



# Summer 1 - What do you need to know about Hinduism?

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## Some important Hindu beliefs about God

Hindus believe there is one God, whom they call **Brahman**. They like to think about him in different ways to help them understand him. Each way they think about Brahman takes the form of a deity and reminds them of something in particular about what God is like.



**Brahma - the creator**

**Vishnu - the preserver of life**

**Shiva - the destroyer of ignorance and evil.**

These three deities are known as the **Trimurti**

Hindus believe that God has visited the world many times in the form of different deities (gods) to help us to know how to be good and to resist evil. Rama, Krishna and Ganesh are popular deities that many Hindus worship.

Hindus use images of gods in the form of pictures and statues to help them to think about God when they worship. They will often have a statue or picture of their favourite deity in their home and worship it every day.

## Some important facts about Hindu worship.

Hindus worship at home (puja) and in the mandir (temple). But Hindus believe that **everything they do is an act of worship.**

- **Worship at home (puja)**
- In a Hindu home there will be a shrine for their favourite deities and they will worship **every day.**
- Hindus will make sure they wash before they start their worship.
- The shrine will contain a picture or statue of the deities and will be decorated nicely.
- A bell is rung before they start to worship, so that the deity will notice that they are there; be woken up.



- Hindus like to use all 5 of their senses when they worship.
- Hindus will light candles and burn incense when they worship.
- They will bring an offering such as food or flowers.
- They will touch the picture or statue with special coloured powder and with **ghee**, which is melted butter.



## Worship at the Mandir

- The mandir contains murtis (pictures or statues) of many different deities, but there will be a main shrine dedicated to one in particular. The building is always beautifully decorated as it is the home of God.
- Hindus take off their shoes before they go in to the main worship areas.
- Hindus like to worship different deities at the mandir, but they will always pray at the shrine to the main deity.
- Worshippers ring a bell before they start to worship, to make sure the deity knows they are there.



Only the priest is allowed to enter the main shrine. He must wash the statues every day and dress them in beautiful clothes.

- Worshippers bring offerings of food or flowers to place in front of the deities. They light lamps and wave them in front of the deities. This is known as **arti**.
- They will sing and pray together or on their own.



## Hindu beliefs about Life after Death

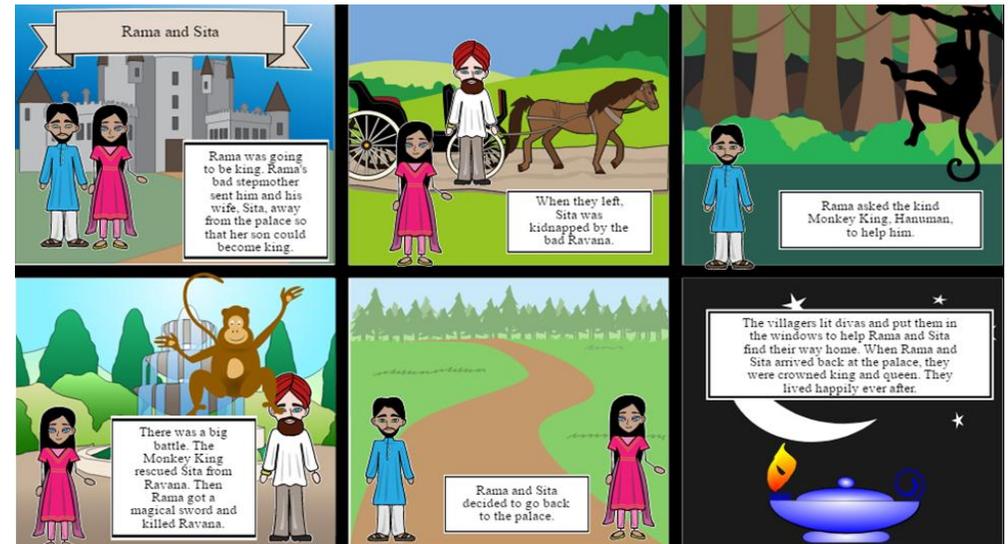
- Hindus believe that life is like a circle: we live, we die and then we are born into a new life and start all over again. This is **re-incarnation**.
- Hindus collect **good karma** - when they do good things and collect **bad karma** - when they do bad things.
- At the end of your life your points are weighed up - a positive balance means your soul (**atman**) will be born into a better life next time and a negative balance means you will be born into a worse life - perhaps poor, or ill, or even as an animal.
- If you progress through each life collecting good **karma** along the way, you will eventually achieve **Moksha** when you get to be with God and no longer have to be reborn.

Are Hindu beliefs about life after death fair?

Yes because	No because
You get lots of chances to get things right Good people get rewarded and bad people get punished	It is too difficult to be good all the time You don't get a fresh start in each life because you are being punished for what you did in the past.

### Key words

<b>Brahman</b>	the Hindu name for God
<b>Deity</b>	the name for the different versions of God Hindus worship, e.g. Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna and Rama
<b>Mandir</b>	Hindu temple or place of worship
<b>Shrine</b>	A special place set aside to worship God.
<b>Puja</b>	Worship at home
<b>Arti</b>	A way of worshipping by waving lamps or candles
<b>Murti</b>	An image or statue of a deity. Hindus believe that the deity lives in the image or statue.
<b>Moksha</b>	Ultimate goal of Hindus - to be with God.
<b>Reincarnation</b>	The belief that your soul is reborn into a new body on earth after you die.
<b>Karma</b>	The reward or punishment for good or bad deeds



### This is the story of Rama and Sita - The Ramayana

This is a very important story for Hindus as it remembers Rama and Sita's safe homecoming. Candles are lit as a symbol in Hindu homes during the festival of Diwali.



belief	religion
believe	religious
people	worship
prayer	