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DHARMA
Primary Grades 1, 2, 3
Teaching Guide

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Buddhist Churches of America
1987

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PREFACE

For Grades One, Two and Three, this book will

1. Enable students to develop an understanding of Buddhism and Jodo Shinshu
2. Enable students to develop and practice a variety of work-study skills
3. Enable and encourage students to understand and respect each other
4. Enable students to reflect on their family and Temple Life
5. Enable students to learn through art activities

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Begin to set goals for themselves
2. Learn to respect each other
3. Begin to develop self-confidence
4. Develop listening skills which will be demonstrated in Dharma School activities
5. Begin to learn to speak in front of their peers

Grade Level	Focus	Aims and Objectives
First Grade	THANKFULNESS Buddhist Observances Activities Shinran Shonin Memorial Day Gotan-E	Cover topics with interest and challenge for children Acceptance of new things Temple Etiquette Thoughtfulness Inter-dependency Me Project
Second Grade	GRATITUDES Buddhist Observances Activities	Learn about the Four Gratuities in Buddhism and how they affect them Kindness to fellow living beings Kindness to family Kindness to your surroundings Three Treasures
Third Grade	OUR TEMPLE Buddhist Observances Activities	Appreciation and understanding of our Temple/Minister-role and explanation of articles in the shrine Meaning of the shrine

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Dharma School Grade Level Lesson Plan is developed from the accumulated writings of ministers and Dharma School teachers, research findings and materials developed at conferences and workshops.

Grades One, Two and Three are combined to expedite publication along with cost considerations.

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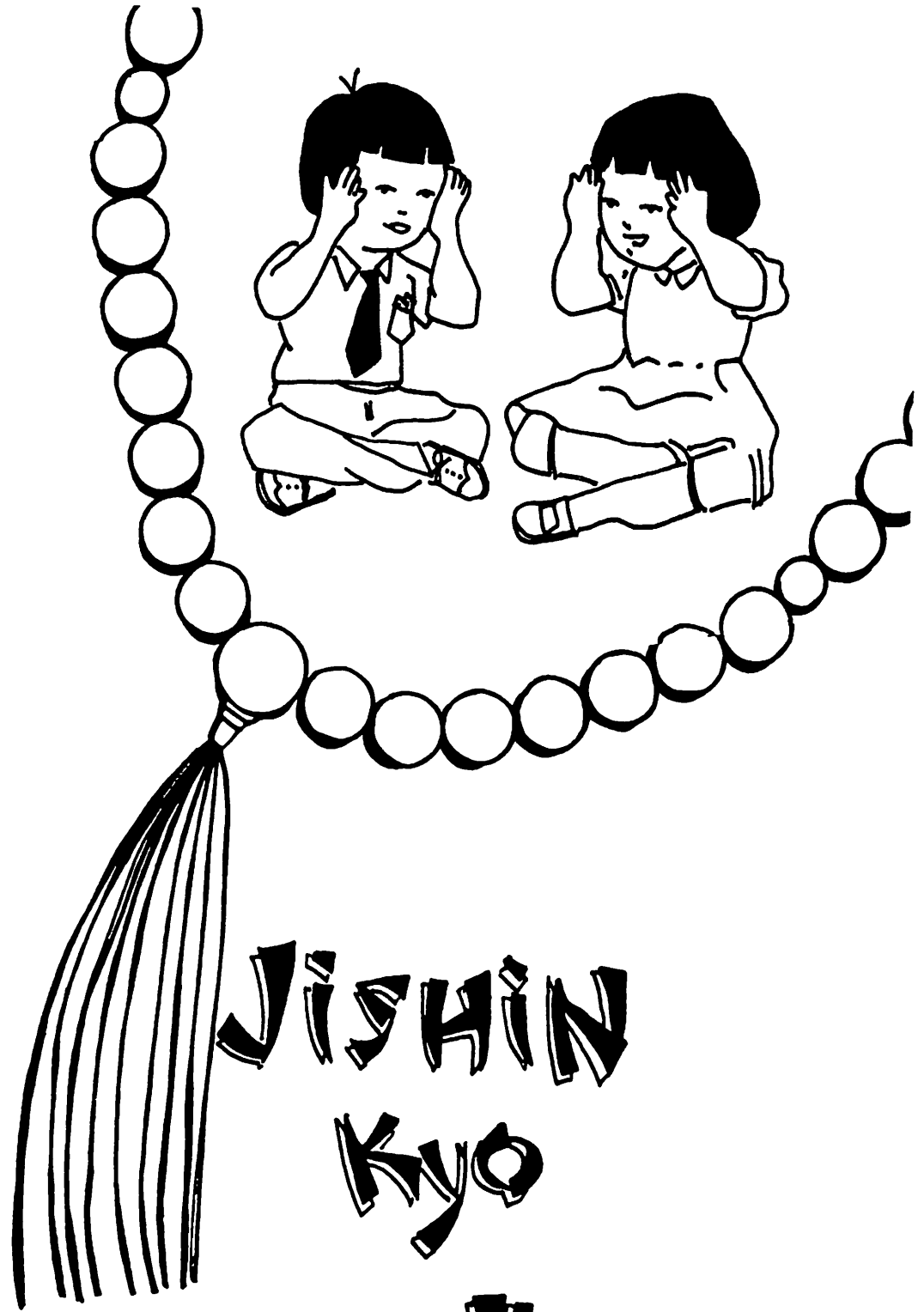
References:

For additional instructions please refer to: Jishin Kyo Ninshin Reference Book, Pre-School Teachers' Guide, Kindergarten Teachers' Guide.

Thank you to the Minister and Sangha.

In Gassho,
Etsuko Steimetz
Dharma School Materials Coordinator
Department of Buddhist Education
Buddhist Churches of America

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INTRODUCTION

Most first graders are quite willing to believe all that the teachers say. It is important that the facts are clear and accurate.

It is helpful if the teacher can visit in each of his/her pupils' homes.

If a visit cannot be arranged then write to your pupil's parents of your goals and plans for the Dharma School year.

Prepare your classroom for the children. Dharma School begins as soon as the children enter your classroom.

Grade Level	Focus	Aims and Objectives
First Grade	THANKFULNESS Buddhist Observances Activities Shinran Shonin Memorial Day Gotan-E	Cover topics with interest and challenge for children Acceptance of new things Temple Etiquette Thoughtfulness Inter-dependency Me Project

First Grade Dharma School Class

Opening of Class

Gassho (Classroom Obutsudan)

Meditation (Namu Amida Butsu)

Recitation of the Nembutsu (led by pupil)

Incense Burning (all students)

Recite KOKUN

Review the sermon (explain to the students in simple words)

Roll Call

Review of Last Week's Lesson

New Lesson and Activity

Clean-up

Announcements and/or Printed Reminders

Recitation of the Nembutsu (led by teacher)

Gassho - Dismissal

Post: Name of child on the blackboard for recitation of the NEMBUTSU

Activities

The following activities are for Dharma School lessons and home reinforcements.

