



PRESENTS

# KIDSEUM AT HOME

*Creative fun and learning for the entire family,  
all from the comfort of home!*

LESSON  
ON  
INDIA'S  
GANESH





# LORD GANESH (A)

## AGES

Grades 6 - 8

## SKILL LEVEL

Intermediate

## DESCRIPTION

For this project we will be making elephant shaped pillows that will be later decorated and meant to honor the Hindu god of success, Ganesh(a).

## MATERIALS

Cotton Fabric (2 sheets)	Sharpies / Markers
Needle	Fabric (Scissors)
Embroidery Thread	Elephant Template
Pillow Stuffing	

Materials with an (\*) are optional, use only if available.

## MUSIC

Listen to music curated for this lesson!

Check out the **Spotify Playlist:**

[https://open.spotify.com/playlist/3O0ejgplqr2noG2qroeh2s?si=sSBWI2m9SviQ9n8\\_mXozDA](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/3O0ejgplqr2noG2qroeh2s?si=sSBWI2m9SviQ9n8_mXozDA)

## Background

All around the globe, people have different beliefs and **religions**. Some believe in a single God, some believe in many Gods, some don't believe in anything, and some honor the spirits of animals, nature and their ancestors. Most religions tend to fall into several categories: **monotheistic, polytheistic, henotheistic, pantheistic** or **atheistic**. Monotheism is the belief in only one God. Polytheism is the belief in many gods/goddesses. Henotheism is the belief in "One God" that also recognizes the existence of other gods/goddesses. Pantheism is the belief that God and the universe are one entity. Meanwhile, Atheism is the disbelief or rejection of a God/goddess(s) or other higher power.

"**Hinduism** is the oldest religion in the world that originated in Central Asia and the Indus Valley. It is still practiced in the present day." (Mark, 1). Hinduism is also the most **prevalent** religion in India and is often considered to be in all categories (mono/poly/heno/pan/a) because each person can decide what sections of Hinduism to believe in or not. However, to most, Hinduism is not only a belief but a way of life. Regardless of which form of Hinduism one believes in, the central idea is to achieve **self-knowledge**. This means that to know God you must know who you are first. Once achieved, then one will be able to do good; however, remaining **ignorant** of the self will only create evil. The pursuit of goodness is your duty or **dharma**. So, in following or rejecting your dharma you will receive good or bad **karma**.

In Hinduism, it is also believed life is temporary, but that doesn't mean one can't enjoy it. That is why Hindus have life goals that one can also achieve during this lifetime. These goals are **Artha, Kama** and **Moksha**. Artha means to have a career, family and financial wealth. Kama means to find love, sexuality, sensuality or pleasure in things. Moksha is to have freedom, intellect or self-reflection. As long as you fulfill these goals during your lifetime then your **soul** will be able to move onto eternity with **Brahma**, the Hindu god of creation. Otherwise the soul must **reincarnate** as many times necessary to achieve the life goals.

There are also many gods/goddesses in Hinduism that have individual purposes. Brahma is the Hindu god of creation. Shiva is the god of destruction and Vishnu is the god of preservation. Together Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu work together to maintain life, death and order in the universe. These gods also tasked other **deities** with specific jobs or purposes, such as Indra, Vac, Kali and **Ganesh(a)** and many more. Indra is the god of thunderbolts, war, courage and storms. Vac is the goddess of thoughts and communication. Kali is the goddess of death (Cartwright, 25). Ganesh(a) is the god of beginning and success.

