

The Path of Peace: Learning about Buddhism

Learning objective: To understand the core beliefs, practices, and origins of Buddhism, and reflect on the concept of mindfulness.

Read the passage carefully and answer the questions below in full sentences.

Buddhism began over 2,500 years ago in India with a prince named Siddhartha Gautama. After leaving his palace to see the world, he wanted to understand why people suffered and how to find true happiness. After years of searching and deep meditation, he became the Buddha, which means 'the Enlightened One'. He taught that life is a journey and that we can find peace by being kind, honest, and thoughtful.

Today, millions of people follow these teachings. Buddhists do not worship a god; instead, they focus on self-improvement and wisdom. Many visit a temple or create a small shrine in their home to help them focus their thoughts. A central practice is meditation, which helps people stay calm and develop a clear mind. Compassion is also very important, as Buddhists believe in treating all living things with gentleness. By practising mindfulness—paying attention to the present moment—Buddhists aim to live a balanced life, free from greed or anger. Just like Ellie the elephant remembers the past, Buddhists use their history to guide them toward a more peaceful future for everyone.

Word bank: Siddhartha Gautama · Enlightenment · Meditation · Compassion · Shrine · Mindfulness

1. Who was Siddhartha Gautama, and what does the title 'Buddha' mean? (2 marks)

2. What are two ways that Buddhists might focus their thoughts or practise their faith? (2 marks)

3. Why do you think meditation is considered an important part of the Buddhist way of life? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, what does the word 'mindfulness' mean in the context of Buddhism? (2 marks)

**5. Do you agree that being kind to all living things can make the world a better place?
Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)**

Draw: Draw a peaceful garden scene that represents the concept of meditation, including a small, simple shrine and elements of nature.



Extension challenge: Research the 'Five Precepts' of Buddhism. Write a short paragraph explaining how these rules might help a person live a more harmonious life in a school environment.