RE

Hinduism

Holy Books

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Aim

- I can explain that Hindus have multiple holy books.

Success Criteria

- I can understand that Hindus have more than one holy book.
- I can demonstrate understanding of the different holy books.

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Holy Books

What are holy books?

Which holy books do you know of?

Why are they important to followers of the different religions?

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Hinduism - Holy Books

Hinduism does not have a single holy book, but several holy scriptures (holy books or texts.)

Neither is there any one person who wrote the main ideas down.

Together they support and guide Hindus in their daily life, family and in society.

They have also contributed to the way in which Hindus worship.

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Hinduism - Holy Books

There are two main categories of Holy Books:

Shruti

(That which is heard.)

composed of 4 **Vedas** (Veda means knowledge), which contain the **Upanishads**.

Smirti

(That which is remembered.)

consists of **Dharma Shastras**, **Puranas** and the folk/historical legends known as the **Mahabharata** and **Ramayana**.

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Hinduism - Holy Books

The god Brahma, is believed to have created the 4 Vedas.
The Vedas are holy books that were passed on orally for centuries.

The four Vedas are:

Rig Veda

Focuses on deities.

Yajur Veda

Instructions for rituals.

Sama Veda

Melodies and songs to be sung during rituals.

Atharva Veda

Hymns and incantations to be said during rituals.

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Hinduism - Holy Books

Each of these texts is divided into four sections:

Samhitas

Oldest part of the text – contains mantras and hymns.

Brahmanas

These include myths, legends and explain some of the rituals. These are written as prose (written in spoken language, unlike poetry).

Aranyakas

Describe how to perform rituals and ceremonies.

Upanishads

This part explains spiritual ideas like Brahman (ultimate soul), ātman (individual soul) and reincarnation.

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Hinduism - Holy Books

Smirti

Dharmashastras

These texts are about the duties, rights, laws, behaviour and how to live life in the right way for Hindus.

Puranas

These texts contain myths and legends relating to the major Hindu deities.

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Hinduism - Holy Books

Smirti

Mahabharata

This is the longest known poem ever written. It is an epic story about the Kurekshetra War for the throne of the Hastinpura Kingdom. One part of this, called the Baghavad Gita, contains Krishna's teachings to one of the princes, which explains the different ideas in Hinduism contained in the Vedas. The Baghavad Gita is seen as a concise guide to Hindu philosophy and a practical guide to life.

Ramayana

This is the story of Rama and Sita (which is celebrated during Diwali). It was also written as a poem. Rama is seen as an example of dharma - the 'right way to live one's life'.

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Hinduism - Holy Books

Hindu Holy Books

There are several holy books. Hindus use them when they are needed or when they want to learn more about an aspect of the religion. Look at the topics in the table below and decide which of the holy books they should read. Write down ALL the relevant holy books (sometimes there will be more than one).

Information Needed	Holy Books Containing Information
Want to find information about deities.	
Want to learn about the Hastinpura Kingdom.	
Want to learn more about the god Krishna.	
Want to read about the important stories in Hinduism.	
Want to find out more about dharma.	
Want to find out how to perform Puja.	

RE | Year 3 | Hinduism | Holy Books | Lesson 5

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Themes in Stories

A common theme in Hindu stories is good overcoming evil.

Hindus believe that there is good and bad in everything and when evil becomes too powerful good has to overcome it.

Which Hindu stories do you know where these messages are contained?

What other stories (religious or non-religious) contain similar themes?

Why is it important to explore these ideas?

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