

This is Your Heritage...

Stories from the South Gloucestershire Indian Community

Resources for Schools - RELIGIONS

This resource could be used over 2 or 3 lessons. The video clips, discussions and activities are appropriate for **Key Stage 2**. You will find National Curriculum, PSHE and RE links in the overview sheet.

Pages 5 – 7 of this resource describes the different world religions. Depending on your class, you might find it useful to go through some of this information before watching the video of people from South Gloucestershire.

When ready watch the video extracts about religions. [Religions](#) (total duration: 4 mins 48 secs) You are prompted to pause between each section to ask focus questions and have discussions.



MARIA COELHO - Winterbourne

My father came from Kolar Gold fields, which is in Karnataka in one of the southern states of India. He was part of the Anglo-Indian community, so he was Catholic, which a lot of people over here find quite, it's kind of like, not what they're expecting.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. Which type of religion did Maria's father follow? *(You can explain that Roman Catholicism is the oldest and largest branch of Christianity. The Roman Catholic Church is led by the Pope.)*
2. Why might people in this country find that surprising?



PARMJIT KAUR, *Kingswood*

(Parmjit speaks mainly in Punjabi so some children might find following her dialogue with subtitles only difficult)

Our family was quite a famous Sikh family in the village. We had the Guru Granth Sahib (Holy Book of Sikhs) at our home, as my father used to pray a lot, even our grandparents. He was a Head Teacher. He was very fond of worshipping, especially at the time of holy festivals. He used to do readings from the holy book, and he used to wake us up in morning at that time. He helped us to fold our beddings if we'd slept outside. Then he used to ask us to wash ourselves, face and hands, and then offer our prayers. After that we used to have tea.

In 1996, I became the President of the Gurdwara. There was no female President in the South-West. I think in the whole of England there was no female president of a Gurdwara. I became the first female President, but it was not easy. Because giving such a leading role to females in Sikh community, it's a bit difficult to be accepted in the community.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. Which religion did Parmjit and her family follow?
2. When she was a child, what did she do to prepare for praying?
3. When she was an adult, what did she become the first woman to do?



PREM SAGAR MIDHA - *Little Stoke, Bristol*

We belong to something called Isha Foundation, which is being led by somebody who is out of this world. He's my guru now, so I'm totally involved. I have no time for being lonely or anything like that.

VOCABULARY

Guru - A "mentor, guide, expert, or master" particularly in religion or spirituality.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. Prem mentions that he is totally involved with the Isha foundation and has no time for being lonely. What other benefits might a religion or spiritual practice have?



NITHYA AND PRABU - *Kingswood, Bristol*

The tuk-tuk I went in, it was driven by a Muslim driver. So, I had a beautiful introduction to Hinduism at home, Christianity at school, and Islam with him. He would tell me things about Urdu. I was the last person, he would drop me, he would drop in this circuit, I would be the first person to get picked up, so we had ample time to discuss things. So, we would talk, I would ask him about Bhagavad Gita, and fortunately for him, he was open-minded, so he taught me a lot of principles that came through Urdu.

And the school obviously taught me things from Bible and Christianity and at home it was Hinduism. So, it was a wonderful blend of introduction to different religion.

We don't thrust our belief system onto the children, but we follow it, we go to temples, we offer prayers, it's our thing. And as a matter of fact, three years ago, our elder one asked if we are Muslims? We were both very proud, that she doesn't even know what we were, and it's not that something to be ashamed. I felt, those barriers should end with this, and then I taught her, I sat with our daughters, why do you want to know? And then we both sat down and told her, no, we are not Muslims, our family is Hindu, but it's up to you to do whatever you want in your life.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. How many different religions did Nithya mention she grew up with?
2. How many people with different religions do you know?
3. Why does Nithya think it is good that her children don't know which religion their family is?



