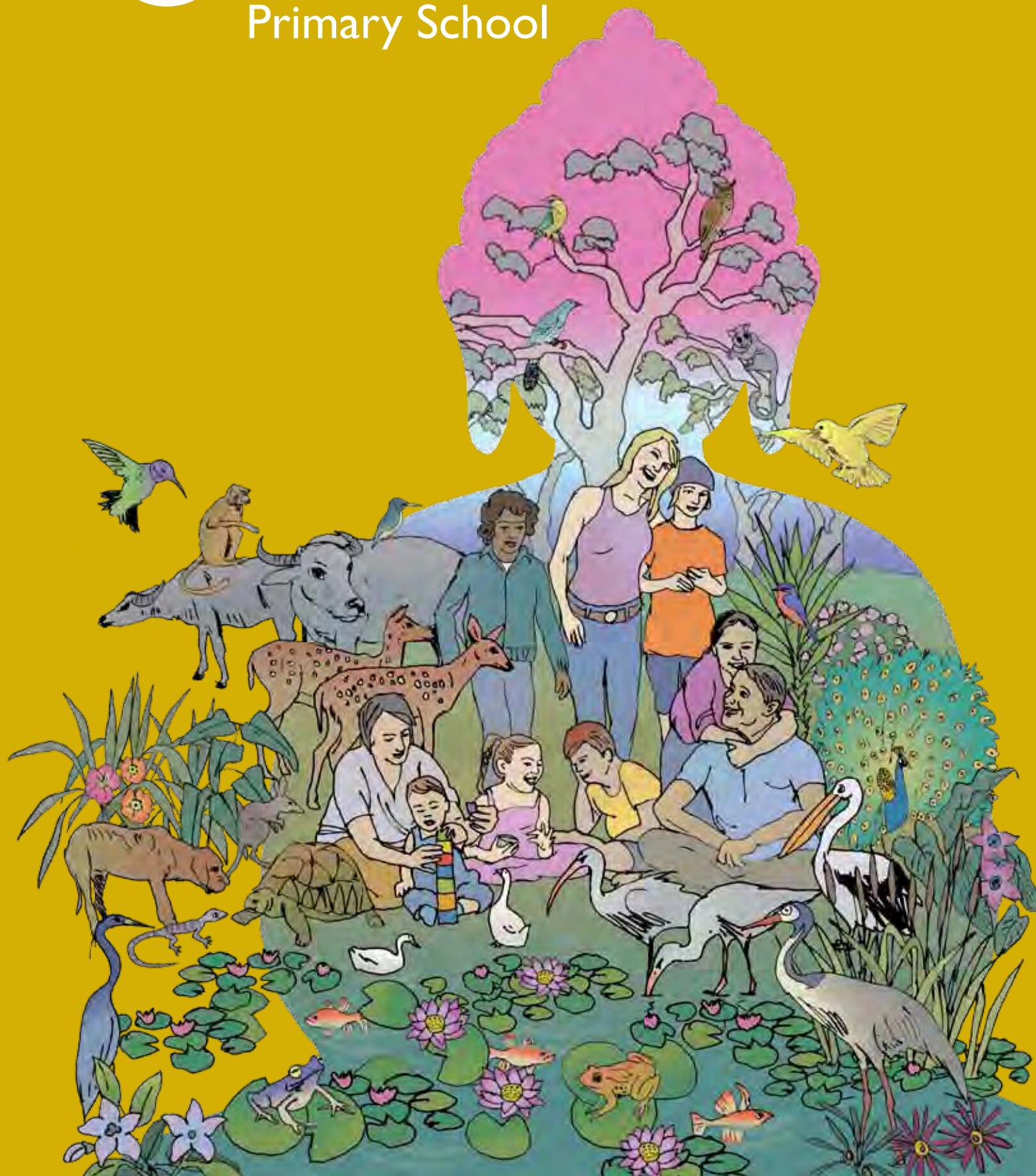




DISCOVERING BUDDHA

Lessons for
Primary School





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Primary School



Acknowledgements

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Welcome



DISCOVERING BUDDHA

Lessons for
Primary School

Key to Icons



Text



Activity



Creative Work



Meditation



Introduction

This resource book of ideas and inspirations for volunteer Buddhist Religious Instructors is relevant to today's primary age students and to mainstream instructors.

Based on the teachings of the Buddha, it provides practical, everyday applications of wise and skilful action. The reflective and inclusive approach is complementary to current Australian educational practices and values and will provide a significant addition to the revised Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS), especially in the domains of Thinking Processes, Personal Development and Inter-Personal Learning.

Buddhist Religious Instruction (bRI) classes have been offered in a small number of Victorian primary schools since 2004. The program was founded on collaboration with a cross-section of Buddhist communities and traditions under the umbrella of the **Buddhist Council of Victoria** (BCV). The ideas and lesson plans in this collection are a result of instructors' experiences, trialling of different approaches and feedback from both staff and students. Curriculum development days for the volunteer instructors of Buddhism have been a fruitful means of reviewing and consolidating the curriculum and resources.

This resource book would not have been possible without the hard work and commitment of the small team of **past and present bRI Instructors**: they are the heartwood of the program and this book is a special gift to them. In addition we are grateful to the schools which have welcomed the bRI program, and the class teachers for their willingness to be open to this possibility.

