

# Year 4 – What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today?



## Key Vocabulary

<b>mandir</b>	A special place for Hindus to worship.
<b>Puja</b>	Act of worship for Hindus.
<b>Murtis</b>	Special statues or images of Hindu gods and goddesses.
<b>Hindu / Hinduism</b>	a follower of Hinduism a major religious and cultural tradition of South Asia
<b>Mahatma Gandhi</b>	Was a leader of India's independence movement. One of the greatest political and social leaders.
<b>Artha</b>	the pursuit of wealth or material advantage
<b>reincarnation</b>	Rebirth; being born again to live another life.
<b>Diya lamp</b>	A lamp with a flame that is used during worship.
<b>Deities</b>	Hindu gods and goddesses.
<b>Aarti</b>	A light, which removes darkness.
<b>Bhajans</b>	Hindu worship songs.
<b>Brahman</b>	Hindus recognise one God, Brahman.

## Did you know?

Hinduism is the world's third-largest religion (after Christianity and Islam). Hinduism believes in only one god, but one that can appear in many forms. Hindus decide which form they want to follow.

## What is the Hindu way of life?

**For many Hindus there are four goals in human life** (purusharthas);

1 **Moksha** - the release of the soul (Atman) from the cycle of rebirth.

The individual soul (Atman) unites with Brahman the universal soul. There are different ways to Moksha.

- spiritual - involves acquiring spiritual knowledge through yoga and meditation; devotion to god
- working selflessly for the good of society.

How a person is reincarnated is determined by karma.

2 **Dharma** - the code for leading one's life. Respect for elders is considered important and many consider marriage as a son's religious duty.

3 **Artha** - the pursuit of material gain by lawful means.

4 **Karma** - through pure acts, knowledge and devotion, you can reincarnate to a higher level. The opposite achieves the contrary result.

## Why are there so many Hindu Gods?

Hindus actually only believe in one God, Brahman, the eternal origin who is the cause and foundation of all existence. The gods of the Hindu faith represent different forms of Brahman. These gods are sent to help people find the universal God (Brahman).

Most Hindus have a personal god or goddess such as Shiva, Krishna or Lakshmi to whom they pray regularly.

There are three most important Hindu Gods:



**Brahma**



**Vishnu**



**Shiva**

Brahma is the creator of the world and all creatures.

Vishnu is the preserver of the world. His role is to return to the earth in troubled times and restore the balance of good and evil. He has blue skin and four arms.

Shiva is the destroyer of the universe. Shiva destroys the universe in order to re-create it. Shiva has blue skin, a third eye and carries a trident.