

Summer | '12

## Teaching Materials

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# 1 - SUMMER PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Dear Volunteers,

Many thanks for giving your time and energy to the summer program. Please review these materials as soon as possible, and let me know if you have any questions.

## Teachers - How To Use the Materials

Check the Week-by-Week list to see when you are teaching and the topic. Use the checklist in the Daily Class Outline to prepare. Select the appropriate game, meditation, story, and activity from the other documents.

Leading a class successfully does require some preparation. If you are going to lead a meditation or read a story, it is best to practice it ahead of time. The Class Outline and specific prompts may need to be adjusted to fit your style or the age of kids in your class. If what you are saying feels unnatural, change it.

## Tips for Assistants

Ways to help include:

- General support/reinforcement of what is being taught. For example, if the kids are doing something individual like an art project, ask kids about their creations or tell what you like about it. If there is discussion going on, answer one of the teacher's questions or ask another question to help facilitate discussion.
- Help keep kids on track. For example, if a child is talking while the teacher is talking, redirect his attention. Sometimes simply placing your hand on the child's shoulder is reminder enough to stop talking and to pay attention. Remind kids to keep their hands to themselves and show respect to the class and their teacher.
- If there is major disruption happening, go to the gompas to get the child's parent (bring a third adult into the room first, if necessary)
- Help set up the a project or snack while the teacher is teaching or take over for a few minutes and ask some questions while the teacher sets up the next activity
- Help keep kids seated or occupied as parents are picking up their children. This enables the teacher to be available to speak with parents as they pick up their children from class.
- Help clean up after class. Often teachers have obligations immediately following class and your assistance would be of great benefit

There may be kids in the class who have a tendency to move around, fidget, or even wander. Some movement may help them refocus. However, intentional acts of hurtfulness to others' feelings or bodies or otherwise being disrespectful are not allowed.

## Teaching Tips

From Discipline by Design (<http://www.honorlevel.com>)

- **Focusing** - Be sure you have everyone's attention before you start. Don't attempt to teach over the chatter of kids who are not paying attention. By beginning your lesson, kids *may* see that it is time to pay attention. However, they often think you are willing to compete with them, that you don't mind talking while they talk, or that you are willing to speak louder so that they can finish their conversation. Demand their attention before you begin. Wait to start until everyone has settled down. Silence on your part can be very effective. Punctuate your waiting by extending it 3 to 5 seconds after the classroom is completely quiet. Begin your lesson using a quieter voice than normal.
- **Direct Instruction** - Uncertainty increases the level of excitement in the classroom. Tell the students exactly what will be happening. Include some time at the end of the period for students to do activities of their choosing. The teacher is more willing to wait for class

attention when he knows there is extra time to meet his goals and objectives. The students soon realize that the more time the teacher waits for their attention, the less free time they have at the end of the hour.

- **Non-Verbal Cuing** - A standard item in the classroom of the 1950's was the clerk's bell. A shiny nickel bell sat on the teacher's desk. With one tap of the button on top he had everyone's attention. Teachers have shown a lot of ingenuity over the years in making use of non-verbal cues in the classroom. Some flip light switches. Others keep clickers in their pockets. Non-verbal cues can also be facial expressions, body posture and hand signals. Care should be given in choosing the types of cues you use in your classroom. Take time to explain what you want the students to do when you use your cues.
- **Assertive I-Messages** - A component of Assertive Discipline, these I-Messages are statements that the teacher uses when confronting a student who is misbehaving. They are intended to be clear descriptions of what the student is supposed to do. The teacher who makes good use of this technique will focus the child's attention first and foremost on the behavior he wants, not on the misbehavior. "I want you to..." or "I need you to..." or "I expect you to..." The inexperienced teacher may incorrectly try "I want you to stop..." only to discover that this usually triggers confrontation and denial. The focus is on the misbehavior and the student is quick to retort: "I wasn't doing anything!" or "It wasn't my fault..." or "Since when is there a rule against..." and escalation has begun.
- **Humanistic I-Messages** - These I-messages are expressions of our feelings. Thomas Gordon, creator of Teacher Effectiveness Training (TET), tells us to structure these messages in three parts. First, include a description of the child's behavior. "When you talk while I talk..." Second, relate the effect this behavior has on the teacher. "...I have to stop my teaching..." And third, let the student know the feeling that it generates in the teacher. "...which frustrates me." A teacher, distracted by a student who was constantly talking while he tried to teach, once made this powerful expression of feelings: "I cannot imagine what I have done to you that I do not deserve the respect from you that I get from the others in this class. If I have been rude to you or inconsiderate in any way, please let me know. I feel as though I have somehow offended you and now you are unwilling to show me respect." The student did not talk during his lectures again for many weeks.
- **Positive Discipline** - Make ample use of praise. When you see good behavior, acknowledge it. This can be done verbally, of course, but it doesn't have to be. A nod, a smile or a "thumbs up" will reinforce the behavior.

### Teaching Strategies and the Learning Process

(taken from *Tips for Nurturing Spiritual Development in Children: A Teacher's Guide* compiled and developed by Sandy Smith, published by FPMT)

- Children learn the most through experience, discovery, and active participation in the learning process.
- A teacher should work at building rapport with the students in order to create an atmosphere of harmony, appreciation, and respect. If good personal relationships are developed, the children will be more receptive and open to learning.
- Children will learn most effectively in an environment where they feel safe and confident. The teacher is responsible for establishing an atmosphere of trust and effective communication.
- Students need to be interested in the topic and willing to learn in a variety of ways. They must also be relaxed, keen, and involved. Be realistic about the students' capabilities.

### Simple Strategies for Dealing with Difficult Students

(taken from *Discipline without Stress Punishments or Rewards* by Dr Marvin Marshall)

- Think of students as lacking skills to handle impulses – or that the behavior is the student's best effort at the time to handle a frustration. Few students are maliciously disruptive.
- Reflect on your own goal. Your goal will direct how you handle the situation. If your desire is to help the student, then be willing to negotiate. There may be factors involved of which you are unaware.

**Send Positive Messages**

- When a student is off task or exhibits inappropriate behavior, be positive by stating what you want – not what you don't want. Simply inform the student what you would like to see happen. This helps the student understand your desires and stops the student from engaging in one behavior only to engage in another, non-productive one.
- Students with short attention spans have a difficult time getting started on a task. Give clear, concise starting directions.
- Ask for the student's help. Put the problem to the student; let the student know that you don't know how to solve the disruptive behavior. Asking for help taps into a natural desire to help others when in need.
- Put the person in charge of the activity. It is almost impossible to be in charge of stopping a disruption (continually getting off task in a group activity) if the person is in charge of preventing it.

## 2 - WEEK BY WEEK

Note that teacher assignments may change if volunteers trade weeks as summer plans evolve. This document will not be updated. Please refer to the schedule on the website.

DATE	5 years old - 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	2 <sup>nd</sup> – middle school	Notes	Warm-up Game	Meditation	Story	Activity
July 1	Erin	Barb	Game Day	15 Seconds	Mind in a Jar	n/a	Choose one
July 8	Kara*	Quinn	HHDL Birthday/ Compassion Day	Name and Movement	Mind in a Jar	n/a	Refer to “HHDL gift” for important info
July 15	Linda	Sharon		My Name is and I Like	Sitting	1.Birth and Baby	Choose one
July 22	Suzanne	Margie		Hello, Your Eyes Look	Sitting	2. The Prince’s Loving Kindness	Choose one
July 29	Kara	Barb		Shout Out Names	Sitting	3. Teen Years (Marriage)	Choose one
Aug 5	Erin	Quinn		Your choice (Repeat the same game you played in the first half of summer if it worked well.)	Moving	4. Four Sights	Choose one
Aug 12	Suzanne	Erin			Moving	5. Leaving the Palace	Play Practice (Erin)
Aug 19	Linda	Sharon			Moving	Offering and Enlightenment	Play Practice (Erin/Kara)
Aug 26	Suzanne	Margie			Choose one	First Teaching	Play Practice (Erin/Kara)
Sept 2	Linda	Quinn			Choose one	Review	Play Practice (Erin/Kara)
Sept 9	Volunteers who sign up for 2012 – 2013		New Year Ceremony in the gompa – thank you to volunteers, presentation of full mala necklaces, kids perform play				

### 3 - DAILY CLASS OUTLINE

[teacher notes/actions in brackets]

*script for teacher in italics*

#### Before Class

- ☐ Use the week-by-week calendar to find suggested games and the story for the week
- ☐ Review the warm-up game or select another - Notice which ones may cause lots of silliness. Have fun with these games, but plan on dialing the energy back down afterwards. Or, choose a game that is more calm in nature.
- ☐ Review the mindfulness game
- ☐ Prepare for the story you are going to read by reading the story and the discussion questions. The questions are simply options. Use the ones you like and are appropriate for your class, or add new ones. (My plan is to have one copy of the book *Prince Siddhartha, The Story of Buddha* in the classroom. Please leave the book there, but it may be useful for pictures.)
- ☐ Choose your activity and prepare it. Determine if you want to do a craft, active game (teambuilding/drama type game), or word game. Non-craft games often require no preparation other than being familiar with the game.
- ☐ Print the pages you need to reference in class.
- ☐ If you do not have the option to print, please let Erin know so she can help.

#### Mala Necklace

[As kids come into class, each finds their necklace and has a seat. Hand out beads to kids who are ready for class.]

*The first thing we are going to do today is add three beads to our necklaces. When you get to 108 beads, you will give me your necklace. It will be blessed and given back to you at the end of the summer. If you finish one necklace, you can start another one for someone else.*

*You don't have to be completely silent, but we will stay in our seats. We will continue working on our necklaces after the summer, so don't worry if you won't finish soon.*

#### Class Rules/Attendance/Motivation

*What is the number one rule in this class? ... What does that mean? (K-1<sup>st</sup>)*

*We have the classroom agreements posted on the wall. We will review them if we need to. (2-7<sup>th</sup>)*

[Take attendance while kids work on necklace.]

