

## Title: Karma & Reincarnation

**LO1: To understand and evaluate the concept of 'reincarnation'**



Please read the extract below from the poem: 'Don't stand at my grave and weep'. What does the poet say about death?

'Do not stand at my grave and weep,  
I am not there; I do not sleep.  
I am a thousands winds that blow,  
I am the diamond glints on snow,  
Do not stand at my grave and cry,  
I am not there; I didn't die.

*-Mary Frye*

**Extension Question:**

What happens after death? Write down the different views that people might have about afterlife



**“As the self moves in this body from childhood to youth to old age, so it also passes into another body at death. The wise person is not confused by this change”.**

***Bhagavad-gita 2.13***



## Hindus have different beliefs about afterlife. Most Hindus believe:

1. The atman (the eternal self) passes into another body after death; this process of rebirth is called 'reincarnation'
2. The process of reincarnation involves life in all different species: plants, animals, aquatics, insects, birds, humans and demigods
3. Reincarnation happens in different planets. There are three main destinations: the upper worlds (heavenly), the middle worlds (including Earth) and the lower planets (hellish).
4. Eternal spiritual planets exist for those who become liberated from the cycle of birth and death

Read the following quotations about reincarnation. Choose one of them and put it into a different format, e.g. slogan, symbol, cartoon or rap

1. 'Just as a person casts off worn-out clothes and puts on new ones, the soul casts off worn-out bodies and enters others that are new'

*Bhagavad-Gita 2.22*

2. 'For certain is death for the born and certain is birth for the death'

*Bhagavad-Gita 2.27*

3. 'The soul may go to the womb of a mother and thus obtain a new body. It may even go into trees or plants, according to its previous knowledge and actions'

*Katha Upanishad part 5*

## Arguments about Reincarnation

*Think about people's views on reincarnation and complete the following statements:*

1. Some people may believe in reincarnation because...
2. Other people may not believe in reincarnation because...



Let's watch a real-life story about Reincarnation!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnXxC-nVsJY>

We have: (1) heard about reincarnation (2) explored reasons for and against it (3) seen a video about it.

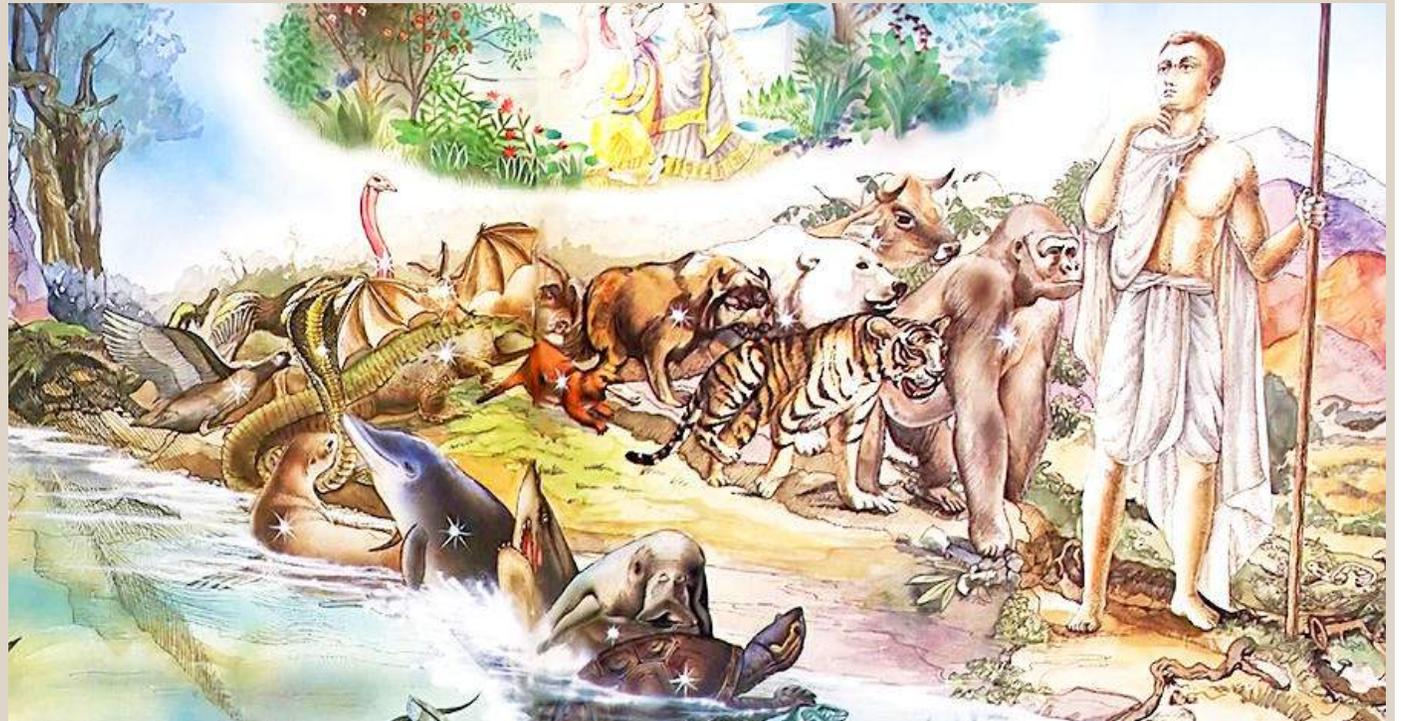
Question: Do **you personally** agree or disagree with the idea of reincarnation? What are your reasons?

