or hard to understand