*We set our motivation in the gompa, but we'll do it again in our own words. Think for a moment about the best thing you can do while you are in this classroom today. Put it in your mind that you will use what you hear and do today to become more kind and wise.*

#### Warm-up Game

[Set up for the warm-up game for the day. ]

*Let's make sure we all know each other by playing a game.*

#### Mindfulness Game/Meditation

[Set up for the mindfulness game for the day]

*Now we are really awake. Let's focus that energy so that we can use it in a way that is helpful to us and to others. This is a quiet activity.*

### **Snack**

*We are going to hand out snack before we get started on our story. We will bless our food before we eat.*

*Thank you, all living beings  
For giving us this food  
May it nourish us so that  
We may nourish others*

### **Life Story of Shakyamuni Buddha, born Prince Siddhartha**

*This summer we are learning stories from the life of Shakyamuni Buddha, who was born Prince Siddhartha. Some of the stories sound a little magical and sometimes that is a good way for us to see stories and learn things. We often talk about "what Buddha said." We can also learn from Prince Siddhartha. He asked a lot of questions. His life can help us learn more about ourselves.*

### **Dedication**

[It may be best to do the dedication now. Otherwise, it's easy to forget.]

*Before we move on to our last activity, let's make sure there will be benefit from our work today. Let's think about helping ourselves so that we can help others. May the good energy from this session help me to become perfectly wise and loving so that I can help others all the time.*

### **Activity**

[Set up for the activity. Aug 12 – Sept 2, the activity will be play practice. Practice will begin at 12:30.]

## 4 - WARM-UP GAMES

Most of these are name games because the kids and teachers change often. The purpose of starting with a game is to help kids form relationships with each other and to help the teacher be able to use the names of the kids.

### **My Name Is and I Like**

[This game is played at the table or in a circle on the floor. This is a memory game, so it is best with ten or fewer people in the class.]

*For this game, one person starts by saying her name and one thing she likes (to do, eat, play, read, watch, etc.) For example, "My name is Erin, and I like to go hiking." The next person says the name of the first person and what she likes. Then she says her name and what she likes. "Erin likes hiking. I'm Barb. I like hockey." Continue going around the circle until the last person has said all the names.*

### **Name and a Movement**

[For this game, you need some floor space. Stand in a circle where everyone has a little room to move.]

*For this game, everyone will say their name and do a movement or make a gesture, and then everyone will copy you. The movement has to be safe. No going upside-down or knocking into anyone else. For example, "My name is Erin [make antler ears]." Each person gets one turn and we'll go around the circle.*

### **Hello, Your Eyes Look...**

[This game is played at the table or in a circle on the floor. It's quick, and you can go in one direction and then the other if you like it.]

*To day we are going to say hello to our neighbor. We are going to say their name and what color their eyes look like. For example, "Hello Erin, your eyes look blue." There is no right or wrong answer. It's what you see. Some people have eyes that change color. In this game, there is only one person talking at a time. No correcting your neighbor. First, let's make sure we know the name of our neighbor. [wait] Now, I will start by looking to my neighbor on my left, and we'll go around the circle.*

[From *The Mindful Child* by Susan Greenland. Nice for making kids feel connected and making eye contact.]

### **Shout Out Names**

[For this game, you need some floor space. Sit or stand in a circle. Sitting may be more difficult to toss but may keep the energy contained.]

**supplies:** soft ball or stuffed animal (I will try to have one available, but if possible, please bring something.)

*I'm going to toss a ball to one of you. When you catch it, the whole group says your name. [Use "shout out" the name if you think the kids can do that without getting too crazy.] You then*

*toss the ball to another child, and so on until everyone gets a turn. The ball must be tossed, not thrown out of the circle so that everyone stays safe and we protect the building and the objects in the building.*

### **15 Seconds**

[This game is played at the table or in a circle on the floor. It may help kids who tend to talk a lot notice how much they are talking.]

**supplies:** timer, such as on your phone or watch (A bell is nice to have, but we don't have one in the classroom. You would bring it. You may have an option on your phone.)

*I'm going to ask a question and have each person answer it but only in 15 seconds. No one else should talk during some else's time. If you stop before 15 seconds is up, we will enjoy the silence. If you are still talking when 15 seconds is up, I will [ring bell, hold up one finger, make a "beep" sound]. You will stop immediately, even if you are in the middle of a sentence, and it will be the next person's turn. We'll go in a circle.*

Example Questions:

What is your favorite food and why?

Describe something you like that is (pick a color).

Tell us about a real or imaginary place you'd like to go.

If you could be one person from a story, who would it be and why?

What is your favorite animal and why?

What is your favorite holiday and why do you like it?

Tell us about your favorite movie.

What do you like to do on a Saturday morning?

Variation: Each person answers a different question.

## 5 - MEDITATIONS

### **A Good Start: Mind in a Jar**

(adapted from *The Mindful Child* by Susan Kaiser Greenland)

[Locate the jar filled with colored sand. Kids can sit in a circle on cushions on the floor or at the table. You will give instructions, then shake the jar, then set it down in the middle. If you are on the floor, try to put the jar at eye level by placing it on something like a short stool.)

*Look through this jar and tell me what is on the other side.* [note they can see through the jar]

[shake] *What does it look like now? Can you see through it? Probably not: the debris clouds the water and obscures your vision. Just like debris in water, thoughts and emotions can create havoc in our heads and cloud our otherwise clear minds.*

*What happens when you leave it alone? The more the water rests, the more the debris settles, and the clearer the water becomes. Soon, everything will settle to the bottom and you will be able to see through the glass again. The same holds true with our minds. The longer we rest in the steady rhythm of our breathing, the more our thoughts and emotions settle down and the clearer our minds become. Buddha taught us that the true nature of our mind is clear and settled, not cloudy, but we must practice to let our clear mind arise. I'm going to shake the jar again, and this time you are going to quietly watch the debris settle. Breathe slowly keeping our bodies still and our mouths silent from any sound other than our breath.*

[shake] *Quiet and still.*

### **How to Sit for Meditation**

(from FPMT Dharma Family Camp Manual)

1. *Sit with your legs crossed.*
2. *Place your left hand in your lap, and put your right hand on top of your left. The tips of your thumbs should touch each other, at about the level of your navel.*
3. *Your back should be straight, like a stack of coins. It will help you to be able to concentrate.*
4. *Your teeth and lips should be held naturally, not clenched, and not hanging open. The tip of your tongue should touch the top of your mouth just behind your front teeth.*
5. *Tuck your chin in just a little, so that your head tips slightly forward.*
6. *Keep your eyes open just a slit (so you don't fall asleep), and gazing toward the ground beyond the tip of your nose. (But remember to be thinking of your meditation, and not the ground!)*
7. *Make sure your shoulders are even, not one higher than the other.*

### **Sitting (Beginner/Younger): Sunshine Meditation**

(adapted from *Baby Buddhas* by Lisa Desmond)

*We are going to sit with our legs crossed, our backs straight, and our heads held high. Our hands are placed crossed over our heart.*

*We'll say our motivation. Say this with me "To fill yourself with love from within"*

*Beneath your crossed hands is a ball of sunshine light, which is full of love. Every time you breathe in, your ball of sunshine light gets bigger and bigger and bigger. Now we are going to fill ourselves up with this bright ball of sunshine light, which is full of love.*

*Now we are going to breathe in and make our ball of sunshine light grow bigger. (Long exaggerated breath in, long exaggerated breath out)*

*And bigger (Long exaggerated breath in, long exaggerated breath out)*

*And bigger (Long exaggerated breath in, long exaggerated breath out)*

*Can you feel yourself all filled up with love?  
Now we are all bright balls of sunshine light  
Say this with me "We are sunshine love."*

### **Sitting (Beginner/Younger): Cleansing Breath Meditation**

(adapted from *Baby Buddhas* by Lisa Desmond)

*We are going to sit with our legs crossed, our backs straight, and our heads held high. Our hands are in our laps, right hand on top of left, thumbs touching.*

*We'll say our motivation. Say this with me "We are letting go of sad, mad, and bad feelings and replacing them with love, joy, and peace"*

*Breathe in love (Long exaggerated breath in through nose)  
Breathe out sadness (Long exaggerated breath out through nose)  
Breathe in joy (Long exaggerated breath in through nose)  
Breathe out madness (Long exaggerated breath out through nose)*

*Breathe in peace (Long exaggerated breath in through nose)  
Breathe out badness (Long exaggerated breath out through nose)*

*All the sad, mad, and bad feelings change to bright white sparkles of love.*

*Say this with me, "We are full of love, joy, and peace today."*

### **Sitting: Nine Round Breathing**

(from FPMT Dharma Family Camp Manual)

[Sit in a circle on the floor on cushions. Technically, this is a pre-meditation exercise to calm and focus your mind.]

