

KS2 Hinduism: Beliefs & Questions



**How do questions
about Brahman and
atman influence the
way a Hindu lives?**

The eMMAVUEl Project:

Teaching other faiths effectively in Key Stage 2



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of St Edmundsbury
and Ipswich

Before you start:

RE is about 'educating' children about differing religious faiths and their impact on the lives of believers, their communities and the wider world. RE is statutory for Key Stage 2 pupils in all schools. National law gives more weight to Christianity as the heritage religion but also requires the study of other religions such as Hinduism, Islam and Judaism.

This unit covers the KS2 'Beliefs & Questions' Learning Theme in the Suffolk Agreed syllabus 2012:

- It focuses on Hinduism but the Learning Theme is repeated for two other faiths, Islam and Christianity, so pupils can examine similarities and differences between faiths as part of the overall scheme of work.
- A key Hindu belief / concept underpins and is central to all the teaching and learning.
- An enquiry cycle model is used to develop the unit: Engage / Enquire / Explore / Evaluate / Express.
- The Explore section is unpacked in relation to 3 key areas: **Hindu Narrative** (story / sacred text); **Hindu Community Practice** (what happens in the Hindu community / mandir); **Hindu Living** (how the faith is lived out).
- The unit is designed to last 6-8 hours and taught weekly or blocked. Teachers should decide how to distribute time effectively. Guidance on assessment is given and resources listed at the back.

Beliefs and Questions:

What key beliefs people hold about God, the world and humans

(Suffolk Agreed syllabus p.29)



Please read the guide to Hindu beliefs about **BRAHMAN** / **ATMAN** which form the heart of the unit. This simple 'image' of the figure 'one' is provided to symbolize the belief. It may also be used to help pupils remember what the unit is teaching about Hindu beliefs and practices. The image was drawn by Victoria Bush.

The *eMMAWUEl* Project – For an overview of the project and how the Hindu units fit a scheme of work, contact: Helen Matter, Diocesan Schools' Adviser: helen.matter@cofesuffolk.org

HINDU CONCEPTS

BRAHMAN / ATMAN



Brahman (the one Supreme being or cosmic principle) and Atman (the true self in each human), it's a bit like:

- **God the fire giving out sparks**
- **God as sunlight glinting off waves**
- **God looking out through human eyes**
- **The ultimate connection or unity behind all things**

'Hindu' comes from Sindhu, a river in NW India, which in Sanskrit means 'a vast expanse of water'. Hinduism itself is vast, a collection of ancient traditions with more emphasis on doing the right thing than agreeing a particular creed. Many Hindus call their tradition *Sanatana-dharma*, the eternal law, which governs all irrespective of belief, and which points to origins beyond human history.

Hinduism has no single founder or scripture, but is continually refreshed by living gurus, whose claim to experience God, drives others to seek them out as sources of guidance. Its wide variety of beliefs and practices are confusing but some ideas are fairly constant e.g.

- one Supreme Being or life principle, underlying the universe (**BRAHMAN**), approached through chosen deities
- all living beings connected to this Supreme Being (**ATMAN**)
- time as cyclical, with humans living, dying and being re-incarnated

Aum / Om is the key symbol of Hinduism. It is said to be the sound at the heart of the universe, which is heard when attaining God-realisation through deep meditation. Using the sound in prayer helps a worshipper focus on and become united with God, the aim of all existence.

The Gayatri Mantra

"We meditate on the glory of that Being who has produced this universe; may He enlighten our minds."

Rig Veda (Mandala 3.62.10)

In the Buddhist / Hindu story of the blind men and the elephant, each man describes a part of the elephant and interprets it as the whole. Hindus live with very different ideas of God, but see each as part of something much bigger. Their understanding of God is defined as pluralism, rather than polytheism.



3 main approaches to God / Brahman

God as a personality with attributes and forms – this most popular approach allows devotees to develop a relationship with God, who may be seen as friend, mother, brother, child. Depictions of God are made in human form but incorporate superhuman attributes e.g. many arms / heads. These many forms or deities, are God's response to the needs of devotees.

Murtis, statues of different deities, are installed ritually in a temple, preparing them to be inhabited by God, infused with living breath (prana). From that point, the divine is manifest in the murtis and they are served like an honoured guest: woken, dressed, viewed, worshipped and put to

rest daily. Devotees visit the murtis to take **darshan** i.e. to see, and be seen, by their chosen deity. They offer flowers, incense, food and praise in a ritual called puja.

God as a personality with attributes but no form – this means God has attributes like love and truth, but no form or shape.

Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886) said, "*God can be both with and without form. It is the love of the devotee that freezes the formless God into the form the devotee chooses. Many are the names of God and infinite the forms through which he may be approached. In whatever name and form you worship him, through that you will realise him.*"

God as principle that underlies everything - Some Hindus believe any attempt to describe God with form or attribute imposes human limitations on the concept. God is unlike all we can imagine and it is better to replace the name with the term 'ultimate' or 'cosmic reality'.

Vivekananda (1863-1902) saw the whole universe as a projection of Brahman, not that the universe is God i.e. not 'pantheism'. Brahman is more manifest in living things, and most clearly manifest in human beings.