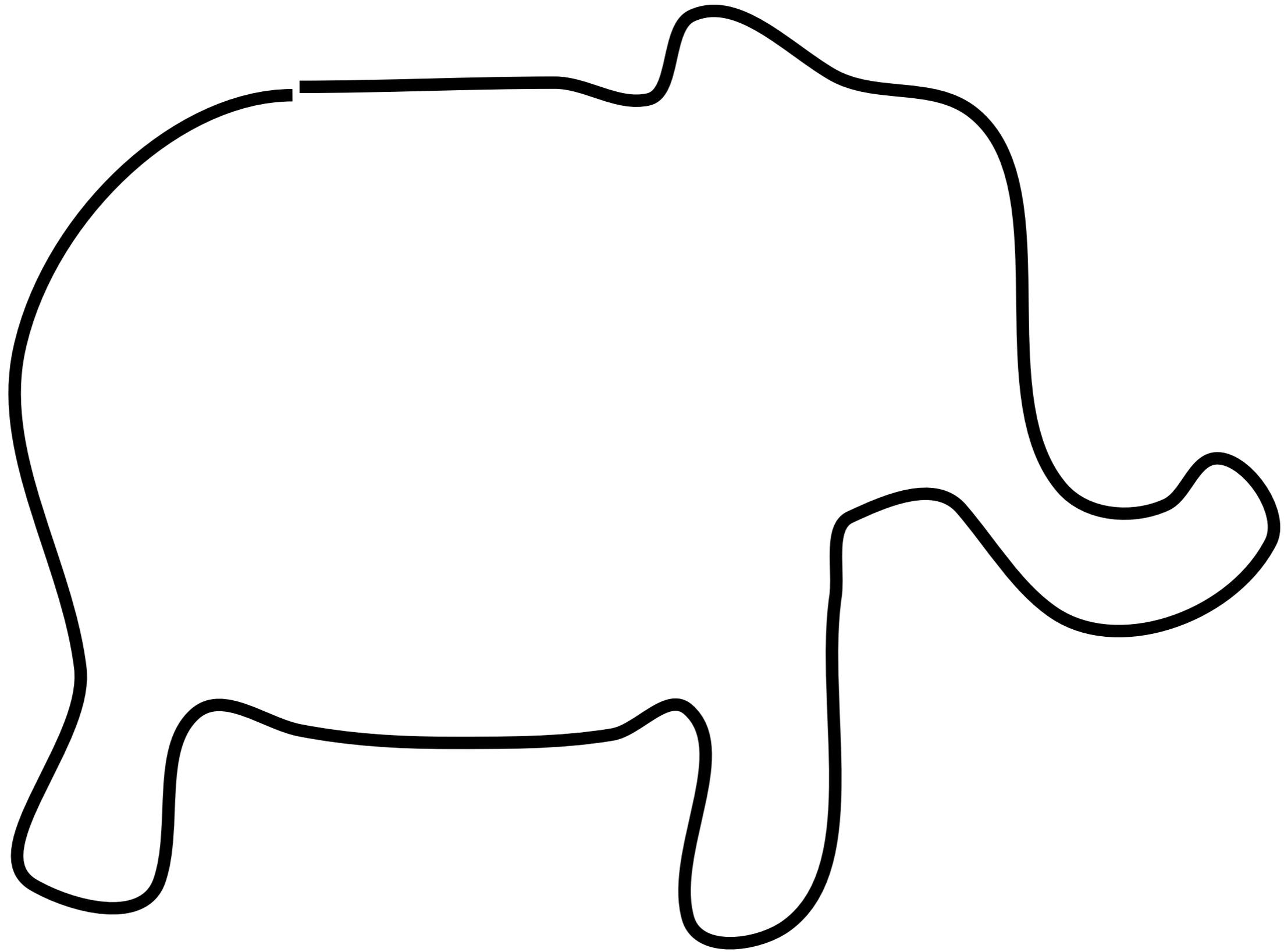
Ganesh(a) is mainly worshipped before any major event, such as opening a business, getting married, having children, or getting a promotion. This is because it is believed he removes obstacles and will bring people prosperity. Ganesh(a) is also very notable because of his elephant head which makes him easy to distinguish in art and statues.