*For this meditation, everyone will be silent other than my instructions. This is called nine-round breathing and it will help you calm and focus your mind. You can use it before you take a test at school or if you are starting to feel angry, anytime you need clear concentration.*

*Start by sitting in meditation as you have been taught, with your back comfortably straight. Then, gently press your left nostril closed. (You can do this with the back of your right index finger, or in any other way that is comfortable.) Now breathe in slowly and deeply through your right nostril. Imagine that the air you are breathing in is filled with powerful white light energy. This light enters your body and begins to clean away everything inside that makes your mind unclear, such as feelings of greediness, anger, and sleepiness. Hold your breath for a little while, but don't become uncomfortable.*

*Then take your finger away from your left nostril and gently press your right nostril closed. (This you can do with the front side of your right index finger.)*

*Now you get rid of all the junk you just cleaned up. As you breathe out a long, slow breath, imagine all this junk as a dark fog or thick cloud that leaves your nostril like smoke leaving a chimney. Think that you are letting go of everything that makes your mind unclear, especially your greed. And when this dark fog leaves you, imagine it evaporates completely, so there is no pollution!*

*Repeat this a second and a third time, breathing in through your right nostril and out through your left. Each time, feel you are getting rid of more and more negativity.*

*Now it is time to breathe in through your left nostril and out through your right three times. This time you close your right nostril while inhaling, and your left nostril while exhaling. Again, breathe in a long, slow breath of powerful white light that cleans away everything making your mind unclear, especially your anger. Then breathe the dark fog out of your right nostril with a long, slow out- breath.*

*Finally, you breathe in and out through both nostrils. (Because you not have to press your finger against your nostrils now, you can leave your hands in your lap.) As you did before, breathe slowly and completely, clearing away all your problems and difficulties, especially your drowsiness and foggy-mindedness.*

*This ends one set of the nine-round breathing meditation. Let's sit quietly for a moment letting our breath naturally move in and out through our nose.*

### **Moving: Mindful Movements from Thich Nhat Hanh**

There are seven movements documented here with drawings:

<http://redroom.com/member/thich-nhat-hanh/blog/mindful-movements-made-easy>

### **Moving: Slow and Silent Walking**

(from *The Mindful Child* by Susan Kaiser Greenland)

There are three main movements in Slow and Silent Walking: lifting the foot, moving it forward, and placing it back down. Starting out it's helpful to narrow the focus of the activity, by paying attention to only one aspect of walking: it could be on the physical pressure on the soles of the feet when one foot steps on the ground, for example, or any other aspect of stepping. What is important is that your awareness remains on the sensory impression – the feeling of lifting, moving, and placing. After a few sessions of this exercise, students can pay attention to two aspects of walking: lifting up and stepping down, for example, or moving forward and placing the foot on the ground. Eventually, students will pay attention to all three aspects: lifting, moving, and placing. Please note that the objective of Slow and Silent Walking is not to become absorbed in the sensory experience but to become aware of how it feels and any emotional reactions that come up during your practice.

As students pay close attention to their walking, some tend to slow down automatically, while others find it difficult to slow their pace. If this happens, reverse the order of this process and encourage students to slow down first deliberately. Slow walking can be frustrating, and as with every practice when working with children, it is important to tailor it so that your children feel comfortable and enjoy practicing them.

### **Moving and Sitting or Standing: Pendulum**

(adapted from *The Mindful Child* by Susan Kaiser Greenland)

The aim of this activity is to help those who find it hard to sit still to meditate in a group. To do so I help children find and establish a repetitive rhythmic swing that they find soothing. Irregularly paced or shaped movements tend not to promote a sense of calm, center, and concentration. Because the Pendulum must be calming to be effective, and what is calming to one child can agitate or frustrate another, the pace and duration of each child's swing will vary. As long as children don't intentionally know into one another, there is no right or wrong pace for the swinging motion.

Like walking, there are three main movements in the Pendulum,: moving, shifting, finding center. Starting in a centered position either seated on a cushion or standing, you first move (or sway) to one side, keeping your bottom on the cushion. When you reach the point at which you cannot sway any farther without lifting your bottom, shift your weight, sway back again toward the center. When you reach the center of the cushion, pause for a moment. If you feel perfectly aligned in the center of the cushion, you have found your center point. Pause. Then continue the side-to-side movement. Gradually, the practice becomes more fluid. You can encourage them to sway through the center without pause.

## 6 - ACTIVITIES

Determine if you want to do a craft, active game (teambuilding/drama type game), or word game. Non-craft games often require no preparation other than being familiar with the game.

### Craft: His Holiness the Dalai Lama Gift

About July 8:

- Families will start in the gompa as usual
- Ven Lhamo will read a story
- Most of class will be creating a Gift for HHDL to celebrate his birthday (July 6) and Compassion Day
- Kids will return to the gompa at 11:45. Line up kids and walk them over. Help kids enter slowly and quietly and sit with their parents. Everyone will listen for direction about how best to offer gift and kata. (\*\*Or, check with Sarah about last-minute changes for the day.)

Guidelines for Gift:

- Maximum size of gift on 8 ½ x 11 paper
- One dimensional
- Submit by July 23 (Kids will bring to gompa at end of class)
- Whenever you work on the gift, generate a strong wish for His Holiness to have a long and healthy life.
- Then take a few minutes to reflect on how His Holiness has inspired you to change your heart and mind and/or has influenced your practice. (Maybe translate this to take a few minutes to think about how you feel when you see a photo of HHDL or hear his laugh.)
- And at the end, dedicate towards again toward His Holiness having a long and healthy life and for the happiness and well-being of all beings.

### Crafts Ideas for Other Weeks

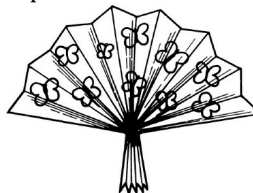
**Window Decoration** - Do you have colored tissue paper to bring in? Make a frame with construction paper or cardstock (two copies of the same), glue on tissue paper to one side of the frame, glue the other side of the frame, then trim.



**Bean Mosaic** - Do you have dried beans and cardboard? Make sure the classroom is stocked with glue, and let kids make bean mosaics



**Fan** - Want to keep cool? Decorate paper, fold it like an accordion, and staple or tape the folds together at one end to hold it in place



## **Board Games**

Before it is your week to teach, look around the classroom to see what board games we have, or bring in a favorite.

## **Active Game: Knots of People**

[Works well with 8 – 12 kids. If you think the kids can do it without getting too wild, time them and let them challenge themselves by trying to beat a previous time]

*Stand in a circle and join right hands with another person in the group, but it has to be someone who is NOT standing immediately to the left or right. Now join left hands with another person in the group, but it has to be someone who is NOT standing immediately to the left or right and someone other than before.*

*Now untangle without letting go of hands. You may have to loosen grips a little to allow for twisting and turning. You may have to step over or under other people. Be slow and careful.*

[There are four possible solutions to the knot: 1) One large circle with people facing either direction. 2) Two interlocking circles. 3) A figure eight. 4) A circle within a circle.]

## **Active Game: Reflecting Back**

[Use open floor spaces for this activity. Warm up by doing the wave (like at sporting events). Then put kids into pairs and do the mirror activity.]

*Let's play a game where, we practice reflecting actions. We'll start with a warm-up. Stand in a line. The first person is going to raise both his arms over his head and then bring them down. When his hands are in the air, the next person starts, and so on down the line. When the wave gets to one end, try to bring it back the other direction.*

*(Reflecting Back) Stand or sit face-to-face next across from your partner. Hold your hands in front of your chest, palms forward and directly across from the palms of your partner's hands. The leader slowly moves, and the partner mirrors the movement. Both of you make sure to keep your palms as closely aligned as possible without touching. [this allows them to experience moving in tandem with another person] Switch roles and repeat the activity.*

[Modification – each pair in center and those watching guess who is the leader. Purpose - To promote awareness of other people's experience]

## **Active Game: Big Wind Blows**

Count the number of chairs you will need (the number of people who will play minus one). Set up chairs in the open floor space in a wide circle, as far apart as possible.

*One person will stand in the middle of this circle and announce a quality saying, "The big wind blows for anyone who's been to Wisconsin" or "The big wind blows for anyone who has a cat." Each person in the circle who possesses that quality must get up and move to another seat as quickly as possible. No person may sit in the seat they were in before. There should end up being one person left in the middle without a seat/spot to stand. The new person in the middle must announce something new that the big wind can blow and start the game all over again. The process repeats until each student has had a turn or a time limit has been reached.*

**Word Game: I'm Thinking of an Animal, Person, Place, or Thing**

*One person chooses an animal. We will go around the circle and each one of you can ask a yes or no question about the animal. If you are asking the question, you have one chance to guess. No one else will talk while you are asking your question. If you don't guess the animal, and someone else wants to guess, they will raise their hand. If no one guesses, the next person in the circle asks another question.*

For example: I chose COW. The kids ask: Does it live on a farm? Yes. Does it swim? No Does it eat Grass? Yes Does it give milk? Yes Is it is COW? Yes!

**Word Game: Scattergories on the Go**

This game is great for helping children with categorization and recall. Pick a category like superheroes. Each person takes turns to think of a new item that fits in that category like Superman, Batman... Only allow 4-5 seconds for each person to name something. If you can't think of something in the allotted timeframe, you're out. The last person standing wins and gets to pick the next category.

Categories that work well with young children:

- Fruits
- Colors
- Songs
- Animals

For older children:

- Brands of cars
- Types of sports
- Famous people
- Occupations
- Plants

Adaptations: If you like to sing, choose a word and have each player think of songs with the word in it. For example, if the word is "Eye", folks often break-out in "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" or "My Brown Eyed Girl". The words love, bye, hello are also fun. You can also do categories like songs about animals or cars.

**Word Game: The Professor's Cat (Ages 5+)**

Pick a letter like "S" and describe the professor's cat with a word that starts with the letter S. "The professor's cat is silly." The next person has to remember the adjective from the previous person and add in their adjective that starts with S like smelly. You keep going until someone can't think of any more adjectives to give the Professor's cat.

**Word Game: Around the World (Ages 6+)**

Player 1 names a country in the world like United States. Player 2 then has to name a country that states with the last letter of the previous player's states which would be "S". They choose Scandinavia which ends in A, so player 3 might say Angola, Australia. You can choose countries, cities, states, bodies of water, or landmarks.