Atman

Humans associate themselves with their minds and bodies; they are concerned with

nationality, race and gender but the real self is distinct from these. The real self is non-material and never changes. Hindus believe this is the spark of Brahman within each person and call it the Atman.

This belief, that the self is none other than Brahman, gives dignity to all humanity. Mahatma Gandhi said, "I am endeavouring to see God through service to humanity, for I know God is neither in heaven nor down below, but in everyone." It is as if God looks out through all human eyes, like the sun shining off individual waves of the sea, or sparks flying out of a fire.

Subramuniyaswami, a modern guru, wrote in 'Hinduism Today' in 1996:

Rishis proclaim that we are not our body, mind or emotions. We are divine souls on a wondrous journey. We came from God, live in God and are evolving into oneness with God. We are, in truth, the Truth we seek. We are immortal souls living and growing in the great school of earthly experience in which we have lived many lives.

The word 'Namaste' or 'Namaskar' is a respectful form of greeting in Hindu custom, used with a slight bow and hands pressed together, palms touching and fingers pointing upwards, thumbs close to the chest. The gesture means "I bow to the divine in you"; the spark of the divine in me greets the spark of divine in you.

Upanishads

"Now (while one has a human birth), one should inquire into Brahman." *Vedanta Sutra 1.1.1*



The Upanishads are philosophical texts debating issues of my-self, its relationship to God and the world, whether it continues after death and how it is affected by our actions, and liberation. The Chandogya Upanishad, tells the story of Svetaketu, whose father taught him that Brahman was in everything, as salt is in water. 'Tat tvam asi', the father ended his lesson: you are like that – the one who underlies the whole universe is in you.

Sacred Cow

In India the cow has long been linked with prosperity, her products considered pure and good. Respect for her as a great mother and provider, be-



came an identifying mark of Hindus, a symbol for mother India, but also a focus of great religious, and political debate. Neo-Hindus have taken up the symbol of the cow too – a sign of non-violence in a new context of ecological awareness, vegetarianism and commitment to the integrity of all creation.



How do questions about Brahman and atman influence the way a Hindu lives?

ENGAGE

with a dilemma for some Hindu monks

Below are some 'I can's' for this section. If you decide to assess any pupils, adapt the lesson to enable this.

Assessment

2d I can ask about how others feel when something they love is threatened or in danger

3e I can ask important questions about the value of an animal's life and compare my ideas with others

Teacher's note: *The story of Shambo is used below to initiate discussion of Hindu beliefs about the world, and about God; it can be used throughout the unit, ending with a debate or presentation by pupils. Respect for the sanctity of life in Hindu tradition is broadly based on the concept of Brahman, the Supreme Being, pervading the universe, including all living beings.*

What happens in this story by a famous author?

Listen to the fable of 'The Magpie and the Bull', written by Michael Morpurgo in response to a story in the news. I wonder what happened to make him write it. It's not just a sad story about a bull dying. What questions do you have about the story?

Play the audio version read by Morpurgo, alongside a picture of Shambo with a garland round his neck **OR** tell it yourself, see details at the side.



<https://soundcloud.com/randomupload/the-magpie-and-the-bull>

What dilemma did Shambo the bull create for his owners?

The bull was called Shambo and his story made national news.

Divide class into groups of 6. Each group needs a different image of the Shambo dilemma to discuss e.g. *worship outside Shambo's pen, caring for the bull, police walking Shambo away, etc.* After 2/3 minutes, children leave their picture behind.

Each child now joins a different new group and must describe the picture they saw. The new group tries to formulate an opinion as to what the dilemma might be. Whiteboard ideas and then share answers as a class.

Explain: *Shambo lived at a Hindu Temple in Skanda Vale in Wales. He was given a slaughter notice in 2007 after being infected with TB. The Hindu monks wanted to care for him till he*

Read the notes on Brahman / atman on p3-4 to inform effective teaching of this unit.

Morpurgo's story:
<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/moral-story-kindness-precious-life-2236406>

Summary of the Shambo affair:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shambo#Sanctity_of_life_in_Hindu_tradition

Try internet search for good pictures, using: Shambo Skanda Vale 2007
Info on Bovine TB – see Wikipedia.