Classroom Projects

Student folder/or book

Home Chart

My Obutsudan

Eight lesson cards

(Order your set through Dharma School Material Curriculum Coordinator)

—The Creed—Noble Eight-fold Path

—Gratitude—Jodo Shinshu Creed

—Dharmacakra—Ondokusan

—Golden Chain—Namu Amida Butsu

Classroom Projects

Make a student folder/book

Place a photograph of the child on the front cover.

Keep work that is completed in the classroom in the folder.

Keep any thoughts of the child.

Save drawings

Save any projects completed by the child.

Give to the parents at the end of the school term.

(See Teacher's Guide, Jishin Kyo Nin Shin for reference)

At Home Chart

A. A chart can be made to continue Buddhist Education at home

1. Morning (brushing teeth)
2. Morning gassho (Nembutsu)
3. Breakfast, "Itadakimasu"-"Namu Amida Butsu", "Gochisosama"
4. Lunch, "Itadakimasu", "Namu Amida Butsu", "Gochisosama"
5. Dinner, "Itadakimasu", "Namu Amida Butsu", "Gochisosama"
6. Bedtime (brushing teeth)
7. Hang up clothes
8. Good night, Mommy
9. Good night, Daddy
10. Bedtime gassho (Nembutsu)

B. Explain chart to children and send letter home to parents.

1. Letter to the parents:

Dear Mommy and Daddy:











This is my "At Home Chart." Please help me keep track of the dates. My teacher feels it is always important to remember and practice the Buddha's Teachings.

Love,

P.S. Pick up a box of stars for your child to paste in each time he/she completes an effort.

In gassho,

AT HOME CHART

DATE															
Morning 															
Brush Teeth															
Morning Gassho 															
Namu Amida Butsu															
Breakfast 															
Itadakimasu Gochisosama															
Lunch 															
Itadakimasu Gochisosama															
Dinner 															
Itadakimasu Gochisosama															
Hang Up Clothes 															
Bedtime 															
Brush Teeth															
Good Night, Daddy 															
Good Night, Mommy 															
Bedtime 															
Namu Amida Butsu															

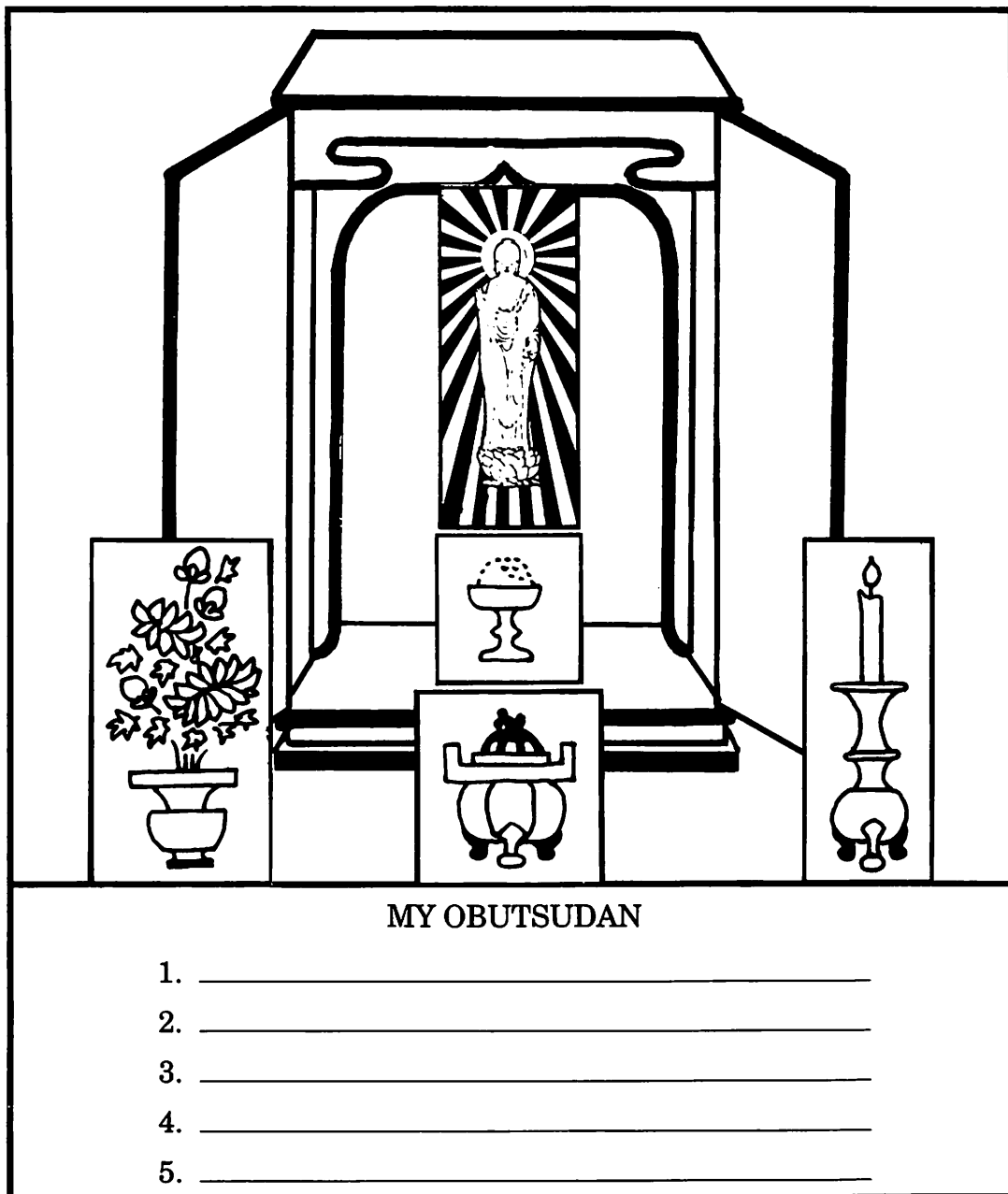
My Obutsudan

1. AMIDA BUDDHA
2. I offer rice to say "thank you."
3. I burn incense and say "thank you."
4. I offer beautiful flowers and say "thank you."
5. I light the candle and say "thank you."

