

## Buddhism as a world religion in the senior phase

### Introductory Task:

In groups, choose ONE of the following topic areas for examination. Each group should explore this topic area and present their findings to other groups at the end of the activity. Use the internet find out some information about basic aspects of Buddhism. Your task is to complete an investigation on some aspects of Buddhism. The topics should include:

- The Life of Buddha
- His upbringing
- The Four Sights
- His life after leaving the palace?
- His enlightenment

#### The Buddha's teaching

- The Eightfold Path
- The Four Noble Truths
- The Three Universal Truths
- Samsara
- Karma

#### Buddhist worship

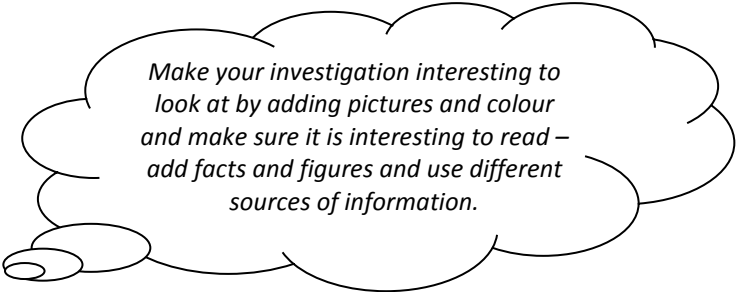
- Meditation

#### Buddhist aims

- Nirvana

You should then present the findings of your investigation. You can do so in one of these suggested ways:

- A magazine/newspaper article
- An information Leaflet
- A Poster
- An interview
- A Podcast
- A PowerPoint
- A Website
- An App for a smartphone



*Make your investigation interesting to look at by adding pictures and colour and make sure it is interesting to read – add facts and figures and use different sources of information.*

For the area your group has explored you should consider covering the three elements below:

What do we already know about this aspect of Buddhism?
What have we found out about this aspect of Buddhism?
What would we still like to know about this aspect of Buddhism?

## Suffering in Buddhism- part of human nature?

Buddhism teaches that life involves suffering and that we should be aiming to stop the suffering. There are very specific reasons why we suffer in life, and by recognising what these are we can then stop the suffering.

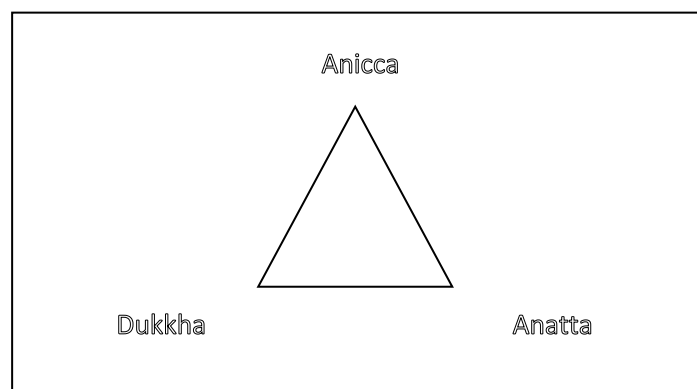
Watch the following video: Dalai Lama - [Humanity](#)



### Reflective questions:

- Think about the different types of suffering that you encounter on a daily basis. Write these down and reflect upon what it is that is *actually* causing the suffering. (Clue: Is what appears to be causing the suffering really the cause of the suffering?)
- What does the Dalai Lama say here about the nature of what it is to be a human?
- Do you agree?

Buddhism says that human life is characterised by three main characteristics. These are ANATTA, ANICCA and DUKKHA. Design a poster that explains what these three things are. You should try to show how these are connected. Use the template below:



## The Bodhisattva in Buddhism

In Buddhism, enlightenment refers to the understanding that life is characterised by the three characteristics, Anicca, Anatta and Dukkha. Although the aim of Buddhism is to achieve enlightenment, a Bodhisattva is a being who has postponed his own enlightenment in order to help all other creatures work towards their own enlightenment. All Bodhisattvas have compassion for all other living creatures.

The Dalai Lama is the title of the religious leader of Tibetan Buddhism. Each Dalai Lama is believed to be the reincarnation of his predecessor. When a Dalai Lama dies, the new one is looked for among newborn babies. The child is identified through predictions, dream and visions.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, was born on 6 July 1935 to a farming family in a small village in north eastern Tibet, called Takster. At the age of two he was recognised as the reincarnation of the 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, who died in 1933.

Buddhists believe that the Dalai Lama has accepted the vow of the Bodhisattva.

