## KS1 (4 - 7 yrs)
### TOPIC 1 The Buddha

#### Topic Outline
- **Key Learning Objectives**
  - Knowing details of his early life.
  - Knowing that he lived a sheltered and privileged life in his three palaces.
  - Knowing that he demonstrated a compassionate (Story of the Swan) and thoughtful (meditating at the ploughing festival) personality.

- **Key Questions**
  - What was different about the Prince's early life compared to a normal person's?
  - How do we know that the Prince was a caring, thoughtful person?

- **Specific Learning Activities**
  - Acting out the stories of the swan and the ploughing festival.
  - Using Story Telling Props: Buddhists have great respect for the Buddha and so anything that portrays him is treated with respect. Hand puppets and finger puppets of the Buddha are therefore not appropriate.
  - Plays: Buddhists generally don't like the Buddha being portrayed in plays. Portraying the Prince before he became the Buddha is fine.

- **Do's and Don'ts**
  - Acting out the stories of the swan and the ploughing festival.
  - Using Story Telling Props: Buddhists have great respect for the Buddha and so anything that portrays him is treated with respect. Hand puppets and finger puppets of the Buddha are therefore not appropriate.
  - Plays: Buddhists generally don't like the Buddha being portrayed in plays. Portraying the Prince before he became the Buddha is fine.

#### - The Life of The Buddha

- **The Early Years as Prince Siddhattha**
  - Knowing what the Four Sights are.
  - Knowing that seeing the first three sights was a great shock and that he realised these things would happen to him.
  - Knowing that on the seeing the fourth sight he was inspired to leave the palace to search for true happiness.

- **Quest and Enlightenment**
  - Knowing that he underwent many hardships and eventually realised that they weren't helping him reach his goal.
  - Knowing that after six years he meditated under the Bodhi Tree.
  - Knowing that he freed his mind from all greed, anger and confusion and thus became the Buddha.

- **Teaching Career and Passing**
  - Knowing that he spent 45 years teaching people how to be truly happy and free of suffering.
  - Knowing that he passed away at 80.

#### - The Four Sights and Leaving the Palace

- **General Key Facts**
  - Knowing that the Buddha was not a god or deity and that Buddhists do not believe in God.

### TOPIC 2 The Dhamma (or Dharma)
(The Buddha's Teachings & Practice)

#### Topic Outline
- **Key Learning Objectives**
  - Knowing that giving results in happiness for oneself and others
  - Knowing that selfishness results in various kinds of suffering.
  - Knowing that kindness also means helping others.
  - Knowing that the Buddha taught us to be kind to all beings, everywhere.

- **Key Questions**
  - How do we feel when we are selfish?
  - How do we feel when we are kind?
  - How can we be kind apart from by giving things?
  - When we are kind, is it just the other person who is happy?

- **Specific Learning Activities**
  - Bringing in sweets or food to share with others. Ask them to write down how they feel when they've done it.
  - Putting animal feeders outside the classroom.
  - Collecting for a charity.
### Morality (Harmlessness)

- Knowing what three of the Five Precepts are: 1. Not killing  2. Not stealing  3. Not lying  
- Knowing that by stopping harming we bring happiness to ourselves and others.  
- Knowing that the 1st Precept means to avoid killing any creature, not just humans.  
- What is the worst thing we can do to another creature?  
- Why are many Buddhist vegetarians?  
- What would the world be like if everyone stopped killing, stealing and lying?  
- Once we have killed a creature, can we ever give it its life back?  
- Ask children to imagine having a conversation with, for instance, an ant about its life: Do you like being alive? Why do you run away when I come near you? etc.  
- Ask the children be mindful of small creatures in danger, e.g. spiders stuck inside something, a snail in the middle of the path, etc. and to help them to safety. Ask them to list what they do and to see how it makes them feel.

### Meditation

- Knowing that meditation is not the same as thinking.  
- Knowing how Buddhists meditate (i.e. by focussing on the breath)  
- Knowing why Buddhists meditate (to calm and clear the mind.)  
- Knowing that meditation is different from prayer and that Buddhists do not pray (because the Buddha isn't a god).  
- How do Buddhists meditate?  
- Why do Buddhists meditate?  
- Is meditation easy?  
- Do you think more people should meditate?  
- Do Buddhists pray?  
- Practise Mindfulness of Breathing for 5 minutes (see footnote for detailed instructions). Get the children to explore how they feel afterwards. Compare to how they felt before.