**Hangman**

Need instructions? <http://www.wikihow.com/Play-Hangman>

## 6 - STORIES of Shakyamuni Buddha, born Prince Siddhartha

### 1. Birth and Baby

- Queen Maya's Dream
- The Day the Prince was Born
- Death of Queen Maya

*This story was read by Ven Lhamo in June. Listen to see if you remember any of the story.*

Many, many years ago, in a small kingdom in the north of India, Something was happening that would change the whole world. Queen Maya, wife of the good King Suddhodana, lay asleep and had a wondrous dream. She dreamt she saw a brilliant white light shining down to her from the sky, and in the rays of this light was a magnificent elephant of light flew closer and closer to the Queen and finally melted into her body. Queen Maya awoke, filled with greater happiness than she had ever felt before. [1]

Quickly she went to the king and together they asked the wise men at the court what this strange and wonderful dream might mean. The wise men answered "O Your Majesties, this dream is a most excellent one! It means that the Queen will give birth to a son, and this prince will someday become a great man. Not only you, but the entire world is fortunate that the Queen will have such a special child." [1]

Hearing this good news, the King and Queen were overjoyed. The King was especially happy because he longed for a son who would someday rule his kingdom in his place. And now it seemed his wish was being granted. [1]

It was the custom in those days for a woman to return to her parent's home in order to give birth. And so, when the time had almost come for the baby to be born, Queen Maya and many of her friends and attendants left the palace of the king and began to journey to her childhood home. [1]

They had not traveled far when the Queen asked that they stop and rest. She knew the baby would be born very soon. They had reached the beautiful gardens of Lumbini and the Queen went into this garden looking for a comfortable place in which she could give birth. The stories say that even the animals and plants, somehow understanding what a special child was about to be born, wanted to help. A large tree bent down one of its branches and the Queen took hold of it with her right hand. Supporting herself in this way, she gave birth to a son. The attendants cradled the baby in their arms and were amazed at how beautiful he was and how peaceful he seemed. [1]

At that moment, throughout the land, there was a great feeling of peace and happiness. People forgot their troubles, ceased their quarrels and felt great love, and friendship for one another. Some people saw rainbows suddenly and unusual things were seen.[1]

Wise men from all over the kingdom noticed these signs of peace and joy and excitedly said to each other, "Something very fortunate has just happened. Look at all these wonderful signs! Today is the full moon day of the fourth month. It must certainly be a special day!" [1]

Queen Maya, unaware that her joy at having a son was being shared at that very moment throughout the kingdom, took the new-born baby in her arms and returned to the palace of the King. [1]

In the first few days after his birth, many people came to the palace to see the new baby. One of these visitors was an old man named Asita. Asita was a hermit who lived by himself in the distant forests, and he was known to be a very holy person. After seeing the Prince, Asita said, "Now that I have seen your son, I know for certain that he will grow up to be more than just a great man. There are special

signs that I have seen on this child-such as the light that shines from his fingers-that tell me he will have glorious future. [1]

"If your son decides to stay with you and become a king, he will be the greatest king in history. He will rule a vast realm and bring his people much peace and happiness. But if he decides not to become a king, his future will be even greater! He will become a great teacher, showing all people how to live with peace and love in their hearts. Seeing the sadness in the world he will leave your palace and discover a way to end all suffering. Then he will teach this way to whoever will listen." [1]

[transition to next part of story]

It doesn't matter how rich you are. It doesn't matter if you live in a palace or a pot-hole. You can still lose someone you love. Soon after Siddhartha was born, his mother, the Queen everyone loved, died. The King cried for three weeks. One was for his wife "She was too young to die!" One was for himself "How can I live without her?" And one was for his son "Who will take care of the boy and love him like a mother?" Then, he stopped crying. He had no tears left. [2]

Soon after this, Prajapati, the Queen's sister, came to see the King. She had clearly loved her sister and was the only person the Queen had trusted as much as her husband. [2]

"I will take care of Siddhartha," she said "The boy will not have to suffer without a mother. I will take her place." So Prajapati became Siddhartha's second mother. Siddhartha never knew his real mother, so he could not miss her. But the King did. Sometimes, Siddhartha would look up to see his father staring away into the distance, as if his mind were somewhere far away. Solemnly, Siddhartha would approach the King and gently tug on the sleeve of his cloak until he attracted his father's attention. Seeing his son gazing up at him so seriously, the King would smile in wonder. Siddhartha was still a child, but he already knew the King better than his oldest friends did. [2]



## Discussion Questions

### Remembering

1. **What is the name of the prince in this story?** Prince Siddhartha
2. **Who will he become?** Shakyamuni Buddha
3. **Who are his parents?** Queen Maya and King Suddhodana
4. **What kind of animal did the queen dream about?** Elephant
5. **What did the dream mean?** that the Queen will give birth to a son, and this prince will someday become a great man
6. **Who told the king and queen about the dream?** The wise men
7. **What happened in the land when the prince was born?** A great feeling of peace and happiness. People forgot their troubles, ceased their quarrels and felt great love, and friendship for one another. Some people saw rainbows suddenly and unusual things were seen.
8. **What day was the prince born?** The full moon day of the fourth month. On our calendar, this day was June 4, 2012.
9. **What did Asita predict?** After seeing the Prince, Asita said, "If your son decides to stay with you and become a king, he will be the greatest king in history. He rule a vast realm and bring his people much peace and happiness. But if he decides not to become a king, his future will be even greater! He will become a great teacher, showing all people how to live with peace and love in their hearts. Seeing the sadness in the world he will leave your palace and discover a way to end all suffering. Then he will teach this way to whoever will listen."

### Understanding

1. **How would you explain the feeling of peace that came over the land?** There is no right answer, but in Buddhism we talk a lot about interconnection. When one person experiences a wondrous thing and they, in turn, act in a positive way, it is very possible for many, many positive things to happen. It could even happen all in one day, and people remember the day as very special. (Also could discuss karma or collective karama.)
2. **What do you think of Asita's prediction? What will happen?** Parents want their children to stay close. The king might want his son to be a great king. We know that the prince became Shakyamuni Buddha, so he must have left the palace.
3. **How did the king feel about his wife dying?** Sad, maybe he won't want his son to leave because he already lost his wife.

### Applying

1. **What would you do if you lived in the palace and met the prince?**

### Analyzing

1. **What would be a good title for this part of the story?**

### Evaluating

1. **What influence will the prince have on our lives?**
2. **What is the consequence of Queen Maya dying?** It may be easier for the price to leave home later. It may make him more able to see problems in the world.

## 2. The Prince's Loving Kindness

- Animals, people, gardens
- Saving the Swan

Last week we learned that when Prince Siddhartha was born, everyone knew he was a special child. A wise man predicted he would be a great ruler OR he would leave the palace and learn the way to truth and happiness. Sadly, the Prince's mother died shortly after he was born, but he was well-taken-care-of. Let's see what happens next!

The little Prince endeared himself to all in the palace. He knew all the birds and animals in the gardens and he knew all the flowers. He knew the girls who worked in the laundry and he knew the boy who swept the leaves in the courtyard. He knew the old blind man who lived in the stables and fed the horses. No one escaped the attention of his knowing, old eyes and he loved them all as they loved him. He didn't chase or scare the birds or tease the cats, and if he was asked to do a favour, he didn't get cheeky and run away. He was kind to everyone and everything, as if he knew what it was like to BE them. He loved flowers, but he didn't pick them. He loved animals but didn't cage them. He loved people, but he had no favourites. He enjoyed life for what it was, not for what it could give to him. Others' happiness made him happy. Everyone in the kingdom took an interest in this remarkable child and many would shake their heads in wonder when they heard the many tales of his wisdom and kindness. [2]

One day as the Prince was sitting in the garden, a flock of white swans flew overhead. Suddenly an arrow shot up into the air, striking one of them. It fell out of the sky and landed at the Prince's feet, the arrow still stuck into its wing. "Oh, you poor swan," Siddhartha whispered as he gently picked up the wounded bird, "do not be afraid. I shall take care of you. Here, let me remove this arrow." Then, with one hand he gently stroked the bird, calming its fear. With his other hand he slowly pulled out the painful arrow. The Prince was carrying a special lotion with him, and softly rubbed it into the bird's wing, all the time speaking in low, pleasant voice that the swan would not become afraid. Finally he took off his own silk shirt and wrapped it around the bird to keep it warm. [1]

After the short time, another young boy came running into the garden. It was the Prince's cousin, Devadatta, he was carrying a bow and some arrows and he was very excited. "Siddhartha, Siddhartha," he shouted "great news! I got a swan! you should have seen it. I hit it with my first shot! It fell down somewhere near here. Help me look for it." [1]

Then Devadatta noticed one of his arrows, with blood still on its tip, lying on the ground near Siddhartha's feet. Looking closer he saw that the Prince was holding something in his arms, and realized it was the swan he was searching for. "Hey, you took my swan," he yelled. "Give it back to me. I shot it and it's mine!" Devadatta grabbed at the bird, but the Prince held onto it, keeping his angry cousin from even touching it. [1]

"I found this bird lying here bleeding," the Prince said firmly, "and I don't plan to give it to anyone while it is still wounded." "But it's mine!" shouted Devadatta again. "I shot it fair and square, and you've stolen it from me. Give it back or I'll take it back."

