

# VIRTUE



Sikh teaching urges humans to fight the 5 thieves of life with the 5 virtues. Try your best to be truthful, loving, compassionate, humble and content. A good life will grow from this.

#### What's it all about? Goodness and virtue.

Are you lazy? Greedy? Impatient? Do you give in to temptation?

None of us lives up to our high ideals. Religions offer people ways to train themselves to be good humans. For example:

Sikhs teach that the 'five thieves' of greed, rage, lust, attachment and conceit can rob you of your best life! These things steal your common sense and stop you enjoying your life. You can beat them with the weapons of the five virtues: truth, compassion, contentment, humility, love.

Hindus note that we have different duties at different times of life: dharma is the way to live – fulfilling the duties life lays on you today. This, of course, leads to a better reincarnation in your next life. This includes parents caring for children, but also children respecting parents – and looking after them in turn.

All religions note that there is a temptation for humans to take pride in their virtues: 'Look at me, I'm the best!' A little humility is an antidote to this kind of big headedness. And all agree too that the good habits of practising virtues payoff: you can be a better person if you practise!

Is virtue a simple matter? Maybe it is. A Jewish Rabbi summed it all up quickly: "what is hateful to you, don't do it to others." But we don't find it simple to put it into action.

# Which religions and beliefs?

- Sikh
- Hindu
- Jewish

### **Key Questions**

- What are virtues?
- Can a person become more virtuous by practising?
- What do Hindus, Sikhs and Jewish people say about living the virtuous life?
- What's the difference between virtues and values?

## Classroom or homework task: List + explain the virtues

Task 1: Your views of some virtues. Watch the clip and take note of the three approaches to virtue from the three religions. Is this a good definition: 'Virtues are the habits of behaviour that make a person good'? Everyone says they have values these days – but virtues go way beyond saying 'I value peace'. To make it a virtue, you have to put it into practice. So, here's a list of 14 virtues the clip touches upon: patience, hard work, generosity, truth, compassion, contentment, humility, love, duty, respect, kindness, determination, empathy, trust. Choose three you think you are doing OK with and say how you put them into practice. Choose two more you think the world needs now, and explain why.

Task 2: Heroes and their virtues Think of three people who are held to be human heroes – people who are great because of how they live, not stars of sport or music, but fine humans. For each one, consider: are there three virtues that they practise which set an example for others. E.g. Nelson Mandela: patience, strength, courage. Saint Teresa of Kolkata: compassion, determination, love.

Suggested outcomes: students can...

- Give an informed account of the nature of virtues.
- Give reasons for their views about putting virtue into action
- Apply different ideas about virtue to life and to other people.

#### Clip available here: www.bbc.co.uk/ teach/class-clipsvideo/religiouseducation-ks3-a-zof-religion-andbeliefs-v-is-for-

virtue/zrtmnrd

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V is for Virtue	Virtue: my definition:
Fourteen Virtues: patience, hard work, generosity, truth, compassion, contentment, humility, love, duty, respect, kindness, determination, empathy, trust.	Three virtues that I try to put into practice:  1 This matters to me because
Two virtues that I think the world needs now:  1, because	
2, because	2 This matters because
	3This matters because
Heroes: One person I admire:	Heroes Another person I admire:
The virtues this person shows (with details):	The virtues this person shows (with details)
What have you found out about what Hindus, Sikhs and Jewish people say about living the virtuous life?	