

Buddhist Festivals - Wesak & Parinirvana Day

Learning Objectives:

- To analyse specific aspects of Wesak and Parinirvana Day - its symbolism and events.
- To reflect on the importance of both festivals for Buddhists today.

POWER OF 3

- If these are answers, what are the respective questions?
1. Thangka
 2. Immanent
 3. Liturgical



BUDDHIST FESTIVALS AND RETREATS

Buddhist festivals are usually a time for joy and celebration. They give Buddhists a chance to remember and celebrate the Buddha's life and teaching. They also offer a chance for people to meet and practice together.

Buddhist Retreats are popular in the West. Many of them give people the opportunity to spend a weekend or week deepening their understanding of Buddhist practice.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Watch this video and write down 5 words which sum up your initial thoughts on Wesak.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E34ubrnWWCo>

THE MEANING OF WESAK

Can you tell me ...

- The historical background of the festival,
- The events in the Buddha's life it commemorates,
- When it is celebrated,
- Explanations of the symbolism of gifts given

Complete these sentences in your books:

Wesak celebrates

It is otherwise known as

Buddhists visit their local temples

They will give offerings

The giant lit lanterns symbolise.....

I think Wesak is important to Buddhists because

Try to include
all the key
terms in the
table below



**Wesak is the celebration of the
Buddhist believe in enlightenment –
how can this statement be opposed ?**

Buddha Day	Birth	Enlightenment
Nirvana	Temple	Offerings
Purify	Respect	Gratitude

BUDDHIST FESTIVALS – PARINIRVANA DAY

This is a **Mahayana** festival that is celebrated during February to remember the Buddha's passing into parinirvana. It is also known as Nirvana Day.



This festival is more solemn than Wesak as it is a chance for Buddhists to reflect on **death, impermanence and mourning** lost relatives and friends.

BUDDHIST FESTIVALS – PARINIRVANA DAY

The **Mahaparinirvana Sutra** is an important Buddhist scripture that describes the Buddha's last days, and passages from it are often read on Parinirvana Day.

Buddhists spend the day reading this text and meditating at home, or joining other temples for puja (worship) or meditation.

Some places will organise retreats.

It is also a traditional day for pilgrimage.



- Religious festivals are just an excuse for people to have a good time – evaluate (12)