

YEAR 1 Unit B2 – Holi & stories of Krishna

Teacher's note:

This unit is part of a scheme of work designed to deliver the Agreed Syllabus. It has been written by a joint Hackney & Enfield curriculum development group.

The teaching objectives and learning outcomes are based on Agreed Syllabus level descriptions which are nationally agreed.

Teaching and learning activities plan for the two attainment targets for religious education - learning **about** and learning **from** religion. The planning promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils whether or not they are from a religious tradition.

On the right of this page is the full KS1 Hinduism programme of study from the Agreed Syllabus. The material picked out in **bold** features in this unit. Within each unit some of the content picked out in **bold** is a *major* focus, other content is a *minor* focus. A *minor* focus, and material alluded to by the teacher in one unit, will normally be revisited more fully in other units during the key stage.

Model individual, paired, group and whole class activities and tasks are included in the planning which teachers will need to adapt and differentiate to meet pupil needs

Enfield Agreed Syllabus 2007 – KS1 Hinduism programme of study:

- explore how, in the stories told at Divali, Rama and Sita provide Hindus with role models and values to live by eg love, courage, loyalty, duty
- **explore how, in celebrating Holi and Divali, Hindus learn about God's power, love and forgiveness eg through telling stories about the childhood of Krishna**
- **explore how, through daily religious observance in the home and through festival celebrations, children learn about God and about belonging to the Hindu community**
- **explore how pictures and images of Krishna and Rama communicate religious beliefs eg through the halo, tilak and symbolism of colour**
- **explore how symbols associated with Divali, (eg light- good overcoming evil as light overcomes the dark) and Holi (eg fire – purifying and destroying evil) communicate beliefs about God's love and power**

| LEARNING OBJECTIVES | TEACHING ACTIVITIES | LEARNING OUTCOMES | POINTS TO NOTE |
|--|---|--|---|
| <p>Children should learn:</p> <p>Hindus tell stories about Krishna as a baby and as a child</p> <p>Krishna is very special to Hindus</p> <p>religious pictures contain symbols</p> <p>symbols help Hindus recognise Krishna</p> | <p>SESSION 1</p> <p>Show the Folens poster of Krishna. This is a picture of a little boy. All babies are special to their families but this baby is special to lots of people. <i>What clues are there to tell you he is a special baby?¹</i> <i>How do we know when someone is important?²</i> <i>Is there anyone who you think is really special? Why?</i> This baby is called Krishna. He is a special person to Hindus. They believe he can help people and can be trusted. There are lots of stories Hindus tell about how he helps people. <i>When you need help who do you go to? At home? At school?</i> <i>What things can you see in the picture for Krishna to play with?³</i> <i>What does it look as if the baby is doing?⁴</i> <i>Do you think he should be doing this?⁵</i> <i>What else could Krishna's mother have done to stop him taking the butter?</i> <i>Are there any things that you like to do that your parents try to stop you from doing? Why do they try to stop you?</i></p> <p>Activity: The teacher models a sentence which describes an aspect of Krishna eg Baby Krishna has a lovely smile. Children make their own caption (words/sentence as appropriate to their ability) and use it to label their drawings of symbols which are associated with Krishna eg halo, peacock feather, flute.</p> <p>More able children could label these symbols and add another sentence about Krishna.</p> | <p>Children:</p> <p>recognise some symbols associated with Krishna</p> <p>know that Krishna is very special to Hindus</p> | <p>Resources: Poster: Krishna from Primary RE 5 – 7 years posterpack Pub: Folens</p> <p>Krishna – teachers information sheet (attached).</p> <p>¹Krishna has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • golden jewellery around his neck and in his hair like a crown. • peacock's feather in his hair. • tilak mark in the centre of his forehead – many Hindus wear this symbol to show they belong to God. • a green and shining halo or aura around his head. • dark blue skin. The name Krishna means 'dark' <p>² Important peoples are sometimes distinguished by a crown, a chain of office, a red carpet</p> <p>³ The flute is particularly associated with Krishna. He plays delightful music for his devotees to dance to.</p> <p>⁴ The baby Krishna is often shown eating butter or yoghurt from a churn. Butter is important to Hindus because it is made from the milk of the cow - a reminder of human interdependence with all animals. Ghee, clarified butter, is used as the oil for divas.</p> <p>⁵ One of Krishna's pranks was to steal butter from the dairy, despite his mother's efforts to stop him.</p> |

