

SYRAP II Outline

1. The Buddha

- a. To arrive at an understanding of Amida Buddha as the “ultimate reality,” an omnipresence of infinite compassion and infinite wisdom**
 - i. Review the sacred story
 - ii. Review the 48 Vows
 - iii. Discuss the pure land as described by Shakyamuni and as it might be described today.
- b. To learn more about the historical Buddha, Shakyamuni, as a great man whose teachings show the way to inner peace through compassion and wisdom (to be reviewed in conjunction with Hanamatsuri and Bodhi Day)**
 - i. Reviewing early life until renunciation, focusing on the significance of the four gates on Shakyamuni Buddha’s decision for the rest of his life
 - ii. Reviewing Shakyamuni’s enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree as a result of years of ascetic practices
 - iii. Learning about his first sermon
 - iv. Learning about his later sermons, especially his final lesson on his deathbed
 - v. Suggested Activities
 1. *Create a timeline or a map tracing Shakyamuni’s life and showing sites of significant moments in his life.*
 2. *Describe luxury items there are in the world today and have the students imagine the difficulties of having to sacrifice it all*

2. Shinran Shonin

- a. To learn more about Shinran Shonin as the founder of Jodo Shinshu**
 - i. Learning about the importance of Gotan-e and Ho-onko
 - ii. Learning about the Wisteria as the Hongwanji’s crest
 - iii. Learning about the succession of the Monshu
 - iv. Learning about Shinran Shonin’s Writings
 - v. Learning about Shinran Shonin’s early life
 - vi. Suggested Activities
 1. Draw and color the wisteria

3. The Dharma

- a. To strengthen Familiarity with Buddhist principles—review as needed**
 - i. The Four Noble Truths
 - ii. The Eightfold path
 - iii. Karma, interdependence, and impermanence as underlying of all human existence.
 - iv. The Six Paramitas
 - v. The Golden Chain of Love
 - vi. The Five Precepts
 - vii. The Three Treasures
 - viii. The Eight Sufferings
 - ix. Shinjin
 - x. Suggested Activities

1. *Four Noble Truths*—Share experiences of suffering; discuss how one’s own self concern is at the base of it all; arrive at how it could have been avoided or handled with a change in attitude about self.
2. *Six Paramitas*—ask students to keep a journal about them describing when they demonstrated or if they saw good examples of them in action.
3. *Golden Chain of Love*—ask students to relate this recitation to the concept of Karma, interdependence, and impermanence.

b. To strengthen familiarity with texts associated with Dharma and Jodo Shinshu

- i. Learn/review “Gassho to Amida”
- ii. Learn/review “The Golden Chain of Love”
- iii. Learn/review “Shinshu Pledge”
- iv. Read from “The Dhammapada”
- v. Learn/review the major sutras
- vi. Suggested activities
 1. *Recite and break down the sutras to further understand the meaning behind it*
 2. *Recite and break down the “Shinshu pledge” and discuss how to follow through with the pledge*

4. Living the Dharma

a. To develop a personal understanding of being truly embraced by Amida Buddha

- i. Maintain an attitude of gratitude
- ii. Understand the unconditional gift of that embrace

b. To Exemplify what it means to be a Buddhist

- i. Demonstrating what it means to be a Buddhist
- ii. Exhibiting civic responsibility beyond the home, at school, and in public
- iii. Getting along with others through fair play and respect for rules
- iv. Suggested Activities
 1. *Discuss people they’ve seen pick up trash, helping others without being asked, etc.*
 2. *Organize Games/sports to allow fair play and respect for the rules*
 - a. *Change rules to show how unfair play affects other people*

c. To respect all living things

- i. Understand and respect the value of life
- ii. Express gratitude for life that is sacrificed and given
- iii. Suggested Activities
 1. *Learn “Words of Thanksgiving” and have students write their own*

d. To strengthen Familiarity with Buddhist rituals, procedures and arts

- i. Learn about the Buddhist flag and its colors
- ii. Learn about the lotus and its symbolic value
- iii. Learn about the Dharmachakra and its symbolic value
- iv. Learn about the bell
- v. Learn/review the items on the altar
- vi. Suggested Activities
 1. *Learn the pattern and try to do the Kansho*

5. The Sangha

a. To demonstrate one’s belonging to a Buddhist community by extending oneself into the larger community

- i. Participate in service-oriented activities
 - ii. Participate in district-wide activities when possible
 - iii. Explore temple-related programs such as Jr. Y.B.A, Y.E.S.S. Camp, and Jr. Y.E.S.S. camp
 - iv. Serve as Dharma School Assistant to younger students
- b. To Familiarize oneself with temple history, organization and structure**
- i. Attend annual orientation meetings for new members