

**Unit:** Buddhism & Detachment

**Unit Abstract:** Students will be analyzing primary and secondary sources of Buddhism to understand different facets of the religion. Students will also actively engage in certain Buddhist practices to gain a further understanding of what it means to be Buddhist.

**Unit Overview:**

Every year, I always find a large number of students craving more information on various world religions. From ancient Roman myths, to Buddhist tenets, students at Central High School are always interested in the ideas these religions suggest, and think actively about how those beliefs might shape a different world experience. Additionally, as a teacher of ninth graders, I find myself educating my students in a unique moment in their lives. They are still growing and evolving as young people; learning through challenges and experiences, they show an immense amount of personal growth over the course of a year. Keeping these ideas in mind, I chose to concentrate on Buddhism as an area of focus for my unit. This unit uses a unique combination of primary sources, written analysis, personal reflection, and art to build a better understanding of Buddhist values.

To start the unit, I wanted my students to reflect upon their personal experiences, and decide upon what has been their most challenging problem to overcome. I chose to start with this idea as I felt it would be an interesting contrast to a tale from the Buddhist analects that they will after the 1<sup>st</sup> lesson. After discussing & sharing life challenges, students will receive a short lecture on the background to Buddhism. Covering Siddharta Gautama's life, and the spread of Buddhism – students will receive some basic knowledge on the religion. Following this lecture, students will be given a portion of a sermon given by Siddharta Gautama on "What is Nirvana". Students will be asked to analyze the definition of Nirvana as the Buddha defines it in pairs. After a class discussion, students will be given their homework – Kisa Gotami. Students will be asked to complete in 1 page a reflection explaining what the moral of the tale of Gotami is (as they interpret it) and how it would possibly connect to the idea of Nirvana.

This first lesson is meant to explore the foundational beliefs of Buddhism. As a teacher who relies heavily on primary sources, I have often found that students can analyze the challenging concepts better through discussion and thinking out loud. As such, I have chosen to incorporate discussion both in pairs and as a whole class in this lesson. The story used at the end of the lesson – Kisa Gotami – is one that I encountered while at an NCTA lecture seminar. The story is a meaningful way to build a better understanding of achieving Nirvana – and allows me to bridge the lessons between day 1 and day 2 of this unit.

The second lesson in my unit provides a more detailed look at the core beliefs of Buddhism & asks my students to begin examining them in light of their lives. I chose to begin the first lesson by asking my students to share their answers from the previous night's homework prompt with a partner. After students have discussed their analysis in pairs, we will discuss it as a whole class. Following this discussion, I will give to students a third primary source on Buddhism – a sermon from the Buddha at Benares. This sermon outlines the 4 noble truths. After they are asked to read and answer questions, we will discuss the 4 noble truths as a class. Additionally, I will present the 8 fold path to students in this

class period as well as the concepts of Annica, Annatta, and Dukha through a mini lecture. In an attempt to connect many different artifacts of Buddhism together – students will be asked to complete short answer writing prompt, where they attempt to define a relationship between either the 4 noble truths or the 8 fold path with Kisa Gotami’s story.

At the end of the class period, I will also present students with their homework assignment. As much of the theme of Buddhist values and practices is detachment, students will be asked to detach themselves from ONE item in their lives for 3 consecutive days. Students will be asked to pick anything that they feel that they might be attached or addicted to – twitter, Facebook, Netflix, sports, video games, chocolate, potato chips, etc. It will be emphasized that students are NOT to give up vital things such as eating, their families, or school – and that it is okay to fail or not succeed any or all of the three days. Each night, they will be required to write a journal entry regarding their experiences. The journal entries are to meant to help students reflect on their experiences; each entry should refer to at least 2 Buddhist values, teachings, ideas, or tenets that we have examined in class through the primary sources. The assignment provides students an opportunity to apply Buddhist teachings to their lives, and experience Buddhism in a manner that is not one dimensional. Additionally, they will be able to reflect, think, and explore the ideas in light of their lives. Students will also present their experiences to the class as a whole in a short 1- 2 minute presentation in a week.