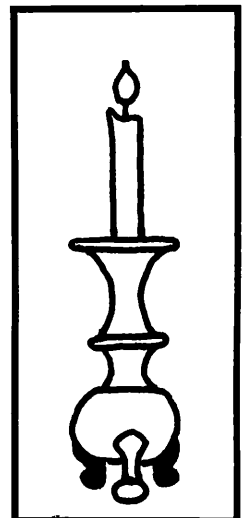
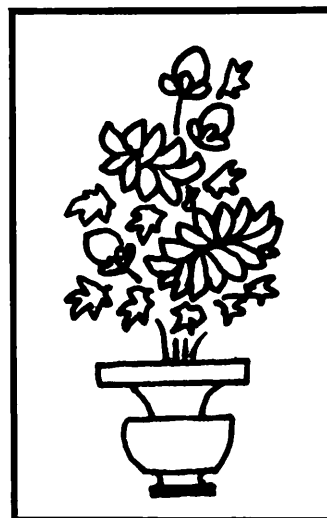
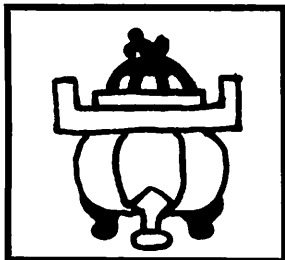
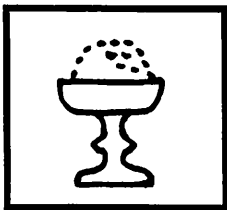
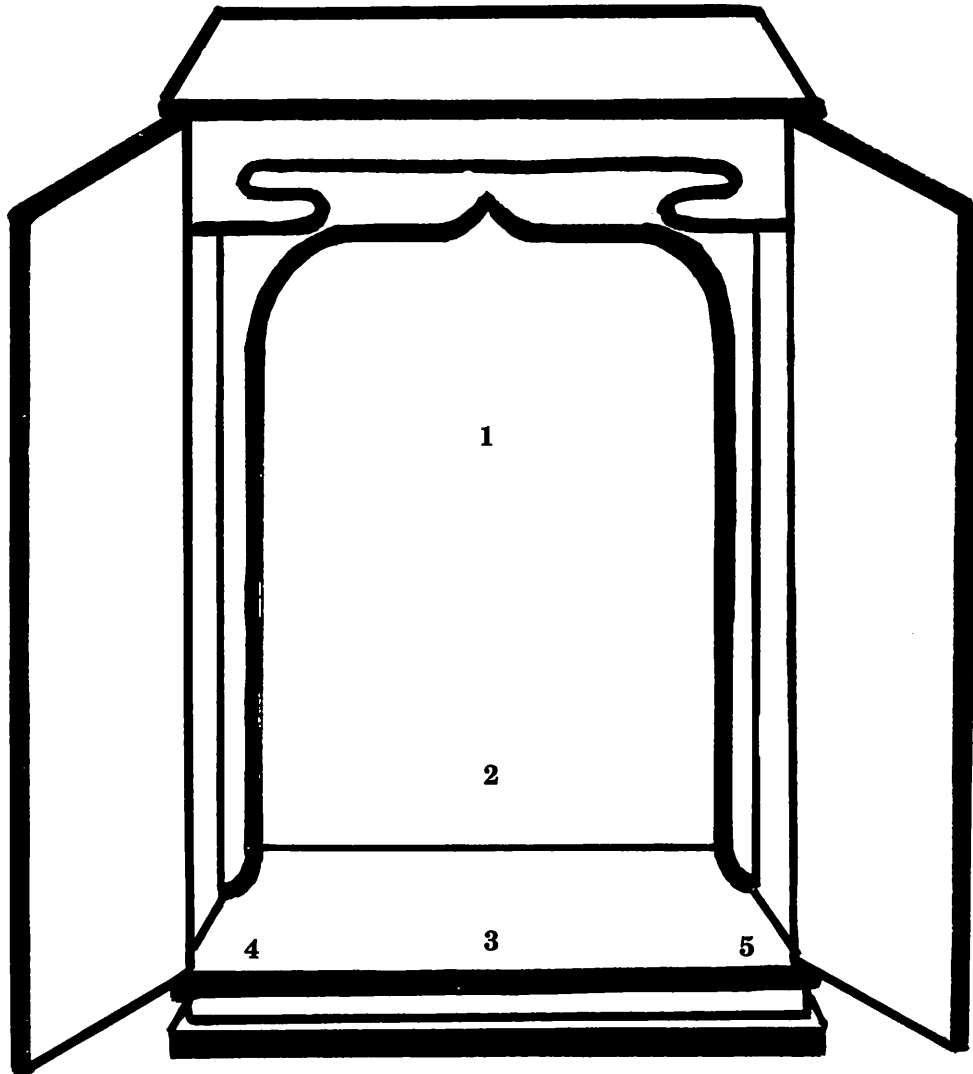
NAMU AMIDA BUTSU

Teacher: Color, cut and paste flowers, candle, etc. in place. Cut out the obutsudan and paste on a piece of cardboard.

(see below)



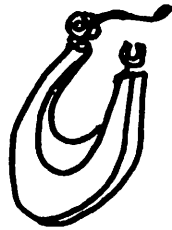
My Obutsudan



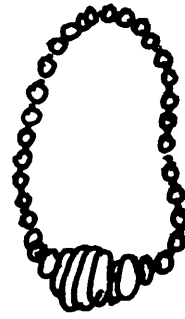
Circle the things we use at Dharma School



Ojuzu



Earring



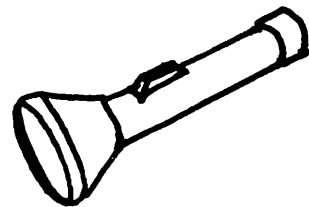
Necklace



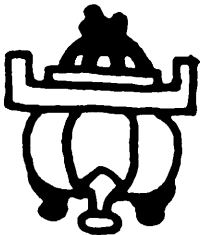
Paper lantern



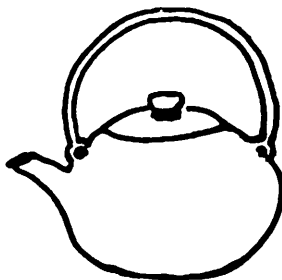
Candle



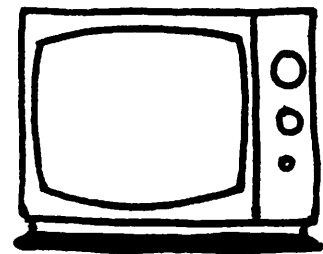
Flashlight



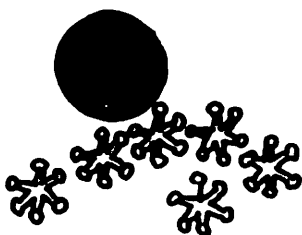
Incense



Teapot



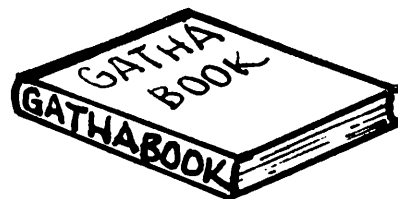
TV set



Jacks



Flowers



Song book

As a Child of Buddha

I Know Why I Go To The Temple

Find or draw five separate pictures of five different children, showing their reasons for coming to the Temple. Be sure that drawings are large enough for the children to see from their seats.