### Key Learning Objectives

**Morality (Harmlessness)**

- Knowing what three of the Five Precepts are: 1. Not killing  2. Not stealing  3. Not lying  
- Knowing that by stopping harming we bring happiness to ourselves and others.  
- Knowing that the 1st Precept means to avoid killing any creature, not just humans.

**Meditation**

- Knowing that meditation is not the same as thinking.  
- Knowing how Buddhists meditate (i.e. by focussing on the breath)  
- Knowing why Buddhists meditate (to calm and clear the mind.)  
- Knowing that meditation is different from prayer and that Buddhists do not pray (because the Buddha isn't a god).

### Key Questions

**TOPIC 3 The Sangha (The Ordained Community)**

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<tr>
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<th>Key Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Key Questions</th>
<th>Specific Learning Activities</th>
<th>Do's and Don'ts</th>
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</table>
| The Life of a Monk | * Knowing that Sangha comprises monks and nuns.  
* Knowing that monks shave their hair and wear robes as a sign of living very different lives to most people.  
* Knowing some of the main monastic rules such as not using money, eating only before noon, and not getting married or having children.  
* Knowing the relationship between monks and Buddhist lay-people: that monks depend on them for material things, and that they depend on monks for teachings and guidance.  
* Knowing that in many Buddhist countries like Thailand they go out each morning to receive food in their alms-bowls. | * What would being a monk or nun be like?  
* How do monks and nuns help ordinary Buddhist people?  
* If monks and nuns don't earn money, where do they get their food and robes from? | * Have a Buddhist monk visit the school to talk about his life. Prepare questions. Alternatively a visit to a monastery could be arranged. The Forest Hermitage near Warwick is open to school visits. Email: schools@foresthermitage.org.uk | * Monks Requisites: Items such as robes and bowls are sometimes found in Buddhist Educational Boxes. This is not appropriate and they shouldn't be used in the classroom. |
| The Life of a Lay-Buddhist | * Knowing that they keep the Five Precepts.  
* Knowing that they live normal lives, have jobs, families, etc.  
* Knowing that they meditate, too.  
* Knowing they should have jobs which do no harm.  
* What kind of jobs cause harm to other creatures?  
* How do lay-Buddhists help the monks and nuns? | * As part of a monk's visit to the school, or the school's visit to a monastery, children could contribute an item of food towards a food basket which can be offered to the monk.  
* Show children devices people use to meditate such as mala beads. | * Artifacts: Many Buddhist items are used in a certain situation and in a precise way that has great meaning to the practitioner. Items such as mala beads, prayer wheels and so on should therefore be treated with great respect and not be touched unnecessarily. |

### Specific Learning Activities

**TOPIC 4 Worship and Festivals**

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</thead>
</table>
| - A Buddhist Shrine | * Knowing that the key elements of a shrine are candles, incense, flowers and a Buddha image.  
* Knowing what the above items symbolise.  
* Knowing that the flame on top of the Buddha's head symbolises wisdom, as do the candles.  
* Knowing that candles and incense are often lit before meditation. | * When do Buddhist light candles and incense?  
* Why are there three sticks of incense?  
* What do the flowers on a shrine remind us of?  
* Why do Buddhists like to have statues of the Buddha? | * Children could be asked to arrange candles, flowers and incense in front of a Buddha image to create a shrine.  
* Children could make paper lotus flowers. | * Handling Buddha Rupas (Statues): Buddhists have great respect for the Buddha and so treat statues of him with great respect. Statues should be placed on a high table or shelf, away from other things. They should be lifted with two hands and not turned upside-down. They shouldn't be handled unnecessarily.  
* Artifacts: Many Buddhist items are used in a certain situation and in a precise way that has great meaning to the practitioner. Items such as mala beads, prayer wheels and so on should therefore be treated with great respect and not be touched unnecessarily. |
**Wesak**

- Knowing that Wesak is the most important Buddhist festival (equivalent to Christmas)
- Knowing that Wesak is the anniversary of the Buddha’s Birth, Enlightenment and Passing.
- Knowing that Wesak usually (not always) falls on the Full Moon Day in May.
- Knowing that on Wesak many lay-Buddhists go to a temple or monastery and practice the Three Ways to Happiness by giving food to the monks, taking the Precepts, and meditating and listening to Buddhist Teaching.