Finally, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the unit – students will be asked to analyze Buddhist art and architecture in light of the Buddhist values we have already analyzed. The icons we will study will mostly come from a seminar session on Buddhist art in Japan. Students will also be presented with a short lecture on monasteries, and students will analyze pieces of art in triads. The groups will be given different examples of art – ranging from icons and statues, to narrative paintings, to monasteries and examples of architecture. Each team will be asked to find an example of a Buddhist value that they believe is present in the work of art. They will present their work to the class to allow all the students to learn about the different examples, and facilitate a discussion about the relationship between religious beliefs and art / culture that it produces.

The unit’s assessments are varied; ranging from primary source analysis to written reflection to class discussion, multiple modalities are engaged. The larger scale written assessment - while not a research project - is an extended written personal reflection that attempts to have each student build a better understanding of what it means to practice Buddhism. I hope that through this experience, students will better understand Buddhist practices & the religion as a whole.

## **Lesson 1:**

Warm Up (10 – 12 minutes): Students will be asked to respond to the following prompt: What are two major challenges or specific challenging incidents that you have overcome in your life thus far? Pick one and explain it in detail. How did you overcome the challenge or incident? What strategies did you use to overcome it? After 3 – 5 minutes, students will be asked to share their personal reflection with the class. The discussion will be focused on how we overcome challenges, and strategies we might use.

Lecture (12 - 15 minutes): Students will be introduced to the religion we are going to examine over the next few days – Buddhism – through a short lecture. The lecture will examine Siddharta Gautama's early life, and his search for enlightenment. Students will also be shown some maps to examine the spread of Buddhism around the world, and where it is practiced today.

Analysis of Primary Source (20 minutes): What is Nirvana? Students will be given a primary source that recounts the Buddha's discussion explaining what nirvana is (see Appendix – Document 1). Students will be asked a series of questions that they must answer individually, then they will share their answers in pairs. We will use this document to conduct a class wide discussion on what nirvana is.

Homework - Kisa Gotami (5 minutes): Students will be given a copy of the story "The Mustard Seed" (see Appendix – Document 2). It will be explained to students that they have to complete a written analysis in 1 page that answers the following questions: What is the moral of the Mustard Seed? How does this story connect to or illustrate the Buddhist conceptualization of Nirvana?

## **Lesson 2:**

Warm Up (10 minutes): Students will be asked to talk to a partner about their answers to the previous night's homework. After 5 minutes, we will discuss the prompts as a class. Students will be informed that the story will be used again towards the end of the class, so they should not completely put it away.

Primary Source Analysis (12 – 15 minutes): Students will be given a copy of a primary source – the Buddha's sermon at Benares (see Appendix – Document 3). Students will be asked to analyze it individually by answering certain questions. After about 7 minutes, students will be asked to participate in a class wide discussion that analyzes the primary source. The primary source contains the 4 noble truths within it.

Lecture (10 – 12 minutes): Students will be presented with a short lecture on the 8 fold path, and the concepts of Annica, Annatta, and Dukha.

Written Analysis (10 minutes): Students will be asked to answer the following questions in written format (1 paragraph each): How does the story of Kisa Gotami relate to the 4 noble truths? How does it illustrate the values of Annia, Annatta, or Dukha? How does it relate to the 8 fold path?

Homework (5 minutes): Students will be presented with their written reflection / significant assessment in this unit. The assessment will ask students to detach themselves from one item in their life, and then reflect upon the process of detachment (see Appendix Document 4).

### **Lesson 3:**

Warm Up (10 minutes): Students will be asked to respond to the following prompt: How can art reflect the values of a culture? Can you think of an example of American art that reflects an aspect of American culture? What is it? Explain! After 5 minutes – students will be lead in a class wide discussion regarding their answers to this prompt and share their answers.

Direct Instruction (20 minutes): Students will be given a short lecture on Buddhist art. Students will be presented with examples of monasteries, iconography, and narrative scrolls. Students will be shown how to analyze them, and find examples of Buddhist values that they see reflected in the art.

Group work (20 minutes): In groups of 3, students will be given an example of Buddhist art – a monastery, icon, or narrative scroll, and asked to do the same analysis. Students will then present their work of art and analysis to the class as a whole.