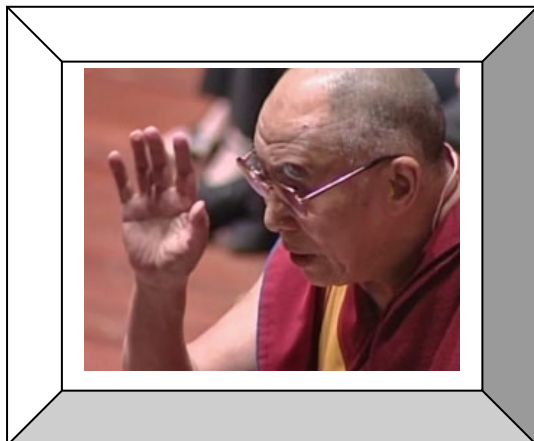
### Task

Find out what compassion means and write down the definitions you find. What do you think compassion means?

Do you think you are a compassionate person? Explain your answer

What do you think are the benefits of being compassionate for you and others? Could being more compassionate help you and other people?

Watch the following video: Dalai Lama - [Selfless Attitude](#)



### Reflective questions:

- What does the Dalai Lama say about being compassionate?
- What does he say is the impact of being selfish?
- What does he say is the impact of being compassionate?

## Compassion

Read and discuss the following quote:

***May I be a protector for those who are without protectors, a guide for travellers***

***And a boat, a bridge, and a ship for those who wish to cross over!***

***May I be a lamp for those who seek light, a bed for those who seek rest,***

***And may I be a servant for all beings who desire a servant.***

***To all sentient beings may I be a wish-fulfilling gem, a vase of good fortune***

***An efficacious mantra, a great medication, a wish-fulfilling tress and a wish granting cow***

***For as long as space endures, and for as long as living beings remain, until then may I,***

***Too, abide to dispel the misery of the world.***

This is from a Buddhist text called the Bodhicaryavatara.

In pairs, think about what this quote is telling us, and link each question below to a line or phrase in the quote.

- 1) What is the key message from the quote?
- 2) What does the quote tell us about how we should act towards others?
- 3) Why would anyone want to be a 'medication'? What 'illnesses' should we be hoping to help cure?

Think about it means to be compassionate in practice. Would this be difficult or easy to achieve?

## Non-violence

Buddhists believe that killing or harming another living thing is wrong, in any circumstances.

***“Non-violence is the only way”***

- How far do you agree with this statement? Give at least two reasons for your answer.

## The Eightfold path of Buddhism

The Eightfold Path teaches how you can live your life in order to become more compassionate and help others. The following tasks will help you learn about the Eightfold Path and get you to think about how you might live this way in your daily life. Think about each of the sections of the Eightfold Path and what each one means. Then consider how you might put this into action in your daily life. Complete the table with your explanations.

The Eight Fold Path	How might I follow the Eightfold Path in daily life?
Right View	
Right Intention	
Right Speech	
Right Action	
Right Livelihood	
Right Effort	
Right Mindfulness	
Right Concentration	

## The Eightfold Path in action

The Eightfold Path states that Buddhists should have “Right Action”. In addition, the Five Precepts refer to Ahimsa which means from refraining from harming any living thing. However, there are many different types of Buddhist. Theravadan Buddhists believe that harming or killing a living being is always wrong and it can generate bad karma. Mayahana Buddhists, on the other hand, believe that if the intention is right but the outcome results in violence then it will not have the same negative impact on a person’s karma.

Let’s consider an example:

You wake up one night to find a burglar in your home. They have a gun and you are afraid that they might hurt you or your family. A Buddhist would naturally want to protect their family but they would also believe that the burglar should not should not be harmed either. What should a Buddhist do? What would a Buddhist do? Do you think there might be different views within Buddhism about what to do in this situation?

- How would you react to this situation? Explain what action you would take and why?

## Beliefs can lead to actions and actions have consequences

Buddhists believe in rebirth. They think that we are born, live our life, die and are reborn again depending on how we lived in our previous life. Buddhists believe that throughout their life they generate karma. In other words; every action which is carried out, every intention thought about, and every word spoken (good or bad!) counts towards your rebirth.

1. How would you (do you, if you are a Buddhist) feel if you knew that all of your actions, thought and words were being recorded and would determine your rebirth moment by moment
2. Does believing in karma affect the life of a Buddhist? How might this happen and what form might it take? (or does it take it you area a Buddhist?)
3. Would (does) believing in karma affect your life?
4. Do you think it is fair that everything you do in this life has consequences? Would it be any fairer if nothing had consequences?
5. Consider what “good” and “bad” actions, thoughts and intentions you have carried out over the last week (you’ll probably want to keep this to yourself!). How is the ‘balance’ of your karma looking?