

## Buddhist Practices Knowledge Organiser

<b>1) <u>Function of a Temple/Vihara (Monastery)</u></b>	
<b>Devotion</b>	People go to the temple to perform puja, meditate and focus on their faith.
<b>Community Events</b>	Community events will be held in the temple to join the sangha (community together)
<b>Meditation</b>	Dedicated, quiet meditation room to support meditation practices.
<b>Vihara</b>	Living area for monks and nuns and a centre for Buddhist teaching (Buddhists receive an education)
<b>Stupa</b>	It may be built around a stupa (relics of important Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are held there)

<b>2) <u>Features of a Temple</u></b>	
<b>Statues</b>	Statues are used for reverence and a focus for meditation (they are not worshipped). Offerings placed by them. Theravada – Statues of the Buddha Mahayana – Statues of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas
<b>Shrines</b>	Image or statue of the Buddha. People will place flowers, candles and incense around it. Buddhists will bow towards the shrine before placing their offerings.
<b>Stupa</b>	Stupas contain the cremated ashes of the Buddha or other famous Buddhist teachers. Many stupas point upwards to symbolise the aim of reaching enlightenment.
<b>Meditation Area</b>	Shoes will be taken off and Buddhists will face a statue of the Buddha or Bodhisattva. The room will be plain.
<b>Offerings</b>	Flowers – impermanence and dukkha Dana – Generous giving to the monks and nuns (alms) Candles – wisdom and reaching enlightenment. Incense – fragrance or morality (good conduct)

<b>3) <u>Reasons to worship</u></b>	
<b>Temple</b>	<b>Home</b>
Join other Buddhists in the sangha (sense of community and support)	Shrine at home
Buddhist funerals, weddings	Buddha reached enlightenment under a tree not in a temple
Dharma room contains important Buddhist scripture	Puja can be performed anywhere

<b>4) <u>Similarities and Differences between Buddhist place of worship in the UK and in a Buddhist country</u></b>	
<b>Similarities</b>	<b>Differences</b>
A few temples in Britain replicate the look of Eastern Buddhist temples.	Temples aren't as intricate and extravagant in the UK
Symbols are still the same within the building structure (Stupa's)	Food is taken to the viharas in the UK rather than monks walking the streets to collect it.
Same features inside the temple.	Some are merely meditation halls.

<b>5) <u>Why is Meditation important?</u></b>	
<b>8fold Path</b>	Right Awareness and Mindfulness are needed to help achieve the 8fold path and reach enlightenment.
<b>Calm the mind</b>	In a busy world full of cravings and materialism, it allows a Buddhist to stop and calm their mind. Find peace.
<b>See the truth</b>	Once they can control their mind, they will be able to see the true reality of nature. This is what the Buddha did before he achieved enlightenment.
<b>Example of The Buddha</b>	Siddhartha Gautama meditated on order to become enlightened.
<b>Teaching</b>	Dhammapada 282 teaches that "wisdom springs from meditation"

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<b>6) <u>Samatha Meditation</u></b>	
<b>What is it?</b>	Being aware of your own breathing. Clearing the mind from distractions. Being mindful of each breath. Calming meditation.
<b>How is it practiced?</b>	The Buddhist will focus on their breathing and feel the rise and fall of their chest. They might also focus on an object such as earth, water, fire, wind, blue, yellow, red, white.
<b>Why is it important?</b>	This calms a Buddhist's mind, so they can follow the 8fold path. It is also important because a Buddhist needs to be able to practice samatha meditation before they can move on to Vipassana meditation.
<b>Buddha's Teaching</b>	"Those who have entered [on the path], meditative, will be released from Mara's fetter."

<b>7) <u>Mettabhavana Meditation</u></b>	
<b>What is it?</b>	Loving Kindness Meditation practiced in order to cultivate loving kindness towards others
<b>How is it practiced?</b>	During samatha meditation the meditator extends loving feelings. They focus on metta, karuna, mudita (joy) and uppekha (loving all things equally). It happens in stages: 1) Feeling metta for yourself, 2) thinking of a good friend/family, 3) thinking of someone you know but not well, 4) thinking of someone you don't like and 5) think of all together focussing on metta.
<b>Why is it important?</b>	Following 8fold path – Right Intention Following Buddha's teaching of metta. Loving all people and wanting a peaceful world.
<b>Teaching</b>	"If you truly love yourself, you will love another, if you truly love yourself, you will never harm another"

<b>8) <u>Vipassana Meditation</u></b>	
<b>What is it?</b>	Practiced in Theravada Buddhism involving concentration on the body to then be able to see the true reality of nature. It sees things as it really is (three marks of existence)
<b>How is it practiced?</b>	They will start with samatha (mindfulness of breathing) but then they will explore different objects and things within their own life. The meditator may focus on the changing body and how unattractive change can be leading to an understanding of attachment and dukkha.
<b>Why is it important?</b>	To have a greater understanding of the world and how it really is. It is needed to understand the four noble truths and complete the 8fold path which will lead to enlightenment.

<b>9) <u>Devotional Practices</u></b>	
<b>Chanting</b>	The reciting of texts of mantras (verses from the dharma). Chanting helps evoke enlightenment as it enables a spiritual reaction. They are not worshipping a God but focusing on their own mindfulness. The Triratna (three jewels – Buddha, dharma, sangha) is chanted daily to focus on the importance of all three.
<b>Malas</b>	Mala beads are used by many to count the number of mantras chanted. They help with concentration as each bead passes through.
<b>Mudras</b>	Different hand gestures – they represent different spiritual aspects and the Buddha is pictured with various mudras.
<b>Puja</b>	Offerings – in front of the Buddha or Bodhisattva (M) statues. Offerings to the monks (shows dana (generosity)). Puja also includes chanting mantras and malas to demonstrate their devotion.