1. I go to the Temple because my mommy and daddy tell me to go.
2. I go to the Temple to be with my friends.
3. I go to the Temple because I like to go to the Temple.
4. I go to the Temple because it is so nice and quiet there.
5. I go to the Temple to learn about the Buddha's Teachings.

Talk about each picture with the children.

On a single sheet of paper have a similar drawing of the five children. Hand this paper to all the children and ask them their reason(s) for coming to the Temple. Ask them to circle the picture(s) that explains best why they come to the Temple. After the children have put a circle around the picture, ask them to talk about the pictures they have chosen.

While no answer is incorrect—try to steer the children's way of thinking to "I go to the Temple to learn about the Buddha's Teachings". In order to do this, ask if there is any child who put a circle around the picture, "I go to the Temple to learn about the Buddha's teachings". Talk with the children why this answer seems better than the others.

Although I know Buddha is always with me, I often forget and going to the Temple helps me to remember. In the Temple, I feel closer to Buddha. The minister and teachers tell me about Buddha. Being with Buddha helps me to be a good child.

The Four Gratitudes

I. Introduction to teachers

- A. At the primary level, in order for the children to develop an understanding of the Four Gratitudes, it is important for them to become involved with projects and discussions so that the feeling of gratitude can be experienced.
- B. The Four Gratitudes
 - 1. Gratitude to our parents—for the loving care of us.
 - 2. Gratitude to friends and all other life—without whose help we could not live.
 - 3. Gratitude to our country—because it allows freedom for everyone.
 - 4. Gratitude to the Three Treasures—for showing us the way to Amida's Pure Land.

II. Discussing The Four Gratitudes with children

- A. What does "Gratitude" mean? It means to be thankful.
- B. How many ways do you know how to say thank you?
 - 1. In English, we say "thank you."
In Spanish, we say "gracias."
In Japanese, we say "arigato."
 - 2. The words may sound different but the feelings they convey are all the same.
It is a way we express gratitude for something that is done for us.
- C. What is the Buddhist way to say "thank you?" Namu Amida Butsu
- D. There are Four Gratitudes in Buddhism that are very important and that I want to share with you. (teacher note: may be helpful to write on a chart)

THE FOUR GRATITUDES

**WE ARE THANKFUL TO OUR PARENTS FOR
THEIR LOVING CARE OF US.**

**WE ARE THANKFUL TO OUR FRIENDS AND ALL
OTHER LIFE FOR THEIR HELP IN PROVIDING
FOR OUR WELL BEING.**

**WE ARE THANKFUL TO OUR COUNTRY FOR ITS
BELIEF IN FREEDOM FOR ALL PEOPLES.**

**WE ARE THANKFUL TO THE THREE TREASURES
FOR SHOWING US THE WAY TO AMIDA'S PURE
LAND.**

NAMU AMIDA BUTSU

PROJECTS: Discuss the 8 Buddhist Cards (can be purchased through Dharma School Curriculum and Material Coordinator)

I. Magazine cut outs

A. Materials

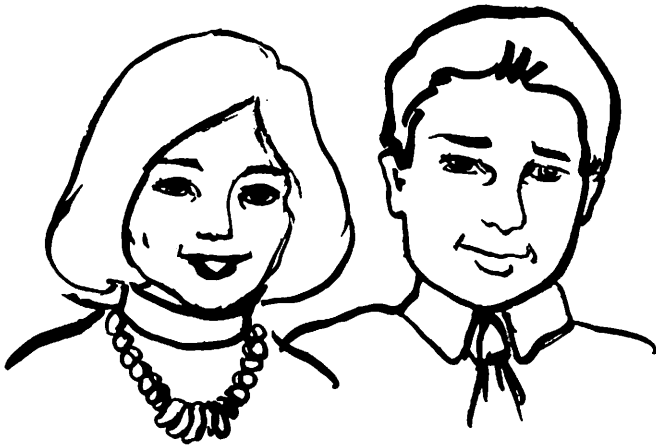
1. 2 large sheets of colored paper per child
2. Glue
3. Scissors
4. Magazines
5. Two circular discs with “parents” written on one and child’s name (e.g. “Garrett”) written on the other.

B. Procedure

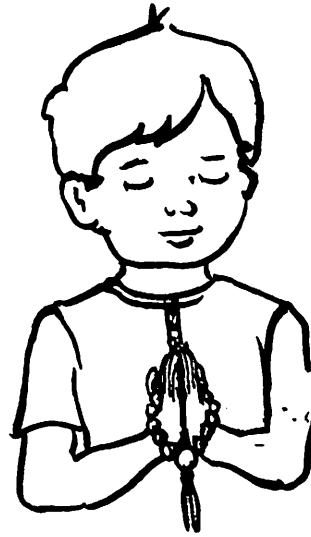
1. Discuss with the children all that their parents have done for them and stress the deep gratitude they owe their parents.
2. Discuss how the children can help their parents (e.g. help keep own room clean, etc.)
3. Explore magazines and have children cut out pictures of what their parents have done for them and also pictures of what the children can do for their parents, and paste the pictures on the discs using the diagram on the following page.

As a Child of Buddha

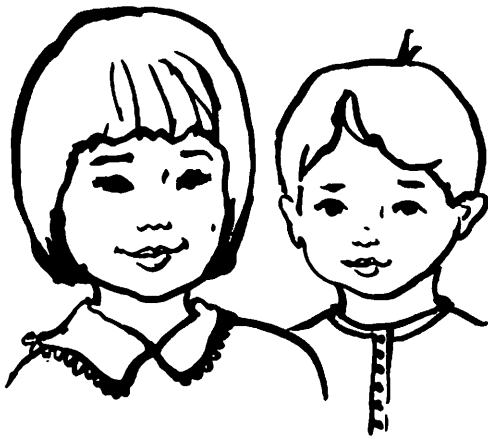
I Know Why I Go To The Temple



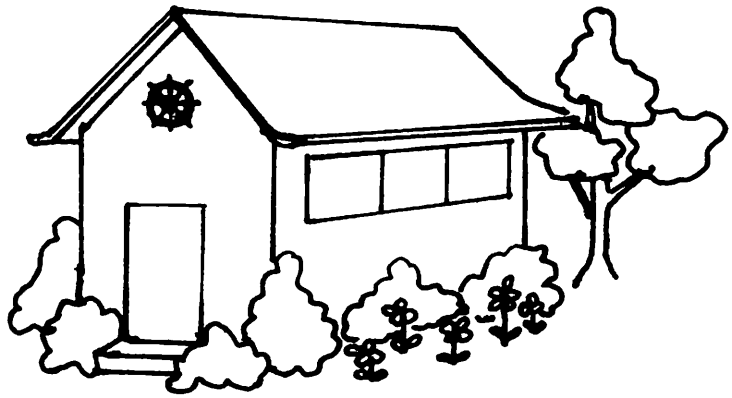
I go to the Temple because my Mommy and Daddy tell me to go



