

KS3 Assessment Three Marks of Existence and Four Noble Truths

Buddhahood

Upon attaining enlightenment by following the **Middle Way** and vowing not to give up his meditation, Siddhartha became the **Buddha** and witnessed the true nature of life and the way to overcome suffering and achieve deep and permanent happiness. Out of compassion the Buddha realised that he could not keep his great insights to himself on how to attain Buddhahood. Over the next 45 years the Buddha taught what he witnessed and experienced upon attaining enlightenment with his followers. These teachings are known as the **Dharma** - universal laws or ultimate truths about the nature and order of the universe.

Three Marks of Existence

The Buddha taught that there are three aspects of experience - **Three Marks of Existence** - that all beings experience:

Dukkha - suffering as an inevitable part of life as life doesn't always go the way we want it but can be overcome by attaining enlightenment.

Anicca - impermanence as nothing lasts forever, things come into existence, exist, and then fade and suffering arises when we become attached to things and resist change.

Anatta - no fixed self or soul as there is no part of the self that is unchanging and we consist of five parts or skandhas that are our bodies, feelings, perception, thoughts, and awareness.

Four Noble Truths

The **Four Noble Truths** were discovered by the Buddha upon attaining enlightenment:

First Noble Truth - dukkha - life is characterised by suffering as there is suffering everywhere.

Second Noble Truth - samudaya - suffering is caused by craving and hatred and not coming to accept that nothing lasts forever.

Third Noble Truth - nirodha - suffering can come to an end if we become aware of our craving and hatred by developing contentment, compassion, and peace, and accepting that nothing lasts forever.

Fourth Noble Truth - magga - suffering can be overcome by following the **Middle Way** and the **Noble Eightfold Path** is a set of practices to become wiser, moral, and train the mind to not cause suffering in life, create good karma, and attain enlightenment or **Nibbana**.

Noble Eightfold Path

Regarding the Fourth Noble Truth the Buddha taught: "This is the Noble Eightfold Path, namely, **Right Understanding, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration**. This, monks, is the **Middle Way**, by which the Buddha has gained enlightenment, which produces insight and knowledge, and leads to peace, wisdom, enlightenment, and **Nibbana**."

