The Beginning of Buddhism

One Man

There was once a wealthy prince in India called Siddhartha Gautama. One day, Siddhartha Gautama left his palace and saw people who were old and ill. This made him very sad.

He realised that all people suffered.

Siddhartha Gautama meditated under the Bodhi tree. He thought about how people could learn to stop suffering.

When he had reached an answer, he became the Buddha.

Buddha decided he would teach others about his new wisdom and understanding about the world. He created the Four Noble Truths to help people end their suffering.

Buddha's Four Noble Truths

Dukkha - All people suffer.

Samudaya - There is a cause for suffering.
People suffer because they want things they not got: fame, money and to be young again.

Nirodha - There is an end to suffering.
Buddha said that if people stopped wanting things all the time, they would be happy.

Magga - In order to end the suffering for good, people must follow the Eightfold Path. This is a set of eight rights, or instructions, created by Buddha.

Asala-Dharma Day

Asala-Dharma Day is a celebration when Buddhists think about the day that Buddha began teaching people about his understanding of life and how to be happy, and to give thanks for his wisdom. Buddhists might go to the temple and listen to Buddha's teachings. They may think about the Four Noble Truths and how they can improve their lives.

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Questions

1. Who was Siddhartha Gautama?

☐ An old man

☐ A rich prince

☐ An ill man

☐ A woman

2. Which word closely matches the meaning of the word suffering?

☐ unexpected

☐ misery

☐ illness

☐ old age

3. What was Siddhartha Gautama thinking about under the Bodhi tree?

_____

_____

4. Who did Siddhartha Gautama become after meditating?

_____

5. In the Four Noble Truths created by Buddha, what does Dukkha mean?

☐ That all people want things.

☐ That all suffering will end.

☐ That all people suffer.

☐ That all princes suffer.

6. Match up the sentences.

People suffer because	a set of instructions.
Their suffering will end	they want things.
The Eightfold Path is	when they stop wanting things.

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7. Why did people suffer?

☐ Because they liked to be unhappy.

☐ Because they wanted things they hadn't got.

☐ Because they were suffering.

☐ Because Buddha said so.

8. What do Buddhists do on Asala-Dharma Day? Tick all that apply.

☐ Give thanks for Buddha's wisdom.

☐ End all suffering.

☐ Think about when Buddha began teaching.

☐ Go to church.

9. What is the purpose of Buddha's teachings?

☐ To help people get better jobs.

☐ To help people live happier lives.

☐ To help people get to heaven.

☐ To help people become Buddhists.

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The Beginning of Buddhism

One Man

Siddhartha Gautama was born in Nepal around the 6th century BC. He was a wealthy prince, who had everything he ever needed.

One day, Siddhartha Gautama left his palace and saw people who were old and ill. This greatly troubled him and he thought about the suffering people experienced.

That day, he learned an important truth about life: that suffering was a fate that nobody could avoid.

Siddhartha Gautama met a holy man. He decided that he needed to give up his wealthy life and live as a homeless holy man.

Over a long period of time, Siddhartha meditated beneath the Bodhi tree. He entered a deep state of concentration and refused to let himself be distracted by anything around him.

At the end of this meditation, he reached enlightenment and became the Buddha.

Buddha decided he would teach others his new wisdom and understanding about the world.

Buddha's Four Noble Truths

Dukkha – Suffering exists in all people.

Samudaya – There is a cause for suffering.
The cause for people's suffering is a desire for fame, wealth or a desire to avoid unhappy feelings.

Nirodha - There is an end to suffering.
Suffering can be overcome if we stop thinking about things we want and don't have.

Magga - In order to end suffering, follow the Eightfold Path.
This is a set of eight rights or instructions designed to help people to reach enlightenment.

Buddha said people would receive enlightenment if they followed these truths.

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Asala-Dharma Day

The beginning of Buddhism and Buddha's teachings are celebrated by Buddhists on the first full moon of the eighth lunar month.

On this day, Buddhists might go to the temple and give thanks for the teachings of Buddha. They may light candles, burn incense and reflect upon the Four Noble Truths.

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Questions

1. Write two pieces of information we are told about Siddhartha Gautama.

2. Which word describes how Siddhartha Gautama felt when he saw people outside of his palace?

- ☐ disinterested
- ☐ disillusioned
- ☐ distressed
- ☐ disgusted

3. In your own words, explain what important truth Siddhartha Gautama learned about life that day.

4. How did Siddhartha Gautama's life change after an encounter with a holy man?

5. Look at the paragraph beginning 'Over a long period of time ...' - what impression do we get about Siddhartha Gautama's character?

