

Enquiry: Who is God to Sanatanis?

Theme: Brahman as one supreme being in everything and everywhere.

Learning Intention: I can start to explain the Sanatani belief that there is one God in many different forms

I can apply this knowledge to the enquiry question

Bridge concept: Different parts of one person

Resources:

Jigsaw Charter

Jigsaw RE Journals

Matching cards – you will need to print out as many as you need for your groups to work with plus one set with the names still attached for the Tell me or show me activity.

Teacher to have a box labelled Brahman and put a set of the matching cards inside.

Flip chart list from previous piece with the list of jobs God might need to do.

Key Vocabulary:

aspect
Brahma
Brahman
character
creator
deity
destroyer
Ganesha
Lakshmi
personality
preserver
Puja
role
Shiva
supreme
Sanatana Dharma
Sanatani
Vishnu



Teaching and Learning

Jigsaw Charter

Slide 1: Remind children of the Jigsaw Charter (displayed on wall)

Connect our learning

In a circle if possible, and using the Owl as the talking object, ask pairs to think about something they have learnt that Sanatanis believe about God.

Pass the Owl around the circle and invite each pair to say one thing they have learnt. (They have the right to pass)

Dependent on answers, revisit prior learning by reminding children that we have learnt that Sanatanis believe that Brahman is One Supreme being who can appear in different ways. You may also wish to revisit the roles of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva and the term Tri-murti.

Open my mind

Slide 2: Picture of a big box, with the label Brahman on the outside. Sanatanis believe Brahman is one supreme being but that he can appear in many different forms. It is like opening the box and finding a lot of different aspects inside.

Slide 3: Learning Intentions:

In the last piece we learnt that Brahman could be seen as Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Today we are going to learn about some of the other ways that Brahman can be worshipped by Sanatanis.

Ask me this...

What do Sanatanis believe about God?

Can you remember what the Trimurti is and the names of the deities in it?

What deities (gods or goddesses) have we already learnt about?

Tell me or show me

(For this activity, the teacher needs to put the matching cards in the box but leave the names and role attached. For Let me learn, these need to be cut off to be matched by the children).

Teacher to take the box labelled Brahman. Explain that inside it are some of the deities we know and some that we haven't yet learnt about. Remind the children that although these are deities, or gods and goddesses, Sanatanis believe there is only one God but that Brahman can appear in many different ways or deities. So, by respecting or using these images in prayer, they are praying to Brahman.

Pass the box around the circle and ask random children to stop and take out a picture. When a child takes out a picture, ask them to show the rest of the class and read out the name and role (if they are able). Then put the cards in the middle of the circle or on a board where they can be seen.

What roles or jobs do these deities have? Compare to the list that the children made in piece 3. Are any of them the same?

Allow the children to study the deities carefully. Can they notice anything that they find unusual or surprising? They may notice that Ganesha has the head of an elephant and that Lakshmi is shown with 4 hands.

What roles or jobs do these deities have?
Were these roles on our list?

Pause Point

Have a Pause Point by holding up the Owl with wings aloft (and/or by using **Slide 4**)
Invite children to take 3 deep breaths, in through the nose and out through the mouth
Ask: How might having these different deities make a difference to a Sanatani?
How might this make a difference to a Sanatani, if Brahman is everywhere and in everything and can appear in different ways? How might you treat other living things if you believed that Brahman was present in them all? Take ideas and keep for piece 5 where this will be discussed in more depth.

Slide 5: Owl has given me some information about Ganesha. Parvati who is the wife of Lord Shiva, wanted to take a bath but she didn't want anyone to walk in on her, so she created a boy out of sandalwood and made it come to life as her son. She told him to guard her doorway while she had her bath. When Shiva returned, he got angry because the boy refused to let him in. He didn't realise the boy was his son, so he cut off his head. Parvati was furious and said she would destroy creation if he wasn't saved, so Shiva asked Nandi the Bull to go and bring him the head of the first animal he saw. Nandi immediately saw an elephant so he brought its head back to Shiva who used it to replace the boy's head and the boy came back to life. Ganesha is very wise and can always think of clever ways to solve problems. For example, he was once challenged to a race to circle the world against his brother. The brother set off at once, but Ganesha thought about it differently. He thought about who **meant** the world to him, so he circled his parents and therefore won the race and was seen to be the wisest brother in the family. Ganesha's four arms sometimes symbolise how powerful he is as they represent the four directions, but this might mean other things to other Sanatanis.

Slide 6: Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth and fortune. Farmers of ancient times always prayed to the Goddess Lakshmi after they finished the year's harvest. They prayed for good crops and more wealth next year. Diwali is an important festival to Sanatanis where they pray to Lakshmi. Divas (lamps) are lit in every household to banish the dark and invite good fortune and luck. On Diwali, Sanatanis celebrate with family and friends. They might dress up in new clothes, share sweets and gifts, and draw some beautiful designs on their driveways (called Rangoli) to invite the Goddess in. They would leave the lights on all night, so that Lakshmi will feel welcome and enter the home.

Lakshmi is shown with 4 arms because they represent the different goals Sanatanis might have to do with doing their duty, finding wealth, finding love and being free from the cycle of living and dying (remind children of the tree image we looked at in piece 3).

Slide 7: Sanatanis will often use images of deities when they pray. They might pray at home or in their temple (their place of worship). When they pray, they might also leave offerings. These pictures are of shrines in public places where many Sanatanis might visit.

Slide 8: Sanatanis may also use images of the gods and goddesses in their own houses for prayer. They might own their own statues or pictures and then make a space for prayer (also called a shrine) on a table like this one.

How might this make a difference to a Sanatani, if Brahman is everywhere and in everything and can appear in different ways?

Have you ever visited anywhere with shrines like these?

Let me learn

Put the children into groups and give each group the same resources as used in the box, but with them all cut up so the name and role are not with the picture. Children to match all the gods and goddesses from the box to their role. Each group to have two whiteboards. Write on one what your group can remember about Lakshmi and on the other what can your group remember about Ganesha. Share with the class.

Can you match the gods and goddesses to their names and role?

Help me reflect

Using the owl, support the children in sitting quietly and take a few breaths to calm and consider their reflection.

I would like you to sit comfortably, close your eyes and take 3 deep breaths.

Think about how we started with our cubes to show the different sides to our personalities and how Sanatanis believe Brahman can show different roles in different ways.

Use **Slide 9** to invite children to complete their Today's Learning sheet and stick this in their Jigsaw RE Journals.