# What does Dharma teach about attitudes to the planet?

## Very Important Vocabulary:

**Dharma:** duty, kindness, and doing the right thing
**Hinduism:** the world's oldest active religion, originating in ancient India over 3,000 years ago
**creation:** how the universe, the earth, and all living things came to be
**Brahman:** the ultimate spirit or invisible life force that connects everything in the universe
**compassion:** noticing when someone is having a hard time and stepping in to help
**reverence:** a feeling of deep, special respect mixed with love and awe
**gratitude:** the feeling of being thankful and showing appreciation for the good things in life
**responsibility:** doing the things you are supposed to do, being dependable, and owning up to your choices
**Non-violence (ahimsa):** choosing kindness, compassion, and peace in everything you do
**Interconnection:** when two or more things are linked together so that what happens to one affects the others
**Mother Earth:** the idea that just like a mother who takes care of us, the Earth provides everything we need to live
**Krishna:** a major god in Hinduism, loved for his joyful adventures, brave deeds, and wise teachings
**Yudhishthira:** main hero in the ancient Indian epic, the Mahabharata, he is famous for always being kind, honest, and choosing to do the right thing—even when it is very hard
**Mahabharata:** one of the longest and most famous epic poems in the world

## The story of Yudhishthira and the Dog

The story shows Yudhishthira refusing heaven if it means abandoning a loyal dog. This demonstrates Dharma as moral duty, compassion and faithfulness. The dog later reveals itself as a god, reinforcing that all beings deserve respect. The story highlights moral responsibility towards the vulnerable.

## Hindu stories of creation

Hindu creation stories are diverse and poetic, offering different explanations of how the universe came into being. Many focus on the idea that everything originates from one ultimate reality, Brahman, and is therefore sacred. These stories teach that the natural world is meaningful rather than random. Creation is often seen as continuing, encouraging humans to care for what exists.

## Bhumi Devi (Earth as Mother)

Many Hindus believe that everything in the universe is connected because all share the same divine essence. The Earth is often described as a mother because she sustains and nurtures life. This belief encourages respect and care rather than exploitation. Seeing the Earth as sacred shapes moral attitudes towards environmental responsibility.

## Dharma and Ahimsa

Dharma includes ahimsa, or non-violence, encouraging care for humans, animals and nature. Many Hindus choose actions that reduce harm, such as vegetarianism. Love for all beings reflects the belief that life is sacred. Dharma is shown through everyday ethical choices.

## Krishna and the natural world

Krishna is often shown living close to nature, protecting animals and landscapes. Stories emphasise joy, balance and gratitude for the Earth's generosity. Reverence is shown through festivals, prayers and care for land. Krishna's actions model harmonious living.