You could use blog excerpts on the

<p>5f I can ask questions about things in the Shambo debate which would be important to me and others, and suggest answers which relate to things I already know about</p>	<p><i>died, rather than have him slaughtered. They stated a petition and even went to court.</i></p> <p>Listen to a monk at Skanda Vale (2.5 mins) explaining the situation. Gather his reasons for wanting to keep Shambo alive. <i>NB Final 2 slides show the results; you may want to hide them.</i></p> <p>https://www.truetube.co.uk/film/shambo-cow</p>  <p>At the end of the unit, we will debate whether the monks should have won the case or lost it. <u>What are your initial thoughts?</u> Children could write down some initial ideas and develop them as the unit progresses, tracking any change of views.</p>	<p>Shambo debate to run a 'newsdesk' each lesson: http://www.skandavale.org/shambo-sanctity-of-life/</p>
<p>ENQUIRE into Hindu ideas about God, the world and living beings</p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>2e I can talk about ideas in the story of the elephant and the blind men that made me ask questions</p> <p>3a I can describe what a Hindu might learn from the story of the blind men and the elephant</p> <p>3c I can use terms</p>	<p>Teacher's Notes: <i>One of the most difficult things to decide in studying Hinduism is what to say about Hindu belief in God. The multiplicity of ancient traditions upon which this religion draws has led to a range of views about the nature of God, and a clear distinction from those faiths, such as Islam and Christianity, which are firmly monotheistic.</i></p>  <p>What does this story from India say about having different ideas?</p> <p>This is a story told in India, in various religions. Six blind men are taken to meet an elephant. Each touches a different part and concludes something different about what the animal is like. None can see the whole elephant.</p> <p>Investigate the story with the video or poem below, or tell in your own words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video: The Blind Men & the Elephant (3.50) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vn9BUfUCL4I • Poem - Try "The Blind Men and the Elephant" by John Godfrey Saxe (1816–1887). Beautifully old-fashioned and huge fun to read as a choral piece. Source on the internet e.g. http://www.allaboutphilosophy.org/blind-men-and-the-elephant.htm  <p>Ask children to retell the story in small groups. Does it help explain why Hindus have different views about God? i.e. no human mind can come close to the whole truth about reality / God.</p> <p>What different ideas are there about God?</p> <p>In the Hindu religion, there are many ideas about God and they are not all the same. It de-</p>	

like pluralism and monotheism to describe different ways people e.g. Hindus, think about God

5a I can suggest reasons for people's beliefs being both similar and different, using the 'Elephant and the Blind Men' and explain how Hindus seek answers from spiritual teachers

5c I can use a wide religious vocabulary to suggest reasons for similarities and differences within Hindu approaches to God, and between those of other faiths

pends who you ask and what aspect of the religion you look at.

There are some words it helps to know. Play a word game, using dictionaries to find and learn the definitions of these words. NB all the words connect with the Greek 'theos' or God.

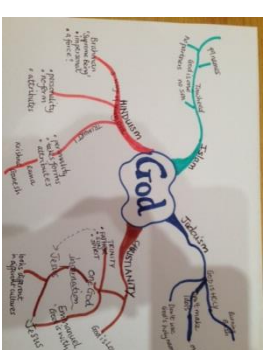
Monotheism	Atheism	Pantheism
Polytheism	Henotheism	Theism

What ideas do you know about God in other religions?

As a class, share ideas about God from their work on Christianity and Islam. Add other religions / atheism, if wished.

You could make a mind map, using the names of faiths as the main branches.

Christianity and Islam are both 'monotheistic' but in Islam, God never takes any 'form' whereas in Christianity, God is incarnated as Jesus.



Add to the Hindu branch as you go along; *this branch will split into different branches – see introduction.*

Most people of a faith agree what their religion says about God; Hinduism is different. It had no single founder and has many different holy books. Many Hindus today follow spiritual teachers or gurus who help them think about God in different ways.

Watch **Hinduism: My Life, My Religion** (first 6.5 mins). Work with a partner to decide which 'theism' word fits best for Hinduism. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hfhka-OVLSA>

Finish this sentence together on whiteboards and then compare with others in class.

We think Hindus are xxxxxx-eist because Vraj and Simran said

Each word could apply to Hindus. Discuss the reasons for the children's choices. All the words could be made to fit because Hindu beliefs about God vary.

Introduce an umbrella term: **pluralist**. This is one way of describing how Hindus approach the idea of God. Connect with 'plural'. Can children link this with the Elephant story?


Use any word game children are familiar with for this exercise.

For a basic discussion on what kind of 'theism' is the best fit for Hinduism:

<http://www.religionfacts.com/hinduism/gods>

More able children could find out about important spiritual leaders for Hindus e.g. Vivekananda or A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

Really good explanation of Hinduism for teachers and some pupils:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Y6Ebi5JBHY>