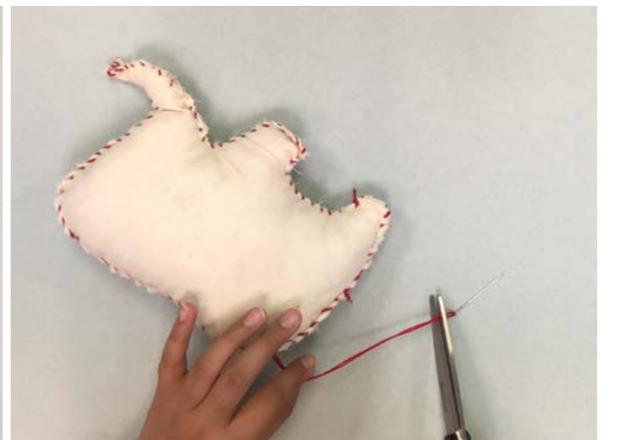
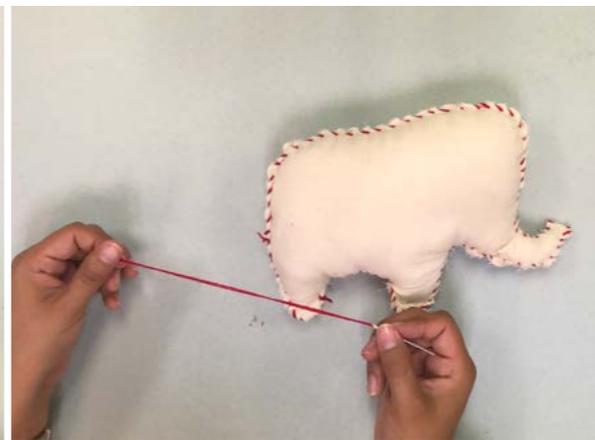
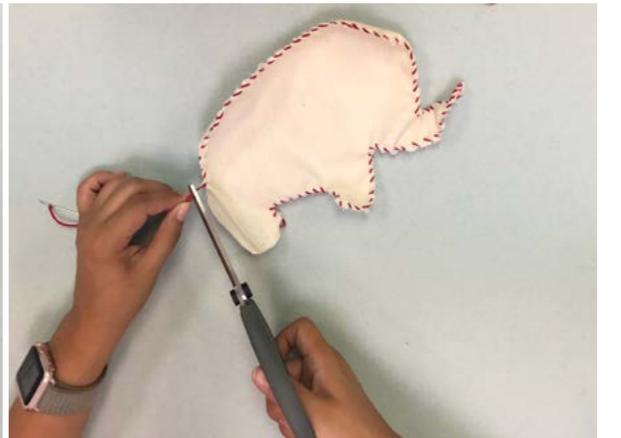
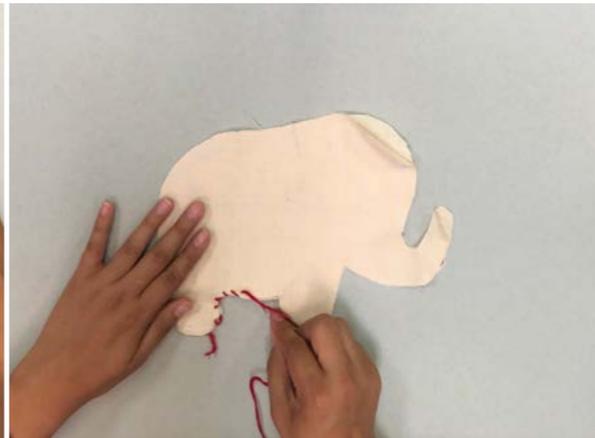
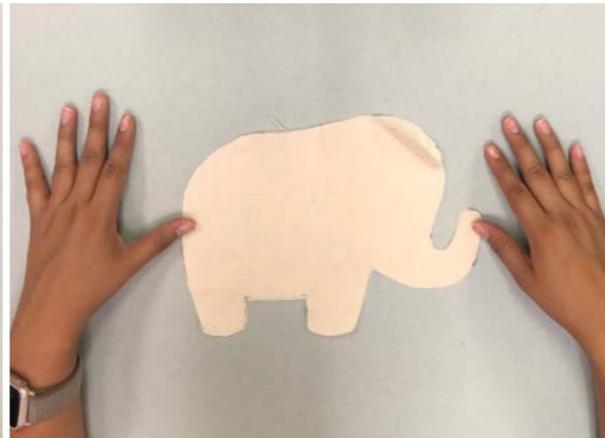


