



Year 7

Buddhism:

Buddhist Beliefs

Knowledge Organiser & Homework Booklet

Name.....

Buddhist Beliefs – Knowledge Organiser

Key Words			
Ascetic	Someone who lives a life of simplicity and self-denial	Impermanence	Only lasting for a limited amount of time.
Bodh Gaya	The holiest site in Buddhism, where Siddhartha meditated and became the Buddha.	Meditation	The practice of focusing the mind.
Brahmins	Priests in ancient India who interpreted Queen Maya's dream.	Middle Way	A lifestyle between luxury and having nothing at all.
Dhammapada	A Buddhist scripture that contains the Buddha's teachings.	Pali Canon	Main sacred text for many Buddhists.
Dharma	The Buddha's teachings	Parinirvana	A state of complete bliss, entered into by souls that have escaped samsara.
Dukkha	The suffering/dissatisfaction of all beings.	Samsara	The continual cycle of life, death and rebirth.
Eightfold Path	A guide containing eight steps towards enlightenment.	Sanskrit	An ancient Indian language.
Enlightenment	The state of being awakened to the truth about life.	Three poisons	Greed, hatred and delusion.

Key Ideas	
Buddhism	Buddhism is the fourth largest religion in the world, with the majority living in Asia. Buddhism began in a place called Lumbini, in an area of ancient India that is now Nepal. The founder of Buddhism was a prince called Siddhartha Gautama, who later became known as 'the Buddha'. It is important to remember that the Buddha never claimed to be god, so, although his teachings are important to Buddhists, they do not believe that he is divine or that he was sent by God. Buddhists believe that we are travelling through a continual cycle of birth and death and rebirth. They call this cycle Samsara . Buddhists believe that when someone dies he or she is reborn. The person's next life may be better or worse, depending on the karma he or she has stored up. Good actions in life store up good karma; bad actions store up bad karma.
The Noble Eightfold Path	The path consists of eight steps to help people achieve a contented life, and become enlightened. By following the Eightfold Path, Buddhists believe they can overcome the selfish desires that cause all suffering. It directs people to think, speak and act in better ways which helps them to achieve inner peace and eliminate suffering. These eight steps are: Right action, right speech, right livelihood, right mindfulness, right effort, right concentration, right view/understanding and right intention.
The Buddha's early life	Understanding the Buddha's (Siddhartha Gautama) teachings require a knowledge of his early life. He was the son of a Queen who died when he was born. While pregnant, his mother had a dream which was interpreted by Brahmins as showing that her son would become either a great and powerful ruler who would conquer the world or a holy teacher and enlightened being. Siddhartha was raised by his aunt. Wanting him to become a powerful ruler, his father made sure his son had everything he wanted and wouldn't have to see any pain or suffering. Stories of his early life demonstrate his compassion and wisdom from an early age: when he rescued and nursed a wounded swan, and when he became distressed by animal cruelty at a ploughing ceremony.
The Four Sights	By the age of 29, Siddhartha wanted to see the world beyond the royal grounds, he saw 'Four Sights' which changed his perspective about life forever. These were: old age, illness, death and a holy man. Having witnessed suffering, and after meeting a holy man, Siddhartha decided that he needed to leave his life as a prince and search for an answer to the question of how to deal with the suffering in the world.
Buddha's path to enlightenment	Once the Buddha had left his life as a priest behind, he went on to reach enlightenment – however, this happened through a few stages. Firstly he became ascetic, ascetics punish their body in order to try and gain peace and wisdom. This could involve fasting, standing on 1 foot for a long time and sleeping on nails. Siddhartha first tried to control his breath by holding it in for as long as possible, however, this made him feel unwell. He then decided to starve himself, but this also made him ill. He realised that he would die if he continued without enough food, so he decided to give up his ascetic life. As neither extreme brought him closer to finding the answers he was looking for. He thought that the only way to reach peace was to follow the Middle Way - a life of moderation, in which he had neither too much nor too little of anything. Later, Siddhartha visited the North Indian city of Bodh Gaya, he meditated under a Bodhi tree. After defeating the Demon Lord Mara (a story which some Buddhists interpret as true, some as symbolism), he achieved enlightenment and became the Buddha.
The Four Noble Truths	The Buddha said that he did not create any new ideas, he simply tried to explain how the world was. Buddhists call the laws or truths that Buddha discovered 'the dharma'. After coming across some of his ex-followers, he delivered his first sermon, where he revealed the Four Noble Truths. These are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All creatures suffer 2. Suffering is caused by selfish desires 3. Suffering can be ended 4. The way to end suffering is to follow the Eightfold Path

Homework 1: Why did the Buddha appeal to lower-class people?

