

SECTION A (20 marks)

1. B. Shruti
2. C. Goddess Saraswati.
3. B. Mahabharata
4. C. Bhakti Yoga.
5. B. Dharma.
6. D. Yoga.
7. B. Aarti.
8. C. Tapasya.
9. C. Navratri
10. B. Vyasa
11. B. form and attributes.
12. C. Asteya
13. B. Santosha.
14. A. Brahmacharya.
15. C. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the world is one family).
16. D. Janmashtami.
17. B. Karma Yoga
18. B. purification and spiritual discipline.
19. C. God's omnipresence and various manifestations.
20. C. Raja Yoga.

SECTION B (80 marks)

21. Your school organized a debate on "Duty vs. Desire." You decide to speak about the Hindu perspective.

(a) Explain the concept of Dharma in Hinduism. (3 marks)

Dharma in Hinduism refers to one's righteous conduct, moral duty, or ethical principles that sustain the cosmic order and individual well-being. It is a comprehensive concept encompassing moral, ethical, social, and religious obligations unique to an individual based on their nature, role in society, and stage of life. It guides one's actions, ensuring harmony and balance in life and the universe.

(b) How does the Bhagavad Gita explain the importance of performing one's duty (Svadharma)? (4 marks)

The Bhagavad Gita profoundly emphasizes the importance of performing one's **Svadharma** (one's own prescribed duty) without attachment to the results. Lord Krishna advises Arjuna that fulfilling his duty as a warrior, even if difficult, is superior to abandoning it due to personal desire or aversion. He states that action is inevitable, and it is better to perform one's own duty imperfectly than another's perfectly. Performing Svadharma with dedication and detachment (Karma Yoga) purifies the mind, leads to spiritual growth, and helps maintain cosmic order.

(c) State three lessons a learner can learn from the teachings on Dharma in the Bhagavad Gita regarding their studies and responsibilities. (3 marks)

- i. **Diligence and Focus:** Learners should perform their studies with dedication and focus, understanding it as their primary duty, regardless of immediate results or distractions.
- ii. **Responsibility:** They should embrace their responsibilities as students, such as completing homework, participating in class, and respecting teachers, knowing these actions contribute to their growth.
- iii. **Detachment from Results:** While striving for excellence, learners should not become overly anxious about grades or outcomes, but rather focus on the process of learning and fulfilling their duty honestly. This helps reduce stress and promotes genuine understanding.

22. Your friend is interested in Yoga but only thinks of the physical exercises. You want to explain that Yoga is more than just postures.

(a) Explain the meaning of Yoga in Hindu philosophy. (3 marks)

In Hindu philosophy, **Yoga** means "union" or "to yoke," signifying the spiritual discipline aimed at uniting the individual consciousness (Jivatman) with the universal consciousness (Brahman) or achieving self-realization. It is a holistic system that encompasses physical, mental, and spiritual practices designed to control the mind, purify the body, and attain a state of perfect tranquility and liberation (Moksha). It is much more than just physical postures.

(b) Outline four different paths (types) of Yoga mentioned in Hindu scriptures (e.g., Jnana, Bhakti, Karma, Raja). (4 marks)

- i. **Jnana Yoga:** The path of knowledge or wisdom, involving deep study of scriptures, philosophical inquiry, and meditation to understand the true nature of reality and the self.
- ii. **Bhakti Yoga:** The path of devotion and unconditional love for God, expressing through prayer, chanting, ritual worship, and selfless service to the divine.
- iii. **Karma Yoga:** The path of selfless action, where one performs duties and actions without attachment to the fruits or outcomes, dedicating all efforts to the divine.
- iv. **Raja Yoga:** The royal path, also known as Ashtanga Yoga (eight-limbed yoga), which involves systematic steps including ethical conduct (Yamas, Niyamas), physical postures (asanas), breath control (pranayama), and meditation techniques (Dhyana) to achieve self-realization.