| LEARNING OBJECTIVES | POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES | LEARNING OUTCOMES | POINTS TO NOTE |
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| Children should learn: | | Children: | |
| <p>some Hindus tell stories about Krishna at Holi</p> <p>Krishna shows Hindus how to be loving and forgiving</p> | <p>SESSION 2</p> <p>Play some Indian flute music.</p> <p>Tell the story: "Krishna tricks the girls." (Included with planning materials). Teachers could use murtis or posters of Krishna as a young man playing a flute, with which to illustrate the story.</p> <p><i>How did Krishna look different from the other children in the village?</i> <i>Why did everyone like him?</i> <i>What does the story say used to happen whenever Krishna played his flute?</i> <i>What was the name of the festival Krishna and his friends were celebrating?</i> <i>What sort of things do Hindus do at Holi?</i> <i>What did Krishna ask his friends to do?</i> <i>What happened next?</i> <i>Why do you think the milkmaids were not cross with Krishna for long?</i></p> <p>Krishna said that he was sorry and that he would never do it again. Krishna asked Radha and the other girls to forgive him and be his friends again.</p> <p><i>Have you ever played a trick on someone?</i> <i>What do you do afterwards so that they don't stay cross with you for too long?</i> <i>Krishna didn't just say he was sorry, what more did he promise?</i> <i>What is the difference between 'saying' sorry and 'being' sorry?</i></p> <p>Individual activity: Children think about times they have said sorry to a friend. They think about times they have been kind to a friend. Children could write a caption or draw a picture to show describe a time when they said sorry. This they do not share but put straight into the Holi box (a box covered in red/gold paper 'flames') to symbolise that event being over and forgiven. Then children similarly write/draw about a time when they were kind or thoughtful to a friend. When they have finished they pin it to a flipchart. It is important that the emphasis is on children sharing the positive things they have done rather than on the negative. The teacher could model this: quietly writing about one thing she said sorry for & putting it in the box ("I said sorry and now we are good friends again") and then proudly reading out the positive action and pinning it to the flipchart.</p> | <p>retell a Hindu story about Krishna at Holi</p> <p>reflect on being sorry and forgiven for hurting others</p> | <p>Resources: Flute music</p> <p>Story: Krishna tricks the girls (included with planning materials)</p> <p>Artefacts: murti of Krishna playing the flute</p> <p>Reminder from the story: "Krishna was not just an ordinary child he was a god. Like many other Indian gods, his skin was blue. He was fun to be with and thought of exciting things to do. He was always full of mischief and loved playing tricks on people. If he was caught he would smile angelically and say sorry and no one could be angry with him for long."</p> <p>A background information sheet for teachers is included in this pack.</p> |

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| Children should learn: | | Children: | |
| <p>Holi is a happy festival for Hindus when Hindus throw coloured paints at each other they forget their differences</p> | <p>SESSION 3</p> <p>Read the story 'The Holi Fire'.</p> <p><i>Have you ever been to a bonfire party? Fire can be dangerous but if we use it safely it can be a good thing. How do we use flames and fire in our daily life?</i> (To keep us warm, to give us light to see by, to cook with, some people use candle light in their prayers to thank God for light and life.)</p> <p>Hindus celebrate Holi in the spring. <i>What things start appearing in the gardens – on trees and bushes and coming up through the soil – in the springtime? What colours can we begin to see in the gardens in spring?</i> <i>Why do you think people are glad to see new things growing in the garden and the sun shining outside?</i> <i>What sort of things does your family do when the weather gets warmer and the spring comes?</i> (Holi is a spring festival which celebrates one of the harvests in India. Holi comes at the end of the cold season when wheat, gram and sugar-cane are ripe. So it is a time of new life and hope.) <i>Do you think it would be fun to throw coloured paint at people?</i> <i>Why wouldn't it be a good idea to do it every day?</i> <i>Why do you think having fun at Holi is a good time for people to make up if they've had an argument?</i> <i>Is there someone you have stopped being friends with?</i> <i>How would you make up with them?</i></p> <p>Activity: Children use drawing/writing/speech bubbles as appropriate to show two friends making up and having a good time at Holi.</p> <p>Whole class: Act out the Holi game using buckets of crepe paper streamers instead of paint!</p> <p>Share pieces of fresh coconut.</p> | <p>describe some of the ways Hindus celebrate Holi</p> <p>reflect on ways of making up with friends after a quarrel</p> | <p>Resources: Story: The Holi Fire (included with planning materials)</p> <p>fresh coconut</p> <p>coloured crepe paper streamers</p> |

