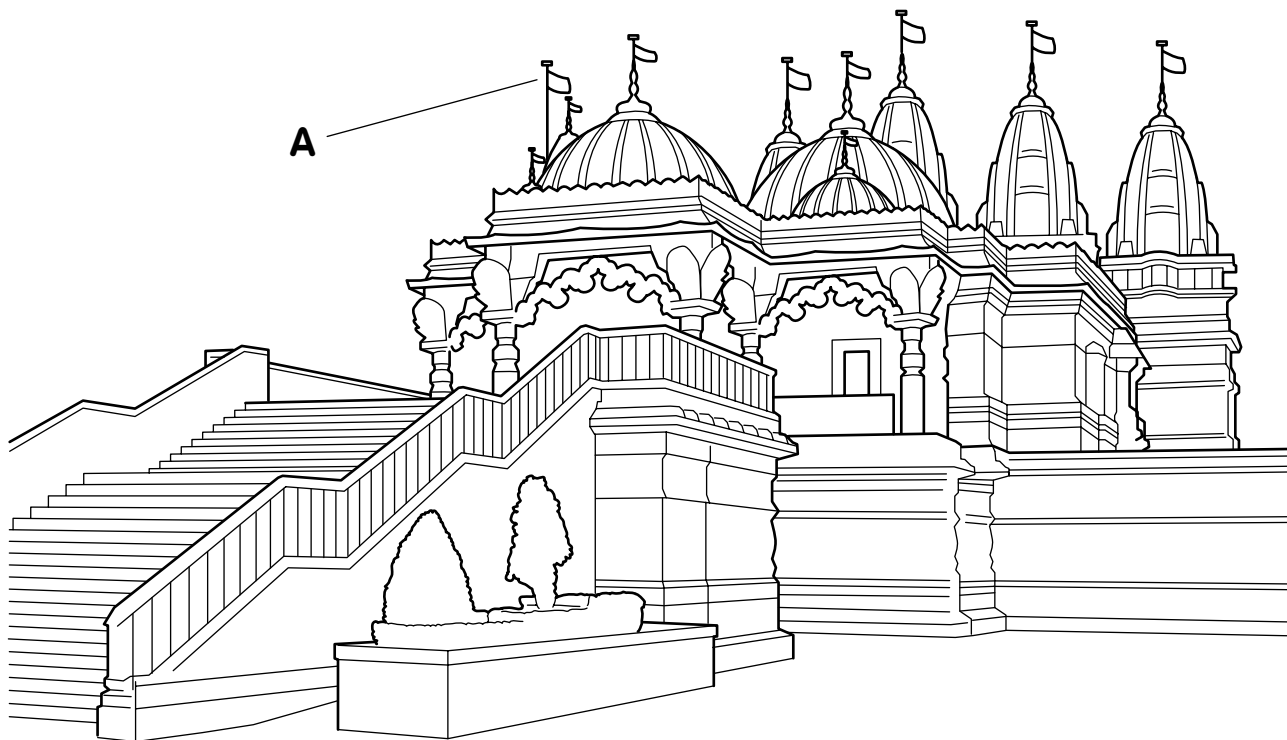


The Hindu mandir is a home

A Hindu mandir is a home for gods and goddesses.



Q1. What are the different forms of God called in Hinduism?

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Q2. Where did Hinduism begin?

Q3. What are many Hindu mandirs designed to look like?

.....

Q4. What is the name of the object labelled **A**?

Q5. How does object **A** remind people that God is king?

.....

Q6. What does the art in a mandir show?

.....

.....



Answers

1. Gods and goddesses.
2. Ancient India.
3. Palaces in ancient India.
4. Dhaja.
5. In ancient times, kings flew similar flags over their palaces.
6. The gods and goddesses and scenes from their lives; scenes of everyday life in India; or important events in India's history.

Lesson objectives

- ▶ To introduce the idea of one God with many different forms, called gods and goddesses.
- ▶ To introduce some features of the mandir.
- ▶ To introduce the idea that the mandir is a home for different forms of God.

Lesson outcomes

- ▶ The children can understand that Hindus believe in one God.
- ▶ The children know that Hindus think of the mandir as a palace for gods and goddesses.

Teaching notes

This opening unit addresses a very confusing aspect of Hinduism for many non-Hindus. Even though Hindus worship many different gods and goddesses, they are not polytheists. Hindus are actually monotheists – they believe in one, all-powerful God. For Hindus, God is everywhere and in everything, so rather than worshipping God, Hindus worship different aspects of God – God who is responsible for beauty, or God who is responsible for

destruction, or God who is responsible for creation, etc. The different gods and goddesses are all forms of the one God. Hindus believe that to worship any one form of God is the same as worshipping all of God. So, when Hindus worship the god Ganesha in a particular ceremony, they are really worshipping the form of God called Ganesha.

One way to help children to understand this idea is to ask them to think about and list how many different ways they might be seen by others. For example, each child may be a son or daughter, a brother or sister, a student, a football player, a musician, a kind person, etc. Just as people can have an almost unlimited number of 'forms' like this, so can God.

Hinduism began around 4,000 years ago. There was no single founder of the religion, instead, it was a combination of many different beliefs. As Hinduism grew and spread throughout India, many old gods and traditions were incorporated. There are hundreds of gods and goddesses in Hinduism. Many of the traditions and rituals of Hinduism are continuations of traditions and rituals that already existed and were simply added to Hinduism. This is also why many of the traditions of Hinduism are similar to traditions regarding kings and queens. In ancient times, many kings represented themselves as gods.

Complementary work

The children could use secondary sources to find out about the names of some of the different Hindu gods and goddesses and what they each represent.

Resources

Secondary sources about Hindu gods and goddesses.