

Vesak (Buddha Day)

Buddhism is the teachings of the Buddha. He was a wise teacher and his teachings help people to live wisely and happily. Buddhists do not think the Buddha is God but a great teacher. Buddhists make promises to the Buddha, one of these is that they will not harm any living thing. The Buddha taught his followers that they live on earth until they become good enough to reach a state of perfect peace called Nirvana.



- ① Sit down with the children and show them the series of pictures overleaf. You may wish to lay the sheets out either on a table or the floor, and then read the story.
- ② Ask the children the following questions and discuss them:-
Which pictures did you like?
Which pictures didn't you like?
Why did the prince want to save the swan?
Do you like animals? What is your favourite animal?
- ③ Ask the children to draw a picture of their favourite animal.
- ④ Talk to the children about what makes them happy and sad.

The Story of the celebration of Vesak



King Siddhodana and Queen Maya had a son. He was called Prince Siddhartha.



**He grew up to be very
kind, he never hurt
anything, not even the
smallest animal or insect.**



One day his cousin shot a swan. The prince saved the swan as he knew all animals wanted to live.



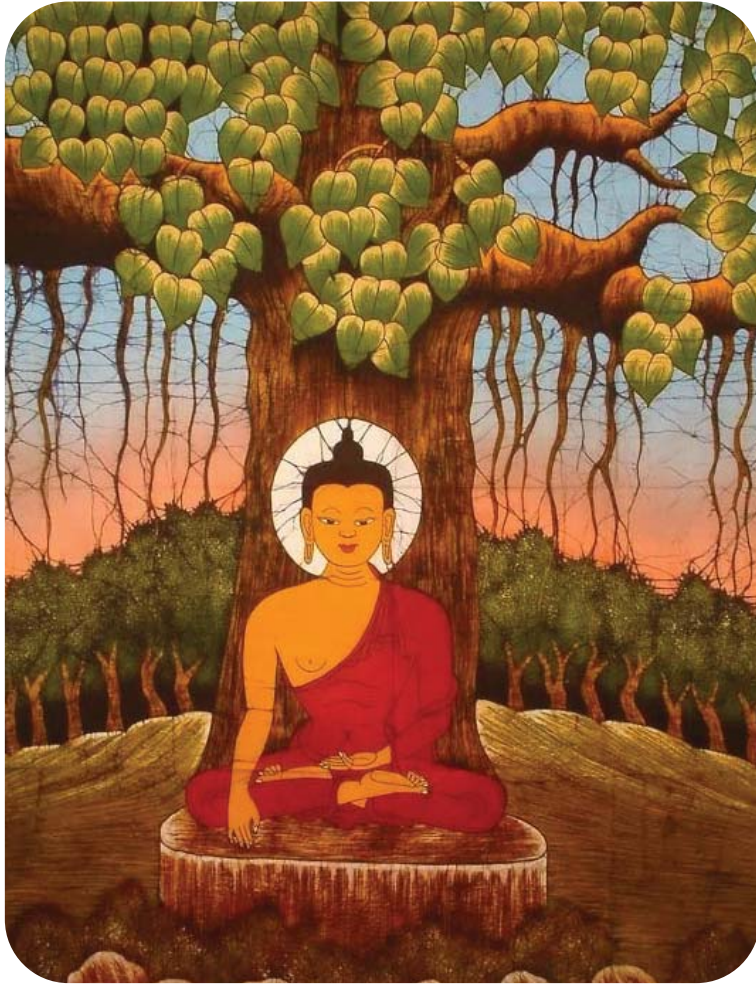
**His parents were told
that one day he would
be a great teacher.**



**One day the prince
was out riding when
he saw 4 people.
One sick, one old
and one dead.**

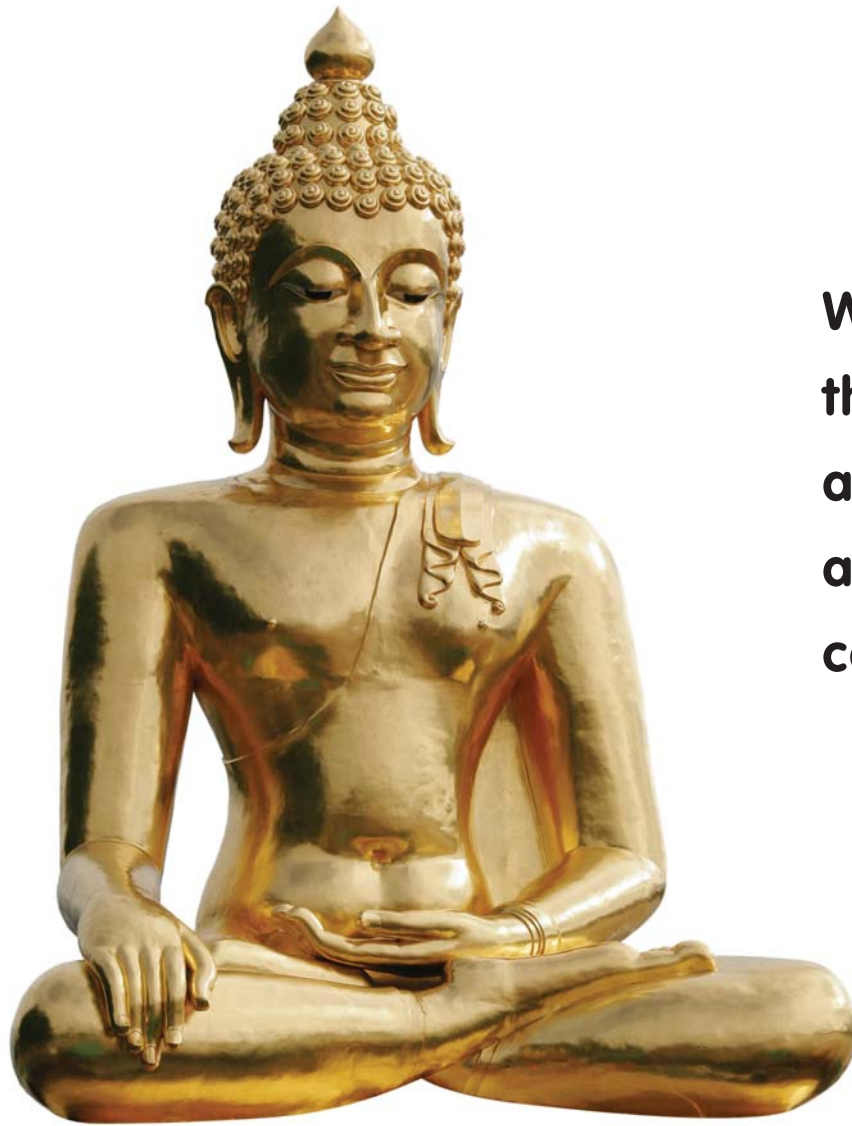


The first 3 made the prince sad, but then he met a holy man who made him think about what it meant to be happy.



Prince Siddhartha went off in search of happiness. He suffered hardships but became wiser as he travelled.

He sat under a huge Bodhi tree and thought about why people suffer and how can he help to make them happy.



**When he had
thought out the
answer he became
a great teacher
called the Buddha.**