The BCV and its Buddhist Religious Instruction (bENGAGED) Program Committee, along with the spiritual advisors to the bRI program, have provided on-going support and encouragement. The organisation **Religions for Peace** provides an invaluable bridge for minority faiths to the mainstream Victorian education system and we thank them for that.

The **Victorian Multicultural Commission** (VMC) has made it possible to bring a dream to reality. We acknowledge with gratitude the financial contribution of the VMC to this publication and join with them in celebrating the rich diversity of faiths and communities that make up the State of Victoria.

May this book inspire, interest and fill with hope, all those who turn to it with that question: "What shall we awaken in mind tomorrow?"



How to Use This Resource: A Guide for Instructors

This is a resource to support a journey of learning that you will engage in with your students. It is not a textbook where you might start at page one and finish at the end of the year. Rather it is a compendium of lesson plans, resource materials and notes for instructors suitable for students in Grades 3-6.

It is not, however, a course *about* Buddhism. It is a course where the Dhamma/Dharma is presented in ways that encourage children to think, reflect, explore, act and create so that mindfulness and loving-kindness may develop within each child because he or she can see for themselves some direct benefits.

This manual is divided into nine sections: Introduction to Buddhism, Life of the Buddha, the Jataka Tales, More Virtuous Qualities, Change and Impermanence, Meditation, Special Days, Craft Activities and an extension activity on Cause and Effect for older students.

Section 1: Introduction to Buddhism: The starting point for any Buddhist class in our program is to introduce children to where Buddhism fits in the world – where and how Buddhism originated, where Buddhist people live today and some basic Buddhist principles and practices. In this section there is a choice of lessons, including a brief version of the life of the Buddha, because you may well find that some children in your class are new, and some would have attended before.

Section 2: The Life of the Buddha: After some introductory lessons, each class will learn in more depth about the Buddha's life story. The lessons are based on chapters in the recommended text *Prince Siddhartha* (Landaw and Brooke. Wisdom Boston. 2003) which is provided to every bRI instructor.

This epic tale exemplifies the important teachings of Buddhism and could take more than one year to work through. Included is a short version to give an overview, followed by detailed lessons from which you as a instructor may choose particular parts to focus on. For example, younger children might enjoy lessons around Prince Siddhartha's birth while older children may be quite excited by the years of asceticism. You do not have to teach every event in the one year. You will notice though, that the lessons that accompany this story, and the other stories in this manual, go beyond comprehension and lead the children towards personal experience.

Sections 3 and 4: The Jataka Tales, the Paramitas and More Virtuous Qualities are included for you to dip into as the need or occasion arises in your classroom. These stories with their suggested activities can be included at anytime and in any order.

Section 5: Change and Impermanence: You may choose to make this a special theme for a semester and work through all the lessons, or just choose one or two to include in your overall program. The choice is up to you.


Section 6: Meditation: This is an essential part of *every* Buddhist RI lesson. The meditations included have been selected because instructors who have pioneered this program have found them to be the most effective. There are many different meditations and too much variety can confuse children. We aim for a calm, stable routine where children develop concentration and loving-kindness and are allowed the opportunity to imagine and feel their own potential and the value in contributing to a better world.

Section 7 and 8: Special Days and Craft Activities: Variety too is most important, and this manual provides many choices. You may wish to suspend the Buddha's story, to respond to a classroom or topical issue, have some fun with a play, make a beautiful lotus or do some 'field work'. Here the instructor has the liberty to delve into the other sections in this book.

Section 9: Extension Activities for Upper Primary:

Buddhist RI classes have been offered for more than four years in some Victorian primary schools. Many students have studied Buddhism for all that time and in Years 5 and 6 are looking for more challenging content and ideas. *The Wheel of Life* section is intended only for those who have already studied some Buddhism and meditation and attempts to introduce the deeper concepts of cause and effect and interconnectedness.

Note: Located within the lesson plan, these notes are advice to the bRI Instructor or a warning that this lesson contains sensitive material.

 **Background Information Sheet:** These pages are intended to provide more depth for the instructor. It is not recommended that the notes be read to the students although instructors may share the extra information with the students in the course of the lesson.

Homework is not part of the regular routine for these weekly classes but may be set occasionally. By maintaining your weekly records you will easily be able to review the previous week's lesson with your class and provide continuity in learning.

At the back of this manual is a **Record and Planner** sheet (*EA12 p9.22*) where you can enter the lessons that you conduct with each grade in your school. This will provide a valuable record for you, and information for any instructor who might come into the school after you. In this way instructors will easily know if, for example, students in one year have done the play of *The Wounded Swan* then it need not be repeated the following year.

Relevance to current education practice: This course fits appropriately with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). Religious instruction is an addition to schools' curricula but the contents of this manual are consistent with, and supplement students' formal learning in the VELS areas of: *Interpersonal Development, Personal Learning, English, the Humanities* and most significantly the *Thinking Processes* that span all disciplines. Our meditations and the excitement of moral imagination through stories provide fresh approaches to cognitive, affective, meta-cognitive and reflective ways of thinking. Instructors in your school may be interested in this program and at times you may have the opportunity to share our teaching methods and content with them.

The Dhamma/Dharma is a precious jewel to promote peace, joy and happiness. If you become familiar with the contents of this manual, you will find a treasury of stories, plays, games, quizzes and opportunities to have fun with your students.

