

Subject	Religious Studies: Component 1: Buddhism
Context	The following tasks will help you develop an overview of our first topic: the life of The Buddha. They will also help you understand why and how his life is significant for Buddhists today, and some different ideas about how the story of his life should be interpreted and understood. You may also gain an overview of some of the main beliefs of Buddhism and how these are understood variously by different denominations.
Securing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Watch the short video clip below about the Life of the Buddha - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rHp82O5acDg 2. Read the document called Reading 1 – The Life of the Buddha 3. Summarise the Life of the Buddha in 10 bullet points. To do this you will need to pick out the most important events in his life. 4. Summarise which event you believe to be the most significant. Outline why you think this and why someone may disagree with you.
Processing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the document called Reading 2 – Interpretations 2. How was the Buddha influenced by the religious, cultural and economic situation in India at the time? Produce a mindmap to collect together your ideas. 3. Try to think of examples where the Buddhas teaching was unique and not influenced by the religion, culture and society of his time. 4. You could listen to the following podcast to learn more about the life and teachings of the Buddha. - Episode 88, Buddhism (Part I - The Life of Siddhartha Gautama) (thepanpsycast.com) This podcast is good for lots of different philosophical topics. Don't limit yourself to Buddhism and have an explore!
Exploring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the document called Reading 3 – Peter Harvey - Introduction to Buddhism 2. Create a diagram to represent the different branches of Buddhism Harvey introduces. This could be a timeline of their development, a family tree, a flow chart, an annotated map, or any other type of diagram you think would work well. 3. Try to include when and where each branch began, how it developed from and is connected to the other branches, their main beliefs and practices, their scriptures, how they are influenced by the culture or religions in the society in which they developed, how many followers they have today, and any other facts you can identify. 4. You can undertake additional research if you like, or just focus on the extract from Peter Harvey 5. This is a university level text, so it will involve quite a bit of work. The language maybe unfamiliar and he uses a lot of Pali/Sanskrit words which don't always translate neatly into English.

	The following documentary explores the life of the Buddha in more detail – this is quite long so worth dipping in and out of! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vc7_VyVXDLs
Reviewing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Based on what you have learnt from this bridging work, what do you think you will find interesting about studying Buddhism for 2 years? 2. What questions would you like to ask about Buddhism in your first lesson 3. Please learn the key words and definitions below. These will be used throughout our first topic. I will test your knowledge of the ‘key’ terms in our first lesson.

Key words and definitions to learn:

Key Term	Definitions
Atman	A Hindu term for the soul
Theravada	Meaning the ‘way of the elders’ – a branch of Buddhism practised today within Southeast Asia (Sri Lanka, Cambodia) that preserves the teaching of the Buddha’s earlier followers.
Mahayana	Meaning the ‘greater (Maha) vehicle (Yana)’ – a branch of Buddhism practiced in China, Tibet and Japan that introduces new ideas and texts.
Ashrama	A Hindu term for a stage of life - Hinduism teaches that there are four stages to life and each stage has different duties
Varna	A Hindu term for the class system - Hinduism divides society into four (five) ‘classes’ that determines your duties and status in society.
Brahmin	The top of the Varna ‘class’ system – made up of spiritual or religious leaders.
Kshatriya	The second rank of the Varna system – often called the warrior or ruling class.
Hagiography	A religious biography – a hagiography is a semi-fictional story that uses analogies and fictional elements to convey messages about a religious figure.... Essentially, gilding the lily.
Allegorical	Having a hidden meaning or message beyond the literal - Plato’s cave is referred to as an allegory because it is a fictional tale used by Plato as a teaching method.

Siddhartha Gautama / Gotama	The name of the historical Buddha.
Dharma	The teachings of the Buddha - In Hinduism it means the eternal law. It can be argued that the Buddha is teaching this after he discovers it through his awakening.
Soteriology	A theory of salvation - Most religions teach us methods of saving ourselves from something; Sin / Pain / Evil. Buddhism is the same.
Dukkha	Is essence, suffering; there are lots of different translations. The Buddhist belief that life necessarily contains elements that are 'difficult to endure.'