- A Buddhist Temple/Monastery

- Knowing this is where monks live.
- Knowing this is where lay-people often go to learn meditation.
- Knowing that sometimes lay-people stay there for a few days or weeks to live a semi-monastic life.
- Knowing that the main hall is often called the Shrine Room and that it's used for two main activities: 1. Meditation 2. Teaching

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<td><strong>Topic Outline</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key Learning Objectives</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- The Early Years as Prince Siddhattha</td>
<td>* Knowing the details of his life, such as date and place of birth, name, name of parents, wife, etc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Knowing that his father ensured that old age, sickness and death was kept from the Prince.</td>
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<td>* Knowing that he showed signs of being both thoughtful (meditating under the Rose Apple tree) and compassionate (the story of the swan) and that this concerned the King.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The Four Sights and Leaving the Palace</td>
<td>* Knowing what the Four Sights are: suffering there is in life and that we cannot escape it, and that this realisation deeply troubled him.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Knowing that he realised how much suffering there is in life and that we cannot escape it, and that this realisation deeply troubled him.</td>
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<td>* Knowing that he realised how much suffering there is in life and that we cannot escape it, and that this realisation deeply troubled him.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The Quest for Enlightenment</td>
<td>* Knowing that he tried many things, such as going to different teachers, but that he was not satisfied with them as he still had greed, hatred and confusion in his mind.</td>
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### Topic Outline

**TOPIC 2: The Dhamma Pt. 1 (The Buddha's Teachings)**

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Four Noble Truths</strong></td>
<td>* Knowing that life involves suffering. * Knowing that the main types of suffering are aging, illness, death, not getting what one wants, and getting what one doesn't want. * Knowing that one of the main reasons why life is painful is because nothing lasts: it is all impermanent. * Knowing that suffering includes both physical and mental pain.</td>
<td>How is life difficult? * How could life be improved? * What's the most difficult thing about life? * Does anything in the world last forever?</td>
<td>* Brainstorm the different ways in which people suffer. List which ones are natural, caused by man, are emotional or physical. * To help understand impermanence, flowers could be placed on a shrine and left there until they die. Each lesson the children could record what is happening to the flowers. * Brainstorm the different kinds of change: change in the natural world, the body and the mind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Second Noble Truth: The Cause of Suffering: Craving &amp; Desire</strong></td>
<td>* Knowing that our suffering is caused by craving (greed/desire). * Knowing that anger and hatred are types of craving. * Knowing that craving can never be truly satisfied. * Knowing that the stronger our craving, the more we suffer.</td>
<td>When we want something, are we happy? * When we get something that we want, does our desire then disappear, or do we just want something else? * Can desire ever bring true and lasting peace? * What do we really need to be happy? * How are anger and hatred similar to greed and craving? * When I get angry at someone, do I suffer? How?</td>
<td>* Children could list things that they once really wanted, and which they now have, and question whether it still makes them happy, or if they just want something else.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **The Third Noble Truth: The Ending of Suffering: Enlightenment.** | * Knowing that Enlightenment (Nirvana or Nibbana) is the goal of Buddhism (for monks, nuns and lay-people). * Knowing that Enlightenment is freedom from craving and therefore from suffering. * Knowing that in order to truly be happy Buddhists need to be free of all craving. * What is the most important purpose in life? * How important is the following question? * Can desire ever bring true and lasting peace? Why? | Practise Mindfulness of Breathing for 5 minutes (see footnote for detailed instructions). To help them understand how Enlightenment might be peaceful, after they have meditated ask the children to notice whether they feel much greed or anger and, if they don't, whether they feel peaceful because of that. | *

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**- Enlightenment**

* Knowing that after six years of searching he eventually sat beneath the Bodhi Tree and meditated. * Knowing that when he meditated his mind became still and, most importantly, clear. * Knowing that with his clear mind he found the Cause of Suffering within himself and that he freed himself from it. * Knowing that this Cause of Suffering is Greed, Hatred and Confusion (or Delusion). * Knowing that Buddhists call greed, hatred and confusion The Three Poisons. * Knowing that Enlightenment means to be free of the Three Poisons.

