

BUDDHISM

Reading Comprehension

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BUDDHISM

HISTORY
Buddhism began about 2500 years ago when a prince named Siddhartha Gautama started to question his privileged life. He was sheltered in a luxurious palace for his entire life until he left. Outside, he made four observations: a sick man, an old man, a dead man, and a monk. Up to this point, he had been protected from illness, death, or suffering. The sight of the monk encouraged Siddhartha to leave his current life as a prince and become a wandering holy man. Siddhartha sought the answers to questions about suffering. He spent several years praying, meditating, and fasting until he became "enlightened," finding the answers to his questions. His realizations occurred after sitting under a tree in India for several days meditating. Siddhartha became known as the Buddha, meaning the "Enlightened One" when he reached enlightenment, or nirvana. Buddha discovered Three Universal Truths and Four Noble Truths, which became his teachings for the next five years.

THREE UNIVERSAL TRUTHS
1. Everything in life is impermanent and always changing.
2. Because nothing is permanent, a life based on possessing things or persons does not make us happy.
3. There is no eternal, unchanging soul and "I" is just a changing characteristic or attribute.

THE MIDDLE WAY
Buddha taught his followers not to worship their own lives and actions. The only way to be happy is to live a life of moderation. People should not lead a life of luxury and indulgence, nor a life of poverty and suffering. There were eight guidelines to follow, known as the Eight-Fold Path.

Right Understanding
Know the truth about suffering and its cause.

Right Mindfulness
Control your thoughts.

Right Concentration
Practice meditation.

Right Effort
Resist evil.

Right Livelihood
Respect the lives of others.

MEDITATION
An essential practice to most Buddhists is meditation. It is a way for people to get within themselves to understand Buddha's teachings. Meditation occurs in many ways such as:

- 1. Transcendental Meditation
- 2. Vipassana
- 3. Zen
- 4. Transcendental Meditation
- 5. Transcendental Meditation
- 6. Transcendental Meditation
- 7. Transcendental Meditation
- 8. Transcendental Meditation

FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS
1. The existence of suffering.
2. The cause of suffering.
3. The cessation of suffering.
4. The path leading to the cessation of suffering.

THE TRIPITAKA
Buddha's teachings were written down in the Tripitaka, or The Three Baskets. It consists of three parts: the Vinaya Pitaka (rules for Buddhists), the Sutta Pitaka (teachings), and the Abhidharma Pitaka (philosophy).

BUDDHISM TODAY
There are about 500 million Buddhists in the world. They are found in many countries, including China, Korea, and Japan.

THE FIVE PRECEPTS
Even though there are many different schools of Buddhism, most Buddhists follow these five guidelines:
1) Do not harm living beings.
2) Do not take what is not given.
3) Lead a decent life.
4) Do not speak unkindly.
5) Do not abuse drugs or drink alcohol.

PILGRIMAGE
Buddhists go on pilgrimages to places associated with the Buddha's life, such as his birthplace, Lumbini Grove, Buddha's place of enlightenment, Bodhi Tree, and the place he died, Kushinara.

SACRED SPACES
Worshipping in a stupa or pagoda is a common practice. Some Buddhists meditate at the temple. The temple is a place of worship and a place where monks live. Later, monks and nuns began to live in monasteries. Monks and nuns are called bhikkhus and bhikkhunis. They live in monasteries and take vows of celibacy. They are also known as monks and nuns.

MONKS AND NUNS
There are some Buddhists who are monks and nuns. They live in monasteries and take vows of celibacy. They are also known as monks and nuns.



BUDDHISM

Choose the best answer.

1. Which of the following is NOT true about Siddhartha Gautama?
A. He was a prince who lived a privileged life.
B. He was sheltered from the beginning of his life.
C. He spent much of his life from his poor home life.
D. He was known as the "Enlightened One," or Buddha.

2. Which of the following is NOT one of the Eight-Fold Path?
A. Right Understanding
B. Right Thought
C. Right Mindfulness
D. Right Effort

3. What is the ultimate goal of meditation?
A. To rest one's mind
B. To rest one's mind
C. To study
D. To study

4. Which of the following is NOT true about Buddhism?
A. There are two main types of Buddhism.
B. The Tripitaka is a recording of Buddha's teachings.
C. Meditating in a temple is vital for Buddhists.
D. Buddhism has about 500 million followers.