## **Appendix:**

**Document 1:** What is Nirvana? From: Ephanius Wilson, *Sacred Books of the East*, rev. ed. (London: The Colonial Press, 1900), pp. 158, 160-61, 171-72, repr. In Mark A. Kishlansky, ed., *Sources of World History, Volume I*, (New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1995), pp. 67-71

*[Kishlansky Introduction] Siddhartha Gautama (ca. 563-483 BCE.) was the son of the king of a small Indian state. Legend holds that it was foretold at his birth that he would either be a great monarch or a great Buddha (literally, "an enlightened one") His father, hoping for the former, raised Siddhartha in luxury. But at the age of 29 Siddhartha experienced a vision of human suffering that led him to renounce his worldly status and goods and take to the road as a wandering ascetic. He joined at least two ascetic sects, whose philosophies he quickly mastered but neither allowed him to achieve the highest truth. He finally attained this goal when one night while he was meditating he was able to comprehend his past and future lives. Siddhartha determined to teach the truths he had realized; he gathered disciples and preached a middle way between worldliness and asceticism. His teachings swept throughout East Asia, becoming the foundation for one of the world's great religions. Buddhist traditions flourished in both India and China, although they developed separately.*

*The selection that follows is a disquisition on the concept of Nirvana.*

### **Sermon: WHAT IS NIRVANA?**

"Revered Nagasena<sup>1</sup>, things produced of karma are seen in the world, things produced of cause are seen, things produced of nature are seen. Tell me what in the world is born not of karma, not of cause, not of nature." "These two, sire, in the world are born not of karma, not of cause, not of nature. Which two? Either, sire, and Nirvana."

"Do not, reverend Nagasena, corrupt the Conqueror's words and answer the question ignorantly."

"What did I say, sire, that you speak thus to me!"

"Revered Nagasena, what you said about ether - that it is born not of karma nor of cause nor of nature - is right. But with many a hundred reasons did the Lord, reverend Nagasena, point out to disciples the Way to the realization of Nirvana and then you speak thus: 'Nirvana is born of no cause.'"

"It is true, sire, that with many a hundred reasons did the Lord point out to disciples the Way to the realization of Nirvana; but he did not point out a cause for the production of Nirvana."

"Well then, sire, attend carefully, listen closely, and I will tell the reason as to this. Would a man, sire, with his natural strength be able to go from here up a high Himalayan mountain?"

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<sup>1</sup> Nāgasena was a [Buddhist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nagasena) sage who lived about [150 BCE](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nagasena). (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nagasena>)

"Yes, revered Nagasena."

"But would that man, sire, with his natural strength be able to bring a high Himalayan mountain here."

"Certainly not, revered sir."

"Even so, sire, it is possible to point out the Way for the realization of Nirvana, but impossible to show a cause for the production of Nirvana. Would it be possible, sire, for a man who, with his natural strength, has crossed over the great sea in a boat to reach the farther shore!"

"Yes, revered sir."

"But would it be possible, sire, for that man, with his natural strength, to bring the farther shore of the great sea here?"

"Certainly not, revered sir."

"Even so, sire, it is possible to point out the Way to the realization of Nirvana, but impossible to show a cause for the production of Nirvana. For what reason? It is because of the un compounded nature of the thing." "Revered Nagasena, is Nirvana un compounded!"

"Yes, sire, Nirvana is un compounded; it is made by nothing at all. Sire, one cannot say of Nirvana that it arises or that it does not arise or that it is to be produced or that it is past or future or present, or that it is cognizable by the eye, ear, nose, tongue or body."

"If, revered Nagasena, Nirvana neither arises nor does not arise and so on as you say. Well then, revered Nagasena, you indicate Nirvana as a thing that is not: Nirvana is not."

"Sire, Nirvana is; Nirvana is cognizable by mind; ... faring along rightly with a mind that is purified, lofty, straight, without obstructions, without temporal desires, sees Nirvana."

"But what, revered sir, is that Nirvana like that can be illustrated by similes! Convince me with reasons according to which a thing that is can be illustrated by similes."

"Is there, sire, what is called wind?"

"Yes, revered sir."

"Please, sire, show the wind by its color or configuration or as thin or thick or long or short."

"But it is not possible, revered Nagasena, for the wind to be shown; for the wind cannot be grasped in the hand or touched, but yet there is the wind."

"If, sire, it is not possible for the wind to be shown, well then, there is no wind."

"I, revered Nagasena, know that there is wind, I am convinced of it, but I am not able to show the wind."

"Even so, sire, there is Nirvana; but it is not possible to show Nirvana by color or configuration."

