***WHAT IS HINDUISM?***

**Population**

There are over \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ million Hindus worldwide.

**Origins**

Hinduism is made up of a variety of different religious beliefs and practices which originated near the river Indus in India. The name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_comes from the word \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

The religion dates back over \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years. World’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_major religion.

**Founder of Hinduism**

Hinduism does not have any \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or any \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Sacred Texts**

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, a collection of hymns praising the Vedic gods

­­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **:** holy book from 8th century BC  
the *Ramayana*, long epic poems about Rama and Sita. The *Mahabharata,* which includes the Bhagavad Gita.

The *Puranas*, a collection of stories about the different incarnations and the lives of saints.

**Major Beliefs**

The belief in **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** the universal soul, or God, which is found in everything. Brahman is worshipped in a variety of forms, including \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Krishna, Rama, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and several others. Salvation is achieved through a spiritual oneness of the soul, **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**, with the ultimate reality of the universe-Brahman. To achieve this goal, the soul must obtain \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, or liberation from the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_- the endless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth – to obtain moksha is the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of all Hindus. Thus, Hindus believe in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (after someone dies, their soul lives on and starts a new life in another body – not necessarily a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ one), which is influenced by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ - (every action has an effect and there is a cause for everything), and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_- (fulfilling one's duty in life)

This means that, depending on how you have behaved in the previous life (generating good or bad Karma), you will be reborn into a better or worse life.

**Who do Hindus worship?**

the major gods of the Hindu Pantheon, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the creator god. All these deities are but

Manifest forms (attributes and functions) of the impersonal Brahman. The 3 most important Hindu gods are:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ - known as the Creator, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_- Known as the Preserver, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_- known as the Destroyer. And we too are manifest forms of God! “We are not human beings having spiritual experiences; We are spiritual beings having a human experience!”

**How do Hindus achieve Moksha?**

There are four different paths to achieve Moksha which a Hindu can take. The Hindu can choose one or all four of the paths they are: 1) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_The path of knowledge, leading to the knowledge of the relationship between the soul (atman) and God (Brahman). 2) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_The path of meditation,

the idea is to concentrate so you can reach the real self within you and become one with Brahman 3) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ The Path of Devotion Choosing a particular god or goddess and worshipping them throughout your life in actions, words and deeds. 4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_The path of good works - This involves doing all your duties correctly throughout your life.

**Everyday Practices**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: worship either at temple or shrine at home. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: worship that takes place in front of statues of the gods – offerings given. **Everyday Practices** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: all life is sacred – so many are vegetarian. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are especially sacred – give freely of themselves (work, milk).

Holy Place – \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (used for spiritual cleansing, funeral rites, and other Hindu rituals) – city of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.Festivals – Belief in reincarnation, karma, and dharma provides the religious justification for the existence of the rigid social structure known as the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ System.

**Diwali**

Hindu festival of lights “row of lights” lasting five days. b/c there are many regions in India, there are many forms of the Diwali festival In at least one region, the “row of lights” are lit on the new-moon night to elcome Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth (In the Indian culture, wealth is not viewed as a corruptive power. Instead, a wealthy person is considered to have been rewarded for good deeds of a past life). homes are thoroughly cleaned, windows are opened candles and lamps are lit to welcome Lakshmi. Gifts are exchanged and festive meals are prepared during Diwali. Celebration means as much to Hindus as Christmas does to Christians.

**Dharma or Daily Duties**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Hindus must devote part of their day to worship. This ensures spiritual contact. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: By reciting from a sacred text, the faithful learn the lessons of worldly and religious life. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Hindus are very loyal family members. Parents and elders are honored for their wisdom and self-sacrifice. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Even the less fortunate try to obey this commandment. Guests, in particular, are given special attention in a Hindu home.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Because Hindus consider all life a sacred part of one God, animals are respected and cared for.

**Varna (Social Hierarchy)**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Priest / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Warriors / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Merchants and Landowners /

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Commoners/peasants/servants

**Untouchables (Dalits) of India**

The Hindu religion prescribes that the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_themselves accept their own oppression. Belief in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_demands that they conform to their religion if they are to progress to higher status in another life.

**Ashrama: Four Stages of Life**

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 1-20 Years Old who is devoted and obedient to his teacher.

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who supports his family and the priests and fulfills duties to the gods and ancestors.

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ withdraws from society to pursue ascetic and yogic practices.

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ renounces all possessions and wanders from place to place begging for food.

**Place of Worship**

Worship takes place in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (temples) There are formal gatherings for worship but people can also visit the Mandir at any time to pray and participate in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (religious songs). Hindus will also worship at home and often have a special room with a shrine to particular gods.

**Home Shrines**

Almost all Hindus keep a shrine in their home, regardless of their caste or economic status. Shrines are dedicated to a particular god.

**Religious Divisions**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_- elements of Islam & Hinduism. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ - concern for life is extended to all creatures, even minute microbes that are not visible.