

Hindu Worship

Learning Outcomes:

1. To look at ways in which Hindus worship
2. To discuss reasons why Hindus worship in such ways
3. To research and design our own hand paintings

Hindu Worship

Keywords:

Arti

Puja

Prashad

Murti

Shrine

Meditation

Mantra

Hindu Worship

Shrines in the Mandir:



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Shrines in the Home:



The heart of every Hindu home is its shrine: the sacred space set apart for honouring and worshiping the gods. While a particularly devout Hindu may visit a temple every day, others go there only to request a favour of the deity, to fulfil specific vows, or on festival days. The pujas that take place in the household shrine are the foundation of all family actions and decisions. Temple worship requires the intervention of a priest, but in the home the contact between devotee and deity is direct.

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Shrines in the Home:



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Shrines in the Home:

Most Hindus have a small shrine in their home where they can worship daily. This worship is called 'Puja'. The shrine will contain at least one image, called a 'murti', of their gods, for example, Lord Ganesh or Lord Krishna. These images help the Hindu to focus on different aspects of God.

Each shrine will also contain a puja tray which holds some seven items. These items are used in the worship. They help the Hindu to use all their senses when they worship, as a symbol that the whole person is taken up with the worship.

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Murti (images) and pictures of God



Hindu Worship

Murti (images) and pictures of God

Hindus believe in one God, yet many gods. They believe that there is one universal, invisible spirit called Brahman which is everywhere in the universe, including inside every living thing. However, they believe that God has shown himself to human beings in many different forms, both animal and human. These gods and goddesses help us to understand what God is like.

Two such gods are Ganesh and Krishna.

Hindus have images, called murtis, or pictures of one or more of the gods in their shrine. These help Hindus to think about God when they worship. By showing love and respect towards the murtis, Hindus believe that they are showing devotion and love to God.

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Objects used in puja



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Objects used in puja



THE BELL

Worshippers will ring the bell to let God know that they have come to worship and to invite him into the home.

DIVA LAMP
Worshippers will light the lamp and move it around in circles to bring light to the shrine.

This light is a symbol of God's presence.



INCENCE HOLDER

Worshippers will light an incense stick and move it around the shrine in circles. This purifies the air and brings a pleasing aroma to the shrine for the gods.

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Objects used in puja

WATER HOLDER AND SPOON

Worshippers will offer water to the gods on a spoon. This is to show respect to the gods. Traditionally in India, people welcome a guest into the house by offering them water to drink and to wash. At the start of the day, the mother of the household will wash the murtis – again to show devotion and respect to them.



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Objects used in puja



CONTAINER FOR KUM KUM POWDER

Worshippers will make a paste out of the red kum kum powder. They use this to make a mark on the forehead of the images. This is again a sign of respect and devotion to the gods.

They will also make a mark on their own forehead as a sign that God has blessed them.

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Objects used in puja



PRASHAD

Worshippers offer food (e.g. fruit and rice) and flowers at the shrine for the gods to bless. This blessed food is called 'prashad'. It is later eaten by the worshippers.

TASK...

What objects are important to you?



Design your own shrine

PUJA TRAY