The two boys stood arguing like this for some time. Devadatta was getting angrier and angrier, but Siddhartha refused to give him the swan. Finally the Prince said, "When two grown-ups have a quarrel like this, they settle it in court. In front of a group of wise people, each one explains the story of what happened. Then the wise people decided who is right. I think you and I should do the same." [1]

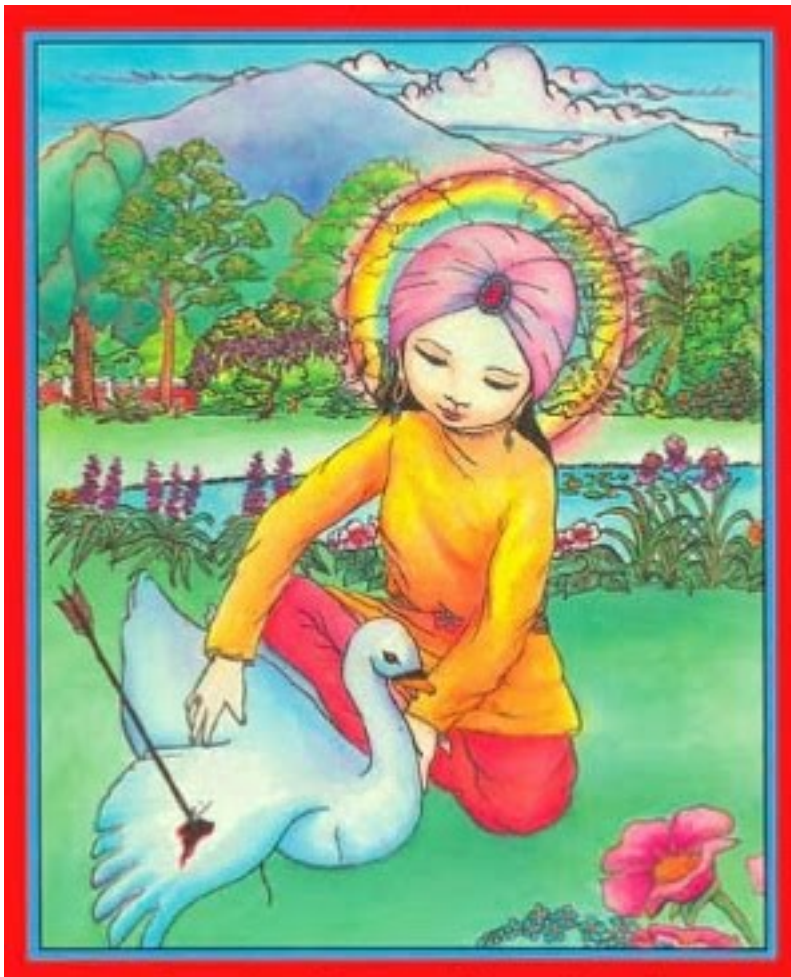
Devadatta did not like this idea very much, but because it was the only way he could ever get the swan back, he agreed. So the two of them went to the palace and appeared in front of the King and his ministers. The people at court smiled at each other when they heard what these two children wanted.

"To Think," they said, "that they want to take up our time over a mere bird!" But the King said, "Both Siddhartha and Devadatta are royal princes, and I am glad they brought their quarrel to us. I think it is very important that, as future rulers, they become used to the ways of this court. Let the trial begin!" [1]

So in turn each of the boys described what happened. Then the minister tried to decide which boy was right and should therefore have the swan. Some thought, "Devadatta shot the bird; therefore it should belong to him." Others thought, "Siddhartha found the swan; therefore it should belong to him." And for a long time the ministers talked and argued about the case. [1]

Finally, into the court came a very old man whom no one remembered ever seeing before. But because he looked so wise, they told him the story of the boys and their swan. After listening to what they had to say, he declared, "Everyone values his or her life more than anything else in the world. Therefore, I think that the swan belongs to the person who tried to save its life, not to the person who tried to take its life away. Give the swan to Siddhartha." [1]

Everyone agreed that what the wise man said was true, so they decided to let the Prince keep the swan. Later, when the King tried to find the old man and reward him for his wisdom, he was nowhere to be found. "This is very strange," the king thought. "I wonder where he came from and where he went." But no one knew. This was just one of the many unusual things that happened concerning the Prince, so many people thought he must be a very special child indeed! [1]



## Discussion Questions

### Remembering

1. **What type of person was the prince?** Loving, wise, kind to everyone and everything
2. **Who are the people in this part of the story?** Prince Siddhartha and his cousin Devadatta
3. **What was Devadatta doing?** Hunting a swan with his bow and arrow
4. **What happened after Devadatta shot a swan?** The prince found the injured swan and began taking care of it. Devadatta found the prince with the swan
5. **What did each of the cousins think should happen with the swan?** The prince wanted to take care of the swan and Devadatta wanted the swan as his prize
6. **How did they decide to resolve the problem?** Explain to the wise men in court and ask the wise men what to do
7. **What did the wise men decide?** Everyone values his or her life more than anything else in the world. Therefore, I think that the swan belongs to the person who tried to save its life, not to the person who tried to take its life away

### Understanding

1. **How did Devadatta feel about the swan?** That it was his and he owned it
2. **How did the prince feel?** That it was best to take care of the swan

### Applying

1. **The Prince sounds like a very loving, kind child. Do you know anyone like him?**
2. **If you were on the court, what questions would you ask?**
3. **How does this situation apply to a situation in your life?**

### Analyzing

1. **Do you think there could have been another outcome?**
2. **How do you think the prince and his cousin felt after the decision?**

### Evaluating

1. **Do you think the court made the right decision?**
2. **How would you compare the cousins? How do you think they may have been the same?** Same upbringing, same life of privilege

### 3. Teen Years

- Marriage Contest
- Many Palaces

So far we have learned that when the Prince was born and when he was a child, special things seemed to happen, and he seemed loving and kind from the day he was born. He treated people and animals well. Let's see what happens next!

As the Prince grew older, his kindness made him well-loved by everyone who knew him. But his father was worried. "I am afraid that my son will soon want to leave the palace and follow the lonely life of holy men like Asita. If he does this he will never become a great king." [1]

These thought bothered the King very much. Finally he decided that if the prince got married, he would be more interested in learning how to be a great king himself. So he arranged for a large banquet at the palace. The prince met Yasodhara, the daughter of a neighbouring King Suprabuddha. She was very beautiful and not shy, as were the other girls at the banquet. [1]

King Suddhodana went to King Suprabuddha to arrange for the marriage. The other King greeted him warmly and said, "I am sure that your son is a fine young man, but I can not give my daughter away to just anyone. Many other princes want to marry her, and they all excellent young men. They are skilled in riding, archery and other royal sports. Therefore, if your son wants to marry my daughter, he will have to compete in a contest with the other suitors, as is out custom." [1]

And so it was arranged for a great contest to be held, with beautiful Yasodhara as the prize. King Shuddhodana was worried. He thought, "My son has never showed the slightest interest in warrior games. How can he ever win this contest?" But the Prince understood his father's fears and said to him, "Do Not be worried. I am prepared to do whatever is necessary to win Yasodhara for my bride."

The first event was archery. The other men placed their targets a long distance away, yet each was able to hit the bull's eye. And when it was Devadatta's turn (for Siddhartha's cousin was also one of the suitors) he not only hit the bull's eye, but sent his arrow right through the target until it stuck out the other side. The crowd cheered, but Yasodhara covered her eyes in fright. "How can my beloved Siddhartha ever beat that shot?" She thought. "How dreadful if I had to marry Devadatta!" [1]

But the Prince was confident. When it was his turn he had his target placed so far away that most of the people could hardly even see it. Then he took an arrow from his quiver and pulled back on his bow. The Prince was so strong, however, that the bow burst in half; he had drawn it back so far! [1]

"Please fetch me another bow," the Prince asked "but a much stronger one this time that will not break like the other one." Then a minister called out, "O Prince, there is a very old bow in the palace. It belonged to one of the greatest warriors of the past. But since he died many years ago no one has been strong enough to string it, much less shoot it." [1]

"I shall use that one," said the Prince, and everyone was amazed. When he was handed the bow he carefully bent it and strung it easily. Then he notched an arrow on the string, drew it back so far that the ends of the bow almost touched, aimed, and let the arrow fly. Twang! The bow made such a loud sound that people in far away villages heard it. The arrow shot away so fast that when it hit the distant target right in the center of the bull's-eye-it did not even slow down, but continued to fly until it was out of sight. [1]

The crowd roared in delight! "The Prince has won! The Prince has won!" But archery was only the first event of the day; the next contest was in swordsmanship. [1]

Each young man selected a tree and showed his strength by slashing through it with his sword. One suitor cut through a tree six inches thick, another nine inches, and a third cut through a tree a foot thick with a single stroke of his sword! [1]

Then it was the Prince's turn. He selected a tree that had two trunks growing side by side. He swung his sword so quickly that it cut through the tree faster than anyone could see. His sword was so sharp and his cut so even that the tree did not even fall over. Instead it remained standing, perfectly balanced. When they saw the tree still standing upright, the crowd and especially Yasodhara moaned, "He has failed. The Prince's sword did not even cut into the first trunk." [1]

But just then a breeze stirred up and blew over the neatly severed tree trunks. The crowd's moans turned into cheers, and again they shouted, "The Prince has won!" The final contest was in horsemanship. [1]

A wild horse, while had never been ridden before was held down by several strong men while each young suitor tried to mount it. But the horse bucked and kicked so furiously that none of them could stay on its back for more than a few seconds. [1]

The crowd began screaming loudly, "Stop the contest! Don't let the Prince near that horse! It is too dangerous; the horse will kill him! But Siddhartha had no fear. "Gentleness can be more powerful than brute strength," he thought, and slowly reached out and took hold of a small tuft of hair that grew from the horse's forehead. Speaking in a low and pleasant voice, and gently stroking the wild horse's head and sides, he calmed its anger, rage and fear. [1]

Soon the horse was so gentle that it began licking Siddhartha's hand. Then, still whispering sweetly to the horse, the Prince climbed onto its back. While the crowd roared happily, he paraded the steed in front of the kings and ministers, and bowed low to his fair prize, the lovely Yasodhara. The contest was over; young Siddhartha had won! And he had done so not only by the power of his great strength, but of his gentleness and kindness as well. [1]

Soon afterwards, Prince Siddhartha and Princess Yasodhara were married. The King wanted to be certain that his son would never desire to leave the kingdom, so he ordered not one but three magnificent places to be built for the new couple. "Make them as beautiful as possible," he told the chief builder. "I want them to be so magnificent that the people entering them will think they are in heaven. [1]

The King did everything possible to make these new homes attractive to the Prince. He had the most skilled musicians in his kingdom play there throughout the day and into the night. All the servants were beautiful young dancing girls, and the chefs in the kitchen were instructed to serve a never-ending variety of delicious food. Nothing was allowed into the palaces that might disturb the Prince's mind and make him want to leave. [1]