Making Learning Fun: Strategies for Instructing

All teachers seek to engage their students in whatever activity they are presenting. Planning class-work that includes different kinds of learning styles (mental, physical, creative, visual, aural (hearing), kinaesthetic (movement), intuitive and emotional) is one way of achieving this. Most instructing is done through the visual and aural senses but many children learn just as well, and sometimes better, through other approaches.

Different learning approaches are also useful for students who are active and easily distracted, or for a tired and lethargic class. A change of pace and activity can give a lift from text-based work in the classroom. Fun learning wakes the students up.

In this section a number of different strategies are suggested, such as different ways to run a class quiz, or the more ambitious but very engaging, putting on a class play or organizing a charade. There are also craft activities and creative drawing and design: plenty of scope for everyone! So be courageous, try out these different approaches and watch how your class responds!

How to Apply these Strategies

1. For most of these interactive instructing strategies, guidelines have to be set to describe what is acceptable behaviour. For example, the waiting group must keep quiet while the active group is performing or answering a question, though some level of noise is acceptable since the students are all excited and involved. So whilst learning with these approaches may be a variation on their everyday activities, regular classroom standards still apply.
2. To have competition or co-operation – that is the question! Obviously a little competition is a good way to raise the energy and have fun, especially if everyone is in a win-win situation and the opportunity is used to share joy with others. In the end, it is the group effort that needs to be applauded and not just the winners. All are winners because they have demonstrated that they have learnt something.
3. Co-operative and group learning are important features of primary school classrooms and are qualities to be encouraged and practised in the bRI class as well. Many Buddhist virtues can be fostered and highlighted through opportunities such as working together, helping one another and sharing skills and resources. All of the lessons in this book include group activities.
4. Spontaneously including one of these activities in your lesson can lift a tired class or calm an over-stimulated one (eg. quiet drawing or colouring for a few minutes).

Story-telling

Whether you are a gifted dramatist or simply enjoy reading aloud to children, story-telling should be a regular activity. In this book there are many stories to choose from – the Jataka Tales, the Life of the Buddha and other stories, poems and verses.

Here are some points to think about as you prepare a story for your class:

- A picture is worth a thousand words. Use visuals wherever you can to bring the story alive.
- Use props such as puppets, dolls, masks or special clothing eg. put on a special shawl when you are telling a story or whatever you can think of to animate the story.
- Use simple words and FEWER of them. Don't confuse the children with too many words.
- Draw out the children's knowledge and experiences with open-ended questions (eg. NOT 'yes' or 'no' answers). Instead use questions such as: *What do you know about the figure in this picture?* Rather than *Do you know who this is?*
- For further ideas on story-telling, see *Section 3: Jatakas and Paramitas JP2. Telling a Story with a Virtuous Meaning, p3.4.*

Making Revision Fun

Re-capping and revising is not only a useful strategy but essential in the bRI classroom where students only attend once a week. So, always recap on the previous week's theme, new words and concepts etc.

Here are some ideas to get you started with quick revision exercises for each lesson:

I. Revising Stories:

- *Re-arranging text*
 - Students arrange jumbled sentences of a story into the correct order on the board or on pieces of card.
 - Students arrange jumbled parts of a sentence into the correct order.
- *Picture sequencing*

Students arrange jumbled pictures of a story into the correct order. They can then retell the story in their own words.
- *Matching text to pictures*

Students match pictures to text and then read the story as a whole.
- *Re-telling the story*

Go around the circle with each student adding the next part of the story. The instructor asks: *And what happened next?*

2. Word Games for reinforcing new words, terms and concepts:

New terms such as impermanence, wisdom, loving kindness and compassion, can be easily reinforced through word games such as:

- *Matching*
Students match concepts to the meaning of the words written on the board, or on card. Easily made into a pair game on the lines of *Snap!* or *Pelmanism*.
- *Fill in the Gaps*
Students are given a text where words are missing. It is helpful to provide a text box of words that students choose from.
- *Missing letters*
Students could be asked to learn the spelling of words and given a worksheet with letters missing from each word.
- *Crossword Puzzles*
Crossword puzzles reinforce meaning and spelling of new words.
www.buddhanet.net has some examples but making your own specially suited to a recent topic and to the level of your students is always best.
- *Word Searches*
Word searches help students learn the spelling of words as they have to look for the words in a sea of letters. See section 9: *Extension Activities EA11*, [p9.19](#))
- *Making 'Who Am I?' Riddles*
The instructor gives three clues about a person or a place from Buddhist history and the students have to guess who or what it is.
eg.
I have only one son.
I am a queen.
I died young and my sister took care of my son.
Answer: Queen Maya

3. Other Games and Activities:

Many well-known board games can be adapted for use in the Buddhist RI classroom. Snakes and Ladders or Q&A Ludo are just two.

The Wisdom Game (see *Section 3: Jatakas and Paramitas JP3 p3.5*) using knowledge from the Jataka Tales has been designed specially for this program and could be adapted for every Jataka Tale lesson.

Games and Performing Activities

1. Charades:

This is a fun activity for an end-of-term/year party.

- Create a list of words or story titles.
- Cut out small pieces of paper. Write a word on each piece of paper and fold in half.
- Put all the folded papers into a container.
- Divide the class into 2 groups. One group plays at a time.
- The *playing group* sends one representative who selects a piece of paper from the container. Without making any sound, the representative has to act out the word for the rest of the group to guess. If the group guesses the correct word within a set period (eg. 30 secs) then the group scores a point.
- The other group then gets a turn and then it comes back to the first group. This time a different student chooses the word and acts it out.
- Continue until all students in both groups have had their turn.

