

Weeks 3/4 Date: *Monday 4th May – 15th May 2020*

Year Group: 9

Subject: RE

Length of Topic: 4 weeks

Week: 3 and 4

Learning Activities	Communication	Supporting Sites
<p>Topic: <i>What does it mean to be human?</i></p> <p>What do you want students to know?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That Buddhism is a 'religion' that has no belief in a God.2. How Buddhist practice every day to lead a simple life.3. To learn, analyse and evaluate Buddhist beliefs and be able to answer the following question '<i>What is the relationship like between Hindu Theism and the Buddhist absence of God?</i>' and relate Buddhists beliefs to their own life. <p>What do you want them to produce to demonstrate learning?</p> <p>Key word and meaning sheet</p> <p>Completed activity sheet on the origins of Buddhism. (1)</p> <p>An answer to the question is Buddhism a religion or a way of life? (2)</p> <p>The completed activities on bottom of the Wisdom sheet. (3)</p> <p>A competed 'The Middle Way' sheet. (4)</p> <p>Using worksheet (5) an answer to the question '<i>What is the relationship like between Hindu Theism and the Buddhist absence of God?</i>'</p> <p>To produce an evaluation on whether 'we' can learn something from The Buddha on how to end suffering and achieve happiness.</p> <p>Weeks 3/4 Learning Objective:</p> <p>To evaluate Buddhist beliefs in relation to spiritual experiences and happiness.</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Find out the meaning of the key words write them out.2. Complete the Origins of Buddhism sheet3. Answer the question 'Is Buddhism a religion or a way of life?'4. Complete activities on 'Wisdom' and 'The Middle Way' sheet.5. Complete an essay type answer to the question 'What is the relationship...'6. Produce a leaflet/poster on how we could use the teachings from the Buddha to reduce suffering and achieve happiness.	<p>Key Vocabulary (list 10 words per week)</p> <p>Buddhism Hinduism Extremes Atheist Theism Wisdom Intention Indulgence Harmony Enlightenment Nirvana</p> <p>What would you like them to read?</p> <p>The attached information/worksheets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Please note this is two weeks work</i> <p>Attached are information/worksheets:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Origins of Buddhism2. Is Buddhism an atheist religion?3. Wisdom4. The Middle Way5. Buddhism emerged from a Hindu society. <p>This is the BBC bitesize website that you look at to help you:</p> <p>https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zh4mrj6/articles/zdbvjhv</p>

Points to consider:

Activity one: Key words and meanings –

To look up, write out a key word sheet on Buddhism

Activity two: Use the '**Origins of Buddhism**' sheet below – read and complete activities. (The BBC website may help you with this)

Activity three: Use the sheet '**Is Buddhism an atheist religion?**' write out an explanation/evaluation using the parable The Buddha told when he was asked whether God exists, why did he give this explanation? What was The Buddha interested in? How did he believe you could reduce or end suffering? Answer the question.

Activity four: Use the '**Wisdom**' sheet to analyse your own life and your own self-awareness by completing the activities and thinking about how you can keep your mind full of good thoughts. Use the '**Middle way**' sheet complete **all** the activities and evaluate that *'for happiness there must be a sense of balance and harmony'*. What would bring balance and harmony to your life?

Activity five: Complete an essay type answer to the question '**What is the relationship like between Hindu Theism and the Buddhist absence of God?**'

Points to consider:

- The meaning of the word *theism*.
- Evaluate the 'difference' between what Hindu's call **God** and The Buddha calls **Truth**.
- How do Hindus and Buddhist experience '**Nirvana**'.
- Analyse on how Hindu's and Buddhist's beliefs are similar and different.
- What are both religions trying to achieve?
- Answer the question.

Activity six: Using what you have learnt about Buddhism produce either a leaflet or poster on what we can learn from the teachings of **The Buddha** and use in our own lives.

Assess what and who are important (the current coronavirus could be used) how could following '**The middle path**' help you achieve happiness and reduce suffering.

For example:

Over indulgence – greed, lust; brings unhappiness as you are never satisfied.



