

RE- Buddhism: Symbols & Religious Expression

How did Buddha teach his followers to find enlightenment?

What I should already know: We have already explored the concept of Dharma through our work on Hinduism. Hindus also believe in the concept of moksha, which is the eventual escape from the cycle of birth, death and rebirth.

Enquiry Questions

- What is the meaning of enlightenment?
- How did the Buddha find enlightenment?
- How is enlightenment explored through Buddhist texts and stories?
- What was the impact of Buddha's enlightenment on the Buddhist community?
- How is the search for enlightenment demonstrated in Buddhist living?

Key Vocabulary

Asceticism – Severe self-discipline and avoiding of all forms of indulgence, typically for religious reasons.

Bodhi tree – A very important Buddhist symbol as Buddha achieved enlightenment sitting under a bodhi tree.

Buddhism – A religion from Asia, founded in the sixth century BC by Buddha. Buddhism teaches freedom from the self and from one's wants.

Buddhist – A person who follows the religion of Buddhism.

Dharma wheel – An 8-spoked wheel representing the key Buddhist teachings known as the Eightfold path. An important Buddhist symbol.

Eightfold Path – The 8 key Buddhist teachings, each giving a technique for overcoming suffering.

Enlightenment – When a Buddhist finds the truth about life and stops being reborn.

Four Noble Truths – The Buddha's four main teachings; the truth of suffering; the truth of the cause of suffering; the truth of the end of suffering, and the truth of the path that leads to the end of suffering.

Lotus flower – An important Buddhist symbol. A flower that rises out of the murky depths of a pond, symbolising the awakening of the human spirit.

Meditate – To clear the mind for a period of time as a way to discipline oneself and find peace.

Meditation – The act of meditating.

Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha) – The first person thought to have reached enlightenment. Born a rich prince and the son of a King. Considered as the main spiritual guide to Buddhists as they follow his teachings.

RE Skills

Pupils will:

Learning about religion and belief

- Make links that show Buddhists want to find enlightenment in their own lives because of the example and teaching of Buddha.
- Use the right religious words to describe different practices of Buddhists in search of enlightenment on the Eightfold Path.
- Show how and why a Buddhist uses the image of a lotus to explain beliefs about growing towards enlightenment.

Learning from religion and belief

- Suggest who they think would be important to ask about suffering in life and say why Buddhist groups would be inspired to ask what Buddha said.
- Ask questions about the meaning and purpose of life and suggest various ideas/ answers including their own and a Buddhist's.
- Ask about the decisions they, and others, make about whether to persevere at a hard task, referring to the story of Buddha.

Useful Images



Buddha meditating under the bodhi tree



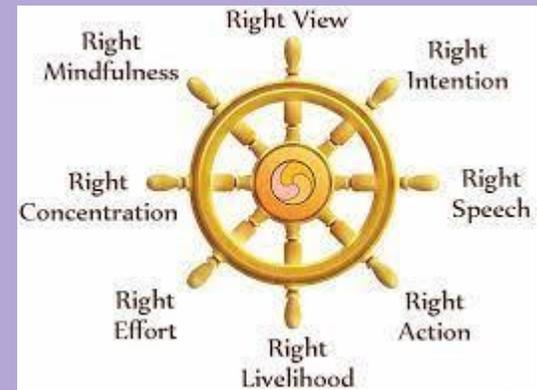
A real life bodhi tree



A lotus flower



A statue of a dharma wheel.



The Eightfold Path

Links to other curriculum areas: British Values – Tolerance of other faiths