



Religion	Hindu
Denomination	n/a
Question answered:	What stories are important to you? (KS1 Q2)
Key concepts, themes, topics, and outcomes:	Narratives, genres, values, God, beliefs Why do symbols and stories play important roles in religions? Why do some people follow religious leaders and teachings? Retell a range of religious stories and explain how they link to the core beliefs and practices.
Key teaching points:	Hindu stories are very old, some of the oldest known. There are lots of different stories that Hindus love. Many Hindu values are based on the ideas explored in the stories that they tell.
Prior knowledge:	Pupils need to have seen some of the pictures of Hindu deities and have looked at some of the symbols associated with them. If they have explored the ways that Christians or Jews retell stories to teach values, they will be able to make links easily.

Core Vocabulary:			
Lord Rama	Hero of the book the Ramayana; Avatar of Vishnu	Ganesha	Elephant headed deity, son of Sarasvati and Shiva
Ramayana Mahabharata Puranas Upanishads	Four of the main volumes of tales in the Hindu library.	Shiva	One of the Trimurti, the three main Hindu deities; Shiva is said to destroy the world ready for it to be recreated
Vishnu	One of the Trimurti, the three main Hindu deities; Vishnu is said to sustain the world	Incarnation	Human representation of a deity, often called Avatars in Hindu philosophy

Summary of answers:
<p>Each of these three Hindus refers to different tales in their answers, demonstrating the breadth and variety of Hindu beliefs.</p> <p>The first speaker links the tales from the Ramayana** and the Mahabharata** to the early history of India*. The tale of Rama and Sita is probably the best known of all the stories and focuses on the actions and upright character of the hero, Lord Rama. This teaches Hindus the values of service and honesty.</p> <p>The second speaker refers to a less well known story about a conversation between a young boy and death. This conversation, recorded in the Upanishads, teaches Hindus to hold lightly to material things and strive to leave the world a better place.</p> <p>Similar values are found in the tales referred to by the third speaker. The battle between Arjuna and Karna, which is won by the one who has gained his skills honestly, teaches Hindu that using deceptive means to achieve your goals will not ultimately be successful.</p> <p>The second story, that of how Ganesha got his elephant head is another well-known Hindu tale. The reward to Ganesha for doing his job well is that he will be remembered for what he did. Therefore Ganesha is often the first deity to be prayed to. His appearance teaches the values of listening more than speaking, being always willing to learn, and accepting with gratitude the good things that happen, while learning from the bad.</p>



Next Steps:

There are several child friendly versions of the Ramayana available. Explore how this tale links with the festival of Divali as lights are lit to welcome Lord Rama home.
Look at pictures of the deities – or visit a temple to see the Murtis and think about the character of the figures portrayed. Think about what makes any of these characters a good role model for Hindus.
Watch a film of Hindu worship with Ganesha on the shrine.
Retell simply one of the stories, making a link to the values that the tale tells.
Make links to characters in stories that the children are familiar with.
Interview other Hindus about the stories they value.

*The dating of Ramayana is subjective. There is no empirical evidence for the date the speaker gives.

Various sources, using astronomical information such as the position of constellations and time of eclipses available in scripture, have concluded that events in the Ramayana took place 7,000 years ago. By the same calculation, events in the Mahabharata took place 5,000 years ago. There are other Hindus who believe that the tales are entirely allegorical.

**Size of the Ramayana:

It does have 24,000 Verses (Shloka) as couplets spread over 500 Chapters in 7 Cantos. However, the size of the Mahabharat is 100,000 Shloka as couplets. So on number of shloka, the Mahabharat is the larger. In fact it is recognised as the “longest poem ever written”.

This information shows that not every adherent to a faith group is equally knowledgeable about their own faith, and that there are different ways of looking at the same information.