We should all do what we can to overcome poverty in the World.



We should strive to find a sense of balance and harmony – NO EXTREMES.

Document 1. ORIGINS OF BUDDHISM: Siddhartha becomes The Buddha

1

‘**The Buddha**’ is not a name but a title. It means **The Enlightened One**.

When he was born, The Buddha was called **Siddhartha Gautama** (the Sanskrit spelling, Siddhattha Gotama is the Pali form).

Siddhartha Gautama was born in the **fifth century BCE**.

Siddhartha’s father was a **Hindu king** and his mother died when Siddhattha was still a baby.

2

When he was born, Siddhartha’s parents had **his horoscope prepared. This said that he would either be a great ruler or a great spiritual leader**. Naturally as his father was the king, he was keen for Siddhartha to be a great ruler so he made sure that while he was growing up he never saw anything to disturb his mind or encourage him to think about things in a deep way.

3

As Siddhartha reached adulthood his **marriage was arranged and some time later he had a son**. But he had led a **very sheltered life** within the Palace estate. As the time for him to become King approached he began to wonder what the world was like beyond the palace, so since he knew his father would disapprove, **he arranged to go out secretly, with his friend Channa who was his charioteer**.

4

Siddhartha was enchanted by the world outside the palace, but then he saw something very strange. A man was coming along the street, but he was bent and walking slowly, using a stick. And his hair was grey. Siddhartha had never seen **an old man** before and when Channa explained that everyone grows old, he was really shocked and upset. So they went back to the Palace.

5

Next day Siddhartha went out again with Channa. He hoped that he would not see another old man, and he did not – but he saw someone lying down, moaning and covered in sweat, breathing with difficulty. Siddhartha was curious and keen to help the man in some way - but Channa urged him to stay away, explaining that **the man was sick**. He was suffering from pain and a high fever. Siddhartha was upset, especially when Channa explained that he might catch the sickness if he went too close, and that everyone gets sick once in a while.

6

On the third day, Siddhartha asked Channa to take him a different way. He did not want to see any old people or sick people this time. All was well until they noticed a group of people approaching. Some people led the procession playing sad music and then some people passed by carrying a narrow bed. A man lay on this but he was covered in cloth which was piled up with flowers. Siddhartha could hardly see the man at all and asked Channa why this man was all covered up and why people were carrying him. Channa explained that this was **a dead man**. Siddhartha did not understand. When Channa explained about death he was horrified. Everyone has to die? Even his beautiful wife and sweet little son would die? It was unthinkable.

Again his day was ruined and when they went back to the palace Siddhartha was in a very quiet mood, thinking about all the things he had seen, the old man, the sick man and now the dead man. He was deeply shaken up by finding out about all these things.

7

They went out again next day and this time Siddhartha said he wanted to go somewhere right away from everyone. He just wanted some peace and quiet. So Channa took him down by the river where they could walk together enjoying nature's beauty. And there, by the river, sitting under a large tree, Siddhartha encountered another unusual sight. He saw **a Hindu holy man sitting in deep meditation.**

8

Siddhartha asked Channa who this strange man was and what he was doing. Why was he being so lazy? What was he doing with the beads he held? Channa explained that he was a holy man. He was **repeating the name of God, using the beads to keep track of his chanting and praying for infinite peace, infinite bliss.**

Siddhartha wanted to know what the man was doing. He wanted infinite peace, infinite bliss, himself. But Channa said that they should not disturb the holy man, so they returned to the Palace.

9

All the things that Siddhartha had seen occupied his mind from that day onwards. He could not go back to his old unconscious life of pleasure. He realised that he must find **a way of ending suffering not just for himself, but for his wife and child too – indeed for everyone.**

10

Siddhartha decided that he must leave his family and the Palace. No more the life of luxury, he would **renounce his former life** and embrace the life of an ascetic, a wandering holy man, owning nothing, begging for his food and spending his days in prayer, meditation and spiritual discipline. He had to find a way of overcoming suffering.