	<p>Children can make notes of what all these words mean and be rewarded for trying to use them accurately in class. Maybe the words could be pinned on an 'elephant'.</p> <p> Shambo Newsdesk. Look at 1 or 2 new entries in the Shambo blog. Add new thoughts or questions about Shambo from today's lesson, to your notes.</p>	
<p>EXPLORE</p> <p>(1) different ideas about Brahman / Atman in Hindu Narrative</p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>4e I can ask about the meaning and purpose of life as illustrated in the song 'Colours of the Wind' and suggest a range of answers, including my own and a Hindu view</p> <p>2a I can tell the story of Svetaketu and the salty water and say something a Hindu believes about God</p>	<p>Teacher's note: At the heart of Hindu tradition is the concept of Brahman. This term may simply be used to mean 'God' but God beyond any possible human classification, without form or attributes. Brahman may also mean an impersonal absolute being or 'world soul' which pervades everything in the universe. Whichever meaning is used, Hindus talk of all living things containing a 'spark' of Brahman, which in humans is known as the 'atman'.</p> <p>What ideas underlie this song? (see note on Native Americans)</p> <p>As a starter, play 'Colours of the Wind' from Disney's 'Pocahontas'. This is the sing-along version: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9MvdMqKvPU</p> <p>Play the clip again. Ask children to think what lessons Pocahontas is trying to teach John Smith. In talking groups, ask children to list these lessons. It will be easier of the children can annotate the lyrics.</p> <p>Report back on possible ideas e.g. <i>there is life in everything, all things are connected, we don't know everything, the world isn't just about humans, we must care about the world, all creatures are important.</i></p> <p>Why is Pocahontas trying to show Smith these ideas?</p> <p>What lessons do Hindu children learn about God from their scriptures?</p> <p>Teacher's note: In ancient Hindu communities, children left home to learn the Vedic scriptures (the 'Knowledge') from high-caste teachers. The Upanishads, also Hindu scriptures, explore the idea that everything is connected to Brahman - the divine essence of everything, including humans. These scriptures also tell us of a student who did not learn as much as he should.</p> <p>The stories of Svetaketu are found in the Upanishads. Svetaketu had been away to be educated and when he came home, his father, a wise man, was horrified to see how conceited his son had become. Svetaketu thought he knew everything but</p>	<p>You might clarify that Native Americans (Red Indians) are different from Hindus or Indians from the sub-continent.</p> <p>Vivekananda, a Hindu teacher, said the universe was a projection of God or Brahman. Think about how the light of a projector comes out from one point and produces an image for all to see. The image is not the origin, but a reflection of it.</p> <p>Upanishad means "sitting near," alluding to the tutorials given by a</p>



4a I can make links between what Svetaketu's father wanted him to learn from the salt, honey and the fig, and Hindu belief in Brahman

3d I can compare some things that influence me with how the idea of God in everything might make a difference to people's lives e.g. Hindus

when his father asked about the essence of everything, Brahman, Svetaketu could not answer. His father called for a glass of water. Act out what happened (see **Appendix 1.**) When his father had demonstrated how Brahman pervades everything, he said 'tat tvam asi' – You are that too. Svetaketu had to realise that Brahman is in him too – in fact, this is his real self (the atman).

In another story, the father asks his son to cut open a **fig**. Act this out with any seeded fruit.. What is inside? And if you cut into a seed? Svetaketu sees nothing; his father says that from this nothingness a great tree has grown. That nothingness, the mystery that lies at the heart of all life is Brahman, the invisible reality pervading everything.



Another lesson involves a pot of **honey**. Many parts of creation combine to make honey – flowers, bees, humans – and its sweetness becomes part of us too; this reflects how all things are joined together as part of Brahman, the interlocking network of all life.



When the stories are all told, allow children to retell the stories to each other, and /or make their own notes about the one they like best and why.

What does this text from a Hindu scripture make you think about? (extension)

Some pupils might enjoy unpicking the text below from the Bhagavad Gita, also describing God. Do they like these ideas? Do they have any similarity with the Pocahontas film?

*I am the taste in the water
I am the radiance in the sun and moon
I am the sound in space
I am the strength in humanity
I am the sweet fragrance of the earth
I am the brilliance in the fire
I am the life in all beings*

Some children could create additional metaphors, noting the first noun is always intangible and the second tangible. A powerpoint could be made to illustrate the text.

Would we see the world differently if God was in everything?

Use the single word 'Brahman' to create a picture of a tree from roots to branches **OR** to fill in an outline e.g. of an animal, or of the items


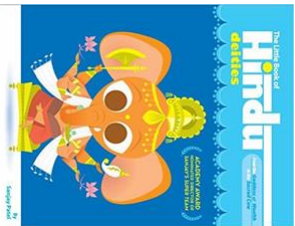
guru to his disciples (who sat "at his feet").


<http://www.hindu-kids.org/old/granda/fatherandson.html> svetaketu


<http://vyjayanthiengarblogs.blogspot.co.uk/2014/07/uddalaka-and-svetaketu- insightful.html#1/2014/07/uddalaka-and-svetaketu- insightful.html>

This text is from the Bhagavad Gita (7:8,9), a much-loved Hindu holy book.

Children may remember Jesus' 'I am' sayings from the unit on Incarnation.

	<p>in the Svetaketu stories i.e. glass of water, fig and pot of honey. While you are working, talk to your neighbours about how people might see the world differently if they thought God was in everything. For example: How would you treat other people? Would you eat meat? Would you look after yourself better? Would you have a higher opinion of your friends and your parents? Report your best ideas to your teacher.</p>  <p>Shambo Newsdesk. Look at 1 or 2 new entries in the Shambo blog. Add new thoughts or questions about Shambo from today's lesson, to your notes.</p>	<p>Darshan – an audience, sighting or viewing of the divine in the form of a murty, a special image of the deity.</p>
<p>EXPLORE (2) ideas about God in Hindu community practice</p>	<p>Teacher's note: For Hindus, it is perfectly consistent to worship several deities but affirm belief in one Supreme Being, Brahman. 'God is one and the wise call him by many names'. The deities reveal aspects of Brahman. Devout Hindus present themselves before the deities in a temple, to receive their blessing and catch a glimpse of the Supreme Being, who is beyond the deities but does not replace them. They pay respects by bowing the head and folding the hands or by prostrating themselves.</p> <p>How do people envisage God? How do Hindus envisage God?</p> <p>Some people believe in God and some people do not. What terms do we need for both these groups of people? An atheist says there is no 'god' – but what do they, or anyone, mean by 'god'? What does a dictionary say?</p> <p>For Hindus, the idea of God is so vast, it makes sense that God can be thought of in many different ways. Use different pictures or models of Hindu gods e.g. from The Little Book of Hindu Deities (see Resources).</p> <p>Hold up the images... what if this was God? or this? or this? How can they all be God? (Does referring back to the Elephant story help at all here?)</p> <p>How do Hindus explain their ideas of God?</p> <p>Watch Anuj, a Hindu boy, present his understanding of God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/z6q6sbk (from Pathways of Belief: Hinduism - 	<p>As an atheist is defined as not believing in 'god'; even they need to be able to explain what they mean by the word.</p> <p>Children may remember Rama, Sita or Krishna.</p>
<p>Assessment</p> <p>2b I can talk about some of the things Hindus do when they go the mandir / pray at a shrine</p> <p>3b I can describe why</p>		<p>Introduce the word 'deity' if pupils have not met it. It</p>