2. Passing Whispers:

- Students are divided into two groups and form a line one behind the other.
- The instructor stands a distance away from the two lines and asks the first student of each line to come forward.
- The instructor whispers a sentence into the ears of those two students who run back to their own line and whisper into the ear of the second student, who whispers into the ear of the third student, and on and on it goes.
- The last student goes to the board and writes down what was whispered to him/her.
- The group with the most accurate sentence gets one point. It is possible to give both groups points. It would be great if they get them right!
- Example of sentences could be, "One way of describing impermanence is nothing stays the same forever."
- The last student then comes up to the front of the line to become the first student. This way all students have a turn to write on the board.
- The object of this game is to encourage the students to think of ways to remember what they hear and to pass on the right message. This is a useful way for students to understand something, as the message has to make sense for them to remember it.

3. Quizzes:

- Students could be divided into two groups and run up to the board to write the correct answer.
- Students could be divided into two groups and the students take turns to be standing at the board to answer questions and to write the answer down.
- Students could be seated in groups and given paper to write down answers and to show their answers. This way the group can discuss their answers.
- Students could form two lines as in Passing Whispers and the instructor whispers the question into the ears of the first student. The question is then whispered down the line and any student who knows the answer would whisper the answer too. The last student will write the question and answer on the board. The last student then comes up to the front to become the first student.

4. Plays and Poems:

- All classes enjoy performing a play, either just amongst themselves or for an audience. Several plays are included in this resource book (see *The Wounded Swan* [p2.8](#) and several others) but as you grow in confidence, writing your own plays for the class will evolve naturally for you.
- Though plays may take up many lessons, they are interactive and require the student to understand the significance of the story and to act it out appropriately. Shy students can be involved in making props or improvisation. Others can provide sound and lighting support.
- *Props* can be simple and imaginative eg. a crown to represent a king or queen, a large green cloth held up to symbolize a forest, a cardboard cut-out for the wounded swan and so on. In fact, the simpler and more creative the props, the more fun the students will have.
- Once the play is well rehearsed, it can be presented to their mainstream class, parents, invited guests or at school assemblies. Make sure you ask permission of the class instructor, deputy principal and inform the Buddhist Education Program Co-ordinator if letters etc are to go home to parents.
- *Poems* are lovely to hear aloud and students enjoy reciting in groups or individually line by line (see *More Virtuous Qualities MV2: Happy, Peaceful and Kind* [p4.6](#)). Encourage your students to write their own poems about a new concept.
- *Recitation of Verses*: Students could learn to recite verses of motivation and dedication. The older students could write their own dedication and take turns to lead the dedication at the end of the class.

Craft and Drawing

Craft

Making things by hand caters to students who learn by doing. It also requires concentration which is good practice for mindfulness. Make sure your instructions are clear and simple and that you have all the materials needed. Creating the item yourself is the best way to ensure you know how to do it and it provides a model for the class to follow. The fruits of their labour could be used as gifts for someone deserving.

Section 8 contains several ideas for craft lessons.

Cartoons and Drawings

Cartooning and drawing are also good activities to make students think of the gist and significance of a story. Students can update a Jataka Tale by using a modern context to illustrate a point in the story and retell it with speech bubbles or cartoon squares or as a story-board. These can be shared with younger students in other classes or given as little gifts.

Making a Class Bodhi Tree

This activity can be an on-going class activity encompassing both craft work in making the tree itself and the leaves but more importantly playing a role in reinforcing positive and helpful behaviour.

For a full description of this activity, see CA5. *Growing our Bodhi Tree* [p8.9](#).

Bringing the Outside World into the Buddhist RI Class

Integrating the Buddha's teachings with everyday life is the ultimate challenge for us all. Doing this in the Buddhist RI classroom can be refreshing and stimulating, especially for older students.

For younger children, bringing in objects of both special and mundane significance (a feather, a Buddha image, a special stone, an elephant statue, a beautiful piece of cloth or a flower) can transform the atmosphere and point children towards the spiritual in everyday life.

Festivals and Special Days

Buddhist festival days are an excellent time to celebrate Buddhism and to share this with the rest of the school or class. Many schools now acknowledge the different religious festival days, so enquire as to whether your school does this. It may be a notice at assembly or in the newsletter that it is the Wesak Festival for instance with a short description of what it is.

Section 7 provides several lessons for observing Wesak. It is also a time when different cultures can express their particular way of celebrating this special time in the Buddhist calendar.