11

After six years of travelling and studying at the feet of the wisest people he could find, practising exercises and disciplines to develop control of his senses – including fasting and practically starving himself, Siddhartha decided that enough was enough. He sat under a **large Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya in Northern India** and vowed that here he would either discover the truth or die in the attempt.

12

Siddhartha entered into deep meditation and remained there for days if not weeks without moving from the spot. A woman who lived nearby was impressed by his sincerity and intensity. She brought him food each day and he accepted it. He came to see that everything should be done in a balanced way. It is not necessary or helpful to starve the body any more than it is necessary or helpful to live a life of luxury. **The middle way** is by far the best.

13

The Buddha never spoke about God but he did describe the demons that attacked him while he was meditating under the Bodhi tree. They were desperate to distract him from his quest for the truth. But he was able to remain in his deep meditation and ignore them completely. As he reached new levels of awareness and understanding, he broke free from the shackles of human ignorance and limitation. He touched the ground and called on the Earth to witness his **victory over the demons** and his inner achievement.

14

Siddhartha was now enlightened. He felt that for the first time he could see the world as it was, with a new clarity and understanding. He said it was like waking up. **‘The Buddha’ means ‘The Enlightened One.’**

15

The Buddha was not sure if it would be possible to share the insights he had discovered, but he met some ascetics who he had known before he was enlightened. They could tell that something special had happened to him, they could sense the new wisdom and light that radiated from him and they asked him to teach them, so there, **in the Deer Park at Sarnath (near Varanasi, in India)** he began his teaching.

16

The Buddha spent the rest of his life teaching his philosophy and setting up 'The **Sangha**' a **community of Monks and Nuns** whose lives were dedicated to following his teachings.

17

After a very full and fruitful life, **at the age of eighty, The Buddha died and entered into his final Nirvana.** His students cremated his body and took his ashes to places which were important to them. They erected memorials there and these are still places of Buddhist pilgrimage.

18

The leading Buddhists met and collected together all his teachings. These were memorised and **passed down by word of mouth** for many years. Much of a Buddhist Monk's time would be spent in learning the teachings perfectly so that they were passed on unchanged until they were eventually written down.

19

The Tripitaka (called Tipitaka in Pali) **is the earliest collection of Buddhist writings.** Initially, they were composed orally, but were written down by the third century BCE. The word means "the three baskets," (tri=three, pitaka=baskets), and refers to the way the texts were first recorded. The early writing material was long, narrow leaves, which were sewn together on one side. Bunches of these were then stored in baskets. This is a large collection, running 45 volumes in one modern edition.

20

Activities

Create twenty questions about the story which relate to the writing that appears in bold in each paragraph.

Summarise the story Siddhartha Becomes the Buddha, making words which appear in bold letters into 20 bullet points.

Choose the ten points that you find most important in this story and turn them into a short essay entitled '**Buddha's Story.**'

Work with a partner and see if you can **answer each other's questions.**

Document 2. Is Buddhism an atheist religion? (information/discussion sheet)

Buddha is not a God. Indeed Buddhism does not include any belief in a God or worship of God. When people asked Buddha about the existence of God he did not say 'God does not exist, there is not such thing, person or being as God. He answered by telling a story which illustrates a truth. This kind of story is called a parable.

If someone comes to you who has been pierced by an arrow then you take them straight to the hospital where the arrow can be removed. If you don't do that the person will suffer greatly and then die. Your aim is to reduce his suffering, to save his life so you just get him the help he needs as quickly as possible.

If you asked the man about the arrow, who had shot it, why they had shot it, what sort of person they were and where they came from, what sort of bow they were using and how long the arrow was – if you asked questions like these, the injured person would be dead long before you could find out the answers. So keep things simple and focus on what you need to know. Suffering is real. Buddhism offers a practical way to end all suffering. That is all you need to know.

When Buddhists stand before a picture or statue of Buddha they are not worshipping the Buddha like some kind of god but remembering the life and teaching of Buddha. They are remembering their own goal of Enlightenment and renewing their commitment to the path of Buddhism and to keeping the disciplines laid out in the Noble Eightfold Path.

