






AQA Religious Studies A – Buddhism Practices

Key Words			
<b>Chanting</b>	A type of worship that involves reciting from Buddhist scriptures	<b>Samatha Meditation</b>	A form of meditation focused on calming the mind and mindfulness
<b>Karma</b>	An ethical principle that explains how actions lead either to happiness or suffering	<b>Shrine</b>	A focal point for Buddhist worship and offerings in temples or at home
<b>Karuna</b>	Compassion – feeling concerned for the suffering of others	<b>Skilful</b>	Actions that lead to good karma, unskilful actions lead to bad karma
<b>Mantra</b>	A short sequence of syllables recited during worship	<b>Stupa</b>	A tiered tower structure that is designed to symbolise elements of Buddhist teaching
<b>Metta</b>	Loving-kindness – a desire for other people to be happy	<b>Temple</b>	The focal point of Buddhist worship – the building where Buddhists gather
<b>Parinirvana Day</b>	A Mahayana festival commemorating Buddha’s passing into nirvana	<b>Vihara</b>	A monastery or community where Buddhists gather to meditate
<b>Puja</b>	Worship – it expresses gratitude and respect for Buddha and his teachings	<b>Vipassana Meditation</b>	A form of meditating on a teaching of Buddha to gain greater understanding
<b>Rupa</b>	A statue of Buddha used in worship and meditation	<b>Wesak</b>	A festival celebrating the life and teachings of Buddha

Key Ideas			
<b>Places of Worship + Puja</b> 	<b>Places of Worship</b> Buddhists often worship in a <b>temple</b> where they gather to meditate together and perform puja. A temple or vihara will have <b>rupas</b> (statues of Buddha), <b>stupas</b> (towered structures designed to symbolise Buddhist teaching) and often <b>shrines</b> where offerings can be made.	<b>Puja</b> Puja is the name for Buddhist worship which is a ceremony that expresses gratitude and respect for Buddha and his teachings. Buddhists perform <b>chanting</b> where sacred texts are remembered and taught orally and with devotion. They also recite <b>mantras</b> which are short sequences of syllables that help concentrate the mind.	
<b>Meditation</b> 	<b>Samatha Meditation</b> This is a type of meditation that involves calming the mind and developing <b>deepened concentration</b> . This can be done through <b>mindfulness</b> of breathing where Buddhists concentrate on the pattern of their breath to relax their mind.	<b>Vipassana Meditation</b> This type of meditation focuses on developing an <b>understanding of the nature of reality</b> . Buddhists focus on the <b>teachings of Buddha</b> , especially the Three Marks of Existence in order to move them closer to enlightenment.	
<b>Funerals + Festivals</b> 	<b>Buddhist Funerals</b> Buddhists usually try to spend as little money as possible on funerals as they believe the cycle of samsara means their energy moves onto a new body. In a <b>Sky Burial</b> Tibetan Buddhists leave the body on a mountainside as an offering to the vultures. This reflects a belief in <b>anicca</b> , the impermanence of existence.	<b>Wesak</b> Wesak is a Theravada Buddhist festival which celebrates the Buddha’s birth, enlightenment and passing away into nirvana. It is celebrated by lighting up <b>candles</b> and lanterns to represent <b>enlightenment</b> and by <b>attending the local temple</b> to take part in worship or meditation.	<b>Parinirvana Day</b> Parinirvana Day is a Mahayana festival that commemorates the <b>death</b> and passing into enlightenment of Buddha. It is celebrated by Buddhists reading and <b>studying</b> the last writings of Buddha, <b>meditating</b> at home or in a temple or going on a <b>retreat</b> to reflect and meditate.
<b>Five Moral Precepts + Six Perfections</b> 	<b>Five Moral Precepts</b> These form a Buddhist <b>ethical code</b> . They are five principles that Buddhists try to live their life by. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. to abstain from <b>taking life</b></li> <li>2. to abstain from <b>taking what is not given</b></li> <li>3. to abstain from <b>sexual misconduct</b></li> <li>4. to abstain from <b>wrong speech</b></li> <li>5. to abstain from <b>intoxicants</b></li> </ol>		<b>The Six Perfections</b> These are six qualities that Mahayana Buddhists try to develop to become Bodhisattvas. They require practice and thought in order to develop them. They are: <b>generosity, morality, patience, energy, meditation</b> and <b>wisdom</b> .
<b>Karma, Karuna + Metta</b> 	<b>Karma</b> Karma is the ethical idea that a Buddhist’s actions lead either to <b>happiness or suffering</b> . <b>Skilful</b> actions result in good karma and happiness. <b>Unskilful</b> actions result in bad karma and suffering. When a Buddhist is <b>reborn</b> their new life will be affected by their karma from past lives.	<b>Karuna</b> Karuna is <b>compassion</b> , a feeling of concern for the suffering of others. It is one of the <b>four sublime states</b> that Buddha taught Buddhists should develop. Buddhists aim to recognise the <b>suffering</b> of others and do something to make their lives better.	<b>Metta</b> Metta is <b>loving-kindness</b> , another of the four sublime states. It means desiring other people to be happy and is an attitude of <b>warmth and kindness</b> that Buddhists try to feel toward other people. It leads to a feeling of peace and contentment.