(c) Choose any one path of Yoga you named and briefly explain how a person practices it. (3 marks)

Bhakti Yoga:

A person practices Bhakti Yoga by cultivating intense love and devotion towards a chosen deity (Ishta-Devata). This involves acts of worship (Puja), chanting mantras, singing devotional songs (Bhajans/Kirtans), prayer, pilgrimage, serving devotees, and constantly remembering God, dedicating all actions and thoughts to the divine, leading to a profound emotional connection and eventual merger with the divine.

23. Your family is preparing for a major festival dedicated to a particular deity, like Navratri for Goddess Durga.

(a) Explain the significance of worshipping Goddess Durga during Navratri. (4 marks)

Worshipping Goddess Durga during **Navratri** is highly significant as it celebrates the divine feminine power (**Shakti**) and the triumph of good over evil. Durga represents the fierce, protective aspect of the Divine Mother who destroys evil forces (like Mahishasura) and restores cosmic order. Navratri is a period to invoke her blessings for strength, courage, wisdom, and protection against negative influences, both external and internal (such as ego, greed, and anger). It signifies the spiritual journey of self-purification and inner transformation.

(b) State four ways Hindus celebrate Navratri. (4 marks)

- i. **Fasting (Vrat):** Many devotees observe fasts for all nine days or specific days, abstaining from certain foods to purify the body and mind.
- ii. **Puja and Aarti:** Daily worship of Goddess Durga and her nine forms (Navadurga) is performed at home and in temples, involving offerings, prayers, and waving of lamps (Aarti).
- iii. **Chanting and Meditation:** Recitation of mantras, devotional hymns (Bhajans), and meditation dedicated to the Goddess is common to invoke her presence and blessings.
- iv. **Dandiya and Garba:** In many regions, especially Gujarat, devotees perform lively folk dances like Dandiya Raas and Garba in circles, expressing joy and devotion.

(c) Give two lessons Hindus learn from the stories and symbolism associated with Goddess Durga. (2 marks)

- i. **Victory of Good over Evil:** The stories of Durga battling demons teach that righteousness and divine power will ultimately overcome evil and negativity.
- ii. **Inner Strength and Protection:** The symbolism of Durga (e.g., her weapons) inspires devotees to cultivate inner strength and seek divine protection to overcome their own inner demons (vices) and external challenges.

24. You are discussing with your classmates about the roles of different people in society. You want to share the Hindu perspective on different roles.

(a) Explain the concept of Varnasrama Dharma. (3 marks)

Varnasrama Dharma is a traditional Hindu concept that outlines a socio-religious system based on **Varna** (social classes or aptitudes) and **Ashrama** (stages of life). It proposes that society is composed of individuals with different inherent qualities and duties, and that life should be lived through distinct stages, each with its own responsibilities, for individual and societal harmony. It was originally based on individual qualities and actions, not birth.

(b) Name the four Varnas and briefly describe their traditional roles in society. (4 marks)

- i. **Brahmin:** Traditionally associated with priests, teachers, scholars, and intellectuals. Their role was to pursue knowledge, educate, and guide society spiritually.
- ii. **Kshatriya:** Traditionally associated with warriors, rulers, and administrators. Their role was to protect society, maintain law and order, and govern justly.
- iii. **Vaishya:** Traditionally associated with merchants, farmers, artisans, and traders. Their role was to generate wealth, engage in commerce, and contribute to the economic prosperity of society.
- iv. **Shudra:** Traditionally associated with laborers and service providers. Their role was to support the other Varnas through their manual skills and services.

(c) How can the underlying principles of Varnasrama Dharma be interpreted to promote harmony and cooperation in modern society, focusing on skill and contribution rather than birth? (3 marks) The underlying principles of Varnasrama Dharma can be interpreted to promote harmony by emphasizing that:

- i. **Diverse Talents are Essential:** A harmonious society requires people with diverse skills and talents, each contributing uniquely (e.g., intellectual, administrative, economic, service).
- ii. **Mutual Respect for Contributions:** All types of contributions, regardless of their nature, are equally valuable and necessary for the functioning of society, fostering mutual respect among individuals based on their skills and work.
- iii. **Focus on Duty and Service:** Individuals should strive to excel in their chosen fields (based on their aptitude and interest) and perform their duties with integrity, contributing to the greater good of the community, rather than being limited by birth.

