

Why is water symbolic?

Religion and Worldviews | Years 3 & 4 | Autumn Term 2025-26

Theology

To know that rituals and practices can be based on religious and cultural roots and that often these are interconnected.

To know that rituals are a way of expressing beliefs and ideas about God.

To know that water is often used in ceremonies and rituals to symbolised cleansing and purity.

Vocabulary

Cleanse: To make something clean or fresh.

Commitment: A promise of firm decision to do something.

Conserve: The importance or meaning of something.

Offering: A gift as part of a religious or spiritual practice.

Perspectives: Different ways of looking at or thinking about something.

Purity: The state of being clean and free from bad things or sin.

There are stories in scripture that suggest God has power over water. Many people consider water to be sacred because of this.



Baptism* is a Christian ritual where water is used to symbolise cleansing and starting a new life following Jesus. Baptism can take place at any age from babies to adults.



Social Sciences

To know that ceremonies involving water and fire and important occasions for some communities.

To know that language used during worship and prayer is important for some people when connecting with their community.

Vocabulary

Ritual: A special set of actions, sometimes for a religious ceremony.

Spiritual: Connecting with non-physical aspects of being human, sometimes linked to God.

Conserve: The importance or meaning of something.

Symbolise: To represent something else, often an idea or quality.

Value: How important or useful something is considered to be.

The Kumbh Mela festival is a major Hindu festival that involves sacred bathing in rivers, receiving blessings and taking part in puja.



Philosophy

To know that the teachings of a religious or non-religious worldview often link with a follower's life choices.

To know that religious texts contain different types of writing.

To know that stories and scriptures give insights about how to live.



Water is used as an offering in some Buddhist and **Shinto*** rituals.



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Key Learning: To understand and explain why some people have to stand up for what they believe in.

1	Why is water important? To explore the importance of water practically and symbolically. Looking at creation stories from different religious worldviews. Discussion of practical and symbolic uses of water.
2	How is water used in rituals? To explore the significance of water in Buddhist and Shinto rituals. Discussion and completing ritual activity. Review of vocabulary and complete venn diagram as a class.
3	 What can some religious stories suggest about water? To explore stories from the Muslim, Jewish and Christian religious worldviews. Sharing of Abrahamic religious stories in groups. Collecting and sharing of ideas. Identify similarities and differences in the role and significance of water.
4	 What is baptism? To explore the symbolism and role of water in a Christian baptism. Discuss baptism photos and viewpoints. Explore Jesus' baptism and imagery used in paintings. Review our understanding of spirituality.
5	How and why do some Hindus celebrate the River Ganges? To explore the significance of water at the Hindu Kumbh Mela festival. Sharing the festival poem about the Kumbh Mela festival. Shared work writing a new stanza.
6	Why is water precious? To explore why water is considered precious by analysing quotes. Sharing the 'Precious Water' video. Share thoughts and ideas about how important water is. Creating a short poem, poster or prayer to include ideas across this unit linked to a religious story, new knowledge gained and a way of conserving water.