And so for many years Prince Siddhartha lived in these heavenly surroundings. From morning to night he was entertained in a thousand ways. He never saw anything that was not beautiful, nor ever heard any sound that was not sweet and pleasant. For instance, if one of the servant girls became ill, she was removed from the palace and not allowed to return until she was better again. In this way, the Prince never saw sickness or anything that might disturb his gentle mind. The King ordered that no one speaking to the Prince should ever mention anything sad or depressing. And even if one of the plants in the garden began to droop or wilt, it was immediately snipped off by a special gardener. Thus the Prince never even saw a faded or dying flower! In all these ways, then, he was kept ignorant of the suffering and unpleasantness in the world. [1]

The time went by, Yasodhara had a son who was Rahula. Everything seemed like to desire. The King was very pleased, glad that his plans to keep the Prince interested in the royal life were working out so well. [1]



## Discussion Questions

### Remembering

1. **Why did the king want the prince to get married?** He wanted the prince to stay and become a king, not a wandering wise man
2. **What was the name of the princess he would marry?** Yasodhara
3. **What did the prince have to do to marry her?** Win a series of contests
4. **What was the first and what happened?** Archery. He broke a bow, then strung a bow no other man was strong enough to string, then he shot the arrow so fast that when it hit the distant target right in the central of the bull's-eye-it did not even slow down, but continued to fly until it was out of sight
5. **What was next and what happened?** Swordsmanship. He swung his sword so quickly that it cut through the tree faster than anyone could see. His sword was so sharp and his cut so even that the tree did not even fall over. Instead it remained standing, perfectly balanced until the wind blew.
6. **What was last and what happened?** Horsemanship. A horse threw off several men and almost trampled one. Speaking in a low and pleasant voice, and gently stroking the wild horse's head and sides, the prince calmed the horse's anger, rage and fear. Soon the horse was so gentle that it began licking Siddhartha's hand. Then, still whispering sweetly to the horse, the Prince climbed onto its back
7. **What happened with Prince Siddhartha and Princess Yasodhara ?** They were married
8. **What did the king do for the prince and his wife?** Built them luxury palaces where everything unpleasant was immediately removed

### Understanding

1. **Would the prince have been able to win the contest with strength only?** No, he needed kindness to tame the horse
2. **Why did the king build three palaces for the prince?** The King wanted to be certain that his son would never desire to leave the kingdom

### Applying

1. **What would you have done if you were the king?**
2. **What would your parents do for you?**

### Analyzing

1. **Are there any flaws with the king's plan?** The plan nothing unpleasant from the outside world can ever get in. Everything is to be so perfect that Prince Siddhartha will be tempted to leave.
2. **We know the prince decides to leave, so what must have happened?** He did see suffering and wanted to change it.

### Evaluating

1. **Do you think that what the king was doing was a good thing?**

#### 4. Four Sights

So far we have learned that when the Prince was born and when he was a child, special things seemed to happen, and he seemed loving and kind from the day he was born. A wise man predicted he would be a great ruler OR he would leave the palace and learn the way to truth and happiness. So, the king did everything he could to keep the prince in the palace by encouraging him to marry and by providing a life full of beauty. Let's see what happens next!

One evening after dinner, Prince Siddhartha felt a bit restless. He asked one of the singers in the court about what was outside the walls. She explained there were all kinds of wonderful things.

Now he desired to journey outside the palace, and so he sent a message to the King requesting him to arrange a travel party into the city beyond the garden walls.

The King still wanted to be certain that his son would not see anything on his trip that might disturb his mind. This might make him want to leave the kingdom and follow the holy life. So the day before the Prince was about to travel to the city, the King sent his servants and soldiers out with this message: "By order of the King! Tomorrow the royal Prince Siddhartha will visit the capital city of Kapilavastu. Decorate your houses and the streets and let everything be colorful in his honor. Let those who are sick or old or in any way unhealthy stay indoors tomorrow. Nothing should be seen in the city that is not young and fair and beautiful." And then, very gently, the soldiers took all the street beggars and brought them to a part of the city where the Prince would not visit. [1]

When the morning came, the charioteer Channa groomed the Prince's favorite horse, Kantaka, and drove out through the palace gates with his royal passenger. It was the first time the Prince had seen Kapilavastu since he was a small child, and it was the first that the most of the citizens of the city had ever seen their Prince. [1]

Everyone was excited and lined the newly decorated streets to catch a glimpse of the handsome young man as he rode by. [1]

And the Prince, too, was delighted. The city was sparkling and clean and everywhere he saw people laughing and cheering and even dancing. [1]

But as the Prince and his charioteer were riding by they spotted an old, bent, sad-looking person among the joyous crowd. Curious-for the Prince had never seen anything like this before-he turned and asked, "Channa, who is that person over there? Why is he stooping over and not dancing like the others? Why is his face not smooth and shining like everyone else's; why is it pale and wrinkled? [1]

And Channa pointed to that man, who remained unseen by everyone else, and answered the Prince, "Why Sir, that is just an old man." [1]

"Old?" the Prince questioned. "Was this man always 'old' like this before, or did it happen to him recently?" [1]

"Neither, O Prince," Channa answered. "Many years ago that wrinkled man before you was young and strong as all the others you see here today. But slowly he lost his strength. His body became bent, the colors faded from his cheeks, he lost most of his teeth, and now he appears the way he does." [1]

Surprised and saddened, Siddhartha asked again, "That poor man, is he the only one suffering the weakness of old age? Or are there any others like him?" [1]

"Surely you know, O Prince, that everyone must experience old age. Someday most of us will look like that man." [1]

These words so shocked the gentle Prince that for a long time he remained speechless. When they arrived back home, the Prince entered his palace without greeting anyone, hurried upstairs to his own room, and sat by himself for a long time. Everyone noticed how strangely he acted and tried hard to cheer him up. But nothing helped. [1]

The King heard about his son's unhappy mood and wondered what could have gone wrong. "He needs more variety," the King thought. "I will plan another trip for him, but this time to an even more beautiful section of the city." [1]

And so Channa prepared Kantaka again, and again they rode out into Kapilavastu. The streets were decorated as before, and the people were again happy to see their Prince. But this time, seen only by Siddhartha and his charioteer, a vision of a sick person appeared in the crowd of laughing people. [1]

"Look, Channa," the Prince called out. "Who is that man who coughs so violently, who shakes his body and cries so pitifully?" [1]

"That is a sick person, O Prince." "Why is he sick?" he asked. "People become sick for many reasons, Sire. Perhaps he ate some bad food or let himself become too cold. Now his body is out of balance and he feels feverish." [1]

"Do even happy people like those in the crowd ever become sick?" "Oh yes," answered the charioteer. "A person might be healthy one day and sick the next. No one is safe from illness." For the second time the Prince was deeply shocked. [1]

When he returned to the palace the Prince was even more unhappy than before. [1]

And so, when Prince Siddhartha again requested to visit the city beyond the garden walls, many arrangements were made to make the journey as enjoyable as possible. The city was beautiful even more than before. All unpleasant sights removed and a special park was prepared with all manner of delights. [1]

Siddhartha and Channa again left the palace by chariot. [1]

But for a third time a vision appeared that only the Prince and his charioteer could see. A group of sad eyed people, carrying a long box in which a body covered in an orange sheet lay, appeared from one of the houses and slowly made its way down one of the side streets. [1]

"Channa, why is that man in the box lying so still?" Is he asleep? And why are all those people crying? Where are they taking him? "He is dead man, Sire. The Prince was confused. "What do you mean by dead? [1]

And so Channa explained, telling the Prince the truths his father had tried to hide from him all these years. [1]

The prince said "Come, Channa, turn the chariot around. I wish to return to the palace and think." [1]

The Prince sank deeper and deeper into gloom. One day he appeared before the King. "Father," he began, "lately my mind has been very troubled. I feel restless and would like your permission to leave the palace once again. Perhaps a change of scenery will do me good." [1]

This time Siddhartha saddled Kantaka himself and rode out of the palace grounds in search of some beautiful countryside. Finally he came to the edge of some farmland and dismounted. [1]

With his mind now at rest he began to think, " every living thing is searching for happiness. Yet most are so blinded by their ignorance and desires that they find nothing but misery. Fear, disappointment, hunger, old age, sickness, and death are rewarding for their trouble! " "Now that I have seen this, I have no more interest in the small and changeable pleasures of this world. I must find something that will bring me lasting peace and happiness. But how can I content to be free from others suffering? I must find out a way to help all other living as well. Because they have been so kind to me, and they are so suffering. And then I will share this experience with them." [1]

When Prince Siddhartha had finished this compassionate meditation He opened his eyes and saw a man who was standing in front of him with a dress like a poor beggar. His eyes were bright and calm. "Please tell me," the Prince asked, "who are you?" [1]

The man answered, " I am someone who has become frightened by the sufferings of the world. I have grown tired of the so-called pleasures to be found in the company of others, so now I wander alone. I have given up my home and now live and sleep in caves, in the forest or wherever I find myself. My only interest in finding the highest and most happiness." When he had spoken these words, the man disappeared. " At last I have found the true meaning for my life," he thought , "I begin searching for the true of the happiness and stop these sufferings." With this thinking, he went back to the palace. [1]



## Discussion Questions

### Remembering

1. **What did the king do to make the prince want to return to the palace instead of choosing the life of a holy man?** Ordered the city to be clean and beautiful and for the old and sick to stay inside
2. **What were the four sights?** An old man, a sick man, a dead man, and a holy man

### Understanding

1. **After he saw the old man, sick man, and dead man, how did he feel?** Gloomy, restless, unhappy
2. **Why?** He did not know these things existed (what a shock!) and there was no way to stop them
3. **After he saw the holy man (a monk), how did he feel?** At last I have found the true meaning for my life," he thought , "I begin searching for the true of the happiness and stop these sufferings."
4. **Why?** There is a way out

### Applying

1. **How do you feel when you see old and sick people? Surprised? Sad? Same as when you see young and healthy people?**
2. **Does it make you think anything about your life?**

### Analyzing

1. **How are these sights a turning point in Prince Siddharth's life?**

### Evaluating

1. **Is it good that the Prince saw these things?**
2. **What if he had only seen the first three and not the holy man?**
3. **Do you ever live your life so that you will avoid everything unpleasant? Does it work?**

## 5. Leaving the Palace and Six Years of Struggle

So far we have learned that a wise man predicted Prince Siddhartha would be a great ruler OR he would leave the palace and learn the way to truth and happiness. So, the king did everything he could to keep the prince in the palace by encouraging him to marry and by providing a life full of beauty. Still, the Prince grew restless and went out into the world. He saw three disturbing sights – an old man, a sick man, and a dead man. He also saw a holy man (monk), which gave him a peaceful feeling. He had a lot to think about. Let's see what happens next!