Read the following passage, answer the question and make notes of the key points in the bullet-points below the text. You will be quizzed testing your knowledge of this text in your next lesson.

Why did the Buddha appeal to lower-class people?

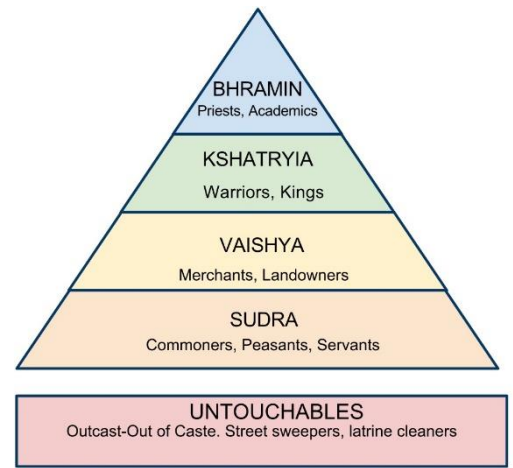
Many people were attracted to the Buddha’s message as it offered freedom from suffering.

The greatest suffering was experienced by the lower-class people, during this time, Indian society was governed by the caste system. Everybody belonged to a caste, which determined what job they could get and what kind of life they could live. The highest class were the Brahmins (priests and academics), then kings and warriors (the caste the Buddha was born into), then landowners, then servants and finally the ‘untouchables’ – social outcasts that no one would ever associate with.

Buddha denounced the caste system and taught that a person’s actions are the measure of who a person is, whether a priest or outcast. He said that social hierarchy was irrelevant – we are all part of the same cycle of samsara. He also denounced the authority of Brahmin priests, their scripture and their rituals. This makes it easy to see why his teachings were so appealing to lower-class people – he was against them being treated poorly and having to go through more suffering than most people.

Set W/B:

Due W/B:



KEY VOCABULARY!

Social Hierarchy – the ranking of people based on how important or worthy of respect they are. This is something the Buddha was strongly against!

‘Lower-class’ refers to the people at the bottom of this ranking, so according to the caste system, this would be servants and ‘untouchables’.

Why did the Buddha’s teachings appeal to those who were considered to be lower-class?

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Key Points:

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Knowledge Quiz:

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| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

Homework 2: The Three Jewells

Set W/B:

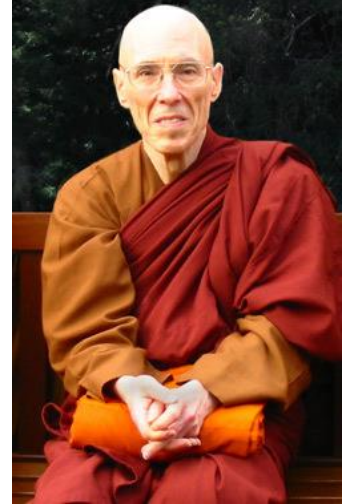
Due W/B:

Read the following passage and make notes of the key points in the bullet-points below the text. You will be quizzed testing your knowledge of this text in your next lesson.

When more people began to follow the Buddha's message, a community of monks and nuns was established, which became known as the **Sangha**. The first monks, called **bhikkhus**, were the 5 ascetics who had previously abandoned Siddhartha, but became followers again after he became the Buddha.

In the early days of Buddhism, those who joined the Sangha would have to: shave their heads, wear simple orange or yellow robes and recite the **Three Jewels**. They are called the 'three jewels' as they are very precious and give light to people. These are:

- I take refuge in the Buddha
- I take refuge in the dharma
- I take refuge in the Sangha



A modern-day bhikkhu

In taking refuge in the Buddha, Buddhists are looking to him as a teacher and exemplar—an ordinary person who awakened to his true nature and serves as a guide to an enlightened life. The word **dharma** refers to the teachings of the Buddha. The **sangha** is the Buddhist community. Traditionally it referred to the community of ordained monks and nuns, as we've discussed, but today sangha includes the whole of community of Buddhists.

'Take refuge' means to make yourself safe from harm, so Buddhists find safety in Buddha (he is an example of someone who has become enlightened to the truth about life), in the Buddha's teachings and in the community of Buddhists around them.

If a Buddhist joins the Sangha today, they need to follow more rules than other Buddhists, they cannot: eat after midday, sing or dance, play music, wear perfume or jewellery, sit on high chairs, sleep in a soft bed, accept or use money.

Key Points:

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Knowledge Quiz:

1.

4.

2.

5.

3.

6.