The Buddha is not a name but a title. It means 'The Enlightened One'. Buddhists speak of their own Buddhahood. That means when they look at a statue or a picture of Buddha they are using it to remind them of their own capacity for enlightenment, their own goal of enlightenment. It is a source of inspiration and a focus for their own progress and change.

If a Buddhist feels love for the Buddha it is not because they think that he still exists and may come to help them. It is a sense of love and gratitude they feel for his life and the teachings that he set out so other Buddhists thousands of years later could still learn from his experiences and find for themselves a state of absolute peace and happiness.

The starting point of Buddhism is to understand that life is unsatisfactory and full of suffering. This is the first of the four Noble Truths. But life does not have to be like that. We can start here and now to become more aware and more in control of our lives, of the choices we make and therefore of the consequences. Buddhism is sometimes described as a way of life rather than a religion because of this lack of a God to worship.

Document 3. Wisdom

The Noble Eightfold Path shows eight ways of living which help people to overcome the suffering in their lives and find true happiness. The eight spokes of the wheel which is a symbol for Buddhism are a reminder of the Eightfold Path.

The first two parts of the eightfold path are grouped together because they are about your own life and the clarity of your own self-awareness. This is why they are grouped together under the heading of wisdom.

Right View or Understanding.

It is not enough just to know something in a theoretical way, You need to feel the truth of it for yourself. **Right View means an acceptance of the Buddha's vision** - summarised in **the Four Noble Truths**. 1) Life is full of suffering. 2) This suffering has a cause which is recognisable. 3) There is a cure which is achievable, **and** 4) that **the Eightfold Path** is a true way of achieving enlightenment and finding the peace and bliss of true happiness for yourself.

Right Thought or Intention.

What someone thinks affects everything that thoughts are they do. The Buddha taught that **right thoughts are those which bring happiness to others** – thoughts of **goodwill** and **kindness, forgiveness** towards those who have harmed you, **and letting go of thoughts of greed and desire** since these stop you being happy just as you are now.

It is not easy to stay in control of one's thoughts. A first thing is to be aware of them. Just watch your thoughts and see how they move from one thing to another. **Thoughts can go anywhere, past or future or even into endless realms of fantasy and imagination. The Buddha gave many exercises to his followers to help Buddhists stay focussed on the present, on the moment that they were in now and to keep their minds full of good thoughts.**

1) Copy all the writing which is in **Bold Type**.

2) *Because the information which comes through our sense of sight is so complicated and dominates our thoughts much of the time it is useful to close your eyes so you can be more aware of other senses. First try hearing. When you close your eyes, listen.*

What can you hear? Which sounds are inside the room and which are outside? What is the softest sound you can hear?

What is the most distant sound? Can you hear any sounds from inside your own body?

* After a minute or two open your eyes and write down what you heard.

Document 4. The Middle Way (homework exercise)

Buddhism is a practical discipline, a way of life. The Buddhist path avoids all kinds of extremes. Buddha taught people to live simple lives, avoiding the over indulgence of pleasure or luxury and the pains of poverty, hardship and self-denial. For happiness there must be a sense of balance and harmony. This is why Buddhism is often called The Middle Way.

1) The following statements represent some of the views found in our society. Make three columns headed 'Indulgence' 'The Middle Way' and 'Hardship'. Now list each one under the heading which you think fits them best.

- * *'I always wear the most fashionable clothes'*
- * *'I eat healthy food because it gives my body the fuel it needs to grow strong.'*
- * *'I would never be seen dead in an Oxfam shop'*
- * *'Hungry and homeless, please spare some change'*
- * *'I've had this coat for ages, but it still fits, it's still warm, why should I change it just for fashion, just to make more money for someone else?'*
- * *'One third of children in Britain are growing up below the poverty level.'*
- * *'I'm always dreaming of winning the lottery. If I was rich then I would be happy.'*
- * *'I spend most of my money on sweets. I give most of them to all my friends.'*
- * *'I really like getting clothes from the Oxfam shop because the money goes to help people and build a fairer world. The clothes are good too. Prices are quite reasonable and you can get all the top labels there if you know how to look.'*
- * *'Eating makes me feel good. I can always go on a diet if I get too fat.'*

The name 'The Buddha' is a title which means someone who is enlightened. Buddha taught that everyone can become enlightened, seeing all things clearly, knowing what is true for themselves, calm and happy at all times. so the goal of Buddhism is to achieve your own Buddhahood, to become enlightened - another Buddha.