More Virtuous Qualities



DISCOVERING
BUDDHA

Lessons for
Primary School

Key to Icons



Text



Activity



Creative Work







Meditation



MORE VIRTUOUS QUALITIES:
DEVELOPING A GOOD HEART:

MV1. Loving Kindness to People and Animals

Lesson Plan	Years 3-6	Lessons 4-5
		
1. Theme:	Loving kindness	
2. Topic:	Loving kindness to people and animals	
3. Values:	Cultivation of loving kindness	
4. Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage children to cultivate loving kindness to people close to them • To encourage children to cultivate loving kindness to animals and people not so close to them • To cultivate empathy in children 	
5. Outcomes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify people and animals they feel loving kindness for • To think of how some animals suffer and to cultivate loving kindness towards them. 	
6. Preparation:	Photocopy worksheets.	
7. Lesson 1:	 Meditation: Lead the students in a loving kindness meditation. Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to talk about the people they love and why they love them. Try to extend from family to friends to animals.  Ask students to write in the heart the names of people and animals they love. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask about people who they might not love so much. Why do we have to cultivate loving kindness towards them. Would they want to add them to their heart?  Talk about animals or pests that they may not love very much, like mosquitoes, spiders. What can they do to remove them from their homes without harming these animals? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the rest of the worksheet and discuss the responses. • Important to ensure that students are not encouraged to touch or catch insects or animals that may be poisonous or dangerous 	
8. Lesson 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the <i>MV1. Activity C. Loving Kindness to Siblings</i> visualisation as a guided visualisation to lead in the next session. Follow up discussion: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did it feel for the younger brother? What can he do next time? 2. Think of how it looks from the older brother's perspective. What did it look like? 3. Tell the story from the big brother's perspective. 	

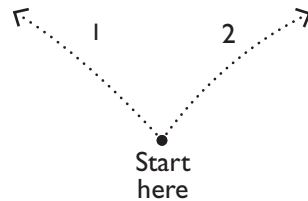


MV1. *Activity A.* Loving Kindness *Page 1 of 2*

Name

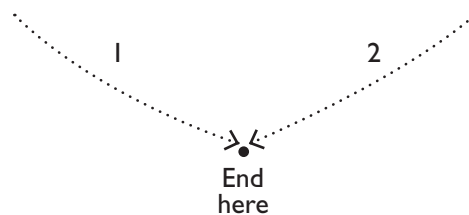
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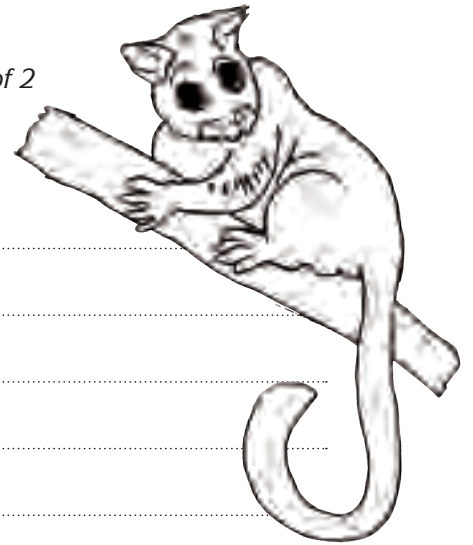
1. Draw a big heart. Start from the dot and end at the dot.
2. Write the names of people and animals that you love/like in the heart.



People I love

Animals I Love





1. Why do you love them?

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2. How do you feel if they are hurt or sick?

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3. Write down 5 ways you can show loving kindness to people and animals.

1.

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3.

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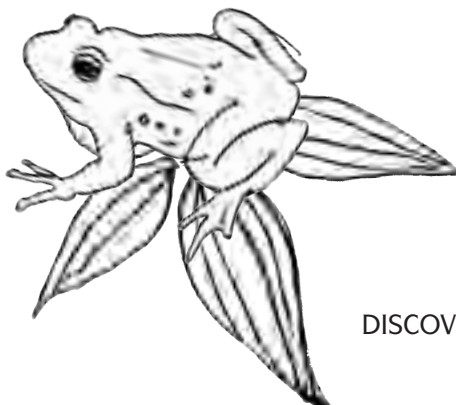
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MV1. *Activity C.* Loving Kindness to Siblings

Imagine yourself as a three year old. You are small. Everything in the house looks big to you. The chairs are high, you need extra effort to climb them.

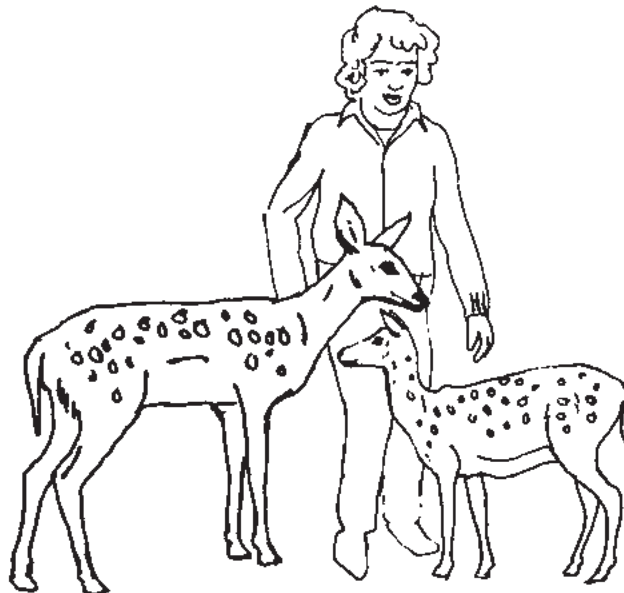
Then you look across the table to see your older brother. He is big and strong and he moves quickly. You want to be like him! You adore him very much and copy everything he does.

You call him so that you can show him what you can do, but he is talking and he ignores you. You call him more loudly and he still ignores you. You start shouting and he tells you to “shoosh”.

You start crying to get his attention and he screams at you to “shut up”. Then your mum gets upset and scolds your big brother. He starts saying that you are annoying him and you are crying for no reason! You feel so upset! All you wanted was to be the same as him, so you cry even more loudly. He starts screaming at you. Why?