"Very good, revered Nagasena, well shown is the simile. Well seen the reason: thus it is and I accept it as you say: There is Nirvana."

### **Questions for Analysis:**

- 1) How can one escape the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth to enter Nirvana?
- 2) How does the idea of Nirvana relate to the Hindu concepts of Karma, Dharma, and Reincarnation?
- 3) Why do you think the Buddha means when he says: "Nirvana is born of no cause"?
- 4) What do you think is the realization that is Nirvana?

**Document 2:** *The Mustard Seed* (accessed from: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/btq/btq85.htm>).

## **THE MUSTARD SEED**

THERE was a rich man who found his gold suddenly transformed into ashes; and he took to his bed and refused all food. A friend, hearing of his sickness, visited the rich man and learned the cause of his grief. And the friend said: "Thou didst not make good use of thy wealth. When thou didst hoard it up it was not better than ashes. Now heed my advice. Spread mats in the bazaar; pile up these ashes, and pretend to trade with them." The rich man did as his friend had told him, and when his neighbors asked him, "Why sellest thou ashes?" he said: "I offer my goods for sale."

After some time a young girl, named Kisa Gotami, an orphan and very poor, passed by, and seeing the rich man in the bazaar, said: "My lord, why pilest thou thus up gold and silver for sale?" And the rich man said: "Wilt thou please hand me that gold and silver?" And Kisa Gotami took up a handful of ashes, and lo! they changed back into gold. Considering that Kisa Gotami had the mental eye of spiritual knowledge and saw the real worth of things, the rich man gave her in marriage to his son, and he said: "With many, gold is no better than ashes, but with Kisa Gotami ashes become pure gold."

And Kisa Gotami had an only son, and he died. In her grief she carried the dead child to all her neighbors, asking them for medicine, and the people said: "She has lost her



senses. The boy is dead. At length Kisa Gotami met a man who replied to her request: "I cannot give thee medicine for thy child, but I know a physician who can." The girl said: "Pray tell me, sir; who is it?" And the man replied: "Go to Sakyamuni, the Buddha."

Kisa Gotami repaired to the Buddha and cried: "Lord and Master, give me the medicine that will cure my boy." The Buddha answered: "I want a handful of mustard-seed." And when the girl in her joy promised to procure it, the Buddha added: "The mustard-seed must be taken from a house where no one has lost a child, husband, parent, or friend." Poor Kisa Gotami now went from house to house, and the people pitied her and said: "Here is mustard-seed; take it!" But when she asked "Did a son or daughter, a father or mother, die in your family?" They answered her: "Alas the living are few, but the dead are many. Do not remind us of our deepest grief." And there was no house but some beloved one had died in it.

Kisa Gotami became weary and hopeless, and sat down at the wayside, watching the lights of the city, as they flickered up and were extinguished again. At last the darkness of the night reigned everywhere. And she considered the fate of men, that their lives flicker up and are extinguished. And she thought to herself: "How selfish am I in my grief! Death is common to all; yet in this valley of desolation there is a path that leads him to immortality who has surrendered all selfishness."

Putting away the selfishness of her affection for her child, Kisa Gotami had the dead body buried in the forest. Returning to the Buddha, she took refuge in him and found comfort in the Dharma, which is a balm that will soothe all the pains of our troubled hearts.

The Buddha said: "The life of mortals in this world is troubled and brief and combined with pain. For there is not any means by which those that have been born can avoid dying; after reaching old age there is death; of such a nature are living beings. As ripe fruits are early in danger of falling, so mortals when born are always in danger of death. As all earthen vessels made by the potter end in being broken, so is the life of mortals. Both young and adult, both those who are fools and those who are wise, all fall into the power of death; all are subject to death.

"Of those who, overcome by death, depart from life, a father cannot save his son, nor kinsmen their relations. Mark I while relatives are looking on and lamenting deeply, one by one mortals are carried off, like an ox that is led to the slaughter. So the world is afflicted with death and decay, therefore the wise do not grieve, knowing the terms of the world. In whatever manner people think a thing will come to pass, it is often different when it happens, and great is the disappointment; see, such are the terms of the world.