2) Think of five things in your own life at school which cause suffering or a sense of unsatisfactoriness. Try to work out what causes this unhappiness and what you might do to change it into happiness.

There is no concept of God in Buddhism. Progress from suffering towards enlightenment is through following the Eightfold Path. This is a practical discipline to transform human nature. Buddha taught his followers to live a life of goodwill, kindness and

unselfishness which causes no suffering to others and to overcome their own emotions of desire and attachment which cause suffering to themselves.

3) Make a list **each day for a week** of some of the things you have done which show goodwill, kindness and unselfishness. How have people responded? Has your action brought happiness or suffering?

4) List some of your own experiences of desire and attachment. Do these emotions cause you to feel happy or sad?

Document 5. Buddhism emerged from a Hindu society. What is the relationship like between Hindu Theism and the Buddhist absence of God? (information/discussion sheet)

The Buddha set out to find an end to suffering. That was what he sought and that was what he found. He did not call on a Being to help him and he did not speak of God. But he did find a way of understanding the truth. What the Buddha calls Truth many Hindus (and others) interpret as another name for what they call God.

The Buddha did not experience what Hindus call the goal of 'God Realisation' but he did experience Nirvana. We can only talk in theory about such exalted states of existence, but sages describe a state of infinite peace and bliss both in the experience of God Realisation and Nirvana. Might they be different aspects of the same ultimate Goal? Could the Buddhist experience of Nirvana be a way of realising the abstract and transcendent aspect of God?

The word Nirvana translates as 'blown out.' In Buddhist theory there is no such thing as self or soul. Just as you can think of a bicycle as an assemblage of different parts – the frame, wheels, handlebars, seat etc, Buddhism sees a human being as an assemblage of different parts. An individual comes into existence through reincarnation many times because the law of karma is working. All our actions have consequences. But when we perfect our actions there is no longer any need to return to this world. In the same way that a candle flame can be blown out and cease to exist, the 'assemblage of parts' which makes up a human being ceases to exist when Nirvana is achieved.

Hindus compare God Realisation to a drop of water merging with the ocean. It becomes part of the ocean and loses its previous sense of separate identity. The two concepts are very similar in many ways.

In Hinduism there is a relationship between the devotee and the Deity s/he worships. This is not found in Buddhism. But there is devotion offered to the statue or picture of the Buddha - which represents a Buddhist's personal goal of enlightenment. The difference is quite subtle and since one of God's qualities (according to most Theists) is omnipresence, the all-pervading quality which makes God both personal and finite and transcendent and infinite at the same time, Theists might argue that a Buddhist finds what he or she calls God within themselves.

Where can you find God? One of the answers is 'in the eyes of a child.' Perhaps Buddhists find what Theists call God in the inner experience of their own enlightenment. It is only the words, 'God' and 'Soul' etc that divide them. It is only in the mind where words are used that there is an argument. Both Hinduism and Buddhism use silent meditation to reach the inner depths of truth. In the silence of meditation, in bowing or placing flowers on a shrine, in the music of chanting and devotional singing there is no conflict. Hinduism and Buddhism share much in common.

Buddhism does not include any belief in a God or worship of God and it is very important to understand that the Buddha is not a God and Buddhists do not worship Buddha. But Buddhism does not deny God's existence either. In some parts of the world Buddhists are theists, adapting their local deities and mythologies to the philosophy of Buddhism. This does not make them less Buddhist. There is a wide range of ideas about the God question within Buddhism but it is not of central importance. The important thing is the action, the practical action of transformation by following the Eightfold Path and other teachings which enable a Buddhist to make progress towards enlightenment.