ALKA MEHTA-GRAHAM – *Emersons Green*

I started community, a community group, which was all religions. It was actually tagged on to the Sai Association. And the Sai Association teaches love, truth, peace, right conduct, nonviolence, so five values. But we wanted our children to experience both our cultures, experience other cultures and be universal. It started with about five or six families of mixed heritage, and then it grew and grew and grew and grew and we went to over, I think we've been from 500, 600 families from all different heritage backgrounds.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

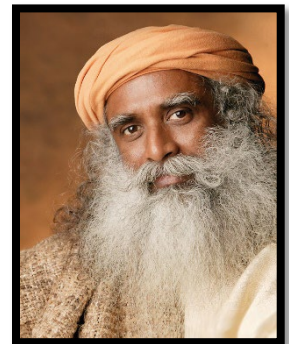
1. What are the values that Alka's community group teaches?
2. If you were to start your own religion, what sorts of things do you think it would be good to teach or practice?

Different Religions

Nithya talks about her journey to school every day in a tuk-tuk (an auto rickshaw). The driver was Muslim. Nithya's family is Hindu, and the school she went to taught Christianity.

Parmjit grew up in a Sikh family in India and became one of the first women presidents of a Gurdwara (Sikh place of worship) in the South-West.

Prem belongs to the Isha foundation, which is a spiritual organisation founded in 1992 in India by Jaggi Vasudev. It offers yoga programmes and spiritual wisdom. The word Isha means 'the formless divine.'



Alka started a community group called Sai Association which embraces all religions. It teaches five values: love, truth, peace, right-conduct, and non-violence.

BRISTOL SAI SCHOOL

²⁵ Bristol Sai School – Human Value Based Education
²⁶ Activity based learning
²⁷ Key Teachings – Truth, Right conduct, Peace, Love, Non-Violence
²⁸ When: Every Saturday, 10 am till 12 pm (Lunch Provided)
²⁹ Venue: Charlton Wood Primary Academy School, Charlton Boulevard, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5DB
³⁰ Fees: £21 per month per family
³¹ Eligibility: 4 till 16 years
³² Parents can stay with the kids

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BRISTOL SAI SCHOOL – Philosophy
³³ Bristol Sai School teaches two aspects, the worldly and the spiritual. Worldly education brings out the latent knowledge pertaining to the physical world. Spiritual education brings out the inherent divinity in man. So, both worldly and spiritual education are essential, without which the human life has no value

A logo for Bristol Sai School featuring a stylized tree with branches. The branches are labeled with values: Social Skills, Creativity, Self Confidence, Inner Strength, and Tolerance. The base of the tree contains the text: NON VIOLENCE * RIGHT CONDUCT, PEACE * TRUTH, LOVE.

Islam is the second most popular religion in the world with over a thousand-million followers. It is more often thought of as a complete way of life rather than a religion.



Islam is India's second largest religion.

Islam began in Arabia and was revealed to humanity by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Those who follow Islam are called Muslims. Muslims believe that there is only one God, called Allah.

The Arabic word 'Islam' means submission and obedience and derives from a word meaning 'peace'.

The Muslim scripture is the Holy Qur'an. Both the mosque and the home are important places of worship and prayer for Muslims.



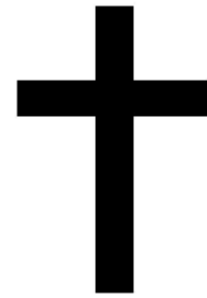
Hinduism is the world's third most popular religion, with around 750 million followers. The religion of Hinduism originated in Northern India, near the river Indus, about 4000 years ago and is the world's oldest existing religion. It may date to prehistoric times.

Hinduism is practised by more than 80% of India's population.

Hinduism has no founder, it developed out of Brahminism. In the film, Nithya mentions the Bhagavad Gita, this is one of the most popular scriptures in Hinduism and is a conversation between a prince and his charioteer.

