

# Comparative Religions Unit Objectives

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## Unit 1: Hinduism

Hinduism, widely practiced in India, is a pantheistic religion based on a right behavior-oriented life (Dharma) that allows someone to become one with the God force (Brahman) and escape the material realm (moksha).

### Key names, places, and terms

Varna	atman	Bhakti
Veda	karma	Om
Brahman	samsara	Swastika
avatar	moksha	Sri Chakra Yantra
Vishnu	yoga	tilaka
Shiva	kundalini	bindi
Brahma	Inna	
maya	Dharma	

### What I need to know and demonstrate

1. I can define the key names and terms for the unit.
2. I can discuss the history of Hinduism.
3. I can state how Varna, the caste system, works and why it is oppressive to India.
4. I can recite what the writings of Hinduism are.
5. I can explain what the God of Hinduism is in its essence, character, and authority and compare it to Yahweh.
6. I can state what the Hindu belief of matter is.
7. I can summarize who humanity is and the problem with humanity, according to Hinduism.
8. I can show how karma works in the lives of Hindus and how it affects their reincarnations and salvation.
9. I can develop all aspects of Hinduism's solution to the problem with humanity and compare it to Christianity's idea of salvation.
10. I can explain what the afterlife is and how one achieves it, according to Hinduism.
11. I can state how yoga works and what its purpose is.
12. I can explain the difference between the eastern and western views of reincarnation.
13. I can name the three branches of Hinduism.

## Unit 2: Buddhism

Buddhism, widely practiced in Asia, is based on the teachings of Buddha and teaches a right behavior-oriented life (Dharma) that allows one to escape the material realm of suffering (nirvana).

### Key names, places, and terms

Siddhartha Gautama	The Four Noble Truths	Mahayana
Buddha	The Middle Way	Zen Buddhism
Sangha	The Eightfold Path	Dharmachakra
Tripitaka	Dharma	Dalai Lama
Anatta	Nirvana	
khandas	Hinayana	

### What I need to know and demonstrate

1. I can define the key names and terms for the unit.
2. I can discuss the life of Buddha and how he came to develop Buddhism.
3. I can compare and contrast Buddhism with Hinduism.
4. I can recite what the writings of Buddhism are.
5. I can state the relevance of the idea of god in Buddhism.
6. I can state what the Buddhist belief of matter is and how is it different from Hinduism.
7. I can summarize who humanity is and the problem with humanity, according to Buddhism.
8. I can explain how Buddha understood the concept of happiness and suffering.
9. I can summarize the basic idea being communicated in the Eightfold Path.
10. I can develop all aspects of Buddhism's solution to the problem with humanity and compare it to Christianity's idea of salvation.
11. I can develop the concept of nirvana and compare and contrast it to the Hindu concept of moksha.
12. I can explain the afterlife, according to Hinduism.
13. I can name the three branches of Buddhism.
14. I can explain how the Buddhist understands who Jesus is and the problem with this understanding.
15. I can demonstrate why Buddhism is so attractive to people in the western world.

## Unit 3: Islam

Islam is a monotheistic religion based on the teachings of Muhammad. The central belief in Islam is that there is only one God (Allah) and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.

### Key names, places, and terms

Muhammad	Hadith	Zakat
Mecca	Naskh	Sawm
Kaaba	Allah	Hajj
Medina	Five Pillars of Faith	Jihad
Gabriel	Shahada	Jesus
Quran	Salah	Sharia Law

### What I need to know and demonstrate

1. I can define the key names and terms for the unit.
2. I can discuss the history of Islam.
3. I can recite what the writings of Islam are.
4. I can show how Islam is considered a religion of peace and violence and what bearing this has on the reliability of the religion.
5. I can explain who the God of Islam is in his essence, character, and authority and compare him to Yahweh.
6. I can state what the Islamic belief of matter is.
7. I can summarize who humanity is and the problem with humanity, according to Islam.
8. I can develop all aspects of Islam's solution to the problem with humanity and compare it to Christianity's idea of salvation.
9. I can explain what the afterlife is and how one achieves it, according to Islam.
10. I can explain how the Muslim understands who Jesus is.
11. I can discuss what Sharia Law is and the problems it presents in integrating it into modern cultures.

## Unit 4: Mystery Religions

Mystery religions were philosophical religious schools in the Greco-Roman world (600 BC–300 AD) in which participation was reserved for initiates. They were based on the idea that enlightenment is gained through obtaining hidden and mystical esoteric knowledge, which frees one from the bonds of the material realm.

### Key names, places, and terms

reason	Dragon	Pythagorean theorem
exoteric	Demiurge	Plato
esoteric	The Eleusinians	Forms
Osiris	Demeter	analogy of the cave
Isis	Pythagoras	the good
Horus	Pythagorean numbers	the philosopher-king
Æons	the five elements	

### What I need to know and demonstrate

1. I can define the key names and terms for the unit.
2. I can discuss the key factors that transitioned the world from a polytheistic-dominated worldview to the man-centered thinking of the mystery religions.
3. I can state the main characteristics of the mystery religions.
4. I can discuss what the Egyptian triad is and the significance of its symbols.
5. I can explain what the God of the mystery religions is in its essence, character, and authority and compare it to Yahweh.
6. I can state what the mystery religion belief of matter is.
7. I can summarize who humanity is and the problem with humanity, according to mystery religions.
8. I can develop all aspects of the mystery religions' solution to the problem with humanity and compare it to Christianity's idea of salvation.
9. I can explain what the afterlife is and how one achieves it, according to mystery religions.
10. I can discuss who the Eleusinians were and what they believed.
11. I can state what the three most important sciences are, according to Pythagoras, and why.
12. I can explain how Pythagoras's understanding of numbers develops the concept of enlightenment.
13. I can state what Plato believed about the material realm and how that affects one's salvation.

## Unit 5: Gnosticism

Gnosticism (“having knowledge”) was a prominent heretical movement of the third-century Christian Church. Gnostic doctrine taught that the world was created and ruled by a lesser and cruel divinity, the demiurge. Also, the Pleroma (“light”), the true God force, sent the spiritual Christ with esoteric gnosis (“knowledge”) to liberate the human spirit from the material realm.

### Key names, places, and terms

Simon Magus	Pleroma	the serpent
Marcion of Sinope	Æons	Christ
Valentinus	Sophia	Jesus-Soter
Nag Hammadi	Demiurge	
Gospel of Thomas	Adamas	

### What I need to know and demonstrate

1. I can define the key names and terms for the unit.
2. I can discuss the history of Gnosticism.
3. I can recite what the writings of Gnosticism are.
4. I can explain what the God of Gnosticism is in its essence, character, and authority and compare it to mystery religions.
5. I can state what the Gnosticism belief of matter is and how it is different from mystery religions.
6. I can summarize who humanity is and the problem with humanity, according to Gnosticism.
7. I can develop all aspects of Gnosticism’s solution to the problem with humanity and compare it to Christianity’s idea of salvation.
8. I can explain what the afterlife is and how one achieves it, according to Gnosticism.
9. I can recite which marks of a cult Gnosticism matches and explain how they match.