5. Which of the following is NOT a purpose of a stupa?
A. To hold sacred items.
B. To worship Buddha.
C. To hold sacred items.
D. To hold sacred items.

6. What do pagodas represent?
A. The stages of Buddha's life.
B. The stages of Buddha's life.
C. The stages of Buddha's life.
D. The books in the Tripitaka.

7. Which of the following is NOT true of monks?
A. They live in monasteries.
B. They live in monasteries.
C. They live in monasteries.
D. They live in monasteries.

8. What is the main purpose of this article?
A. To persuade the reader to convert to Buddhism.
B. To inform the reader about the religion of Buddhism.
C. To entertain the reader with the story of Buddha.
D. To explain to the reader how to build a pagoda.



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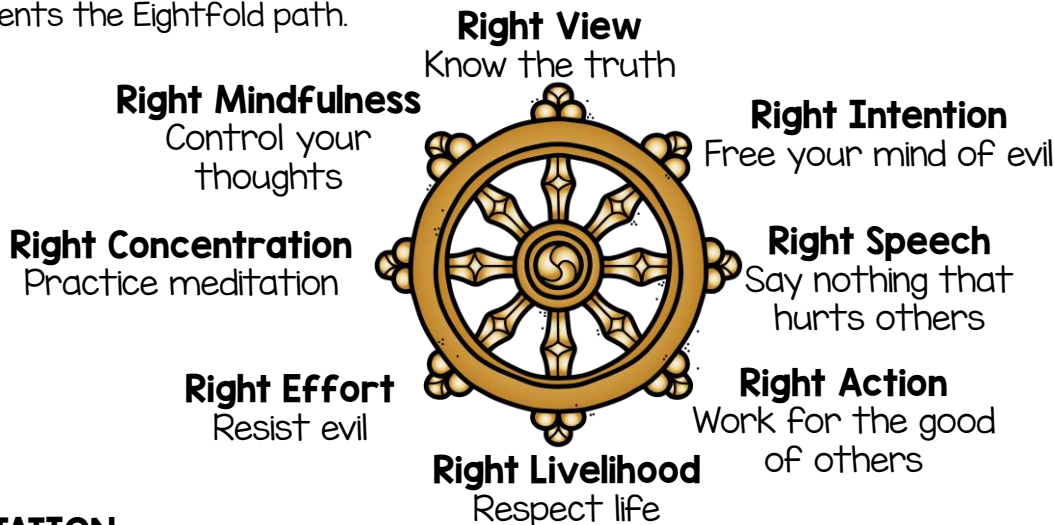


FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

1. Human life has a lot of suffering.
2. The cause of suffering is greed.
3. There is an end to suffering.
4. The way to attend suffering is to follow the Middle Path.

THE MIDDLE WAY

Buddha taught his followers not to worship him as a god, but to take responsibility for their own lives and actions. The only way to reach nirvana was to follow the Middle Way. People should not lead a life of luxury and indulgence, but they should also not fast too often. There were eight guidelines to follow the Middle Way. The eight-spoked wheel represents the Eightfold path.



MEDITATION

An essential practice to most Buddhists is meditation. During this time, Buddhists look within themselves to understand Buddha's teachings. The goal of meditation is enlightenment, or nirvana. Nirvana is freedom from needless suffering. It is a state beyond words. When a Buddhist meditates, they focus their mind to achieve an inner stillness. Meditation occurs in many ways such as: sitting quietly beside a beautiful

arrangement of rocks, practicing a martial art requiring mental control and concentration, contemplating a short poem, chanting, or focusing on one's breath going in and out. Meditation can happen anywhere at any time.

THE TRIPITAKA

Buddha's teachings were written down from what people could recall after his death. The Tripitaka, or The Three Baskets, is a collection of his sayings, thoughts about them, and rules for Buddhist monks. It was first written on palm leaves collected in baskets.

BUDDHISM TODAY

There are about 500 million Buddhists in the world today. Once Buddha died, some of his followers had varying opinions, leading to their breaking away and forming separate types of Buddhism. There are two main types of Buddhism. One is Theravada, which spread to Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. The other is Mahayana, which spread to Nepal, Vietnam, China, Korea, and Japan.

