AQA Religious Studies A – Buddhism Practices

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

Key Ideas			
Places of Worship + Puja 	**Places of Worship** Buddhists often worship in a **temple** where they gather to meditate together and perform puja. A temple or vihara will have **rupas** (statues of Buddha), **stupas** (towered structures designed to symbolise Buddhist teaching) and often **shrines** where offerings can be made.	**Puja** Puja is the name for Buddhist worship which is a ceremony that expresses gratitude and respect for Buddha and his teachings. Buddhists perform **chanting** where sacred texts are remembered and taught orally and with devotion. They also recite **mantras** which are short sequences of syllables that help concentrate the mind.	
Meditation 	**Samatha Meditation** This is a type of meditation that involves calming the mind and developing **deepened concertation**. This can be done through **mindfulness** of breathing where Buddhists concentrate on the pattern of their breath to relax their mind.	**Vipassana Meditation** This type of meditation focuses on developing an **understanding of the nature of reality**. Buddhists focus on the **teachings of Buddha**, especially the Three Marks of Existence in order to move them closer to enlightenment.	
Funerals + Festivals  	**Buddhist Funerals** Buddhists usually try as 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 **Sky Burial** Tibetan Buddhists leave the body on a mountainside as an offering to the vultures. This reflects a belief in **anicca**, the impermanence of existence.	**Wesak** Wesak is a Theravada Buddhist festival which celebrates the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and passing away into nirvana. It is celebrated by lighting up **candles** and lanterns to represent **enlightenment** and by **attending the local temple** to take part in worship or meditation.	**Parinirvana Day** Parinirvana Day is a Mahayana festival that commemorates the **death** and passing into enlightenment of Buddha. It is celebrated by Buddhists reading and **studying** the last writings of Buddha, **meditating** at home or in a temple or going on a **retreat** to reflect and meditate.
Five Moral Precepts + Six Perfections 	**Five Moral Precepts** These form a Buddhist **ethical code**. They are five principles that Buddhists try to live their life by. 1. to abstain from **taking life** 2. to abstain from **taking what is not given** 3. to abstain from **sexual misconduct** 4. to abstain from **wrong speech** 5. to abstain from **intoxicants**	**The Six Perfections** 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: **generosity**, **morality**, **patience**, **energy**, **meditation** and **wisdom**.	
Karma, Karuna + Metta 	**Karma** Karma is the ethical idea that a Buddhist's actions lead either to **happiness** or **suffering**. **Skilful** actions result in good karma and happiness. **Unskilful** actions result in bad karma and suffering. When a Buddhist is **reborn** their new life will be affected by their karma from past lives.	**Karuna** Karuna is **compassion**, a feeling of concern for the suffering of others. It is one of **the four sublime states** that Buddha taught Buddhists should develop. Buddhists aim to recognise the **suffering** of others and do something to make their lives better.	**Metta** Metta is **loving-kindness**, another of the four sublime states. It means desiring other people to be happy and is an attitude of **warmth** and **kindness** that Buddhists try to feel toward other people. It leads to a feeling of peace and contentment.