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<b><u>10) Death and Mourning</u></b>	
<b>Samsara</b>	Death is not a sad occasion because it is part of the cycle of samsara.
<b>At death</b>	Buddhists believe they should try and have control of their mind upon death. Monks will chant mantras from the dharma whilst a person is dying. It reminds the person of the Buddha's teachings as they die.
<b>Cremated</b>	Usually the body is cremated as the body is just the vehicle for the karmic energy. Some Buddhists will have their ashes buried in a stupa at their temple.
<b>Merit</b>	Family members will take extra offerings to the monks and the temple when a loved one dies to gain extra merit for the person who has died.

<b><u>11 Mahayana Funeral Practices</u></b>	
<b>Bardo</b>	There are 49 days between death and re-birth. The family will try to gain extra merit for their loved ones rebirth.
<b>Tibetan</b>	When a person is dying or dead a relative will read to them from the Tibetan Book of the Dead. This helps with their transition. <b>Sky Burial</b> – Ground unsuitable for burying and so they take the body on top of the mountains and allow the vultures to eat the body. This is an offering to the animal (Buddhists respect animals as equals) and emphasises the fact that a Buddhist does not need to be attached to their body.
<b>Japanese</b>	The body is cremated. Family members will pick out the bones from the ashes and keep in an urn. In Japan the family will 'buy' another name for their loved one. This stops their spirit returning if the family say their name. Ashes are usually buried in a family/group grave.

<b><u>12 Theravada Funeral Practices</u></b>	
<b>Merit</b>	Non-Arahants will be moving on to their next life so the family will try and gain extra merit for them. After three months and then yearly, the family will offer money to the monastery as merit for the deceased person.
<b>Offerings</b>	The family will give the monks extra offerings such as white robes.
<b>Preaching</b>	A monk will come to the family home a week after death and preach a sermon. The family will give the monk dinner.

<b><u>13) Festivals – Wesak</u></b>	
<b>What is it?</b>	The most important Buddhist festival. It remembers the Birth, Enlightenment and Death of the Buddha. It takes place in May.
<b>What happens during Wesak?</b>	Many <b>lanterns and candles</b> are lit to symbolise enlightenment (from darkness to light) <b>Bathing of the Buddha</b> – water is poured over a Buddha statue to symbolise the need to purify their mind from greed, hatred and ignorance. <b>Dharma</b> will be read. Buddhists will visit the temple. Giving <b>offerings</b> to the monk.

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<b><u>14 Festivals – Kathina (Vassa)</u></b>	
<b>What is it?</b>	A Theravada festival that celebrates the end of The three month rainy season retreat. A group of monks were travelling to the Buddha when they were unable to get to him due to the rain. They spent three months in retreat and then went to visit the Buddha. Their robes were all dirty and torn, so the Buddha gave them cloth to make new robes.
<b>What happens during Kathina? For monks</b>	Monks will often stay inside during vassa. They will do extra meditation. Lay Buddhists will bring offerings of cloth for robes and food to eat during this time. Kathina marks the end of this, when they move on.
<b>What happens during Kathina? For lay Buddhists</b>	Lay Buddhists will do extra meditation and will try to give up something for the three months eg alcohol/smoking of vassa. They will follow the Buddha’s example and be generous to the Buddhist monks (dana). They show metta.

<b><u>15) Festivals – Parinirvana Day</u></b>	
<b>What is it?</b>	A Mahayana Festival marking the death of the Buddha (aged 80). It celebrates his freedom from the cycle of samsara.
<b>What happens during Parinirvana?</b>	Readings are made from the Parinirvana sutta describing the Buddha’s final days on earth. Buddhists will meditate on loss and impermanence. It is a social occasion in the monastery and temple with people gathering together and bringing food. They will spend time remembering the dead.

<b><u>Practice Questions</u></b>	
<b>a)</b>	Define samatha (2)
<b>a)</b>	Define Mettabhavana (2)
<b>a)</b>	Define Vipassana (2)
<b>b)</b>	Describe what happens during a Tibetan funeral (5)
<b>b)</b>	Describe what happens during Parinirvana (5)
<b>b)</b>	Describe ways in which Buddhists perform puja (5)
<b>B)</b>	Describe the key features of a Buddhist temple (5)
<b>b)</b>	Describe why Chanting is important for Buddhists (5)
<b>b)</b>	Describe the similarities and differences between temples in the UK and Buddhist countries (5)
<b>b)</b>	Describe why Kathina is important for Buddhists (5)
<b>c)</b>	Explain why Wesak is important for Buddhists (8)
<b>c)</b>	Explain from two traditions the different ways Buddhists funerals are performed (8)
<b>c)</b>	Explain why Buddhists meditate (8)
<b>c)</b>	Explain the importance of puja for Buddhists (8)
<b>c)</b>	Explain why Buddhists will visit a temple as part of their faith (8)
<b>c)</b>	Explain why Mettabhavana meditation is important (8)
<b>c)</b>	Explain from two different traditions ways in which they celebrate festivals within Buddhism (8)
<b>c)</b>	Explain why the temple is an important part of the Buddhist community (8)
<b>d)</b>	“Religious festivals are just excuse for people to have fun” Discuss (15)
<b>d)</b>	“Every Buddhist should perform puja” Discuss (15)
<b>d)</b>	“Samatha Meditation is the most important type of meditation” Discuss (15)
<b>d)</b>	“Buddhist temples in the UK are not ‘authentic’ Buddhist temples” Discuss (15)
<b>d)</b>	“A Buddhist funeral should focus on remembering the dead person” Discuss (15)