THE FIVE PRECEPTS

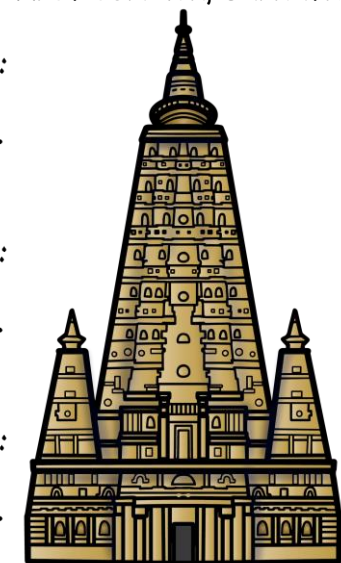
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- 1) Do not harm or kill living things.
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- 4) Do not speak unkindly or tell lies.
- 5) Do not abuse drugs or drink alcohol.



PILGRIMAGE

Buddhists go on pilgrimages to places associated with Buddha's life. One of these is his birthplace, Lumbini Grove; Buddha's place of enlightenment, Bodh Gaya; the place of his first sermon, Sarnath; and the place he died, Kusinara.



SACRED SPACES

Worshipping in a temple is not essential for Buddhists, but they do visit shrines and temples to pay their respects to Buddha and meditate with other Buddhists. Buddhism is a way of life, so worshipping at the temple is not necessary. The form of a Buddhist shrine or temple depends on where it is built. The first Buddhist shrines were ten dome-shaped mounds, or stupas, built to hold Buddha's ashes. Later, more stupas were built to hold sacred items. Some stupas are bell-shaped. Visitors usually walk around stupas as a way of paying respects to Buddha. Pagodas were built in Japan and China as sacred temples. These towers have various number of tiers, usually five. These tiers represent the five basic elements of the Universe: earth, water, fire, wind, and emptiness.

MONKS AND NUNS

There are some Buddhists who wish to practice their Buddhism more strictly with less distraction. These people are called monks and nuns. They form communities and live in places known as monasteries. A religious community of Buddhists is known as Sangha. Monks lead simple lives, with meditation as the center of their life. Monks beg for food and alms since they have given up worldly possessions. Some Buddhist countries have young boys live in monasteries as part of their training and education.

Name _____

BUDDHISM



MATCHING: Match each term with its description.

1. _____ Siddhartha Gautama	A. All Buddhists follow these guidelines
2. _____ The Middle Way	B. Guidelines for following the Middle Way
3. _____ Eightfold Path	C. Also known as the Three Baskets
4. _____ Meditation	D. Buddhist temples for worship
5. _____ Tripitaka	E. The "Enlightened" One, or the Buddha
6. _____ India	F. A religious community of Buddhists
7. _____ Five Precepts	G. Country of origin of Buddhism
8. _____ Stupas	H. The way of living life Buddha taught his followers
9. _____ Sangha	I. Buddhist festival to celebrate Buddha's birth
10. _____ Wesak	J. An important Buddhist practice, goal is nirvana

BUDDHIST FESTIVALS

Wesak is the celebration of Buddha's birth. Theravada Buddhists also celebrate Buddha's enlightenment and death during Wesak. Statues of Buddha are often decorated, offerings are taken to monasteries, and there are sometimes fireworks. Vassa is a time to meditate and study. Buddhists are supposed to set aside time for study and meditation. New robes are brought to monks at the end of Vassa. Depending on the country a Buddhist lives in, they may celebrate other Buddhist festivals. In Japan, Buddhists celebrate the flower festival, or Hana Matsuri, honoring Buddha's birthday. Temples are decorated with cherry blossoms and children pour scented tea over statues of baby Buddha. The Festival of the Sacred Tooth honors Buddha's first teaching in India. One of Buddha's teeth is paraded around the streets to celebrate during this festival.

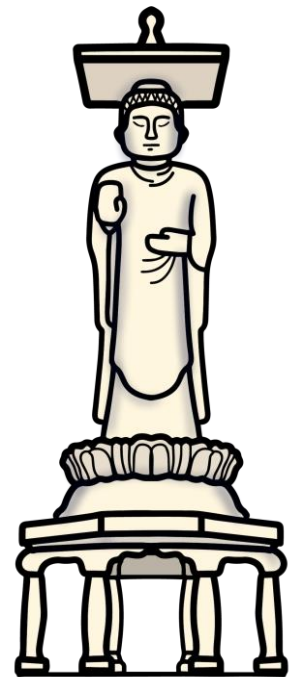


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Festival	Purpose	Traditions
(11) _____	Celebrate Buddha's birth	-Statues are decorated -Offerings are taken to (12) _____ -Sometimes fireworks
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Festival of the Sacred Tooth	Honors Buddha's first (17) _____ in India	-One of Buddha's (18) _____ is paraded around the streets

MULTIPLE CHOICE: Choose the best answer.