25. Your family is hosting a community gathering at the Mandir. You are helping to welcome people.

(a) Outline four courtesies and manners that Hindus should observe when entering and being inside a Mandir. (4 marks)

- i. **Remove footwear:** Shoes should be removed outside or at the designated area before entering the main prayer hall as a sign of respect and reverence.
- ii. **Dress modestly:** Devotees should dress in clean, modest clothing that covers shoulders and knees, showing respect for the sacred space.
- iii. **Maintain silence or speak softly:** Inside the Mandir, one should maintain silence or speak in hushed tones to preserve the peaceful and contemplative atmosphere for others.
- iv. **Offer Namaste/Pranam:** Upon entering and greeting others, it is customary to offer a respectful Namaste or Pranam (bowing) towards the deities and elders. *(Other valid answers: not pointing feet towards deities, ringing the bell respectfully, performing circumambulation (pradakshina), offering donations respectfully, etc.)*

(b) State four roles that a Mandir plays in the Hindu community. (4 marks)

1. **Place of Worship:** It serves as a central location for individual and communal prayers, Pujas, Aarti, and other religious rituals dedicated to various deities.
2. **Cultural and Educational Hub:** Mandirs often host classes on scriptures, languages, music, dance, and cultural traditions, preserving and transmitting Hindu heritage to new generations.
3. **Community Gathering Point:** They act as social centers where community members gather for festivals, events, celebrations, and to foster a sense of belonging and unity.
4. **Charitable Activities:** Many Mandirs engage in selfless service (Seva) activities, such as providing food for the needy (Langar/Annadaan), supporting disaster relief, or offering educational assistance.

(c) Give two differences between worship at home and worship at the Mandir. (2 marks)

- i. **Atmosphere and Scale:** Worship at home is typically more intimate and personal, while worship at a Mandir involves a larger congregational setting with a more elaborate and formal atmosphere.
- ii. **Presence of Deities and Priests:** Mandirs house consecrated deities that are regularly tended by trained priests (Pujaris) who perform specific rituals, whereas home worship is often conducted by family members with a smaller altar (Puja altar).

26. You see a classmate being treated unfairly because they come from a different background.

(a) Explain the Hindu teaching of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. (3 marks)

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is a profound Sanskrit philosophical concept from Hindu scriptures, meaning "the world is one family." It emphasizes universal brotherhood and sisterhood, promoting the idea that all living beings, regardless of their nationality, race, religion, or background, are interconnected and part of a single, global family. It calls for compassion, unity, and harmony among all.

(b) How does this teaching promote tolerance and respect for people from different religions and cultures? (4 marks)

This teaching promotes tolerance and respect by:

- i. **Fostering Inclusivity:** It encourages viewing everyone as part of one large family, naturally breaking down barriers of "us vs. them" based on differences in religion or culture.
- ii. **Emphasizing Shared Humanity:** It highlights the fundamental unity of all beings, transcending superficial distinctions and promoting the understanding that beneath cultural or religious variations, all humans share common aspirations and values.

- iii. **Encouraging Empathy:** By seeing others as family, one is more likely to empathize with their experiences, traditions, and beliefs, leading to greater understanding and acceptance.
- iv. **Promoting Peaceful Coexistence:** If the world is a family, then disputes are resolved with understanding and cooperation, fostering peaceful coexistence and discouraging conflict based on differences.

(c) State three ways you can apply this teaching to promote harmony in your school. (3 marks)

- i. **Inclusive Interactions:** Actively include all classmates in discussions, games, and group activities, regardless of their background, ensuring no one feels left out.
- ii. **Respectful Dialogue:** Engage in respectful conversations about different cultures and religions, listening to others' perspectives without judgment and being open to learning.
- iii. **Celebrating Diversity:** Participate in or initiate activities that celebrate the diverse backgrounds, traditions, and festivals present in the school community, fostering appreciation for differences.