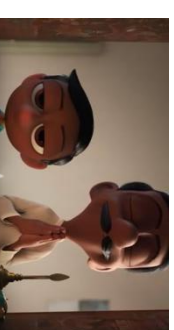
<p>Hindus choose to worship different deities and name some of them</p>	<p>Expressing faith through dance and the different Hindu gods / 3.20)</p> <p>Follow it with a second clip in which Anuj tells the story of the salt in the water and explains why he worships Ganesh the elephant God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/z47ttg8 (Pathways of Belief: Hinduism – Ganesh the Hindu God / 2.06) <p>OR Watch as Vraj and Simran show worship of the deities and explain their relationship to Brahman. Learn the words: murti, arti and puja. What do these words mean?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/z3hb4j6 What is Hinduism? (03.57) <p>What can you find out about a Hindu deity?</p> <p>Using a variety of resources e.g. pages from <u>The Little Book of Deities</u>, and internet research, ask children to identify key information about one deity e.g. Ganesh. They could create individual line drawings or use oil pastel or other suitable medium OR work in groups to create a larger collage of a deity.</p> <p>Label / write a paragraph about the deity. If this deity is showing an aspect of Brahman, a glimpse of the Supreme Being, what do you think it might be showing?</p> <p> Shambo Newsdesk. Look at 1 or 2 new entries in the Shambo blog. Add new thoughts or questions about Shambo from today's lesson, to your notes.</p> <p>Alternative: Use RE Ideas: God (from <u>RE Today Services</u>) p.19-24 – How do Hindus express beliefs about God? Useful activities and background for teacher. See Resources.</p>	<p><i>comes from the Latin 'deus' or god.</i></p> <p><i>Watch an 'aum' symbol morph into different gods:</i></p> <p>http://www.cleo.net.uk/resources/display-frame.php?src=200/consultants_resources/re/temple/index.htm+</p> <p><i>In Islam the idea of giving God a 'form' or image is strictly forbidden.</i></p> <p><i>In Christianity, Jesus is seen as the 'image of the invisible God' - the one who shows what God is like.</i></p>
<p>EXPLORE (3) how Hindu Living is affected</p>	<p>Teacher's note: <i>Hindus believe there is a divine spark of Brahman (the Supreme Being) in each individual; this is the Atman, a human's real self. The Atman is eternal and indestructible and continues to exist after the body dies. Its goal is to be merged with Brahman as salt dissolves in water or a drop of water merges into the sea, and, at death, either achieves this union (moksha)</i></p>	<p>Some background on 'atman':</p>

<p>by the idea of Brahman / Atman</p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>3f I can link my ideas about how important people, including myself, are with how I think and behave</p> <p>4d I can ask my own questions about whether people have a spirit or soul, and suggest answers which refer to people who have inspired/ influenced me</p> <p>3d I can compare some things that influence me with how the idea of God in everything might make a difference to people's lives</p> <p>4b I can use the right religious words to describe how a belief in Brahman / atman might affect a Hindu's diet and their attitude to animals</p>	<p><i>or is re-incarnated. For Hindus, all life is thus sacred and serving others is like serving Brahman.</i></p> <p>Do you know who you are? What is your atman?</p> <p>Play a pointing game. Stand in a large circle. Tell children to point to parts of the body e.g. point to your left foot... right knee... nose...left wrist. After 10 to 15 body parts, ask children to point to 'your self'! Why is this so difficult?</p> <p>For Hindus, your 'self' is not a body part but the most real bit of you. What do you think that might mean? What makes you 'you'?</p> <p>Hindus believe this real 'self' is your 'atman' and it is indestructible - divine spark, part of Brahman. When your body dies, your 'atman' joins up with Brahman or comes back to life in a new body (reincarnation).</p> <p>How do people greet each other with respect?</p> <p>So now we know who you are, who is everyone else? Imagine you haven't met all these people. Think of different ways of greeting! Which do you think are most respectful?</p> <p>Shake hands, bow, give hugs, peck on the cheek, rub noses! Allow children to discuss quickly and see what you come up with. What do different ways of greeting 'say'? Why do we greet people in different ways? Culture, relationship, status etc.</p> <p>Look at the symbol for this unit. For Hindus, and many Indians, it has a special meaning, and is accompanied by the word 'namaste'. It does not involve 'touching' and is suitable for all ages and cultures.</p>  <p>How is the custom of Namaste connected to the idea of atman?</p> <p>Teacher's note: <i>Namaste is a reverential greeting, made with bowed head and folded hands, before something, or someone, deeply respected e.g. grandparents, parents or teachers. The action is also used in prayer at a shrine or temple, before a deity. Roughly translated, Namaste means "I bow to the God within you", or "The Divine Spirit in me salutes the Divine Spirit in you".</i></p> <p>Watch for this respectful form of greeting in a short film: Sanjay's Super Team.</p>	<p>http://www.hinduwebsite.com/atman.asp</p> <p>The Pointing Game (originally from ISKCON Educational Services)</p> <p>'Namaste' - na-mass-tay - is a reverential greeting used in India, common also in Buddhist culture, and in the practice of Yoga in the West.</p> <p>Some children may recognise the similarity with hands held in Christian prayer.</p>
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5b I can describe why some Hindus have different views on the importance of worship, with reference to Sanjay's Super Team, and the film's creator