One night after dinner a strange force seemed to enter the palace. One by one the musicians and dancers and servants became drowsy and fell asleep. Finally even Yasodhara fell asleep next to her baby Rahula. Only Siddhartha remained awake. Now he knew what he must do with his life. He had important work to do and for that he had to be fully awake. [1]

Stepping carefully around the sleeping bodies, he reached the window and climbed out onto the roof and then down to the ground. He went to where Channa, the charioteer was sleeping and gently woke him up. "Hurry, Channa, saddle my horse. I wish to ride tonight." [1]

Channa was surprised that the Prince would want to go out in the middle of the night, but he did as he was asked. [1]

They rode all night. Just as the morning sun was about to rise they reached a quiet forest where many holy people lived. The Prince was happy and thought to himself, "now my real journey has begun." Then he turned to Channa and said, "my friend, I thank you deeply for your help. I have reached the place that I wanted. Now it is time for you to take my horse and return to the palace." [1]

Channa could not believe that the Prince would not be returning to the palace with him. He stood there confused, tears beginning to fill his eyes. The Prince understood his grief and spoke to him again very softly, "my faithful Channa, do not cry. Sooner or later we all have to say goodbye. Here, take these royal jewels I am wearing; I shall not need them anymore. Return to the palace and tell my father that I have not left in anger. It is not that I do not love my family anymore. Rather, it is because I love them all so much that I must leave them for now. If I ever discover the way to end all suffering, I shall return to them. If I fail, then it really makes little difference that I am leaving them now. Sooner or later death would pull us apart anyway. Go now, and let me begin my search." [1]

As Siddhartha stood alone in the forest, ready to begin his great adventure, he thought, "From today onwards I am no longer a prince. Therefore, it is not right that I continue to look and dress like one." He took his knife and cut off his long, flowing hair, a sign of royalty. Then he met a poor hunter and said to him, "Sir, I have no more need of these silk clothes. If I am to live in the forest I should wear something rough like yours. Let us switch." The hunter was surprised and delighted to receive such expensive clothing in exchange for his own and quickly agreed to Siddhartha's suggestion. [1]

Now that he was properly dressed as a poor seeker of the truth, Siddhartha began to look for a teacher who could show him the way to end all sufferings. [1]

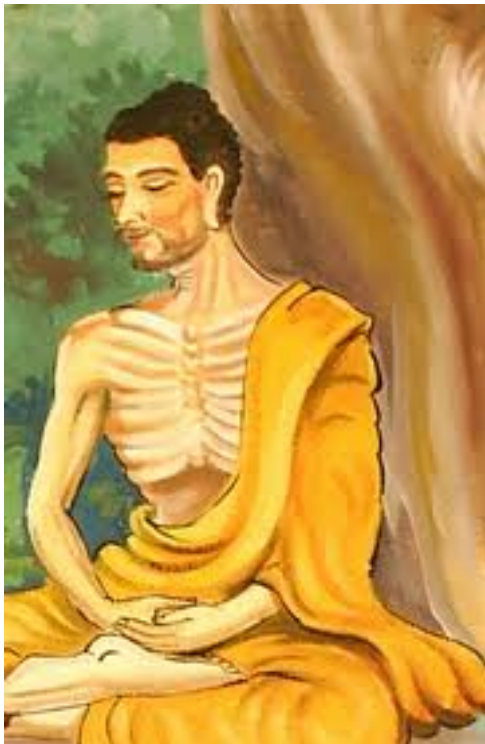
Eventually Siddhartha came to the forest where the wise men lived. They did painful things to their bodies because they believed that learning to master pain would help them control all suffering. Siddhartha thought to himself, "For so many years I lived in those luxurious pleasure palaces. I was treated very gently, yet still my mind did not find peace. Perhaps these men are right. I shall join them in their practices and see if this leads to the end of sufferings." [1]

Siddhartha treated his body more and more harshly. In the beginning, he slept only a few hours for each night, but eventually he stopped going to sleep. He stopped taking even the one poor meal a day that he used to eat, and would only eat the few seeds and berries that the wind blew into his lap. He

grew thinner. His body lost its radiance and became covered with dust and dirt. Eventually, he looked like little more than a living skeleton. But still, he did not give up his practices. [1]

Six long years passed. Siddhartha was thirty five, having spent six years with hardly any food, sleep, shelter or decent clothing. One day he thought to himself, "Am I any closer to my goal now than I was six years ago? Or am I still as ignorant as before? I can see now that it is a mistake to punish my body like this, just as it was a mistake to have wasted so much time in those palaces. To find the truth I must follow a middle path between too much pleasure and too much pain." He remembered that many years ago, after he had seen the dead man, he had meditated under a rose apple tree. "After that meditation," he thought, "my mind was very calm and still. I was able to see things clearly for the first time. I shall try to meditate like that again now." [1]

But when he looked at himself he realized, "I have been sitting here for such a long time with no food that I am tired, dirty and weak. I am so thin that I can see my bones through my skin. How can I meditate when I am too hungry dirty even to think clearly?" And so he slowly pulled himself up and went to bath himself in the river. He was so weak, however, that he fell and was almost drowned. With great effort he just managed to pull himself to the shore. Then he sat for a while, resting. [1]



## Discussion Questions

### Remembering

1. **What happened to the people in the palace on the night the Prince left?** One by one the musicians and dancers and servants became drowsy and fell asleep. Finally even Yasodhara fell asleep next to her baby Rahula. Only Siddhartha remained awake
2. **What did the Prince do next?** Leave the palace
3. **How did the Prince change his looks?** He gave his jewels to Channa, cut his hair, and traded clothes with a poor hunter
4. **The Prince decided to find the truth by living with men who deprived themselves of what things?** food, sleep, shelter or decent clothing
5. **How long was he there?** Six years
6. **What happened after six years?** He realized he was no closer to his goal and wanted to try meditation
7. **Was he able to meditate?** No, he was too weak

### Understanding

1. **Why did the Prince leave? Was he angry?** No. He said "Return to the palace and tell my father that I have not left in anger. It is not that I do not love my family anymore. Rather, it is because I love them all so much that I must leave them for now. If I ever discover the way to end all suffering, I shall return to them."
2. **Why does Prince Siddhartha decide that to find the truth he must follow a middle path between too much pleasure and too much pain?** He was not able to find happiness in the palace or by depriving himself

### Applying

1. **Prince Siddhartha is too tired to move. What would you do if you saw him?**

### Analyzing

1. **The Prince was not angry with his father. Could he have been?** Maybe he could have been angry that his father tried to stop him from what he needed to do
2. **What do you think will happen next?**

### Evaluating

1. **What do you think the middle path will be?**

## 6. Offering and Enlightenment

[Remember that Siddhartha is exhausted and starving after six years of struggle.]

In a small village at the edge of the forest lived a herdsman and his wife Sujata. One day she was taking special food into the forest as an offering to the spirits she thought lived there. When she saw Siddhartha, she offered the food to him instead.

Siddhartha slowly opened his eyes and saw the bowl in front of him. Smiling silently to Sujata he lifted it to his lips and began to drink. To her amazement, his body grew more and more radiant as he drank. When he was finished he placed the bowl down and thanked her saying, "Your offering has made me strong again. Now, I am sure that I shall find the truth. Much good will come from-what you have done today. Thank you."

The men who were living with Siddhartha thought he had given up his search for the truth, and left him. He stood up, waded across the river and headed towards what would be known in later years as the Tree of Enlightenment.

The moment that the world had been waiting for was now at hand. Siddhartha, who had given up a kingdom in search of truth, was approaching the tree. On his way, he passed a man carrying freshly cut grass and asked him for a small bundle. This he would use for his seat.

As he drew closer the air became very still. It was as if the whole world was holding its breath, anxiously awaiting what would happen next. The branches of the tree bent down as if welcoming him to come and sit down under its shade. Siddhartha carefully arranged the grass into a small cushion and sat down, facing the east. He crossed his legs in a firm meditation posture and rested his hands in his lap. Then he made a bold and determined vow: "I shall not arise from this position until I have reached my goal, even if I die sitting here!" And all the spirits of the air looking on rejoiced, hearing Siddhartha's great pledge. It was the full moon day of the fourth month, and the sun was about to set. But the ancient stories tell us that not everyone rejoiced at this moment. There was one force, called Mara, who was terrified and angry. For Mara, She is the name the ancient Indian people gave to the evil forces that disturb our minds. Mara is our greed, hatred, ignorance, jealousy, doubt and all the other poisons bringing people unhappiness and grief.

Mara was worried and said to other evil forces "If Siddhartha is successful and discovers the way to end all suffering, what will happen to us? Don't you understand that we shall lose all our power? We can not harm people if he teaches them the truth. We must disturb his meditation, or else we are doomed!" So Mara and his evil forces tried everything to disturb Siddhartha.