What can I do next time to get his attention?


How would kindness change the situation?



MORE VIRTUOUS QUALITIES: DEVELOPING A GOOD HEART

MV2. Happy, Peaceful and Kind

Lesson Plan		Years 3-6	Lesson 1
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1. **Theme:** Loving kindness
2. **Topic:** Loving kindness song
3. **Values:** Loving kindness
4. **Aims:** To sing the celebration of happiness, peacefulness and kindness
5. **Lesson:**  Introduce the topic by talking about how you can express happiness, peacefulness and kindness with hand gestures.

These gestures will become the hand actions for the song.

- Read through the lyrics of song, 'Happy, Peaceful and Kind'.
- Sing to the tune, 'If you're happy and you know it'





MV2. Happy, Peaceful and Kind

If you're [Happy] and you know it, clap your hands.
If you're [Happy] and you know it, clap your hands.
If you're [Happy] and you know it, and you really want to show it,
If you're [Happy] and you know it, clap your hands.




If you're {Peaceful} and you know it, meditate.
If you're {Peaceful} and you know it, meditate.
If you're {Peaceful} and you know it, and you really want to show it,
If you're {Peaceful} and you know it, meditate.

If you're (Kind) and you know it, give a hug.
If you're (Kind) and you know it, give a hug.
If you're (Kind) and you know it, and you really want to show it,
If you're (Kind) and you know it, give a hug.



MORE VIRTUOUS QUALITIES: DEVELOPING A GOOD HEART

MV3. A Smile Snapshot

Lesson Plan		Years	Lessons
		3-6	4-5
1. Theme:	Acts of kindness		
2. Topic:	Bringing happiness		
3. Values:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciation of self • Cultivation of virtues • Appreciation of the virtues of other people 		
4. Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To notice how an act of kindness brings a smile to someone's face • To look for acts of kindness • To appreciate the goodness in oneself • To appreciate the kindness of others 		
5. Outcome:	A collection of pictures of people smiling.		
6. Preparation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several photos of people smiling – all ages, all races. • Copy the worksheet and make into a double sided A4. • Make three sets of worksheets per student. • Think of happy moments to share with the class. 		
7. Lessons 1-5:	 Meditation: Think of the last time you saw someone smile. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where was the person and who was that person with? • What were they doing? • What were they saying? • Why is the person smiling? • Is the other person smiling too? Why? • How does it make you feel when someone smiles at you? • What makes you smile? Why do you smile?  Ask the students to talk about the circumstances of smiling. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show several photos of people in different situations (eg. at a party, playing in a park, a parent or grandparent and a child). All of them are smiling. • Discuss what the people are doing, how they are feeling, how they are treating one another and why they are smiling. Why does helping someone bring a smile? • Group Work: In groups ask the students to discuss examples of smiling that they could collect. • Whole Class: Students share their discussion. Class decides which pictures they should look out for. 		



Data Collection:

Fieldtrip No. 1 to playground/classroom/after school

- Observation and recording of smiles seen every 30 minutes.
- Collecting acts of kindness.

Fieldtrip No.2 to playground/classroom/after school

- Active participation to generate smiles
- Collection of smiles received every 30 minutes.
- Discussion after each field trip about what they collected, how it was collected, and any difficulties experienced.
- Cover (page 1): Students to think of what they should put on the cover. It should have a title and a picture or photo.

8. Follow up:

Students could collect more smiles from home and anywhere outside school. It could also be a school holiday activity.

OR

As a class, write up a list of why people smile.

Display in a prominent place.





MV3. Example. A Smile Snapshot

This is an example of a completed Smile Snapshot.

Date 5 May 2008

What happened?

We were at the supermarket and an old lady who had a bag of potatoes in her hand asked my mum if she could let her go first. Mum said, "Sure" and the lady had a wide smile for mum. I turned and looked at mum and she had a beautiful smile too.

Why do you think the first person was smiling?

The old lady was smiling because she might be in a hurry and mum let her go first. She was also thanking mum with her smile.

Why do you think the second person was smiling?

Mum was smiling back at the old lady. She is happy to make someone else happy.



MV3. *Activity.* Smile Snapshot page 1 of 2

Name

Date

Paste here your best picture of someone smiling.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for pasting a photograph of someone smiling.



Snap a smile and record the result below.

Date

What happened?

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Why do you think the first person was smiling?

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Why do you think the second person was smiling?

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MORE VIRTUOUS QUALITIES: DEVELOPING A GOOD HEART:


MV4. The Good Deeds Book

<i>Lesson Plan</i>		<i>Years</i> 3-6	<i>Lessons</i> Several weeks or a term
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- 1. Theme:** The benefits of good deeds.
- 2. Topic:** The Good Deeds Book.
- 3. Aims:** For the children to become aware of the kind actions they already do and to encourage them to do small daily acts of kindness.

Note

When a child does something wrong, adults often pay attention. However, at other times they may only give a faint smile or soft praise when they see children behaving well. As a result, the child focuses on his/her negativity and can overlook his/her own strengths. This exercise affirms the positive potential in all children.