**- Teaching Career and Passing**

* Knowing that after he became the Buddha he spent 45 years wandering in Northern India teaching people. * Knowing that he taught people how to be truly happy and free of suffering. * Knowing that many people also became Enlightened. * Knowing that he founded the Sangha - the Order of Monks and Nuns (Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis).

**- General Facts**

* Knowing that the Buddha was not a god, and that Buddhists do not believe in God. * Knowing that the Buddha was an ordinary man who became Enlightened through his own efforts. * Knowing that his teachings were not revealed to him by a god, but that they resulted from his own Enlightenment.

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**Key Questions**

- How are anger and hatred similar to greed and craving?
- When we get something that we want, does our desire then disappear, or do we just want something else?
- When I get angry at someone, do I suffer? How?
- When I am greedy, or angry, or confused, am I happy? Would it be good to be free of these things?
- What is the most important purpose in life?
- What does the word 'Buddha' mean?
- What did the Buddha know?
- Why was the Buddha such a peaceful, happy person?
- When I am greedy, or angry, or confused, am I happy? Would it be good to be free of these things?
- What are the opposites of greed, anger and confusion?
- Is it right to call greed, hatred and confusion 'poisons'?

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**Specific Learning Activities**

- **Practise Mindfulness of Breathing** for 5 minutes (see footnote for detailed instructions). To help them understand how Enlightenment might be peaceful, after they have meditated ask the children to notice whether they feel much greed or anger and, if they don't, whether they feel peaceful because of that.
### The Moral Law of Actions and Their Results

The Moral Law of Actions and Their Results

- Knowing that Kamma means 'action' or 'deed'
- Knowing that speech is also an action.
- Knowing that the most important part of Kamma is our intention - what we decide to do (as opposed to doing something by accident).
- Knowing that good actions motivated by generosity, love and wisdom bring happiness to ourselves and others.
- Knowing that bad actions motivated by greed, anger and confusion bring suffering to ourselves and others.
- Knowing that whether we will be happy or unhappy later on in life depends on how we act now.
- Knowing that Kamma is a natural law like gravity, and that it doesn't involve the judgement of a god.

### The Law of Kamma (Karma)

Knowledge of Kamma is our way to salvation.

- Why understanding the Law of Kamma is important.
- How the Law of Kamma works.
- Why we should avoid bad actions.
- Why we should do good actions.
- What the results of our actions will be.

### The Noble Eightfold Path

- Wisdom
- Meditation
- Morality

#### The Noble Eightfold Path

- Key Learning Objectives
  - Moral Law of Actions and Their Results
  - Key Questions
  - Specific Learning Activities
  - Do's and Don'ts

#### TOPIC 2 The Dhamma Pt.3

(The Buddha’s Teachings)

- Topic Outline
  - The Noble Eightfold Path
  - The Way to the Ending of Suffering:
    - The Fourth Noble Truth:
      - Knowing that speech is also an action.
      - Knowing that the most important part of Kamma is our intention - what we decide to do (as opposed to doing something by accident).
      - Knowing that good actions motivated by generosity, love and wisdom bring happiness to ourselves and others.
      - Knowing that bad actions motivated by greed, anger and confusion bring suffering to ourselves and others.
      - Knowing that whether we will be happy or unhappy later on in life depends on how we act now.
      - Knowing that Kamma is a natural law like gravity, and that it doesn't involve the judgement of a god.

#### Key Learning Objectives

1. Morality
2. Meditation
3. Wisdom

#### Key Questions

- What is the Law of Kamma?
- What is the principle of Harmlessness?
- What is the principle of Right Thought?
- What is the principle of Right Speech?
- What is the principle of Right Action?
- What is the principle of Right Livelihood?
- What is the principle of Right Effort?
- What is the principle of Right Mindfulness?
- What is the principle of Right Concentration?

