

Learning about Hindus: celebrating the Goddess

Hindus worship God in many different ways. In this resource, you will learn about one celebration of God in the form of the Goddess, Durga.

Watch this clip from the BBC. This is a special festival of worship to Durga in Calcutta, a huge city in India.

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xmhy



Durga Puja

The clip shows a 9-day long festival called Durga Puja (also known as the festival of Navaratri). It is a lively celebration, full of sounds, colours, smells, tastes and other sensations.

As you watch the clip, think about your five senses: seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and touching.

Imagine what it would be like to be at this Hindu celebration.

- What things do you see and hear?
- Use your imagination: what would you taste, smell and touch if you were there?

Write down some of these ideas on the next page.

Using your senses!

Fill in at least one thing in each box. What strikes you most?

 Something I can see	
 Something I can hear	
 Something I would taste	
 Something I would smell	
 Something I would touch	
 Something I want to say	
 Something I wonder	

Some keywords

You have heard some important words during the clip. Can you say what they mean? You may need to watch and listen to the clip again!

Shrine	
Puja	
Goddess	
Durga	
Worship	

Definitions

Here are some definitions you can use for the grid above – but be careful – they are not all correct! You have to work out which ones fit best. Then look them up with a dictionary to check.

- A ceremony of worship, offered to God/the Goddess
- A place where gods and goddesses are worshipped
- A type of prayer
- One form of the Goddess, usually shown with many arms and riding on a tiger (or a lion)
- The festival of lights, remembering Rama and Sita
- The female form of the Deity (God)
- An act of devotion towards God, showing a person's commitment, loyalty and love
- A symbol representing the Deity (God) in Hinduism

What's the story?

Hindus remember the Deity (god or goddess) in many different stories. One story that they remember at Durga Puja is the story of how the goddess Durga defeats the demon Mahishasur.

The demon Mahishasur unleashed terror on the world. The goddess Durga, full of energy, mounted a tiger and rode into battle. Mahishasur changed form many times: starting as a buffalo, he changed into an elephant, a lion, a man – and finally back to buffalo. Durga killed all these forms, until she defeated the demon.

You can watch a version here:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHDt4IUP-4k



Can you see why Hindu women dance such a lot at the Durga Puja? It was a great victory of good over evil.

How would you illustrate the great battle between Durga and Mahishasur? Choose one or two scenes and do some drawings here. You could draw Durga with her many arms and the weapons given to her by the other deities.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for students to draw a scene from the story of Durga and Mahishasur.

What matters most?

What do you think is most important to Hindus at this celebration? Some suggestions are below, but you should add your own. Can you rank them to say which are most important all the way down to the one that is least important and say why?

Dancing	Murtis (statues or pictures)	Shrines
Good over evil	Women	Recycling
Music	Processions	The Goddess

1. (the most important of all)

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9. (the least important)