Sculpture of Lord Ganesh, 7th to 8th Century India  
Wood and paint; 9 x 3 5/8 in.  
99.56.21

## Procedure

1. Cut two cotton fabric squares. Stack them and place your elephant template over them and cut along the outline. This will make two pieces.
2. Align the pieces as closely as possible.
3. Take your needle and a piece of embroidery thread and thread one end through the needle eye. Tie the end.
4. Once ready, you can begin sewing. Start on one side and work your way around.
5. Continue stitching along the edge of the fabric pieces.
6. Stop about 2 inches before the end, leaving an opening to add the stuffing.
7. Tie that piece in place and cut the thread.
8. Take your stuffing and slowly begin to fill the pillow.
9. Once it is filled, thread your needle once again and tie the end. Finish stitching the opening on your pillow until you reach the first stitch.
10. Tie it in place and cut.
11. Using a remaining piece of thread, you can sew a piece on the end of the elephant to make a tail.
12. Cut the ends as needed.
13. Take your sharpies and decorate the pillow as desired.
14. Add patterns, color and words. Clean up when done.





## Key Vocabulary

<p><b>Religion</b> a set of beliefs concerned with explaining the origins and purposes of the universe, usually involving belief in a supernatural creator and offering guidance in ethics and morals.</p>	<p><b>Monotheism</b> the belief that there is only one supreme being.</p>	<p><b>Polytheism</b> the belief in more than one god.</p>
<p><b>Henotheism</b> belief in or worship of one god without denying that others may exist.</p>	<p><b>Pantheism</b> the religious or philosophical doctrine that God is in all things and all things are part of God.</p>	<p><b>Atheism</b> the belief that there is no God.</p>
<p><b>Hinduism</b> the predominant religious and social system of India, characterized by a caste structure of society, belief in reincarnation, and many deities that are aspects of the same supreme being.</p>	<p><b>Prevalent</b> generally accepted; pervasive; widespread.</p>	<p><b>Self-Knowledge</b> understanding of oneself or one's own motives or character.</p>
<p><b>Ignorance</b> the condition or fact of being ignorant; lack of education, knowledge, training, or the like.</p>		

Source: Ancient History Encyclopedia, M. Cartwright. Vishnu. <https://www.ancient.eu/Vishnu/>. Accessed August 28, 2020.

Ancient History Encyclopedia, M. Cartwright. Shiva. <https://www.ancient.eu/shiva/>. Accessed August 28, 2020.

Ancient History Encyclopedia, M. Cartwright. Brahma. <https://www.ancient.eu/Brahma/>. Accessed August 28, 2020.

## Key Vocabulary

<b>Dharma</b> in Buddhism and Hinduism, the underlying nature, as of the universe or one's self; essence.	<b>Karma</b> in Hinduism and Buddhism, the principle that one's actions determine one's future in this life or in other incarnations.	<b>Artha</b> the pursuit of wealth or material advantage, one of the four traditional aims in life.
<b>Kama</b> is pleasure, and it refers to the desires of the mind and the physical body. It is the human desire for passion and emotion.	<b>Moksha</b> is the liberation from the cycle of death and rebirth known as samsara	<b>Soul</b> the spiritual dimension of human beings, regarded by some religions as immortal, and viewed as distinct from the physical body.
<b>Brahma</b> according to Hinduism, the impersonal, supreme, and eternal essence of the universe, from which all life originates.	<b>Reincarnate</b> to give another body or existence to; cause to undergo reincarnation.	<b>Deity</b> a god or goddess.
<b>Ganesha</b> Hindu god of success, wisdom and remover of obstacles, represented as a short, plump man with an elephant's head.		

## State and National Standards

### Lord Ganesh(a)

#### California Content Standards:

**HSS-6.5**

Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of India.

**HSS-.6.5.3**

Explain the major beliefs and practices of Brahmanism in India and how they evolved into early Hinduism.

#### Visual and Performing Arts Standards

**6VA.Cr2.4**

Create increasingly complex original works of art reflecting personal choices and increased technical skill.

For more fun from home, follow us @bowersmuseum