"Not from weeping nor from grieving will any one obtain peace of mind; on the contrary, his pain will be the greater and his body will suffer. He will make himself sick and pale, yet the dead are not saved by his lamentation. People pass away, and their fate after death will be according to their deeds. If a man live a hundred years, or even more, he will at last be separated from the company of his relatives, and leave the life of this world. He who seeks peace should draw out the arrow of lamentation, and complaint, and grief. He who has drawn out the arrow and has become composed will obtain peace of mind; he who has overcome all sorrow will become free from sorrow, and be blessed."

**Questions for analysis (1 paragraph each):**

- 1) What is the moral of the story?
- 2) Does Kisa Gotami achieve Nirvana? How do you know?
- 3) What does this story illustrate about Nirvana? How does this story relate to the concept of Nirvana?

**Document 3:** The sermon at Benares - From: Ephanus Wilson, *Sacred Books of the East*, rev. ed. (London: The Colonial Press, 1900), pp. 158, 160-61, 171-72, repr. In Mark A. Kishlansky, ed., *Sources of World History, Volume I*, (New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1995), pp. 67-71

### **THE SERMON AT BENARES**

On seeing their old teacher approach, the five bhikkhus (disciples or monks) agreed among themselves not to salute him, nor to address him as a master, but by his name only. "For," so they said, "he has broken his vow and has abandoned holiness. He is no bhikkhu but Gautama, and Gautama has become a man who lives in abundance and indulges in the pleasures of worldliness."

But when the Blessed One approached in a dignified manner, they involuntarily rose from their seats and greeted him in spite of their resolution. Still they called him by his name and addressed him as "friend Gautama."

When they had thus received the Blessed One, he said: "Do not call the Tathagata<sup>2</sup> by his name nor address him as 'friend,' for he is the Buddha, the Holy One. The Buddha looks with a kind heart equally on all living beings, and they therefore call him 'Father.' To disrespect a father is wrong; to despise him, is wicked.

"The Tathagata," the Buddha continued, "does not seek salvation in austerities, but neither does he for that reason indulge in worldly pleasures, nor live in abundance. The Tathagata has found the middle path.

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<sup>2</sup> Literally means "thus gone one." The term was used by Buddha himself to describe a being who has reached Nirvana.

"There are two extremes, O bhikkhus, which the man who has given up the world ought not to follow—the habitual practice, on the one hand, of self-indulgence which is unworthy, vain and fit only for the worldly-minded and the habitual practice, on the other hand, of self-mortification, which is painful, useless and unprofitable.

"Neither abstinence from fish or flesh, nor going naked, nor shaving the head, nor wearing matted hair, nor dressing in a rough garment, nor covering oneself with dirt, nor sacrificing to Agni, will cleanse a man who is not free from delusions.

"Reading the Vedas, making offerings to priests, or sacrifices to the gods, self-mortification by heat or cold, and many such penances performed for the sake of immortality, these do not cleanse the man who is not free from delusions.

"Anger, drunkenness, obstinacy, bigotry, deception, envy, self-praise, disparaging others, superciliousness and evil intentions constitute uncleanness; not verily the eating of flesh.

A middle path, O bhikkhus, avoiding the two extremes, has been discovered by the Tathagata—a path which opens the eyes, and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvana!

"What is that middle path, O bhikkhus, avoiding these two extremes, discovered by the Tathagata — that path which opens the eyes, and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvana?

"Let me teach you, O bhikkhus, the middle path, which keeps aloof from both extremes. By suffering, the emaciated devotee produces confusion and sickly thoughts in his mind. Mortification is not conducive even to worldly knowledge; how much less to a triumph over the senses!

"He who fills his lamp with water will not dispel the darkness, and he who tries to light a fire with rotten wood will fail. And how can anyone be free from self by leading a wretched life, if he does not succeed in quenching the fires of lust, if he still hankers after either worldly or heavenly pleasures. But he in whom self has become extinct is free from lust: he will desire neither worldly nor heavenly pleasures, and the satisfaction of his natural wants will not defile him. However, let him be moderate, let him eat and drink according to the needs of the body.

"Sensuality is enervating: the "self-indulgent" man is a slave to pleasure to his passions, and pleasure-seeking is degrading and vulgar.

"But to satisfy the necessities of life is not evil. To keep the body in good health is a duty for otherwise we shall not be able to trim the lamp of wisdom, and keep our mind strong and clear. Water surrounds the lotus-flower, but does not wet its petals.