27. Your parents advise you to always be humble and grateful.

(a) Explain the Hindu value of humility. (3 marks)

In Hinduism, **humility (Vinamrata or Namrata)** is a highly valued spiritual virtue. It involves recognizing one's limitations, acknowledging the supreme power of the Divine (Brahman), and being free from ego, pride, and arrogance. It implies a willingness to learn, serve others, and accept that all talents and achievements are ultimately gifts from a higher source, fostering an attitude of surrender and gratitude.

(b) State four reasons why cultivating humility is important for spiritual growth. (4 marks)

- i. **Reduces Ego:** Humility helps in shedding the ego (Ahamkara), which is seen as a major barrier to realizing one's true divine nature and connecting with Brahman.
- ii. **Opens to Learning:** A humble mind is open to receiving knowledge, wisdom, and guidance from teachers, scriptures, and life experiences, accelerating spiritual understanding.
- iii. **Fosters Compassion:** Humility allows one to empathize with others, understand their struggles, and develop genuine compassion, which is fundamental to spiritual development.
- iv. **Enhances Devotion:** It cultivates a sense of surrender and dependence on the Divine, deepening one's devotion (Bhakti) and allowing divine grace to flow freely.

(c) Give three ways a person can practice humility in daily interactions. (3 marks)

- i. **Listen More Than You Speak:** Allow others to express themselves fully without interrupting or constantly trying to assert your own opinion.
- ii. **Acknowledge Others' Contributions:** Give credit where it's due and appreciate the efforts and achievements of others, rather than always seeking recognition for oneself.
- iii. **Be Open to Feedback and Correction:** Humbly accept constructive criticism or advice, recognizing it as an opportunity for personal growth rather than a personal attack.

28. You are discussing the Hindu concept of God with a friend from another faith. They find the idea of God having different forms confusing.

(a) Explain the difference between Nirguna Brahman and Saguna Brahman. (4 marks)

Nirguna Brahman refers to God as the ultimate reality without attributes, qualities, or form. It is the unmanifest, impersonal, transcendent aspect of the Divine, beyond all human comprehension, descriptions, or distinctions. It is the formless, absolute Truth. **Saguna Brahman** refers to God with attributes, qualities, and forms. It is the manifest, personal aspect of the Divine, worshipped through various deities like Vishnu, Shiva, or Devi. This aspect allows devotees to relate to God through qualities like love, wisdom, creation, preservation, and destruction, making the abstract Nirguna Brahman accessible for human devotion and understanding.

(b) Why do Hindus worship God in various forms (Saguna)? (4 marks)

Hindus worship God in various Saguna forms for several reasons:

- i. **Accessibility and Relatability:** The human mind finds it easier to conceptualize and relate to God through specific forms and qualities rather than an abstract, formless reality.
- ii. **Focus for Devotion:** Different forms (deities) serve as focal points for specific aspects of divine power or cosmic functions, allowing devotees to cultivate a deeper personal connection and devotion.
- iii. **Symbolism and Education:** Each deity embodies specific virtues, stories, and teachings, which serve as powerful symbols and educational tools to guide devotees on their spiritual path.
- iv. **Meeting Diverse Needs:** Hinduism recognizes that individuals have diverse temperaments and spiritual inclinations, and worshipping various forms allows everyone to connect with the Divine in a way that resonates most deeply with them.

(c) Give two benefits of contemplating God as Nirguna Brahman. (2 marks)

- i. **Transcending Duality:** Contemplating Nirguna Brahman helps one move beyond dualities, distinctions, and limitations of the material world, leading to a profound understanding of oneness.
- ii. **Attaining Ultimate Liberation:** It is the path to direct realization of the ultimate truth, leading to Moksha (liberation from the cycle of birth and death) by understanding the self as identical with the absolute reality.