Extension: Is there any **other way** to explain the true life story about James and his 'memories' as a pilot?

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### LO: To explain the meaning of the term 'Karma'

- If reincarnation does happen, what would you like to be in your next life and why?



# What is it that determines our next birth?

According to the Bhagavad-gita, our next birth is determined by our...

1. Desires (and state of mind)
2. Store of Karma (merit)

Karma means 'action'

It also means 'the results of action'

Good action results in good karma (good results)

Bad action results in bad karma (bad results)



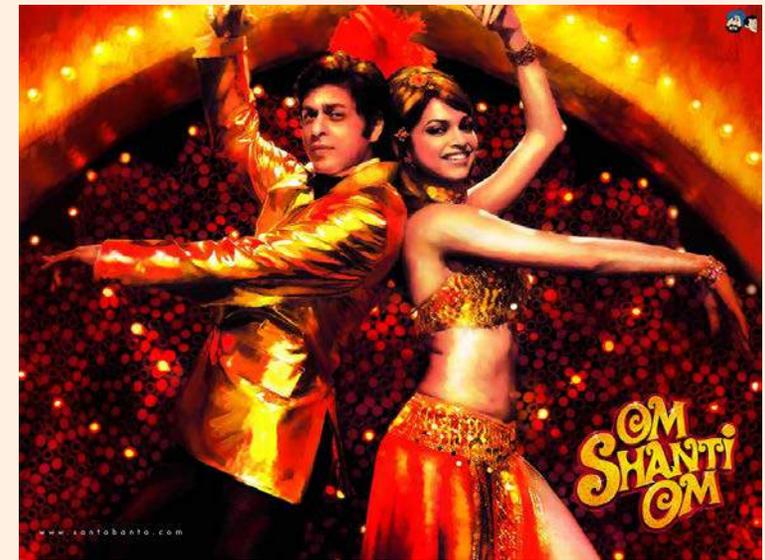
## Pair/Group Activity:

- First, match the 'Action' with the 'Result' with the cards.
- Now, we will watch the video about 'tracking down a murderer from a previous life'.
- The story might be used as evidence for those who believe that our actions have consequences in this life or the next.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWYHuN1G1vk>

# Mime: 'This Life and the Next'

- In groups, think on one example to show how actions in one life may give results in the next.
- You will then perform a mime for 1-2 minutes.
- Remember, it will show two lives
- You have five minutes to practice
- The rest of the class will try to find out what happened in the first life and what were the consequences (results) in the second life