6. What happened after Siddhartha Gautama finished meditating? Tick two answers.

- ☐ He was enlightened.
- ☐ He was a prince.
- ☐ He was the Buddha.
- ☐ He was suffering.

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7. Give two examples of what might cause Samudaya.

_____

_____

8. If you asked Buddha how to stop feeling miserable about life, what might he advise?

_____

_____

9. What is the purpose of the Eighfold Path?

☐ To reach Buddha.

☐ To reach happiness.

☐ To reach enlightenment.

☐ To reach heaven.

10. What is the purpose of Asala-Dharma Day?

_____

_____

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The Beginning of Buddhism

One Man

Siddhartha Gautama was born in Nepal around the 6th century BC. He was a wealthy prince, who had everything he ever needed. He had been kept away from the harsh realities of life.

One day, Siddhartha Gautama left his palace and saw an old man, a sick man and a corpse. This greatly troubled him and he thought about the suffering these men had endured.

He pondered on what he had seen and discovered an important truth about life: that sickness, age and death were the inevitable fate of human beings - a fate nobody could avoid.

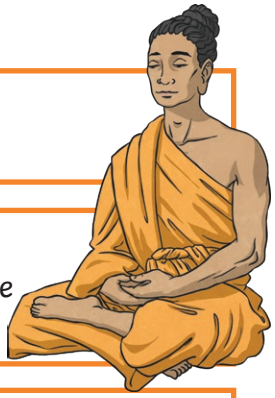
Siddhartha Gautama met a holy man. He decided that he needed to give up his wealthy life and live as a homeless holy man.

Over a long period of time, Siddhartha meditated beneath the Bodhi tree. He was completely determined not to be distracted by anything and he entered a deep state of concentration.

He triumphed over his demons of temptation and distraction. At the end of this meditation, he reached enlightenment and became the Buddha.

Buddha decided he would teach others about his new wisdom and understanding about the world.

He created four noble truths.



Buddha's Four Noble Truths

Dukkha - Suffering exists in many forms.
Life itself is not ideal and even if we are not suffering ourselves, we feel unfulfilled with life.

Samudaya - There is a cause for suffering.
The cause for suffering is a need to control something, or a craving. For example, a desire for fame, money, recognition, or a desire to avoid unpleasant feelings.

Nirodha - There is an end to suffering.
Suffering can be overcome if we let go of our desires and learn to live each day at a time without going over the past or imagining a perfect future.

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Magga - In order to end suffering, follow the Eightfold Path.
This is a set of eight rights or instructions concerned with wisdom, morality and meditation.

If these truths were followed, Buddha taught that people would receive enlightenment and have great wisdom about life.

Asala-Dharma Day

The beginning of Buddhism and Buddha's teachings are celebrated by Buddhists on the first full moon of the eighth lunar month.

Dharma means doing the right thing in speech, thoughts, action and right mindfulness. In effect, dharma is truth.

On this day, Buddhists might go to the temple and give thanks for the teachings of Buddha. They may light candles, burn incense and reflect upon the Four Noble Truths.

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Questions

1. Explain what is meant when the text says that Siddhartha Gautama had been kept away from the 'harsh realities of life'. Give one example of this.

2. Find and copy one word which means the men that Siddhartha Gautama met outside his palace had experienced pain for a while.

3. Why do you think seeing these three men, 'greatly troubled' Siddhartha Gautama?

4. Look at the paragraph beginning 'Over a long period of time ...' to the paragraph ending '...became the Buddha', what impressions do we get about the character of Siddhartha Gautama? Give one example from the text.

5. What did Siddhartha Gautama do after he had reached Enlightenment? Identify two facts.

6. Identify three possible causes of people experiencing Samudaya and give a modern-day example of each one.

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7. Tick true or false for these statements. For any false statements rewrite them with the correct information from the text.

	True	False
After a going into a deep state of concentration, Siddhartha Gautama understood how people could avoid suffering.		
Siddhartha Gautama realised that everyone would suffer in some way during their lives and that no one could avoid suffering.		
Siddhartha Gautama met a holy man and realised he needed to remain a prince to help people become happier.		
Siddhartha Gautama reached enlightenment because he gave in to the demons distracting him.		

8. If you asked a Buddhist how you could end your unhappiness, what might they suggest?

9. What issues are the rules in the Eightfold path concerned with?

10. In your opinion, what do you think would be the benefit of following Buddha's advice and how difficult or easy do you think that would be?

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