Mara's threats and temptations failed to bother Siddhartha. Silently he lifted his right hand from his lap, reached in front of him and touched the earth. Yes, the earth itself was Siddhartha's witness! For countless lifetimes he had appeared on this earth in various forms. He had practiced generosity and patience, he had acted lovingly and had avoided harming others, and he had meditated on the truth. He had done all these things-sometimes as a man, sometimes as a woman; sometimes rich, sometimes poor-over and over again. He had done this all, just for the sake of discovering the end to all suffering. And the earth was his witness. Mara realized that now he was truly defeated, and faded away like a bad dream. Siddhartha was left completely alone.

Siddhartha's mind was calm and relaxed. Slowly his concentration deepened and his wisdom grew brighter. In his mind's eye he saw far into the past. He saw that when one life ended, another began. Death only brought the body to an end; life itself continued on and on finding a new body again and again. He saw that when a person did evil in one life-such as harming another-he or she experienced sadness in the future. But when a person acted with love, happiness and joy followed. Nothing anyone did was ever lost, but was carried on from life to life, bringing happiness or pain.

As he discovered how all life is linked together in this way, deeper truths appeared to his mind. The sun, planets, all the stars, the galaxies of the universe-they all appeared in his meditation. He saw how everything, from the smallest speck of dust to the largest star, was linked together. Everything was constantly changing, growing, decaying, and growing again. Nothing happened without a cause, and every cause produced an effect.

Finally he discovered the way to end all this suffering. If a person could see the truth clearly-as he himself had seen it this night-all running after pleasure and away from pain would stop. There would be no more greed or hatred in the person's mind. He or she would no longer do anything to harm anyone else. Thus, there would be no more unhappiness to be felt. With all hatred finished, the person's heart would fill with love. And this love would bring a peace and happiness unlike anything else.

When Siddhartha had seen all this, even the last speck of darkness disappeared from his mind. He was filled with a radiant clear light. He was no longer an ordinary person. He had become fully enlightened to the truth. He was now a Buddha. He had reached his goal! With a calm and peaceful smile, he arose from his meditation. It was morning, and the sun was rising in the east.

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## 7. First Teaching

Buddha himself was filled with the highest happiness. His mind, free from all darkness and pain, felt a boundless joy. For days and weeks he stayed near the Tree of Enlightenment, enjoying the bliss and happiness only a Buddha knows. Then he thought, "it was so difficult for me to reach the end of suffering and become a Buddha. I had to work so hard for so long. When I see how blind and ignorant most people are, I wonder if there is anyone who can understand the truths I have discovered. How could I possibly teach them? Perhaps it is better for me to live the rest of my life in the forests alone and enjoy the happiness of being a Buddha myself." Then he heard an inner voice which said, "please do not forget us ! We are the suffering beings of the world. We have been waiting for this moment ever since your birth, and even before that. We have hoped and prayed these for many years that you would leave the princely life and discover the way to end all suffering. Now that you have found this path, please teach it to us. Unlike you, we are still suffering."

Then he thought, "who, among all the people in world, should I teach first ? Who is the most ready? He thought of the five men who lived with him for so long in the forest. "They are ready to understand the truth," he thought, " I shall teach them first." He knew that he would find these men in the Deer Park near Benares, the holiest city of ancient India. "I shall go there," Buddha proclaimed, " and begin the work I came to do."

It was a long way to Benares and Buddha walked slowly through village and farm. Everyone was immediately attracted to him. He was tall and handsome and moved with dignity and grace. Just seeing him brought calmness and joy to the people. He spoke kind and gentle words of comfort to everyone he met. Whether they were rich or poor, simple or intelligent, of noble birth or low, Buddha treated them all equally, with great love and respect.

Finally, he reached the Deer Park. From a distance the five men saw him approach. Quickly they s whispered to one another, "Here comes that good-for-nothing Siddhartha. Let us have nothing to do with such a quitter ! Ignore him if he comes near." But as Buddha approached the men immediately felt that there was something very special about him. Forgetting their plan to ignore him, they automatically stood up as he drew near. With great respect they prepared a seat for him, took his robe, brought him some water and said, "Welcome Siddhartha, to the Deer Park. We are honored that you have joined us here." Buddha answered, " I thank you for your kind welcome, O monks. But you should know that I am no longer simply Siddhartha, and it is no longer right for you to call me by that name." "By what name should we call you then ?" they asked. "The whole world is asleep in ignorance," he answered. "When someone discovers the truth, he or she is asleep no longer. Now I am awake, having discovered the truth. All such Awakened Ones are called Buddha."

Then the five men, with great respect, said, "O Buddha, please teach us what you have learned so that we too may awaken." And so, in answer to their request, Buddha delivered his first teaching. It is called "

Turning the Wheel of the Dharma" and "Dharma" is the truth he discovered. "O monks, " he began, "you must know that there are four Noble Truths. The first is the Noble Truth of suffering. Life is filled with the miseries of old age, sickness, death and unhappiness. People chase after pleasure but find only pain. Even when they find something pleasant they soon grow tired of it. Nowhere is there any real satisfaction or peace.

The second is the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering. When our mind is filled with greed and desire, sufferings of all types follow. For example, if a rich man is attached to his wealth, his miserliness will bring him nothing but pain.

The third is the Noble Truth of the End of Suffering. When we remove all craving and desire from our mind, suffering will come to an end. We shall experience a peace and happiness that is beyond words.

Finally, the fourth truth is the Noble Truth of the Path. This path leads to the end of all suffering. If we avoid harming all other living beings, if we sharpen and focus our mind, and if we gain wisdom, each of us can reach perfect happiness, the end of all misery."

When they heard these words the five men felt as happy as if they had found a great treasure of gold. " Oh, Buddha," they said, "you have indeed found the truth. Please teach us the path to perfect wisdom and happiness and we shall be your followers." It is said that many unseen spirits also heard these first teachings and flew to the ends of the earth crying, "The Buddha has begun to teach. Let us the world rejoice !"

Buddha taught in many different ways. To simple people and to children he taught by telling stories. To those people with high intelligence, Buddha gave detailed explanations of the path. To others, he taught without speaking any words at all. But, perhaps, his most powerful teaching was his own example, the very way he lived his life. He always acted with kindness and love. He was patient with everyone, even the most ignorant and foolish.

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## **8. Review and Parinirvana**

From the time he was thirty five years old, Buddha gave his teachings to everyone who was interested. For the next forty five years he traveled around India bringing people peace about love and kindness, he would tell them stories that would catch their imagination.

One day Devadatta fell ill. Many doctors came to see him but no one could cure him. Buddha went to visit him. One of Buddha's followers asked him, "oh! Buddha, why are you going to help Devadatta ? He had tried to harm you many times. He has even tried to kill you !" And Buddha answered, "There is no reason to be friendly with some people and an enemy to others. All people are equal in that everyone wants happiness and no one likes to be sick and miserable. Therefore, we should have love for everyone." Then he approached Devadatta's bed and said, "if it is true that I love Devadatta, who is always trying to harm me, as much as I love Rahula, my only child, then let my cousin be cured of his sickness !" Immediately Devadatta recovered and was healthy once again.

Buddha turned to his followers and said, "remember a true Buddha helps all beings equally."

When Buddha was eighty years old he thought to himself, "I have done all I could to help others. I have taught them how to live with love and how not to fear anything in life. Now it is time to show them how to leave this world without fear."

And so Buddha and his disciples traveled toward to the North. Kapilavastu was not so far from the place that they lived. Buddha and his followers started their strip. During the strip, they passed through the village of Kushinagar. Buddha asked his students to stop there and rest. Then he returned to Ananda and said, "this is a place where I shall pass away."

Although this was to be the last day of his life, Buddha did not stop helping others. An old man from the village asked to see him, and Buddha agreed. He listened to the man's problems and gave him kind words of advice. The man was put at ease and felt happy once again. Then Buddha went out into the garden and lay down between two trees. His students gathered around him. Some were crying, but others, their minds completely at peace, looked on silently.

Then Buddha spoke for the last time. "Remember ! what I have taught you. Craving and desire are the cause of all unhappiness. Everything sooner or later must change, so do not become attached to anything. Instead of this, you devote yourself to clearing your mind and finding true, lasting happiness."

Buddha then turned onto his right side and placed his right hand under his head. He closed his eyes and very peacefully passed away. It was the full moon day of the fourth month.

### **Discussion Questions**

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## References

- [1] from *Prince Siddhartha, The Story of the Buddha* by Jonathan Landaw and Janet Brooke
- [2] from *Ten Thousand Days of Summer* by Andrea Willson

\*\*\*SAVE FOR LATER

### **Plowing Ceremony**

- Nature of Life
- Meditation

\*\*\*The Rose-Apple tree (from buddhanet)

It was an ancient Indian tradition that every spring, the king took part in the Ploughing Festival with his subjects. The king would plough the first row in the fields for the spring planting.

That year, the king took the prince to the Ploughing Festival. Everyone was happy to see them. The men and boys shouted with joy as the king's golden plough cut into the earth. Next, the royal ministers ploughed a row with their silver ploughs, and then the peasants took over the rest of the ploughing with their wooden ploughs. There were one thousand ploughs in all. As the peasants worked, sweat poured from their brows. They yelled and whipped the panting oxen that struggled to pull the heavy ploughs.

Suddenly, the sky was filled with black crows circling over the freshly ploughed fields. "Caw! Caw!" they cried as they swooped down and plucked worms out of the earth with their sharp beaks. The prince tugged at his father's arm, "Can't anyone stop them?" The king laughed heartily, "It is only natural!"

The prince wandered off and sat under the shade of a rose-apple tree, meditating. He concentrated on his breath. His breath was like a bridge between his body and mind. When he concentrated on his breath for a while, his body became relaxed and his mind became quiet and peaceful.

When his father saw the prince sitting in meditation, he remembered Asita's words. He wondered whether the prince's kind, gentle and thoughtful nature would one day lead him to give up the world after all.