#### Specific Learning Activities

- Practise Mindfulness of Breathing for 5 minutes (see footnote for detailed instructions). Get the children to explore how they feel afterwards. Compare to how they felt before.
- Practise Metta for 5 minutes (see footnote for detailed instructions). Get the children to explore how they feel afterwards. Compare to how they felt before.

#### Do's and Don'ts

- Asking children to imagine having a conversation with, for instance, an ant about its life: Do you like being alive? Why do you run away when I come near you? etc.
- Asking the children if they would be mindful of small creatures in danger, e.g. spiders stuck inside something, a snail in the middle of the path, etc. and to help them to safety. Ask them to list what they do and to see how it makes them feel.

### The Noble Eightfold Path

- * Knowing that the Path is divided into the three main areas of:
  1. Morality
  2. Meditation
  3. Wisdom (see below)

#### The Noble Eightfold Path

- * Knowing that Buddhist Morality is based on the principle of Harmlessness.
- * Knowing what the Five Precepts are.
- * Knowing that the Precepts are not commandments from a god, but guides to living a good life.
- * Knowing that by harming others we also harm ourselves.
- * Knowing that the 1st Precept means to avoid killing any creature, not just humans.
- * Knowing that Buddhism keep the Fifth Precept because alcohol and drugs make us confused.
- * Knowing that Buddhist Morality is based on the principle of Harmlessness.
- * Knowing what the Five Precepts are.
- * Knowing that the Precepts are not commandments from a god, but guides to living a good life.
- * Knowing that by harming others we also harm ourselves.
- * Knowing that the 1st Precept means to avoid killing any creature, not just humans.
- * Knowing that Buddhism keep the Fifth Precept because alcohol and drugs make us confused.

#### Key Learning Objectives

- Knowing that the Path is divided into the three main areas of:
  1. Morality
  2. Meditation
  3. Wisdom (see below)

#### Key Questions

- When we break a precept, how does the other person or creature suffer?
- When we break a precept, do we suffer? If so, how?
- Why are many Buddhists vegetarians?
- What is the (good) opposite of each of the precepts? (i.e. protecting a life, instead of killing.)
- Should I gossip about other people? If not, why not?
- Why should Buddhists not drink alcohol and take drugs?
- What kind of jobs should a Buddha not have?
- How does lying damage trust?

#### Specific Learning Activities

- Practise Mindfulness of Breathing for 5 minutes (see footnote for detailed instructions). Get the children to explore how they feel afterwards. Compare to how they felt before.
- Practise Metta for 5 minutes (see footnote for detailed instructions). Get the children to explore how they feel afterwards. Compare to how they felt before.

#### Do's and Don'ts

- Asking children to imagine having a conversation with, for instance, an ant about its life: Do you like being alive? Why do you run away when I come near you? etc.
- Asking the children if they would be mindful of small creatures in danger, e.g. spiders stuck inside something, a snail in the middle of the path, etc. and to help them to safety. Ask them to list what they do and to see how it makes them feel.
## TOPIC 3 The Sangha (The Ordained Community)

