

Hinduism Artefact Collection (HI-PACK)

This collection contains a variety of artefacts for teaching and learning about Hinduism. Using the artefacts can help bring religion to life and promote discussions.



Questions you could ask children about the artefacts

Initial Discussion

- What is this object?
- Does it resemble anything the children have seen?
- What do you think the item is used for and by whom?
- Which religious belief is it used by?
- Does anyone know what it is called? Learn how to pronounce the name.
- What does it represent?
- How might it be used?

Collect any other questions the children might have about the artefacts and display them as you try to find the answers through your learning sessions.

- **What do the objects tell us about the faith?** *This last question can be returned to at the end of the investigation.*

All About the Hindu Artefacts



Contents: -

1. Puja Thali
2. Story Book
3. Money Envelope
4. Greeting Cards
5. Mythological Picture
6. Rangoli Diya candles
7. Hindu patterned bag
8. Hindu figure
9. Henna impressions

Please note contents may vary.

1. Puja Thali

For Hindus worship is primarily an individual act as it involves making a personal offering to the deity. However, Hindus may attend a temple or worship at home with their family. Hindu worship, known as puja, involves images (*murtis*), prayers (*mantras*) and diagrams of the universe (*yantras*). A puja (pooja) thali acts as focal point for ceremonies and represents the devotee's reverence, devotion and gratitude towards the deities. The components in a puja thali include powders such as turmeric, flowers, incense sticks, nuts and leaves of the betel plant, rice grains and sacred thread.

Use online resources to look at examples of different puja thali. Use a template of a puja thali and draw or cut and stick symbolic food, along with names and meanings, to the plate.

2. Hindu Stories

Stories of Lord Krishna. Krishna (a popular deity in Hinduism) features in several Hindu stories. Explore the stories and learn why Krishna is special.

How is Krishna represented in the stories? What can you learn about Krishna from the stories?

3. Money Envelope

Diwali is a popular time for gifts to be shared, and money is often gifted in beautifully decorated envelopes. They are also traditionally used at Indian weddings, as money is the preferred gift, rather than presents.

Design and make money envelopes. Create a fact file about Diwali.

Explore further – Why is one additional coin added to the money envelope?

4. Hindu greeting Cards

Diwali is the most popular occasion for card giving. Diwali Cards often depict scenes from the story of Rama and Sita and are sent to family and friends as greetings cards during the festival of Diwali. Diwali is known as the festival of lights. It is celebrated each year between mid-October and mid-November. It lasts for five days.

Design and make own greeting cards and think about why people send cards and what they mean.

5. Mythological picture

Explore various gods and goddesses from Hindu scriptures. For Hindus, Brahman is God or the Supreme Being and they believe that this is beyond human understanding.

There is not one representation of God, but an understanding that it is multiple concepts at the same time. For this reason, Hindus worship many different deities (gods and goddesses). Shiva, also known as 'The Destroyer of Evil', is often shown with a third eye to represent his wisdom. Hindus believe that Shiva destroys the evil within the universe so that it can be recreated.

Lakshmi is one of the most popular goddesses of Hindu mythology and is known as the goddess of wealth and purity. Hindus believe that Lakshmi bestows good fortune and success upon those who work hard and seek help sincerely.

Explore further – Who are the three principal gods worshipped by Hindus?

6. Rangoli Diya Candles

The word Diwali means 'rows of lighted lamps.' In the story of Rama and Sita lamps were lit to guide them home and welcome them back. During the Diwali celebrations people light their homes and outside areas with clay diya lamps. The lighting of a diya is a symbolic action in itself; Hindus believe that by lighting a diya, you are removing the darkness and bringing in light, removing the negative energies that could be present in a space and bringing in positivity.

*Explore further what happens on each of the 5 days of the festival of Diwali.
Design and make own diya lamps out of clay.*

7. Hindu Patterns

Rangoli is a decorative folk art from India that is created on the ground during celebrations, and especially Diwali. Hindus believe that rangoli brings good luck and welcomes gods and goddesses. The details in rangoli decorations can include lotus flowers, mango leaves and geometric shapes. The elaborate designs can be made with rice, coloured sand, chalk and flower petals.

Explore further – Use online resources to show videos of rangoli patterns being created. Create rangoli patterns using chinks, coloured sand and flowers. Print own patterns onto t-shirts, bags, cloth and explore different colours and designs.

8. Hindu Figure

Ganesh is considered as the God of Intellect, Remover of Obstacles and Lord of Beginnings. Hindus pray to Ganesh when embarking on something for the first time, as they believe he bestows wisdom and good fortune. Hindus traditionally worship Ganesh and Lakshmi together at Diwali as it is believed that to have good fortune one must also acquire knowledge.

Explore further – Why is Ganesh depicted with one broken and one unbroken tusk? Can you find other stories relating to Ganesh?

Lakshmi is Goddess of Wealth and Beauty. Hindus believe that Sita is an incarnation of Lakshmi. Particularly worshipped during the festival of Diwali, Hindus believe that worshipping Lakshmi sincerely and not in greed, will bring fortune and success. It is believed that Lakshmi resides in places of hard work, virtue and bravery, but leaves when these qualities are no longer present.

Explore further – On which day of Diwali are candles lit to guide Lakshmi to Hindu's homes?

9. Henna Impressions

The booklet consists of examples of henna patterns and designs that can be copied. Henna designs are called mehndi patterns, and they are created using a paste, which is applied to the hands and feet. It is a tradition to paint bride's hands and feet in mehndi for the wedding ceremony and it is also used to celebrate Hindu festivals such as Diwali. Patterns and images can include circles, diamonds, squares, triangles and mandalas.

*Explore further – Use online resources to show videos of henna being applied.
Design own mehndi patterns.*

Useful Tips

- *Be sensitive using religious and cultural artefacts and understand any special requirements in handling them.*
- *Avoid creating stereotypes and understand that not all people from the same culture may use the artefact in the same way.*
- *Use the appropriate language to talk about the artefacts.*
- *Teach the children to handle and store the artefacts with respect and sensitivity.*