

# Title: The Self and Discrimination

LO1: To know how Hindus answer the question,  
'Why do we humans discriminate?'

Link the following words to their meaning (Worksheet 7.2.4a):

**DISCRIMINATION**

**AHIMSA**

**SEXISM**

**PREJUDICE**

**RACISM**

**RACIST**

**HATRED**

**AGEISM**

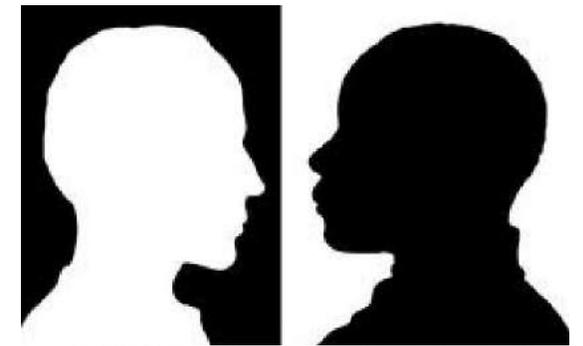
Extension: Can you think of other related words ?

# People are different in many ways.



For example, we are different according to:

1. Sex or gender (i.e. male or female)
2. Race and skin colour (e.g. black or white)
3. Age (e.g. young, middle-aged or old).



Exercise:

In your groups list, other ways we are different:  
as many as you can – **this is a competition!**



# WHY DO WE DISCRIMINATE AGAINST OTHERS?

Let's look at what Hindu teachings say about this!



First, do you remember some of the analogies that explain the atman (eternal self)?



Let's look at two of them!

## Analogy 1: the driver in the car

- Do we sometimes judge people because of the car they drive?
- What is a good car to drive?
- Which car would you avoid driving?
- Do we even think that we are similar to people who drive the same colour and make of car?
- If the driver represents the 'Atman' or 'Self' and the car represents the body, what is it that we see when we discriminate against other people?
- What is it that we often fail to see?



## Analogy 2: changing clothes

Let's pretend we are all from Manchester and we go to a football match to support Manchester United

What colour clothes might we wear?

If we see someone wearing the same colours, how do we think about them? How do we treat them?

Now, if we see someone wearing sky blue, what do we think of them? How might we (or other United supporters) treat them?



# What are Our Conclusions?

Hindu teachings say: we discriminate against others because we 'identify' with the body



We think we are white or black; we think we are male or female: we think that we are young or old.

But these characteristics change. The atman (the real self) remains the same despite the changes

We need, therefore, to see the real person (atman) within everyone and not their temporary and external self (their body)

## **Pair Exercise:**

Please discuss and write down answers to the question: “What is useful about being different from each other?”



## **Extension Questions:**

1. How would the world be if we were all the same?
2. Are there any disadvantages in being different from each other?

## Reflection Exercise:

Please reflect and write down  
“one thing that is unique,  
unusual or distinctive about  
yourself”  
Then, write down why this  
is a good thing.



# Plenary



Do you want to share a unique quality you have?

**Title: Hindu ideas about the treatment of animals.**

LO: To explain the connection between the concept of 'atman' and the treatment of animals

**Question:** Write down how many people in UK  
(a) think or feel about  
(b) act towards  
the three animals shown  
in the pictures



**Extension:** How might some people in China think or behave towards dogs?

# CARD GAME



Please get in groups

You have some cards

You have a poster

Please place each card in the correct column

*Note: 'animals' refers to mammals such as dogs, cats, pigs, cows, and so on.*

Animals	Animals and Humans	Humans

# Moral Questions about Animals

- Do animals have rights?
- Do animals feel pain and pleasure like humans do?
- Is it right to eat animals?
- Should we use animals in experiments?
- Should hunting be legal?
- Should we treat all animals the same?



## Writing Exercise: “Animal Diary”

Please write an entry for a diary, as if you knew what an animal is feeling and thinking

First, let’s read an example!

When you write, keep in mind the moral questions about animals.

For example you might have been treated well or badly.

Now, we will hand out your personal animal card; once you get it, please start writing.



# Plenary

Read a passage from your 'animal diary'



# Homework

- Conduct a research into a news item based on negative discrimination
- Bring it with you to the school (e.g. a newspaper article, a print out from your computer at home, a handwritten description of a news reading, etc.)



Title: the practice of ahimsa (non-violence)  
LO3: to explain the term 'ahimsa'



**Get in pairs or groups of three**

**Answer the question: "In your opinion, why are many Hindus are vegetarian? Why is the School vegetarian? Can you name one Hindu belief or idea that supports vegetarianism?"**

## The Practice of ahimsa (non-violence)

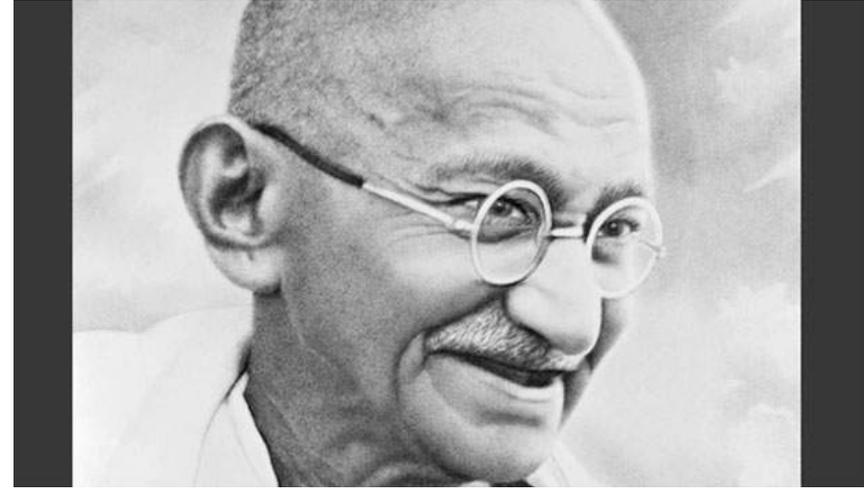
We will briefly discuss two famous people who practised ahimsa.

Ahimsa means 'non-violence'  
(usually, towards all living beings)



# MAHATMA GANDHI

(India, 1869-1948)



He was a vegetarian; he opposed discrimination against animals.

He fought against religious discrimination and violence; he opposed discrimination based on caste and social class.

He later applied ahimsa to his attempts to remove the British from India. His policy was called 'non-violent resistance'.

# REVEREND MARTIN LUTHER KING. (USA, 1929 – 1968)

King was fighting against racial discrimination



He followed the example of Gandhi, and practiced ahimsa (non violence)

He said that neither blacks nor whites should be racist.



## Verses on discrimination from the Bhagavad-gita

The humble sage, who has true knowledge, sees with equal vision a learned and gentle person, a dog, a cow, an elephant, and a ruffian.  
(BG 5.18)



## Verses on discrimination from the Bhagavat-Purana

"A human being who thinks the body the self, who thinks only his own family members to be special, who considers his land of birth sacred and who blindly follows religious principles, is hardly better than an ass or a cow".  
(SB 10. 84.13)

## Writing Project

Please re-write your news article on discrimination

(if you don't have one, the teacher can give you one)

Please see the Worksheet for details!