I go to the Temple because I like to go to the Temple



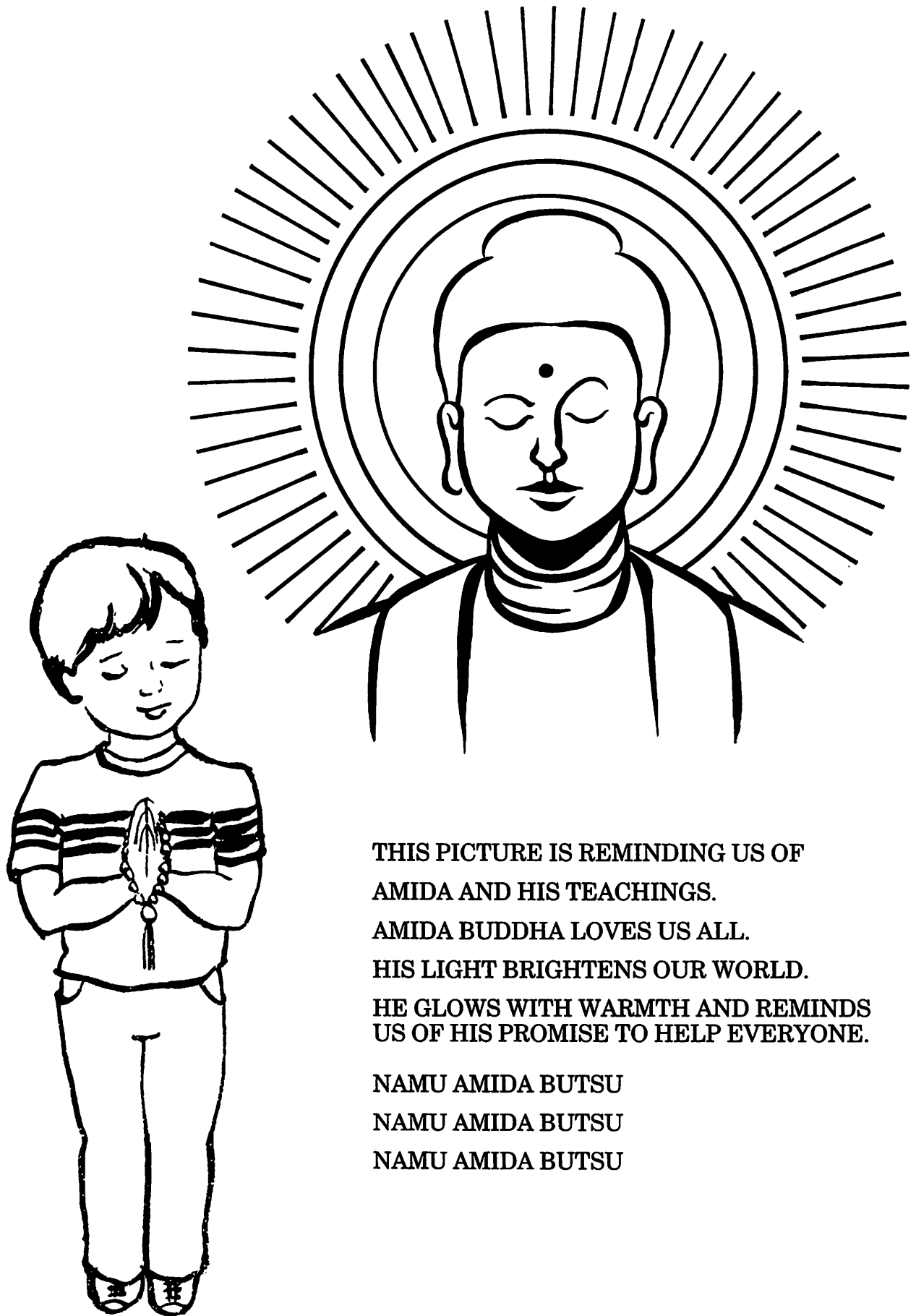
I go to the Temple to be with my friends



I go to the Temple because it is so nice and quiet there.



I go to the Temple to learn about the Buddha's teachings



THIS PICTURE IS REMINDING US OF
AMIDA AND HIS TEACHINGS.
AMIDA BUDDHA LOVES US ALL.
HIS LIGHT BRIGHTENS OUR WORLD.
HE GLOWS WITH WARMTH AND REMINDS
US OF HIS PROMISE TO HELP EVERYONE.

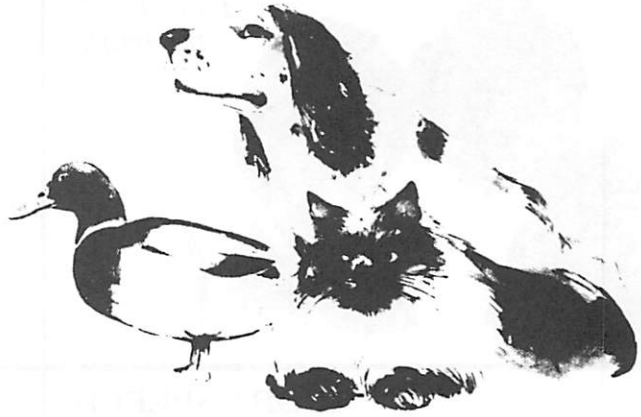
NAMU AMIDA BUTSU
NAMU AMIDA BUTSU
NAMU AMIDA BUTSU

Gratitude



GRATITUDE TO PARENTS

The attitude of respect for family life and parents is to be nurtured as the basis for his/her later development as a human being, citizen and Buddhist.



GRATITUDE TO ALL LIFE

The attitude of appreciation for life and non-injury of living beings is to be cultivated as the first step in developing character and personality, in becoming a real human being.

