

Key Vocabulary	
pilgrims	People who travel to a place as an act of holy devotion
offerings	A sacrifice given as part of worship.
essential	Something that is necessary
regulate	To bring under control
function	To serve a certain purpose
purification	Make pure or free from sin or guilt.
forgiveness	letting go of past grudges and lingering anger towards a person.
moksha	Released from the cycle of rebirth through gaining good karma.
karma	A Hindu's actions determine what they will be reborn as when reincarnated. Good karma (good actions) will mean they will be reincarnated into good circumstances.

Key Concepts

Why is water important?

Why is the River Ganges important to Hindus?

Why is Varanasi an important place for Hindus?

What rituals do Hindus perform when they visit the River Ganges?

Would a non-Hindu find a trip to Varanasi special?

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Would visiting the River Ganges feel special to a non-Hindu?

Key Knowledge

Water is essential for humans to stay alive because: it helps digest food, it regulates body temperature through sweating, it carries nutrients around the body and helps every cell in our bodies to function properly.

Hindus believe in a God who is in everything called Brahman.

Brahman shows his many different characteristics through other Gods and deities.

Goddess Ganga is the Hindu goddess of purification and forgiveness.

In the Hindu story about Ganga she saves the world from fire and brings life to the earth.

The River Ganges flows from the Himalayan mountains in Northern India to the Bay of Bengal. It is 1569 miles long.

The River Ganges is sacred to Hindus and it is believed that bathing in the river will take away their sin and purify them. This will help achieve moksha.

Hindus believe that each person should bathe in the Ganges at least once in their lives.

Varanasi is seen as being a particularly sacred part of the River Ganges

Hindus will often collect sacred water from the river Ganges and carry it in a copper pot.

Hindus often sip sacred water from the Ganges just before they die as it is believed to take their soul to heaven.

Hindus often travel to Varanasi just before they die as it is believed that those who die in the waters will achieve Moksha and be released from the cycle of rebirth. Instead their soul will go to heaven.

