

Year 5 - Nightjars

RE

Autumn 1

Multi-faith: Symbols and Religious Expression

Key Vocabulary	Definition
Brahman	A spiritual power and the source of everything that exists in Hinduism.
calligraphy	The art of beautiful writing - turning letters into works of art.
Eucharist	Also known as Holy Communion, is a sacrament that commemorates the Last Supper.
ichthys	Often called the "Jesus fish", is a simple drawing of a fish made of two curved lines.
idol	A special statue representing a god/ gods to be worshipped.
Israelites	Ancient ancestors of the modern Jewish people who lived in Canaan.
menorah	A candle with seven or nine branches used as a symbol for knowledge and wisdom in Judaism.
monotheism	The belief in and worship of only one God. The word comes from two Greek parts: <i>mono</i> , meaning "one", and <i>theos</i> , meaning "god".
omnipotent	God is all-powerful, able to do anything.
omnipresent	God is present everywhere in their creation, all at once.
polytheism	The belief in and worship of more than one god. The word comes from the Greek language: "poly" means <i>many</i> , and "theism" means <i>belief in a god</i> .
sacrifice	The act of giving something up for someone else.
symbol	An image or object which represents something.
The Trimurti	Three gods, central to Hinduism.

The Importance of Symbols

Symbols are all around us and in use every day. A symbol is simply a mark or an image which represents something else. This means every time you use a letter or a digit, you are using symbols. When we write the symbol '3', it refers to a certain quantity. Symbols are important as they can help us quickly identify what something is or means. Symbols can be incredibly effective ways of communicating complex ideas in a way that is easy to understand for many people, sometimes using written language, mathematical symbols, or pictorial symbols to represent certain concepts. Symbols are used within religions to point to or explain something more clearly and will usually have a deeper meaning.

Key Symbols and their Meaning

The cross of Christ or Crucifix

The cross is a Christian symbol. It represents the cross on which Jesus was executed by the Romans. It symbolises the salvation, suffering and sacrifice of Jesus.



Crescent Moon and Star

There is no specific religious significance of the crescent moon and star symbol for Muslims. The symbol of the moon relates to the following of the lunar calendar in Islam.



Om

The Om symbol is used in Hinduism to signify the universe and the Ultimate Reality. Some people say that this symbol represents the three aspects of God: the Brahma (a), the Vishna (u), and the Shiva (m).



The Star of David

The Star of David is a Jewish symbol, a six-pointed star used on the flag of Israel. In Hebrew, the star is called Magen David (Shield of David), showing God as the protector of David a menorah is an important who was King of Israel.



Menorah (Judaism)

This is a special holder for candles or oil lamps used in the Jewish faith. In Hebrew, the word simply means lamp. There are two main types: the Temple Menorah which has 9 branches and the Hanukkah Menorah which has 7. The original menorah was crafted from a single piece of pure gold and placed inside the Tabernacle, and later the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.



The Trimurti (Hinduism)

The Trimurti are three gods, central to Hinduism, who represent creation, preservation and destruction. They are all aspects of one god. Brahma is the first member of the Trimurti, representing creation. Vishnu is the second member, representing preservation. Shiva is the third member, responsible for destruction. Brahman is the ultimate reality in Hinduism. It is similar to a single, monotheistic god, but it is not a personality in the same way. Om is the sacred symbol representing Brahman.