Life Journey - Hinduism
This term we will be looking at Hinduism.

Our sequence of learning will look at the different rites of passage that mark the move from one phase of life to the next.

1. Rites of Passage - Samskaras
2. Birth
3. Initiation
4. Marriage
5. Death
We have been looking at Samskaras.

Today we are going to be focusing on the final Samskara number 16 (death rites)
Death rites vary from family to family and also according to which type of Hindu tradition is followed. The region of India a family comes from will also have an impact on what happens when a Hindu dies. In some communities, relatives wash their body and clothe it in white garments. They may put a few drops of water from the River Ganges into the mouth of the deceased to help purify them.

In India, relatives may carry the corpse on a stretcher to the funeral pyre that is near a river before the next sunrise or sunset and traditionally, the eldest son lights the funeral pyre. In the UK, many Hindu families have the body cremated as soon as reasonably possible at a crematorium.

During the funeral ceremony, the priest and the mourners may recite verses from scripture and mantra. Most Hindus would say they are grieving for the person they knew, not the atman, which they believe will be reincarnated.
Shraddha

After the death of a loved one, some Hindus perform Shraddha.

Offerings are made to family gods and goddesses to help the atman of the deceased to move on. Some Hindus believe the atman remains around loved ones while they grieve, so Shraddha symbolises an end to mourning.

Some Hindus give gifts in charity on behalf of the departed loved one.
What offerings would you give to the Gods?

What gifts to charity could you give?