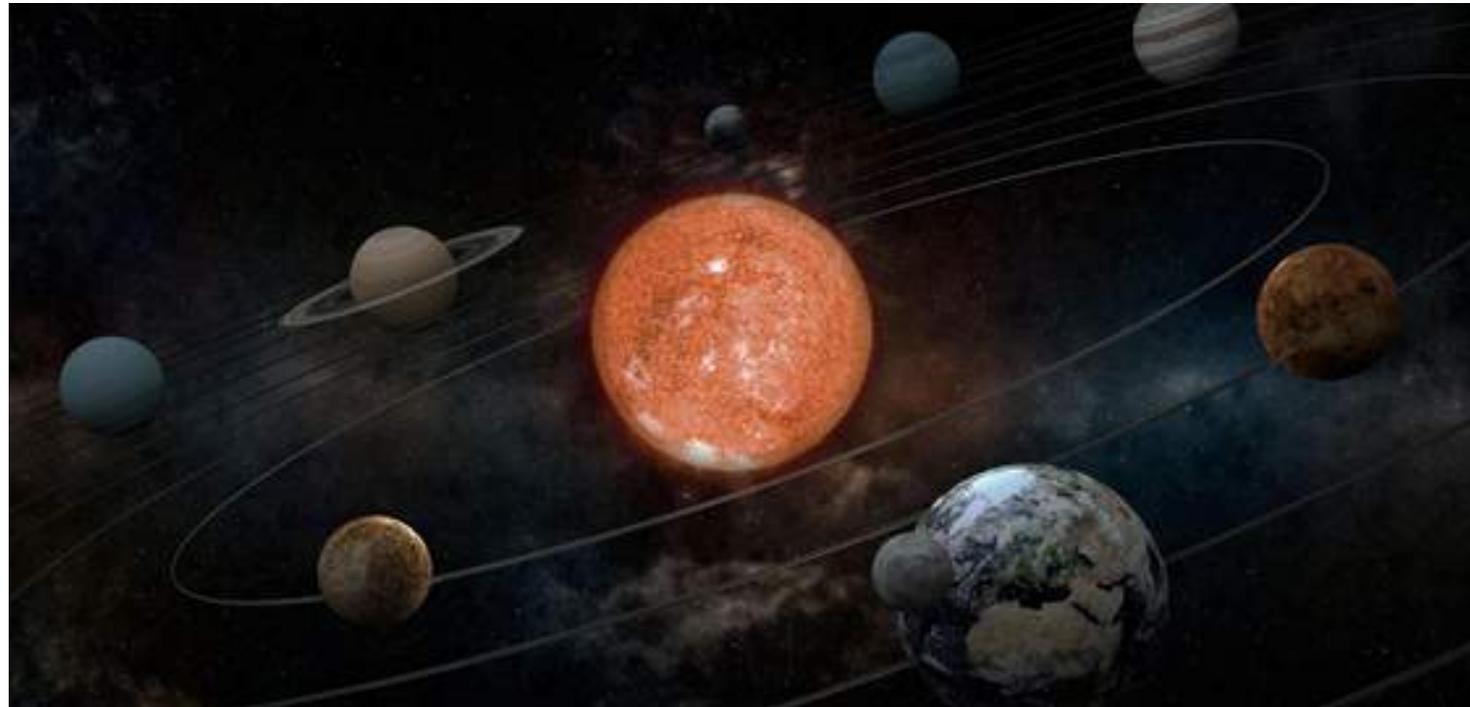
# Plenary

- Explain in your own words the meaning of the concept of Karma (or the “Law of Karma”, as it is called).
- Your statement should begin, “Karma means...”

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**LO: To explain the meaning of the term 'moksha'**

- Do you believe there is life on other planets?
- Explain why.



According to the Bhagavad Gita  
our next destination is decided at  
the moment of death.

This is a picture of the spiritual world  
(which Vaishnavas call 'Vaikuntha')



In this world there are three main destinations:

1. The upper (heavenly) worlds
2. The middle planets (including the Earth)
3. The lower planets, full of suffering



# Life in the heavenly planets is long, opulent, and happy



# Human life on earth is busy, and where the soul creates karma



# Life in lower planets and lower species is full of suffering



**The gods and demons are  
always in conflict**



# Different Desired Destinations According to Hinduism

Some Hindus desire to:

- ❖ Have a better life on Earth
- ❖ Go to the heavenly planets after death
- ❖ Achieve Moksha (liberation). There are two main ideas:
  1. The soul becomes one with a non-personal God (Brahman)
  2. Having a personal relationship with God (e.g. Krishna) and living with him in a spiritual world.



# A Story about Reincarnation

- Please either (a) make a storyboard or (b) write your own script of a story. Include the concepts of atman, karma and reincarnation.
- Extension: How does a person reach moksha? What must they be like? What qualities must they have?