KRISHNA

Hindus believe in One God (Brahman), worshipped in many forms because Brahman is too great for the human being to comprehend. Most Hindus recognise three aspects to Brahman: Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver and Shiva the Destroyer. Sometimes this trinity is referred to as **G**enerator, **O**perator and **D**estroyer – spelling G-O-D. Sometimes Hindus explain this concept of One God in many forms using the analogy of the prism. One beam of light refracted through a prism reveals that light is made up of a spectrum of many colours. Thus One God, many aspects.

When the world is in danger of being overcome by evil, Vishnu descends to earth as an avatar (incarnation). Vishnu has taken many forms through the ages, the most popular of which for many Hindus is Krishna.

The story of Krishna's birth shows him miraculously surviving threats to his life. Other stories of his childhood tell of his precocious strength, skill and knowledge which he uses to protect and help the people around him. The feats he performs emphasise his divine nature – God is all powerful.

In one story, naughty Krishna steals butter which his mother has made. She demands to look in his mouth. When he opens it, instead of butter, she sees the whole world and realizes that this child is the Lord of the Universe. Krishna reveals the power of God which cannot be denied and there is a divine purpose behind his actions.



Whether Krishna is performing superhuman feats or mischievous pranks, the villagers love him devotedly. The main teaching of Krishna is that through devotion (bhakti) to God and the performance of one's rightful duties (dharma) the atman (soul) will eventually be released from the cycle of rebirth. Krishna offers liberation to everyone who offers him their sincere love.

A key Hindu story of Krishna dancing with the gopis (milkmaids) illustrates this concept.

In this dance each of the gopis believes that she alone is dancing with Krishna. In the same way the believer has an individual, loving relationship with God. When Krishna plays his flute its sweet music invites all who hear it to respond to God.



Many stories tell of Krishna's lively and playful nature. This is the aspect of Krishna which is developed in this unit on Holi. It is the fun-loving aspect of God. Celebrations at Holi recall the love between Krishna and Radha, one of the gopis.

Holi is known as the festival of colour. Men and women offer prayers, sing and dance joyfully. They splash each other with coloured water and powder paints.

It is a spring festival. Spring time brings more light and colour to nature which tends to cheer people up after winter. Holi expresses this happiness: enemies become friends on this day; old quarrels and personal differences are forgotten. The playful activity of throwing paint, singing and dancing together is designed to remove barriers between people. Holi renews the spirit of unity and fellowship among families and in the community.

At Holi, plays, songs and dances depicting the activities of Krishna are performed. Another key story associated with Holi is that of Prahlada and Holika. Prahlada is saved from being destroyed because of his faith in God. He displays human qualities of courage and commitment. We have chosen not to use this story because the detail may be off-putting to young children although the concept that God protects those who are devoted to him can be communicated through stories of Krishna.

KRISHNA TRICKS THE GIRLS

There was once a boy called Krishna, who lived with his father and mother in a village in India.

Krishna looked very different from the other children in the village. He was not just an ordinary boy, he was a god, and like many other Indian gods, his skin was blue. Everyone liked him because he was fun to be with and thought of exciting things to do. He was always full of mischief and loved playing tricks on people. If he was caught he would smile angelically and say he was sorry, and no one could be angry with him for long.