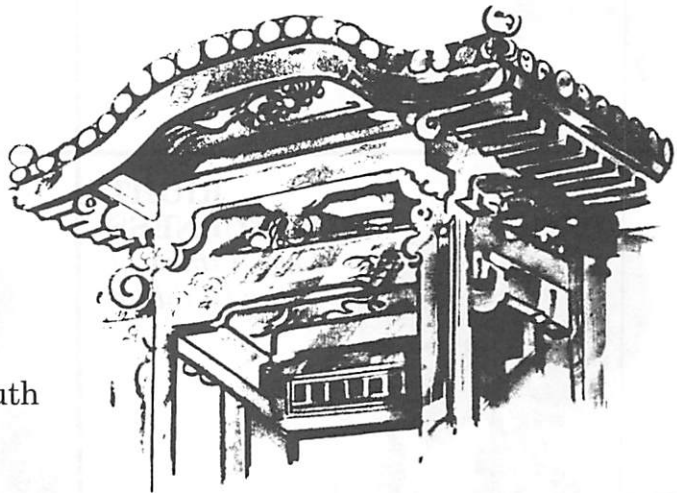


GRATITUDE TO COUNTRY

To be taught the meaning, role and responsibility of being a citizen in a given society. From the attitude of this gratitude there arises concern for the welfare of the country and its proper functioning, the development of a real citizen.

GRATITUDE TO BUDDHA, DHARMA, SANGHA

The appreciation for the Three Treasures is the source of the spiritual development. The Buddhist grows in spirituality as he/she grows in the gratitude to Buddha; the light of compassion who is with us in the Nembutsu; gratitude to Dharma, the truth of life which is the source of timeless peace; gratitude to Sangha, the men/women who selflessly devote their time and effort to spreading the teachings so we may share in its wisdom.



Noble Eight-Fold Path

RIGHT VIEWS

*I shall seek
the truth.*



RIGHT THOUGHTS

*I shall have pure
thoughts.*



RIGHT SPEECH

*I shall speak
truthfully.*



RIGHT CONDUCT

I shall act truthfully.



RIGHT LIVELIHOOD

*I shall live
honestly.*



RIGHT EFFORT

*I shall follow the
teachings of
Buddha.*



RIGHT MINDFULNESS

*I shall think of
the Buddha.*



RIGHT MEDITATION

*shall recite the
Nembutsu.*





The Creed

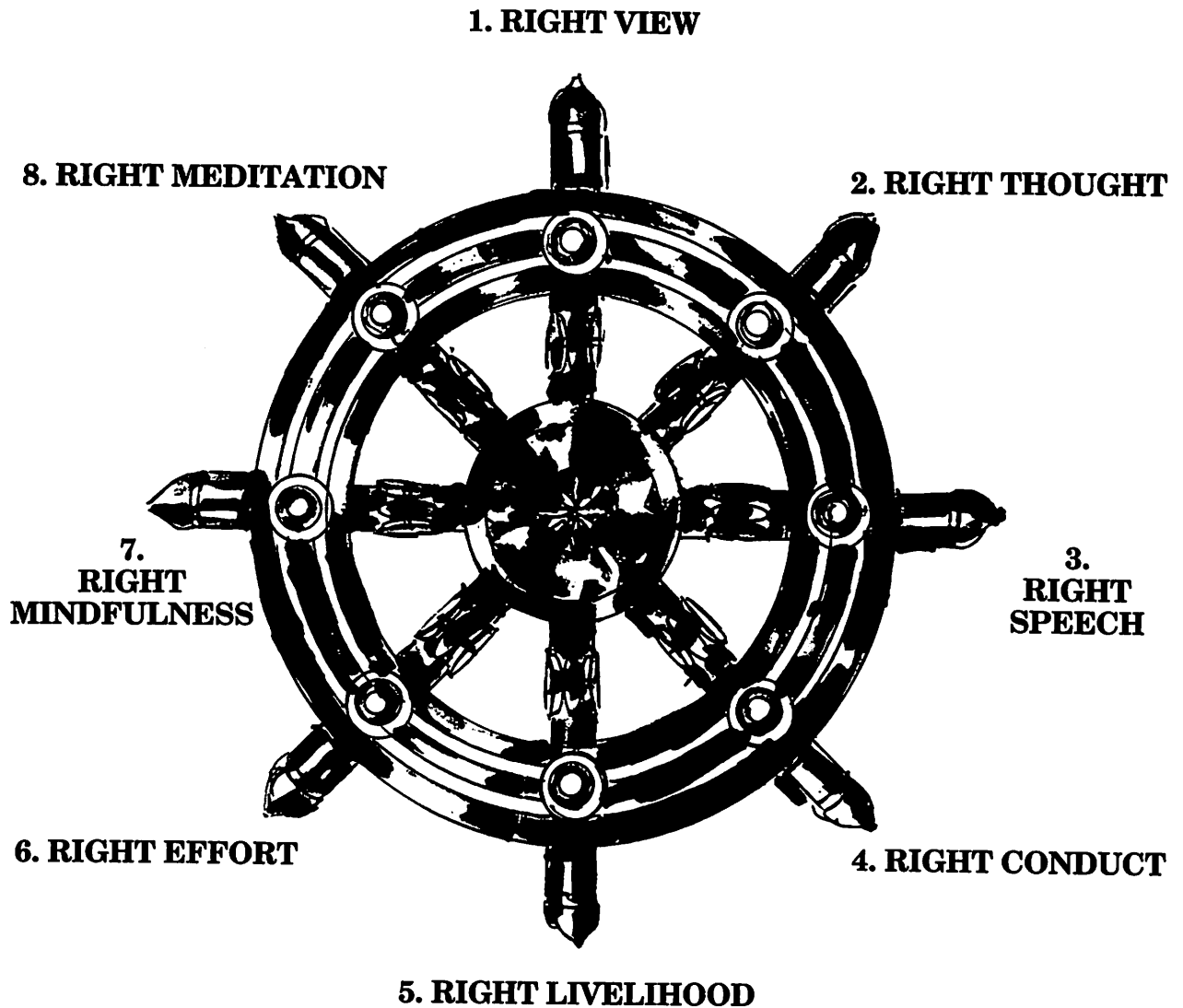
We rely upon Amida Buddha with our whole heart for Enlightenment in the life to come, abstaining from all sundry practices and teachings, and giving up the trust in our powerless selves.

We believe that the assurance of our Rebirth through Amida Buddha comes at the very moment we put our faith in Amida Buddha; and we call the Name,

Namu-Amida-Butsu, in gratitude and appreciation for Amida's compassion.

We also acknowledge gratefully the benign benevolence of our Founder and the succeeding Masters who have led us to believe this profound teaching; and we do now endeavor to follow, throughout our lives, the Way laid down for us.

