

# Y5.5 What do Hindus Believe?

**Hinduism** is an Indian religion and dharma, or way of life. It is the world's third-largest religion with over 1.25 billion followers, or 15–16% of the global population

- Although the majority of Hindus live in India where the religion began, there are large Hindu communities all over the world.
- **Today more than a billion people in the world are Hindus.**
- All Hindus believe that **life, death and rebirth are a continuous process** that we are all part of.
- Many gods are worshipped in Hinduism. Each Hindu god is said to be a different part of the supreme God 'Brahman'.
- Hindus believe that God can be seen in a person or an animal. They believe that God is in everybody.
- **As well as visiting temples, Hindus worship God in their own homes and most houses have either a room or corner in which there is a family shrine.**
- Hindus believe that certain rivers are sacred and have the power to wash away sins (actions that are wrong in the eyes of God). **The Ganges River in Northern India is especially sacred to Hindus.**
- **Hindus believe that all living things have souls, which is why very committed Hindus are vegetarians.**  
Cows are considered to be sacred animals among Hindus because they produce milk for people. In India cows are allowed to wander freely, so they can sometimes cause traffic jams if they stroll on roads!



## Specialist Vocabulary

**Monotheism — Belief in One God**

**Dharma— Eternal teaching. Following your duty**

**Holi—A festival that celebrates spring, love and new life**

**Diwali —Festival of lights**

**Cyclical—Going around in a cycle. In Hinduism this is**

**seen as birth, death and re-birth**

**Krishna -worshipped as a god but also considered to be an avatar of Vishnu, one of the forms that the god took when visiting Earth**

**Ganesh -the Remover of Obstacles**

**Hanuman -the Monkey-God**

**Lakshmi -the goddess of wealth and good fortune**

