



Items/Activities	Do	Don't
<p>The Nature of Hinduism</p> <p>People within the tradition often call it the 'Sanatan Dharma'. Sanatan means 'eternal' and 'dharma' refers to natural laws or duties.</p>	<p>Do explain that Hinduism is a collection of religious practices and beliefs and a range of philosophical ideas embraced by people living in India over thousands of years, hence the diversity of the religious tradition. Do use phrases like 'many Hindus' and 'most Hindus' to express this idea to pupils.</p> <p>Do try to introduce pupils to the Hindu concept of one God, Brahman (the ultimate life force), and the many gods and goddesses of Hinduism as expressions of Brahman. Do introduce the Trimurti as important deities representing the three aspects of God- Brahma, the Creator, Vishnu, the preserver and Shiva, the destroyer.</p> <p>Do explain to pupils that Hindus will worship one or two gods or goddesses as their way of approaching God and that some of these are human avatars (forms) of the God Vishnu e.g. Krishna and Ram(a) (Rama is usually how the Sanskrit name is spelt in our alphabet).</p> <p>Do explain statues/images of gods/goddesses are known as 'murtis' (deities). Do refer to both gods and goddesses as the feminine energy within the ultimate life force is clearly recognised in Hinduism.</p> <p>Do refer to other spiritual leaders of the Hindu tradition instead of only focusing on Gandhi. Good examples are Vivekananda, Pandurang Shastri Athavale and Shri Aurobindho.</p>	<p>Don't just focus on Hinduism in India but explore expressions in other parts of the world, including the UK, with particular focus on local expressions.</p> <p>Don't describe the images/statues of Hindu gods and goddesses as 'idols', as this would suggest Hindus worship the artefacts, when actually they are used to aid worship and provide a focus.</p> <p>Don't refer to the Trimurti as 'The Hindu Trinity' as their roles bear no resemblance to the Christian Trinity. Always use Hindu terms rather than analogies from other religions.</p> <p>Don't use images of Hindu ascetics (holy men) too casually. Prepare pupils before viewing images so that they do not become open to ridicule.</p>
<p>Puja (worship)</p>	<p>Do explain the term 'puja' as meaning 'worship' and that worship takes place in the home more than at the mandir. The Hindu Dharma (teachings, truth) should be</p>	



	<p>contextualised for pupils within home and community life. Please do show images of Hindu home shrines and devotees worshipping at these.</p> <p>Do demonstrate how items on the puja tray are used in worship e.g. waving of the aarti lamp, ringing the bell, etc)</p>	
Samsara	Do teach pupils about Hindu concepts which they may have already encountered in inaccurate forms through popular culture, such as samsara (the cycle of death and rebirth; reincarnation) and karma (actions in this existence affecting fate in the future existences)	Please do not trivialise the concept of 'samsara' by implying that a human may be reincarnated in the next life as another species e.g. spider. Although this is theoretically possible Hinduism emphasises that the process is slow, taking places over hundreds of incarnations.
Varna	Do teach pupils about the role of varna in Indian society and how this has changed. The 4 varna are: Shatriya (warriors), Brahmin (educators), Vaishnav (Businessmen) and Sudra (Cleaners).	<p>Don't use the term 'caste' as this was introduced by the colonial British to divide Hindus and is not known by 2nd and 3rd generation British Hindus.</p> <p>Be cautious about using the term 'Harijan' (Children of God) which was used by Gandhi to describe 'outcasts' as this is now often regarded as patronising. Instead use 'Dalit people'.</p>
Visiting a Mandir	<p>Before visitng a Hindu mandir please instruct pupils on what they will see there and how they will need to act. This will include removing shoes on entry. Head coverings are not usually required. Please ensure pupils are respectful towards the deities (murti) they see during the visit.</p> <p>Please make pupils aware that they will likely be offered sweets or some fruit on leaving and it is considered polite to accept (though exceptions can be made for allergies, intolerances, etc).</p>	<p>Please ensure pupils do not disturb worshippers.</p> <p>Please do not bring non-vegetarian food into the manir.</p>