

3. Hindu Arts and Symbols



- Hindus use dance to tell religious stories, such as the stories of Krishna and the story of Rama and Sita.
- The dancer uses mudras (hand-signs or gestures) to tell the story. Here are some of the mudras:



The cow



Showing respect



Giving blessings
(wishing good luck)



Thinking

- Drama is another way Hindus tell their ideas about God and the world.
- Music is very important in worship. 'Bhajan' means 'religious song.' 'Kirtan' is the chanting of mantras (prayers). These are often done during 'arti.'
- Here are some important musical instruments:
Hand cymbals (used in temples for worship); tablas (a set of two drums);
mridanga (a drum with 2 heads); harmonium (a small organ, pumped by hand);
Sitar (a stringed instrument, used in classical Indian music);
Shenai (a wind-instrument played at weddings); flute (played by Krishna).
- Hinduism is well-known for its colourful paintings, and its rangoli patterns.
- It also has many symbols, which can be drawn. Important symbols are:
(1) Om, which looks like a '3', (2) hands together in prayer; (3) the swastika,
(4) the lotus flower; (5) the cow (6) the trident (three-pointed spear).
- Look at this card and the other ones in the set (there are 15 altogether) and try to find all these six symbols. Perhaps you will find others also!
- Hindus use all their five senses in worship (the five senses are the eyes, ears, tongue, nose and sense of touch). Find out how they do this.