<https://vimeo.com/165239546>

Where did you see hands in the Namaste greeting? i.e. Sanjay's father, the gods in the shrine. It is actually a simple form of bowing. Who might people bow to in this country? Why? Why do Sanjay and his father fold their hands in front of their shrine? Why are the deities standing with folded hands too?



As a greeting, namaste is also used between people because Hindus believe that there is a divine spark within every living thing, especially within every human: the Atman.

How does belief in Brahman / Atman affect the way Hindus live?

Show children 3 or 4 stand-up cardboard cutouts – a bird, an animal, some people – with holes punched in them. Ask children what these might represent.

Then light a large central candle. From this, light a tea-light behind each cut-out so that you can see the light shining through. Again ask children what this could represent i.e. atman shining out of every living thing.



Develop questions about how this would affect everyday life for a Hindu.

Here are some areas to talk about briefly or for children to investigate. Each is related to Hindu respect for the divine in living things, and the belief that all life is connected as a result.

- **Being vegetarian** – many Hindus do not eat meat, some believe people can be reborn as animals. Cows are especially sacred and not killed for meat.
- **Respect for others**, especially the elderly – there is the divine in everyone –
- **Serving other people** as 'manifestations' of the divine /God, helping others helps you
- **Non-violence (ahimsa)** – refraining from harming living things, harming others harms you

Children can create their own card cut out which will stand up (a simple ring of card, like a 'crown', would do). Decorate the outside with key words / phrases / pictures to show what they found out about the 4 areas above, or more generally what they have learnt in this unit.

Find out more about the reasons behind the creation of this film on the internet.

Create your own simple silhouettes, to cut out. They need to be able to stand up. Punch holes with a hole-punch.

Candle should be stood in a pot of sand for safety reasons.

Punch holes in the card and display with tealights behind it to show the idea of Brahman / atman shining through. This could be completed as part of **EXPRESS**.



Shambo Newdesk. Look at 1 or 2 new entries in the Shambo blog. Add new thoughts or questions about Shambo from today's lesson, to your notes.

Teacher's note: Assess children's progress throughout the unit, selecting particular tasks as you go along to establish learning. Do not try to cover everything in the Assessment Grid, which just summarises all the possibilities. This is a good point to check what has been done.

How do questions about Brahman and atman influence the way a Hindu lives?

This alternative assessment activity will allow pupils to demonstrate their learning; it could be prepared this lesson and the **EXPRESS** part of the unit could be a presentation or debate.

Review the situation at Skanda Vale and explain that we are going to use what we now know about Hinduism to help unpick the situation, and prepare our witnesses.

Draw together some paragraphs and quotes from different viewpoints so that pupils have to work together to find the meaning of the whole. These can be sourced from a variety of places e.g. the Skanda Vale Blog:

<http://www.skandavale.org/shambo-sanctity-of-life/>

If children have had an ongoing debate about the case, now is the time to draw their ideas and comments together.

If not , give small groups a particular point of view to research, and find at least one piece of evidence of what they might want to say about the case, for example:

European Court of Human Rights	DEFRA	The Welsh Assembly
The Skanda Vale Monks	Jay Lakhani	Local vets



EVALUATE
what pupils have learnt about Hindu belief and practice in relation to Brahman / Atman

See the Assessment Grid for a summary of 'I can' statements.

2f I can talk about what is important to me in the Shambo debate and listen respectfully to others
4f I can question decisions made about Shambo and suggest what might happen as a result of different decisions, including those made with reference to Hindu beliefs

5e I can ask questions about what I feel ready to stand up for in my life and suggest some answers to my own questions about what is really important in life

The Hindu Forum of Britain	Farmers' Unions	The Court of Appeal
Govardhan Charitable Trust, India	Michael Morpurgo	The Welsh Assembly

Set up your own court scenario to review the case and debate whether the right decision was made.

