

Lesson Plan #3: Exploring Buddhism

Objectives:

- Review important vocabulary words
- Explore Buddhism more deeply

1. The students will enter the room and begin copying the agenda from the board. The bell ringer will be a 10 minute quick-write (shown on the ActivBoard screen) on the following: **“Explain what you think two of the following statements mean. Give concrete examples if possible.”**
 - a. The greatest achievement is selflessness.
 - b. The greatest worth is self-mastery.
 - c. The greatest quality is seeking to serve others.
 - d. The greatest precept is continual awareness.
 - e. The greatest medicine is the emptiness of everything.
 - f. The greatest action is not conforming with the world’s ways.
 - g. The greatest magic is transmuting the passions.
 - h. The greatest generosity is non-attachment.
 - i. The greatest goodness is a peaceful mind.
 - j. The greatest patience is humility.
 - k. The greatest effort is not concerned with results.
 - l. The greatest meditation is a mind that lets go.
 - m. The greatest wisdom is seeing through appearances.
2. The students will stop writing when the timer goes off. The teacher will collect the writing samples. The teacher will then ask volunteers to share (from memory) what they imagined.
3. The students will decide discuss and define morality and ethics. They will talk about where our beliefs in right and wrong come from. Then the teacher will open the web pages on the board. The class will copy and discuss the four noble truths, the eightfold path, and the precepts:
 - a. <http://www.thebigview.com/buddhism/fourtruths.html>
 - b. <http://www.thebigview.com/buddhism/eightfoldpath.html>
 - c. <http://www.thebigview.com/buddhism/precepts.html>

The teacher will have each of the items discussed on cards. On the wall, there will be a piece of tape that represents a continuum. On one end, it will say **IRRELEVANT/UNIMPORTANT**. On the other end, it will say **CRUCIAL/ESSENTIAL**. The class will look at each of these teachings and practices and discuss them from the standpoint of ethics and morals. They will discuss which they think promote a better society and why. Then they will decide where on the continuum they think the concept or teaching should go.

4. Next, the students will get out a scrap piece of paper. They will play a quick word association game in which they write the first word that comes to their minds when the teacher says the following:
 - a. Emptiness
 - b. Peace
 - c. Reflection
 - d. Awareness
 - e. Yoga
 - f. Meditate
5. The students will share some of the words they came up with and talk about meditation. Questions to be addressed are what is it, why do people do it, what are the benefits, etc.
6. The teacher will introduce the guest speaker, Dr. C. Stangel, a chiropractic neurologist who has studied the medicinal benefits of meditation. He will show slides that explain the health purposes that meditation can serve and how scientists believe it happens (i.e. responses of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system, etc.) Then Dr. Stangel will then lead the students through a short breathing exercise and, if time permits, through other types of meditation exercises. (*Note: If Dr. Stangel is unavailable, the teacher will be able to use internet sources and lead the students through a short Theravada meditation session.)
7. Fire Escape: In order to leave the classroom, each student will show me a Buddhist mudra from yesterday and explain what it means.

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Materials:

- ActivBoard with writing assignments and internet sites such as <http://www.thebigview.com/buddhism/>
- Cards and tape
- Guest speaker with audio-visual aids

Notes:

- This lesson is designed for a multilevel English language learner class at the high school level.
- There are approximately 12 students from 10 different countries.
- There are no students with disabilities.
- The class is approximately 90 minutes long.