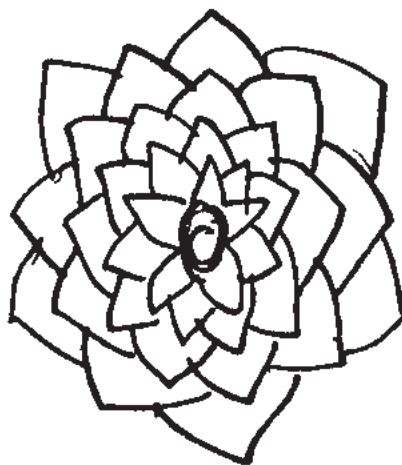
- 4. Preparation:** Photocopy pages of book double-sided and collate.
- 5. Lesson:** Explain to the children that we often do not notice the many good deeds that we do. In this activity we stop to look at how doing good deeds can affect not only others' happiness, but our own happiness. HH the Dalai Lama has said, *"if you try to ... develop more kindness and compassion for others, ultimately you yourself will benefit more than you would otherwise. So sometimes I say that the wise selfish person should practice this way. Our own brain, our own heart is our temple; the philosophy is kindness."*
 Is this true? Do we personally benefit from acts of kindness? By using the book children can conduct an experiment to find out if they benefit from their good deeds.
- 6. Useful Tip:** The Buddhist Council of New South Wales has set up a website www.actsofkindness.org.au to collect random acts of kindness. Students could log on and look it up and even add their own records of acts of kindness.

Discuss with the class the types of activities that are good deeds.

For example:

- Bringing a cool drink to mum/dad when she/he is working on something around the house
- Helping in your family - without being asked
- Offering to read a book to a sibling or younger friend
- Offering to help out with your older brother/sister's chores
- Helping your Instructor with clearing up/doing something in the class
- Opening the door when they have their hands full
- Helping a classmate with something they have difficulty doing
- Comforting or hugging a friend when she/he is upset
- Sharing your toys with other people so that they can enjoy them too
- Releasing a fly/spider outside the house instead of killing it
- Being kind to an animal
- Caring for an injured bird and then releasing it back to freedom
- Picking up something that might cause someone else to slip or fall over..

The pages in the book also ask the children to guess how the other person or animal might have felt. This will help the children develop empathy by attempting to identify how another might be feeling. Explain that we may not know for sure, and that not all acts of kindness will be responded to immediately or returned. Treat this activity as an exploration and allow time for discussions.





MV4. *Activity.* The Good Deeds Book

Name

Date

The kind deeds I did today were:

1.

2.

3.

My Happiness rating was:

I think the Happiness of the other (person/animal?) was:

Comments/observations:

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.....

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MORE VIRTUOUS QUALITIES: FRIENDSHIP

MV5. A Bush Turkey and a False-Friend Falcon

(Kukkuta – Jataka)

Lesson Plan	   	Years	Lessons
		4-6	2

1. Theme: Friendship

2. Topic: A Jataka Tale: A Bush Turkey and a False Friend Falcon


3. Values:

- Integrity
- Kindness and compassion
- Wisdom and understanding the effect of one's actions


4. Aims:

- To consider the qualities of a true friend
- To be mindful of unwholesome qualities in friends
- To show gratitude and kindness towards friends

5. Preparation:

-  Class set of the story
- Writing paper or coloured card cut to a suitable size
- Photocopies of worksheet

6. Lesson 1:

-  Distribute copies of the story to students and read aloud, inviting students to take turns reading the story.
- Assign a stanza of the poem to groups of two or three.
- Groups discuss the meaning of their stanza.
- Class discussion of the meaning of the story with feedback from groups.

Follow-up Discussion Questions:

1. Who was the Bush Turkey in a future life?
2. Why was the Bush Turkey the last of the flock?
3. What did he do to survive?
4. How did the Falcon try to trick the Bush Turkey?
5. Did the Bush Turkey believe him?
6. What are the qualities of a good friend that the Bush Turkey mentions in his verse?
7. Do you agree? Would you add some more?
8. Why did the Falcon fly away?
9. What is this story about?
10. Other than friendship, can you find other good qualities (paramitas, virtues) demonstrated in the story? (eg. Wisdom, equanimity)

7. Lesson 2:



Meditation: Loving Kindness to a Friend.

ME11. The Flower Garden in my Heart p6.22.

- 2-3 minutes quick debrief with students on their responses to the meditation.
- Recap the qualities of a good friend as discussed in the last lesson.
- Write these on the board.



Choose one of the two following activities:

Writing a Letter/Making a Card:

- Ask students to think of a friend (or family member) who has the qualities written on the board. Distribute paper/card.
- Students write a letter or make a card telling that person why they like them so much.
- Students give their work to their friend.





MV5. Bush Turkey and a False-Friend Falcon *(Kukkuta – Jataka)*

This ancient story tells of a time when the Wise and Compassionate One on the way to Enlightenment took birth as a bush turkey.
He grew up to be the head of his flock.
In the area lived a falcon who would circle the skies and swoop to catch a turkey from the flock to eat whenever he could.

Finally, only the leader of the flock remained. This turkey would take great care to hide in the bushes when he ate so as to not to leave himself exposed to the sky where the falcon could move to catch him.

The falcon grew frustrated at not being able to catch the bush turkey the regular way, so he tried to trick him.

The falcon perched on a branch of a tree and called to the turkey,

“Dear bush turkey, why do you fear me? I want to be friends with you. Over the hill there is food for both of us. Why don’t we go there and feed together?”

“No way,” replied the bush turkey, “You and I can never be friends, so go away!”