Children should prepare their own 2 minute statements to give in 'court'. Make sure you call several Hindu witnesses to give at least two Hindu views. Those not in court could be members of the public giving their views but these must be balanced and include an element which shows some understanding of a Hindu viewpoint.

EXPRESS

your RE learning so it can be shared with others

4c I can express religious beliefs about Brahman / atman in a range of styles e.g. art, poetry, and suggest what my work might convey to a Hindu

How can you share your learning about, and from, the idea of Brahman / Atman?

Most of these are developed from work done earlier in the unit, but you will have other ideas for how to share the children's work and so will they!

SHAMBO DEBATE – invite another class or the headteacher to come and hear your debate. At the end of the debate. All children should have a vote, as themselves. If they still do not know the result of the case, this should be given.

BRAHMAN WORD PICTURES – Create a display of Brahman trees and animals, created or infilled with the word 'Brahman' and label them carefully so others can understand some Hindu beliefs about Brahman / atman.



'I AM THE' poetry- based on the passage from the Bhagavad Gita

NAMASTE HANDS – make hands out of card or a modelling clay. Display with explanation.

CARDBOARD Cut-outs with tea-lights to show atman shining through living things. If LED lights can be used, a proper display may be made and left out.

Appendix 1 - The Stories of Svetaketu

Svetaketu had studied long and hard but his father, Uddalaka, was bothered. It seemed that his son was very conceited and, although he knew many things, he did not seem to have grasped the true knowledge of how things were in the universe and these were surely the most important things. He decided to teach him. The conversations and lessons he had with Svetaketu are written in detail in the Hindu scriptures called the UPANISHADS.

Uddalaka asked his son to bring some salt and put it in a cup of water and bring the cup next morning. Svetaketu did so.

Uddalaka: "You put the salt into the water in this cup. Can you take the salt out?"

Svetaketu: "I cannot find the salt; it has dissolved."

Uddalaka: "Taste a drop from the surface of the water."

Svetaketu: "It is salty."

Uddalaka: "Now taste a drop from the middle of the cup."

Svetaketu: "It tastes the same, salty."

Uddalaka: "Now taste a drop from the bottom."

Svetaketu: "It is salty there too."

Uddalaka: "Now my son, you do not see the salt, although it is certainly in the water. In the same way, the True Being, Brahman, is present everywhere in this universe, although you do not see Him. He is the essence of all, and you, you are this essence too"

Svetaketu became a humble and great rishi in the course of time.



Svetaketu asked, "Sir, please teach me more."
Uddalaka said, "The bees, my child, collect the honey from different flowers and mix them in the hive. Now, honeys of different flowers cannot know one from the other."



Uddalaka then asked his son to bring a fig. When he did so, Uddalaka asked him to break it. Svetaketu broke it open.

Uddalaka: "What do you see in it?"

Svetaketu: "I see small seeds."

Uddalaka: "Break one of the seeds and say what you see."

Svetaketu: "Nothing, Sir."

Uddalaka: "You are unable to see the minute particles of the seed after breaking it. Yet, the big fig tree is born out of that essence of that particle. Like that, the True Being (Brahman) is the essence of all creation."



Assessment of progress and achievement in the Suffolk RE Syllabus 2012

The Suffolk RE Agreed Syllabus 2012 has an 8-level scale to assess progress (p.39-41). For higher or lower levels, see the Syllabus.

Attainment Target 1 - Learning about religion & belief		Attainment Target 2 - Learning from religion & belief				
How pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding with reference to:						
Level	a) beliefs, teachings and sources	b) practices and ways of life	c) forms of expression	d) identity and belonging	e) meaning, purpose and truth	f) values and commitments
I can	I can	I can	I can	I can	I can	I can
2	2a tell a Hindu story and say some things that people believe	2b talk about some of the things that are the same for different religious people	2c say what some religious symbols stand for and what some art (music, etc) is about	2d ask about what happens to others with respect for their feelings	2e talk about some things in stories that make people ask questions	2f talk about what is important to me and to others with respect for their feelings
3	2a I can tell the story of Svetaketu and the salty water and say something a Hindu believes about God	2b I can talk about some of the things Hindus do when they go the mandir / pray at a shrine	2c I can say what the Namaste action stands for and when it might be used in worship	2d I can ask about how others feel when something they love is threatened or in danger	2e I can talk about ideas in the story of the elephant and the blind men that made me ask questions	2f I can talk about what is important to me in the Shambo debate and listen respectfully to others
3	3a describe what a Hindu might learn from a religious story	3b describe some of the things that are the same and different for religious people	3c use religious words to describe some of different ways people show their beliefs	3d compare some of the things that influence me with those that influence other people	3e ask important questions about life and compare my ideas with those of other people	3f link things that are important to me and other people with the way I think and behave
	3a I can describe what a Hindu might learn from the story of the blind men and the elephant	3b I can describe why Hindus choose to worship different deities and name some of them	3c I can use terms like pluralism and monotheism to describe different ways people e.g. Hindus, think about God	3d I can compare some things that influence me with how the idea of God in every-thing might make a difference to people's lives	3e I can ask important questions about the value of an animal's life and compare my ideas with others	3f I can link my ideas about how important people, including myself, are with how I think and behave