"This is the middle path, O bhikkhus. that keeps aloof from both extremes.

And the Blessed One spoke kindly to his disciples, pitying them for their errors, and pointing out the uselessness of their endeavors, and the ice of ill-will that chilled their hearts melted away under the gentle warmth of the Master's persuasion.

Now the Blessed One set the wheel of the most excellent law rolling, and he began to preach to the five bhikkhus, opening to them the gate of immortality, and showing them the bliss of Nirvana.

The Buddha said:

"The spokes of the wheel are the rules of pure conduct: justice is the uniformity of their length, wisdom is the tire; modesty and thoughtfulness are the hub in which the immovable axle of truth is fixed.

"He who recognizes the existence of suffering, its cause, its remedy, and its cessation has fathomed the four noble truths. He will walk in the right path.

"Right views will be the torch to light his way. Right aspirations will be his guide. Right speech will be his dwelling-place on the road. His gait will be straight, for it is right behavior. His refreshments will be the right way of earning his livelihood. Right efforts will be his steps, right thoughts his breath; and right contemplation will give him the peace that follows in his footprints.

"Now, this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning suffering:

"Birth is attended with pain, decay is painful, disease is painful, death is painful. Union with the unpleasant is painful, painful is separation from the pleasant, and any craving that is unsatisfied, that too is painful. In brief, bodily conditions which spring from attachment are painful.

"This, then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning suffering.

"Now this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the origin of suffering:

"..., it is that craving which causes the renewal of existence, accompanied by sensual delight, seeking satisfaction now here, now there, the craving for the gratification of the passions, the craving for a future life, and the craving for happiness in this life.

"This, then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the origin of suffering-

"Now this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of suffering:

"..., it is the destruction, in which no passion remains, of this very thirst; it is the laying aside of, the being free from, the dwelling no longer upon this thirst.

"This then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of suffering-

'Now this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the way which leads to the destruction of sorrow. Verily! it is this noble eightfold path: that is to say:

"Right views; right aspirations; right speech; right behavior; right livelihood, right effort; right thoughts; and right contemplation.

"This, then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of sorrow. "By the practice of loving kindness I have attained liberation of heart, and thus I am assured that I shall never return in renewed births. I have even now attained Nirvana."

And when the Blessed One had thus set the royal chariot wheel of truth rolling onward, a rapture thrilled through all the universes. The devas left their heavenly abodes to listen to the sweetness of the truth; the saints that had parted from this life crowded around the great teacher to receive the glad tidings; even the animals of the earth felt the bliss that rested upon the words of the Tagathata: and all the creatures of the host of sentient beings, gods, men, and beasts, hearing the message of deliverance, received and understood it in their own language.

And when the doctrine was propounded, the venerable Kondanna, the oldest one among the five bhikkhus, discerned the truth with his mental eye, and he said: "Truly, O Buddha, our Lord, thou hast found the truth!" Then the other bhikkhus too, joined him and exclaimed: "Truly, thou art the Buddha, thou has found the truth. "

And the devas and saints and all the good spirits of the departed generations that had listened to the sermon of the Tathagata, joyfully received the doctrine and shouted: "Truly, the blessed One has founded the kingdom of righteousness. The Blessed One has moved the earth; he has set the wheel of Truth rolling, which by no one in the universe, be he god or man, can ever be turned back. The kingdom of Truth will be preached upon earth; it will spread; and righteousness, good-will, and peace will reign among mankind."

#### **Questions for analysis:**

- 1) What are the 4 noble truths?
- 2) What is the "middle path"?
- 3) How does the content in this sermon relate to the concept of Nirvana?
- 4) What are the "right" actions that the Buddha describes here?

#### **Document 4: Buddhist Journals**

Over the next week, please pick 3 consecutive days for you to practice the Buddhist value of detachment. You can choose ANY item or object or product you use regularly. This can range from twitter, to chocolate, to television. You are to detach yourself ENTIRELY for 3 days. Each night, please complete a 1 page written reflection, for 3 total pages of reflection. Each reflection should include a

discussion of at least 2 Buddhist values or ideas as they pertain to your experience. The reflection should examine some of the following ideas:

What did you give up? Why did you give it up? How hard was it for you to detach yourself from this item? What strategies did you use to detach yourself? Were you successful in detachment? Or did you fail? Why?