“Come on now,” coaxed the falcon, “I have changed. I am sick of eating bush turkeys. I promise you that I will be a good friend to you.”

“I don’t believe you. Now go away!” answered the bush turkey, “You have eaten all my friends so you can never be a friend of mine.”

Then the bush turkey thought about friendship and spoke aloud in verse for all the animals of the forest to hear:

*Do not trust those whose words are lies, or those who only know
Self-interest, or those who put on an ‘I-am better-than-you’ show.*

*Some are jealous and full of greed
They will speak kind words, but don’t follow through in deed.*

*Do not put your trust in man or woman of fickle mind
Like those who make plans and promises, but to break them they are inclined.*

*The bullies who talk tough and frighten all others
These should never be held close as sisters or brothers.*

*Some speak smooth words not from the heart, and try to please
With showy acts of friendship – don’t put your trust in these.*








*If one is jealous when you do well and wants what you have got
They will do you harm then leave – such a friend is not.*

*Those who recognise the meaning of events
Choose good friends and avoid unhappy incidents.*

All the animals clapped and cheered when they heard this verse and the falcon flew away, because nobody wanted to be his friend.

MORE VIRTUOUS QUALITIES: CO-OPERATION AND INTERDEPENDENCE

MV6. The Quails and the Net

Lesson Plan	   	Years 3-6	Lessons 2-6
1. Theme:	Interdependence		
2. Topic:	A Jataka Tale: The Quails and the Net		
3. Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will appreciate the connections that we have to other people and places• Students will appreciate that all material comforts come from the efforts of others		
4. Preparation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Class set of the story• Class set of the worksheet		
5. Lesson 1:	 Distribute copies of the story to students and read aloud, inviting students to take turns reading the story.		
	Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does working together improve our lives? At school? At home? Playing sport?• Ask the students to think of as many examples as possible. Write them on the board.		
6. Lesson 2:	 Revise the last lesson and the values of the story. As a group, investigate how many people it takes to bring an apple (or a chocolate biscuit) to your hand.  Construct a mind map copy and distribute the worksheet <i>MV6. Activity B</i> linking as many people as possible to the food. Some prompts may be – cocoa farmers, biologists, pickers, packers, drivers, truck-makers, road-makers. They all wear clothes and eat food – so include cotton-growers, food producers etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make it as extensive as possible.		



MV6. Activity A. The Quails and the Net *(Ammadamana – Jataka)*

A long time ago in ancient India, the Wise One on the path of gaining wisdom was born a quail. He lived in a forest as the head of a flock of many thousands of quail.

There was also a fowler who made a good living by catching and selling quail.

Each day the fowler would come to the forest and make little quail sounds in the undergrowth until the quails flocked together. Then he would swiftly fling a net over the assembled birds, draw it in on all sides, bundle the net filled with birds into a basket and make off to the market.

The losses to the flock were heavy.

The head quail, who was already on the path of wisdom and kindness, addressed the flock with an idea.

“This fowler is causing much grief in our community, he began, “yet I believe we have the power to avoid this trouble.”

“All we have to do is work together. Tomorrow when he comes into the forest, the very moment he throws the net over you, each one of you must put your head through a hole in the mesh, then all of you together must fly up carrying the net. Put the net down on a thicket of thorns and from there you can escape.”

The flock agreed that this was an excellent idea.

The next day the plan worked beautifully. The fowler spent the rest of the day untangling the net and went home that evening empty-handed.

Day after day the quails stuck to their plan, and day after day the fowler would work until sunset untangling the net and return home empty-handed.

His wife got cross. “What are you doing every day?” she demanded, “Are you keeping a second home? Where is all the money?”

“No my darling,” replied the fowler, “I have no home other than with you my love. It’s those quail. They have learned to work together now. Each day the moment I throw my net over them, they grab the net and fly together to a thorn thicket, drop the net there and escape.

Mind you, I don’t expect that they will keep this up for long. They won’t live in unity always. As soon as they start bickering amongst themselves, I will be there with my net and bag plenty for you, my lovely.”

Then he spoke in verse:

*With co-operation the birds will flee
When quarrels arise they will fall prey to me.*



One day, not long after this conversation the quails were feeding.
One little bird accidentally trod on another's head.

"Get off my head you idiot," grumbled the quail.

"I am really sorry, I didn't mean to, don't be angry with me," apologised the other.

But the other one did not leave it there, and soon the two started bickering.

Others joined in.

"You say that you can lift the net by yourself."

"Do not. You do."

"You do!"

"No, you do!"

And so it went. The quail leader was saddened by the display.

"There is no safety here with this quarrelsome group. Soon they will no longer lift the net together, and then the fowler will catch his quarry. I can stay here no longer." With that the quail leader left with a loyal band of followers.

Sure enough the fowler came back a few days later, made the little quail noises in the undergrowth, gathered the quails and spread his net.

"Here's your big chance Muscles, lift the net!"

"No, you're the expert, show us how it is done!"

And with retorts being bandied around the group, the fowler swept up the net and bagged the lot of them. That evening with money in his pocket and a bag of juicy quail for dinner he returned home to be greeted by a happy wife.





More Virtuous Qualities: Co-operation and Interdependence

MV6. *Activity B. The Quails and the Net Mind Map*

Name

Date

As a group, investigate how many people it takes to bring an apple (or a chocolate biscuit) to your hand. The first one 'Orchardist' has been done already.