One day Krishna was out in the fields looking after the cows, when he heard a boy playing a flute. It made such a soft, sweet sound, that Krishna decided that he must have one for himself. He rushed home to his mother and begged her to buy him one.

"But who will teach you to play?" his mother asked. "No one," said Krishna confidently. "I'll teach myself."

And so he did. His mother bought him a flute from the bazaar and Krishna sat down under a tree, far away across the fields, where no one could hear him and tried to play. At first he could only make a funny squeaky noise, but every day he would sit under the tree and practise until he could play a tune. It was a merry little tune, soft and sweet, easy on the ear, the sort of tune you could listen to forever. Krishna practised it and learned another, and another. Each tune was lovelier than the last.

Now it was time for the festival of Holi, when all over India the arrival of spring is celebrated. Holi is a time for music and laughter, singing and dancing. And it is the custom for people to throw coloured powder over the earth and shower each other with coloured water.

Just as the festival began, Krishna thought of a wonderful trick to play on the village girls. He called a secret meeting for the boys.

"Listen," said Krishna, "I have a good idea. If you do exactly what I say, I promise you will see something very funny. First, I want each of you to bring me two buckets filled with coloured powders mixed with water – the brightest colours you can find. Then I will tell you what to do next."

The boys were puzzled, but they were used to doing what Krishna told them so they all ran back to their homes and brought Krishna buckets of water in all the colours of the rainbow.

"That's good," said Krishna, peering into the buckets. "Now, pick up the buckets and follow me."

He led the way towards the forest that lay on the outskirts of the village, playing his flute as he went. The boys followed in a long line, carrying a bucket in each hand. Krishna stopped in a clearing.

"Now I want everyone to hide up in the trees. Climb up and find a strong branch to sit on. Take your buckets with you, making sure you don't spill them, and hide yourselves in the leaves and branches so you can't be seen."

Then Krishna told them his plan. The boys thought it was very funny and scrambled up into the trees to hide, laughing.

"Sssh! Don't let anyone hear you!" said Krishna. Sitting alone in the middle of the clearing, he took out his flute and began to play.

Softly, sweetly the notes came, soothing and pleasant to listen to. There was a hush in the forest as boys, birds and beasts were still, listening to the flute. The music travelled through the forest, across the river, through the village and to the fields where the village girls were playing in the bright new dresses they had put on for the festival.

"Listen to that beautiful music! Where is it coming from?" asked one of the girls. Radha, the liveliest and cleverest of them, stopped to listen. "It must be coming from the village. Let's go and see what it is," she said.

The girls ran back to the village, but no one there was playing the flute. They ran further, crossing the river and went into the heart of the forest, led by the sound of the flute. At last they came to the clearing where Krishna sat playing.

When Krishna saw the girls coming, he closed his eyes, pretending not to notice them. He played even more sweetly. The girls stood in the clearing, entranced by the sound of the flute.

"Now!" said Krishna suddenly, opening his eyes. The boys, perched up in the trees, tipped their buckets upside down. A shower of coloured water poured down over the girls, drenching their hair, their faces and their new dresses.

The girls ran around shrieking in surprise. "Oh! The monsoon rains have come early. Oh what shall we do? Look at our nice new clothes! Oh, oh, oh!"

Then Krishna grinned a huge grin and the boys in the trees howled with laughter. "Happy Holi!" they cried.

When she saw Krishna laughing, Radha cried, "Oh, it's Krishna playing one of his tricks. We should have guessed it would be him!"

"I'm sorry, Radha," said Krishna, looking repentant. "I only meant to have a bit of fun with my flute and as it's Holi and the first day of spring it seemed to good a chance to miss. Please forgive me. Let's be friends." He smiled so charmingly and looked so sincere that the girls couldn't be angry.

"All right," said Radha. "It's only coloured water, and our dresses will soon dry in the sun. We'll be friends just as long as you don't play any more tricks on us!"

Krishna picked up his flute with a smile, and played for them, and they danced and sang until it was time to return to their homes for the evening meal.

From The Indian Storybook
Author Rani Singh