<p>4</p> <p>4a make links between the beliefs (teachings, sources, etc.) of different religious groups and show how they are connected to believers' lives</p>	<p>4b use the right religious words to describe and compare what practices and experiences may be involved in belonging to different religious groups</p>	<p>4c express religious beliefs (ideas, feelings, etc) in a range of styles and words used by believers and suggest what they mean</p>	<p>4d ask questions about who we are and where we belong, and suggest answers which refer to people who have inspired and influenced myself and others</p>	<p>4e ask questions about the meaning and purpose of life, and suggest a range of answers which might be given by me as well as members of different religious groups or individuals</p>	<p>4f ask questions about moral decisions I and other people make, and suggest what might happen as a result of different decisions, including those made with reference to religious beliefs / values</p>
<p>4a I can make links between what Svetaketu's father wanted him to learn from the salt, honey and the fig, and Hindu belief in Brahman</p>	<p>4b I can use the right religious words to describe how a belief in Brahman / atman might affect a Hindu's diet and their attitude to animals</p>	<p>4c I can express religious beliefs about Brahman / atman in a range of styles e.g. art, poetry, and suggest what my work might convey to a Hindu</p>	<p>4d I can ask my own questions about whether people have a spirit or soul, and suggest answers which refer to people who have inspired/ influenced me</p>	<p>4e I can ask about the meaning and purpose of life as illustrated in the song 'Colours of the Wind' and suggest a range of answers, including my own and a Hindu view</p>	<p>4f I can question decisions made about Shambo and suggest what might happen as a result of different decisions, including those made with reference to Hindu beliefs</p>
<p>5</p> <p>5a suggest reasons for the similar and different beliefs which people hold, and explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to important questions about life and morality</p>	<p>5b describe why people belong to religions and explain how similarities and differences within and between religions can make a difference to the lives of individuals and communities</p>	<p>5c use a wide religious vocabulary in suggesting reasons for similarities and differences in forms of religious, spiritual & moral expression found within and between religions</p>	<p>5d give my own and others' views on questions about who we are and where we belong and on the challenges of belonging to a religion; explain what inspires and influences me</p>	<p>5e ask questions about the meaning and purpose of life and suggest answers which relate to the search for truth and my own and others' lives</p>	<p>5f ask questions about things that are important to me and to other people and suggest answers which relate to my own and others' lives</p>
<p>5a I can suggest reasons for people's beliefs being both similar and different, using the 'Elephant and the Blind Men' and explain how Hindus seek answers from spiritual teachers</p>	<p>5b I can describe why some Hindus have different views on the importance of worship, with reference to Sanjay's Super Team, and the film's creator</p>	<p>5c I can use a wide religious vocabulary to suggest reasons for similarities and differences within Hindu approaches to God, and between those of other faiths</p>	<p>5d I can give my own and other views in my class about the challenge of acting on the idea that all things are 'pervaded' by Brahman, including humans</p>	<p>5e I can ask questions about what I feel ready to stand up for in my life and suggest some answers to my own questions about what is really important in life</p>	<p>5f I can ask questions about things in the Shambo debate which would be important to me and others, and suggest answers which relate to things I already know about</p>

Resources for this enquiry:

Most of the resources are mentioned in the text as well as in this list. Although you do not need all the resources listed, it would be hard to teach the unit without any of them.

Teacher Resources

- Hinduism: a very short introduction - Kim Knott- Oxford University Press
- Explaining Hindu Dharma: A Guide for Teachers –Nawal K. Prinja
- Useful glossary <http://www.hinduacademy.org/schools/glossary.htm>
- Hinduism for Schools <http://www.hinduism.fsnet.co.uk/>
- RE on-line website <http://www.reonline.org.uk/knowing/what-re/hinduism/>

Books

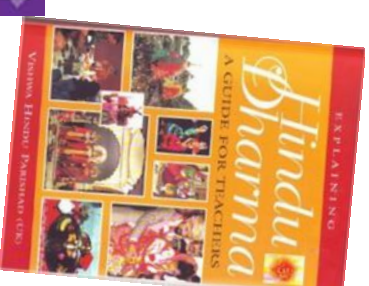
- RE Ideas: God – Fiona Moss - <http://shop.retoday.org.uk/9781905893768>
- The Little Book of Hindu Deities – Sanjay Patel

Artefacts / pictures

- Posters / figurines of Hindu deities e.g. Ganesh <http://www.articlesoffaith.co.uk/>
- Set of 5 mini resin deities - <http://www.articlesoffaith.co.uk/hindu-deity.html>

Video / DVD

- Sanjay's Super Team: a Pixar / Disney short film produced in 2015.
- BBC Education clips – bitesize – see details in lessons



The initial ideas for this unit were worked on by Anne Cooper (St Mary's CE Primary Academy), Victoria Bush (Barrow CE Primary) and Wendy Rayner (Kingsfleet Primary, Felixstowe) at the Emmanuel Project days at Belsey Bridge Conf. Centre 2015. They were completed as part of a Farmington Fellowship given to Wendy Rayner and in consultation with the Hindu community. Thank you for your hard work!