

The Path of Peace: Understanding Buddhism

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

Read the text carefully, then answer the questions that follow. Use full sentences and refer back to the text to support your answers.

Buddhism originated in ancient India with Siddhartha Gautama, known as the Buddha. He taught that life involves suffering, but this can be overcome by finding inner peace. Buddhists believe in the concept of 'Enlightenment', which is a state of deep understanding and wisdom. To achieve this, followers often practise meditation to clear their minds and focus on the present moment. A central part of Buddhist life is showing compassion towards all living beings, reflecting a belief that everything is interconnected. Many Buddhists visit a shrine to pray or reflect quietly. They also aim to follow the 'Noble Eightfold Path', a guide for living a moral life that includes right speech, right action, and right effort. Rather than worshipping a creator god, Buddhists focus on personal spiritual development and the idea that our actions have consequences, known as karma. By practising mindfulness, followers strive to remain calm and kind, even when faced with life's challenges. For Ellie, our elephant friend, the Buddhist focus on memory and gentle reflection is a beautiful way to understand the world's history and the importance of kindness.

Word bank: Enlightenment · Meditation · Compassion · Mindfulness · Shrine · Noble Eightfold Path

1. According to the text, who was the founder of Buddhism, and what is the primary goal of the 'Noble Eightfold Path'? (2 marks)

2. What is the purpose of a shrine within the Buddhist tradition? (2 marks)

3. Why might a Buddhist choose to practise regular meditation in their daily life? (3 marks)

4. Explain why the concept of 'karma' encourages people to treat others with compassion. (3 marks)

5. Do you think the practice of 'mindfulness' is useful for children in the modern world? Justify your answer with reasons. (4 marks)

Draw: Draw a peaceful garden scene featuring a small, simple shrine surrounded by nature, including a lotus flower, which is a symbol often associated with Buddhist art and purity.



Extension challenge: Compare and contrast the Buddhist idea of the 'Noble Eightfold Path' with the rules or values you follow in your own life. Write a paragraph explaining how these similarities or differences shape your personal character.