Dharmacakra



Golden Chain



I am a link in Amida Buddha's golden chain of love that stretches around the world. I must keep my link bright and strong.

I will try to be kind and gentle to every living thing,
and protect all who are weaker than myself.

I will try to think pure and beautiful thoughts,
to say pure and beautiful words,
and do pure and beautiful deeds.

May every link in Amida Buddha's golden chain of love become bright and strong, and may we all attain perfect peace.

Jodo Shinshu Creed

I affirm my faith in
Amida's Infinite Wisdom
and Compassion.
Reciting his Sacred
Name, I shall live with
strength and joy.

I shall follow Amida's
Teachings. I shall under-
stand the Right Path and
resolve to spread the
true Teachings.

I shall look up to
Amida's Guiding Light.
As I reflect upon my
imperfect self.
I live with gratitude for
His Perfect Compassion
which surrounds me at
all times.

I rejoice in Amida's
Wisdom and Compassion.
I shall respect the help of
my fellow men and work
for the good of my
community.



Ondokusan

NYO RA I DA I HI NO ONDOKU WA,
MI O KO NI SHI TE MO HO ZU BE SHI.
SHI SHU CHI SHI KI NO ONDOKU MO,
HO NE O KU DA KI TE MO SHA SU BE SHI.

TRANSLATION

The benevolence of the Tathāgata's great compassion,
Even if we must crush our bodies, should be returned in gratitude.

The benevolence of the masters and teachers,
Even if we must break our bones, should be returned in gratitude.



Namu Amida Butsu



To Temple We Go

Today is Sunday morning. _____dressed in her Sunday clothes and put her 'ojuzu' on her wrist. She put her 'offertory' in her pocket and called her little brother, _____.

"Time to leave," said Daddy and Mother.

When they arrived at the Temple, _____took _____hand and led him to his classroom.

She saw her friends with their sisters, brothers, and mothers and fathers. She waved to them.

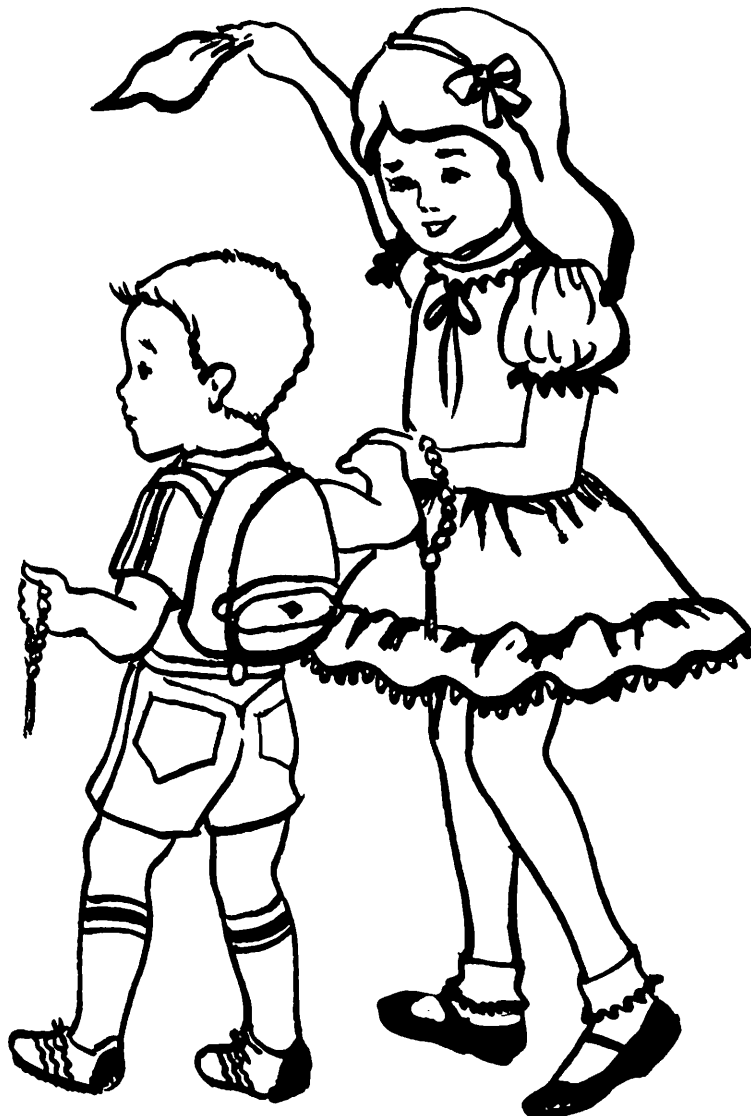
_____and _____like to come to Dharma School.

Teacher: 'What did you do this morning to get ready for Dharma School?'

'It feels nice to come to the Temple with the whole family, doesn't it?'

'When mother is busy on Sunday mornings, do you help her clear the breakfast table, so you can all be ready for the Temple?'

To the Teacher: the names are left blank so the children's names in class can be filled in.



To Temple We Go

We have a puzzle "To Temple We Go"

Can you help this boy find his way to the Temple?

