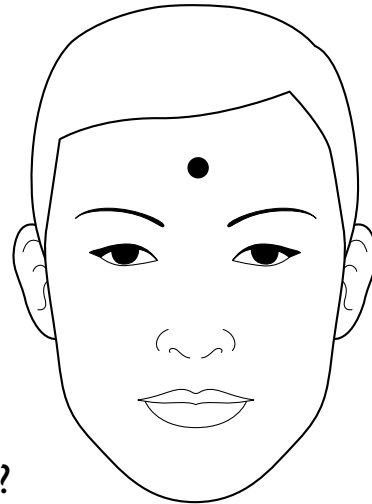


Visible reminders

In the mandir, many Hindus wear visible reminders of the blessings of the gods and goddesses.



Q1. What does the tilaka remind Hindus of?

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Q2. What do many Hindus believe comes from the part of the forehead in-between the eyebrows?

.....

Q3. Some Hindus wear a tilaka of three lines. The three lines remind them that God is responsible for three things. What are they?

.....

Q4. What does a U-shaped tilaka remind Hindus of?

.....

Q5. What does the red dot remind Hindus of?

.....

Q6. What do the three strands of the sacred thread stand for?

.....

.....

.....

Answers

1. That God is present all day.
2. Wisdom and concentration.
3. Creation, preservation and destruction.
4. That God will protect them.
5. That God created everything.
6. The three duties of a Hindu adult: to promote knowledge and wisdom, to respect your parents, to be a good citizen.

Lesson objectives

- ▶ To show that many Hindus wear visible reminders of their worship.
- ▶ To show that there are a wide variety of visible reminders of worship.

Lesson outcomes

- ▶ The children know that some Hindus wear coloured marks as a reminder of worship.
- ▶ The children know that there are a variety of marks.
- ▶ The children know that some Hindus wear a sacred thread as a reminder of their duties as Hindus.

Teaching notes

Tilaka

The tilaka, sometimes called a bindi when worn by women, is a symbol of Hinduism. There are many different shapes and colours for the tilaka, although the red dot, which is sometimes called the kumkum, is most common. Many Hindus also believe that the spot the tilaka is applied to (sometimes called 'the third eye') has an important role in cooling the mind and

keeping it stable. This is why the tilaka is often made with 'cooling' spices like sandalwood. The bindi has a number of additional traditional meanings, and was often used to indicate marriage status. Today, the bindi is often worn as decoration and may come in coloured and jewelled stickers. While bindi worn for decoration can be made of anything, tilaka worn by worshippers are usually made with specially prepared and blessed ingredients.

Sacred thread

The wearing of the sacred thread is traditionally associated with the caste system in India. The ceremony where a boy was presented with the thread marked the transition from childhood into the student stage of life for members of the top three castes: brahmins (priests), kshatriyas (warrior) and vaishayas (merchants). Today, the ceremony (called upanayana) has taken on a more modern role. It is not necessarily restricted by caste, and girls may also undergo the ceremony and wear the thread. The ceremony is carried out before a child begins school, according to family tradition and custom. The thread itself consists of three thin strands of cotton woven together.

Complementary work

The children could use secondary sources to find out about different types of tilaka and bindi and what they are made from.

Resources

Secondary sources on tilaka and bindi.