

## PRE Curriculum (Year 7, Term 4)

### Exercise Sheet 7.4.4a - "Interview Question Cards"

*These to be printed out and cut; and preferably stuck on cards which can be laminated. Each pair of students should receive at least six cards, which may be selected according to ability. Possible answers are given on pages 4 and 5.*

1 What does the word 'murti' mean in English?	2 Why do Hindus worship the sacred Image?
3 How can the sacred image be spirit if it is made of wood, metal or stone?	4 What is your own opinion on the worship of sacred images? Do you agree or disagree with it and why?
5 Is the murti aware of what is going on, do you think? Why?	6 What rules are there for making the sacred image?

7

Some people say, “God is not there, present in the murti.”  
How might a Hindu reply?”

8

Do all Hindus worship the sacred image?

9

Why do Hindus worship idols?

10

According to Vaishnavas, why does God appear as the sacred image?

11

Some say that the murti isn't God but helps Hindus meditate.  
What is their idea of God, usually?

12

Is the following statement true?  
“Hindus claim they can worship any image of God, whatever they choose”

### Possible Answers

1. 'Form'; 'sacred image'; 'sacred statue'; 'temple deity'.
2. Some see it as a form of God which they can see (and therefore with whom they can have a loving exchange).

Others may see this as something to aid meditation; it helps concentrate the mind of God, who actually has no form; it's hard to think of a formless God.

3. According to some thinkers, everything is actually spirit (although it acts in two different ways; one (prakriti) is binding, the other (spirit) is liberating. Others, including many Vaishnavas, claim that matter can function of spirit if God so desires. They give the analogy of an expert electrician, who can use electricity for opposite functions, namely heating (as in a cooker) and cooling (as in a fridge).
4. No set answers here! However, students should well support their own opinions with good reasons and arguments, referring also to what others say or have said.
5. Students might give their own opinions here. However they might support claims that the murti is conscious by the belief that it is brahman (spirit) rather than dead matter (though it may appear to be made of matter, since it is originally fashioned out of wood, stone or metal).
6. These rules govern the shape and dimensions of the murti. Additionally, the murti-maker should be qualified and be a devotee of God or the particular deity he/she is making.
7. Some will say that, upon installation (i.e. at that installation ceremony), 'God enters the murti'; other, they may claim that 'God is within the murti'. However, some say that for God there is no difference between himself and his body (as there is with us humans); therefore, 'the murti is God'.

8. No, some do not believe in it (e.g. those who belong to the 'Arya Samaj' movement).
9. It depends what you mean by 'Idol'. However, since the word 'idol' is not a positive word, then most Hindus don't call their murtis 'idols'. Idol may mean 'a false God' or 'a false form of God'. It may also be applied to a singer, footballer or other celebrity; then, it means 'someone who may be given too much respect in a fanatical or sentimental way'.
10. Many Vaishnava's believe that God appears or 'descends' as the murti (or 'archa vighraha') so that the devotee may engage in loving exchange with him (or her). This is because God wants to protect and help his/her devotee.
11. Very often, they think God is formless, and is therefore very difficult to concentrate on. Therefore, the murti is a kind of 'meditational aid' to help fix the mind on God and some of his/her qualities.
12. Some may say this. However, there are rules as to whom may be worshipped, and what the murti looks like. It is not that Hindus can worship anything (e.g. a Barbie doll) and claim it is God!