What do Hindus believe? For many Hindus religion is a matter of practice rather than of beliefs. It is more what you do than what you believe. Hindus believe in a universal soul or God called Brahman. Brahman takes on many forms that some Hindus worship as Gods or Goddesses in their own right. Hindus believe that there is a part of Brahman in everyone.

Christianity is the world's biggest religion, with about 2.2 billion followers worldwide. It is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ who lived in the Holy Land 2,000 years ago. Through its missionary activity Christianity has spread to most parts of the globe.



Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God. He came to earth to teach about love and fellowship. He represents the person that all Christians must strive to be.

Jesus was a Jew who was born about 2000 years ago in Bethlehem. Jesus lived for 33 years before being crucified by the Romans.



The cross is the main symbol of Christianity. It reminds Christians that Jesus died on the cross to save them. The dove is the symbol of the holy spirit and peace.

Sikhism is one of the world's youngest religions being founded just over 500 years ago. Despite being so young, it is the fifth largest religion in the world with over 20 million followers.



The word 'Sikh' in the Punjabi language means 'disciple', Sikhs are the disciples of God who follow the writings and teachings of the Ten Sikh Gurus

Sikhism comes from the Punjab, an area of Northern India. Its founder was Guru Nanak and its sacred text is the Guru Granth Sahib.

Sikhism teaches that all human beings are equal and can realise the divine within them through devotion to God, truthful living, and service to humanity.

Core beliefs

One God

All Are Equal Men and Women have the same rights/responsibilities.

Meditation Remember God.

Live Honestly Sikhs are supposed to work hard and live honestly.

Share with Others Give to the needy.

Sikhs worship at home and in the Sikh temple called the **Gurdwara** ('Gateway to the Guru').

Activities

Overview of the main religions in India (Islam, Hinduism, Christianity, Sikhism)
(information from the primary homework resource

<http://www.primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/religion/christian.htm>

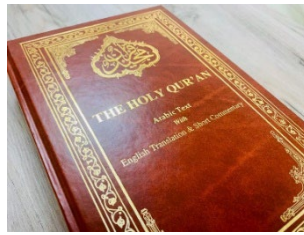
Read through with the children the overview of different religions. After reading these, discuss what elements the different religions have in common.

Sorting Activity Ask the children to look at the pictures of places of worship, sacred books and texts and symbols and draw a line to link the picture with the religion it is part of.

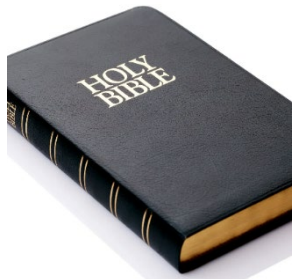
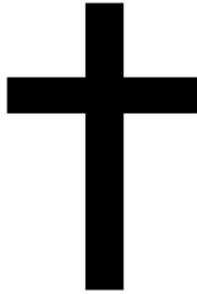
Drawing the symbols ask the children to choose a religion they would like to focus on. Can they copy the symbol of that religion? Can they write a few of the main parts of that religion which they find most interesting?

Extension Activity As with previous themes the children could devise the interview questions. What would they ask someone if they wanted to find out more about their religion?

Draw a line between the picture and the religion it is part of



HINDUISM
Place of worship
Religious book or text
Symbol



SIKHISM
Place of worship
Religious book or text
Symbol



ISLAM
Place of worship
Religious book or text
Symbol



CHRISTIANITY
Place of worship
Religious book or text
Symbol



Answers to above activity. Clockwise, starting at top centre:

- 1. Holy Qur'an - Islam*
- 2. Sikh Gurdwara*
- 3. Christian cross*
- 4. Hindu Temple*
- 5. Guru Granth Sahib – Sikh scripture*
- 6. Christian church*
- 7. Bhagavad Gita Hindu scripture*
- 8. Islamic Mosque*
- 9. Sikh symbol*
- 10. Christian bible*
- 11. Symbol of Islam*
- 12. Symbol of Hinduism*



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