

Read through The River Ganges Text and write down any words you don't know or understand. Use a dictionary to help you or ask someone in your house if they know the meaning.

The River Ganges



The Ganges is the longest river in India and the third largest in the world in terms of the amount of water it carries. It rises in the Himalayas and flows for fifteen hundred miles to the Bay of Bengal, where it empties into the sea, forming the largest river delta in the world. The waters of the river are provided by a combination of melting Himalayan snows between April and June, the hot season, and rains brought by monsoon winds between July and October, the monsoon season.

For the first hundred and fifty miles of its course, the Ganges flows rapidly through narrow Himalayan valleys. After this, it turns into a broad river, winding its way slowly across flat plains. The lands either side form one of the most fertile and densely-populated regions in the world, with numerous cities dotted along the riverbanks.

The Ganges is the most sacred river in the world to Hindus, being worshipped in the form of Ganga, the river goddess. Every section of the river as it flows through India and into Bangladesh is considered to be sacred.

Hindu pilgrims visit the Ganges, bathing in its waters, which are some of the most polluted in the world, in order to wash away their sins. Whilst standing in the water, Hindus cup their hands, lift up the water and allow it to pour through their fingers back

into the river, at the same time as worshipping either their ancestors or their gods.

Worshippers float flowers and lighted oil lamps on the surface of the river, as well as scattering the ashes of dead relatives into its waters. When pilgrims leave, they fill small containers with sacred river water which they use to help them worship back at home.



Day 1 – Vocabulary

Can you match the words to the correct description?

Perhaps write the words and the descriptions and then draw your lines to match them if you do not have a printer at home.

Plains		A river delta is where the mouth of a river flows into an ocean or sea.
Sacred		A female God
Polluted		A plain is a flat, sweeping landmass
Ancestors		Connected with God and so deserving to be worshiped
Goddess		A person, typically further back than a grandparent, from who you are descended.
Delta		Contaminated with harmful or poisonous substances.

Can you find India on the world map?

Do you know what continent it is in?