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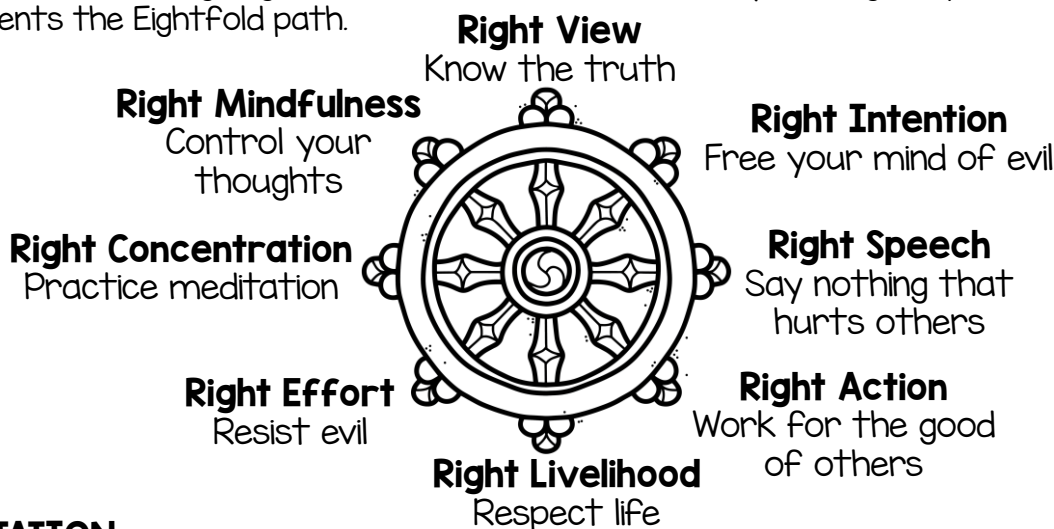


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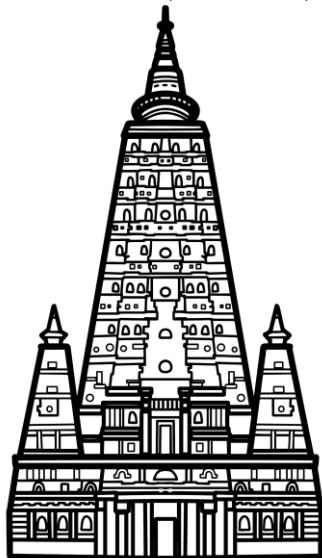


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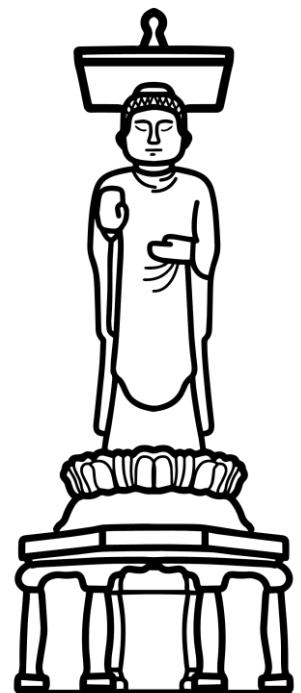
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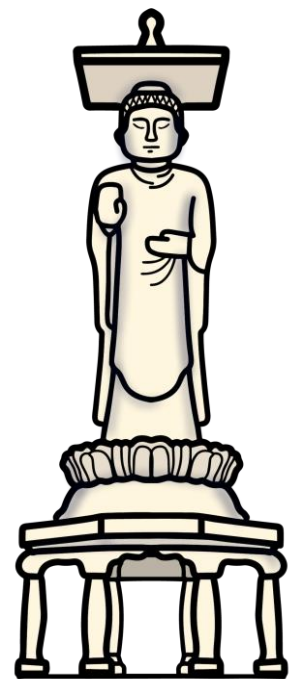


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