


<h1>G</h1>	<h2>GODDESSES</h2>	<p>What is it all about? Goddesses and the female.</p> <p>Is religion male? Well, there have always been goddesses to worship. Hindus worship the Goddess in different forms: Lakshmi, Kali, Parvati and Ammavaru all symbolise aspects of the divine energy from which all life comes.</p> <p>Followers of the Buddha see Tara, (not a goddess, but a female Bodhisattva) as the feminine embodiment of wisdom and compassion. Her image is a common focus for meditation.</p> <p>In Christianity, though God is usually called 'He', the Blessed Virgin Mary is a key female figure, called the 'Mother of God' in Catholic traditions, where prayer to Mary to intercede for us is common practice. Many Christians believe God is beyond gender – not a man, not a woman, just God.</p> <p>The most ancient religious artefact discovered by archaeologists dates back to over 25,000 years ago. It is a big-breasted naked fertility statue, so the original 'god' might have been a goddess. What do you think? Is it sensible to say 'he' or 'she' for God?</p>
 <p>The history of religions includes myriad forms of goddesses, the female divine – and some sexist rejections of these forms too. We ask: if God is real then would God be male, female, both or neither?</p>		<p>Classroom or homework tasks:</p> <p>After watching the clip, write down three paragraphs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reasons for saying 'He' for God.</i> • <i>Reasons for saying 'She' for God</i> • <i>Reasons for not ascribing any gender to God</i> <p>Have you ever heard of 'feminist theology'? Find out and note what it means. Anything to surprise you there?</p> <p>Some scholars in Religious Studies claim that Hindu traditions, with their many goddesses, are more gender-equal than religions which usually say 'He' for God. What do you think? Should [all?] religious people be feminists? Give your reasons.</p> <p>Suggested outcomes: students can...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give an informed account of issues about religion and gender ▪ Give reasons for their views about speaking of God as 'He' or 'She' ▪ Handle information and ideas effectively by analysing views from different religions about God, masculinity and femininity.
<p>Which religions and beliefs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jewish • Christian • Buddhist • Hindu • Ancient fertility religion <p>Clip available here: www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-education-ks3-a-z-of-religion-and-beliefs-g-is-for-goddesses-animated-film/z7kcwty</p>	<p>Key Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does God have a gender? • Why, in recent years, have all religions come to include members who are feminists? • Would it be good to have complete gender equality in religion? Why doesn't this happen? • Are some religions more 'female friendly' than others? How can you tell? 	

G is for Goddess

5 Facts about Hindu goddesses:

A.

B.

C.

D.

E.

Can you give examples of things about religion that look sexist? For example, do some religions deny leadership roles to women?

Reasons for saying 'he' for God

Reasons for saying 'she' for God

Reasons for not giving any gender to God

Feminist theology: what is that? I found out...

Why, in recent years, have all religions come to include members who are feminists?