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| The Life of a Monk | * Knowing that the Sangha comprises monks and nuns.  
* Knowing that monks shave their hair and wear robes as a sign of living very different lives to most people.  
* Knowing some of the main rules such as not using money, eating only before noon, and not getting married.  
* Knowing the relationship between monks and Buddhist lay-people: that monks depend on them for material things, and that they depend on monks for teachings and guidance.  
* Knowing that in Buddhist countries like Thailand they go out each morning to receive food in their alms-bowls.  
* Knowing their goal in life is to reach Enlightenment. | * How do lay-Buddhists help the Sangha?  
* How does the Sangha help lay-Buddhists?  
* If monks and nuns don't earn money, where do they get their food, robes and other necessities from?  
* What would I find difficult about being a monk or nun?  
* What would I like about being a monk or nun?  
* Do you think most people have too many possessions?  
* How much money do people need to be happy?  
* Do I like being by myself? Why? Why not? | * Have a Buddhist monk visit the school to talk about his life. Prepare questions. Alternatively a visit to a monastery could be arranged. The Forest Hermitage near Warwick is open to school visits. Email: schools@foresthermitage.org.uk | * Monks Requisites: Items such as robes and bowls are sometimes found in Buddhist Educational Boxes. This is not appropriate and they should not be used in the classroom. |
| The Life of a Lay-Buddhist | * Knowing they keep the Five Precepts.  
* Knowing they live normal lives, have jobs, families, etc.  
* Knowing they meditate, too.  
* Knowing they should have jobs which do no harm.  
* Knowing their goal in life is also to reach Enlightenment. | * How do lay-Buddhists help the Sangha?  
* What rules should Buddhists keep?  
* What kind of jobs would Buddhists avoid?  
* Why? | * As part of a monk's visit to the school, or the school's visit to a monastery, children could contribute an item of food towards a food basket which can be offered to the monk.  
* Show children devices people use to meditate such as mala beads. | |
| Becoming a Buddhist | * Knowing that to become a monk a person goes through an ordination ceremony with a group of at least four monks.  
* Knowing that the new monk has to live with a teacher for the first five years.  
* Knowing that to become a Buddhist a person takes part in a ceremony (often led by a monk) where they Go for Refuge to the Triple Gem and take the Five Precepts. | * What must people do to become a Buddhist?  
* Why do you think a monk needs to live with his teacher for five years? | | |

## TOPIC 4 Worship, Festival & Texts

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| - A Buddhist Shrine | * Knowing that the key elements of a shrine are candles, incense, flowers and a Buddha image.  
* Knowing what the above items symbolise.  
* Knowing that the flame on top of the Buddha's head symbolises wisdom, as do the candles.  
* Knowing that candles and incense are often lit before meditation.  
* Knowing that Buddhists have statues of the Buddha to remind them of their goal: to reach Enlightenment. | * What does the light given by the candle flame symbolise?  
* When do Buddhist light candles and incense?  
* What important Buddhist teaching do the flowers on a shrine remind us of?  
* The flowers remind us of change. Is there anything in the world or about myself that doesn't change?  
* Why do Buddhists have statues of the Buddha?  
* How do I feel when I look at a statue of the Buddha? | * With guidance, pupils can arrange a shrine and light the candles and incense.  
* Monks and nuns should be thanked for their help. | * Handling Buddha Rupas (Statues): Buddhist have great respect for the Buddha and so treat statues of him with great respect. Statues should be placed on a high table or shelf, away from other things. They should be lifted with two hands and not turned upside-down. They shouldn't be handled unnecessarily.  
* Other Artefacts: Items such as Buddhist books, prayer wheels, prayer flags and so on shouldn't be handled unnecessarily. Like Buddha statues they should be placed high up and off the floor. |
| - Wesak | * Knowing that Wesak is the most important Buddhist festival (equivalent to Christmas)  
* Knowing that Wesak is the anniversary of the Buddha's Birth, Enlightenment and Passing.  
* Knowing that Wesak usually (not always) falls on the Full Moon Day in May.  
* Knowing that on Wesak many lay-Buddhists go to a temple or monastery and practice the Three Ways to Happiness by giving food to the monks, taking the Precepts, and meditating and Listening to Buddhist Teaching. | * What's the difference between Wesak and Christmas?  
* What do Buddhists celebrate on Wesak? | | |
- A Buddhist Temple/Monastery

- Knowing this is where monks live (and that nuns live in nunneries).
- Knowing that they are very simple places, without comfortable furniture, televisions, music players, etc.
- Knowing this is where lay-people often go to learn meditation.
- Knowing that sometimes lay-people stay there for a few days or weeks to live a semi-monastic life.
- Knowing that the main hall is often called the Shrine Room and that it's used for two main activities: 1. Meditation 2. Teaching

- What would be good about living in a monastery?
- What would be difficult?
- Who lives in a monastery all of the time?
- Why are monasteries often in peaceful places, like in the countryside?

- Visiting a temple or monastery. Many temples host school visits. The nearest to Coventry is the Forest Hermitage, near Warwick. They regularly host school visits and a monk is also available to visit schools. Telephone: 01926 624564 Email: schools@foresthermitage.org.uk

- The Pali Canon