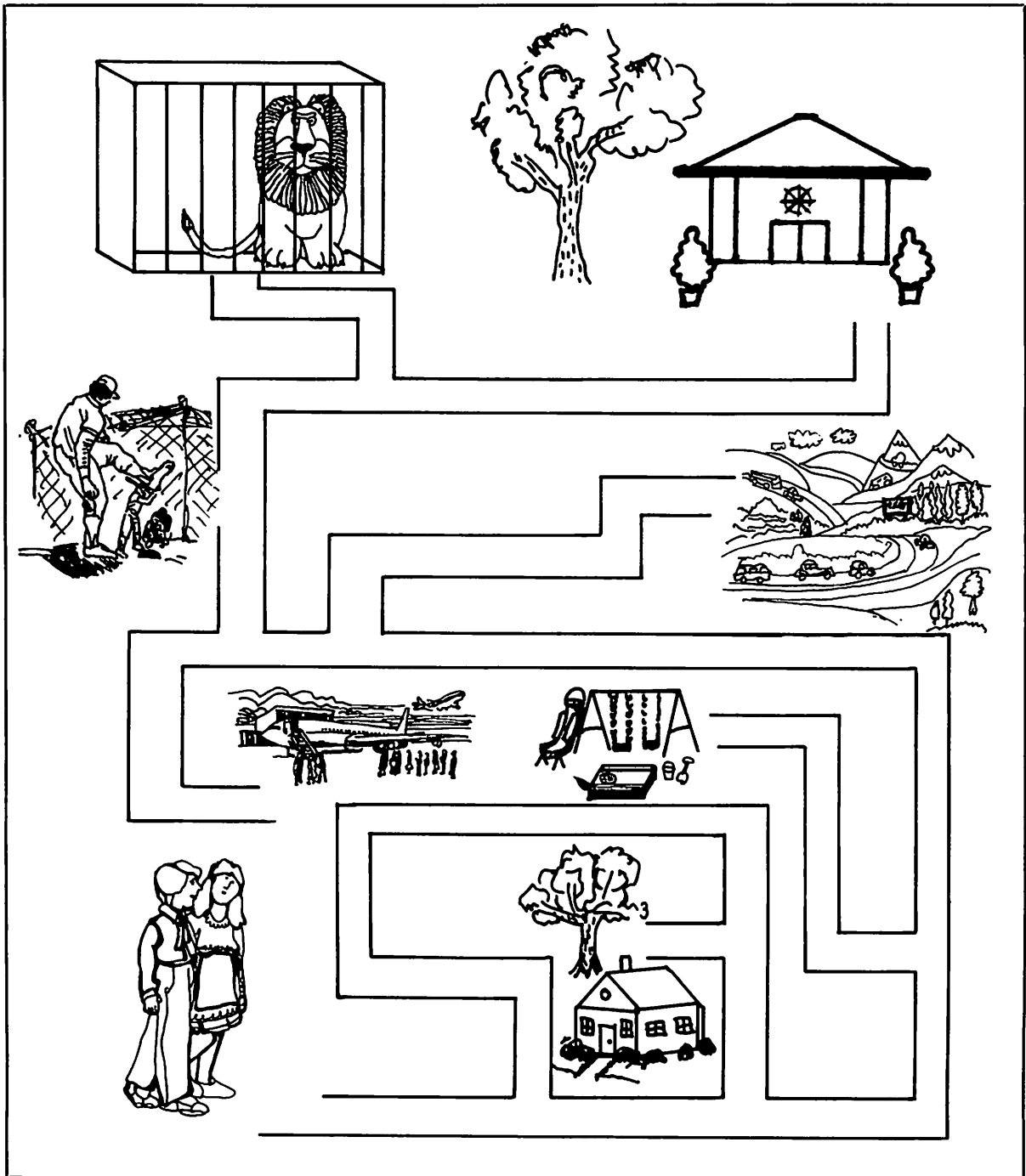
Why do we come to the Temple?

To learn about Amida Buddha.

To be with our friends.

To learn about being Buddhist children.

Can you think of more reasons?



Temple Etiquette

Purpose:

To develop the understanding that the Temple is a place of worship and to learn about the Buddha's Teachings

Materials:

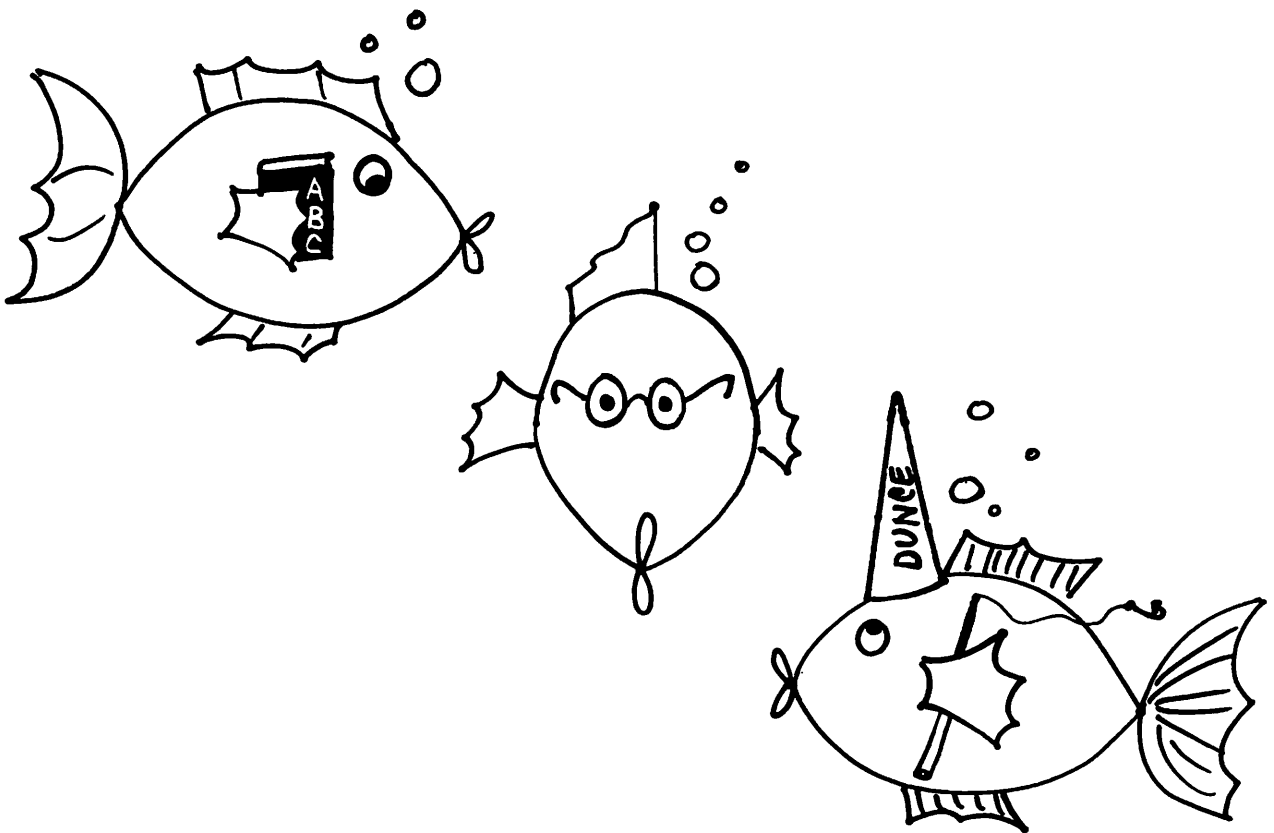
1. Story, **Three Fishes**
2. For puppets: crayons, paper, scissors, stiff paper, paste, tongue depressor
3. A ready-made puppet for example

Procedures:

1. Tell story, **Three Fishes**
We will not act foolishly if we listen carefully to what the sensei says during Dharma School.
2. Discussion
We don't want to be like the 3rd fish who was foolish! What are the things we can do in Temple to become Buddhist children?
 - a. Be very quiet when we enter the Temple
 - b. Walk in the Temple
 - c. Sit quietly and face the shrine during the service.
 - d. If you are late, quietly take a set without disturbing anyone.
3. Construct simple puppets of ourselves.
Pass out materials: crayons, paper, scissors, tag board (or construction paper), paste, tongue depressor.
 - a. Children draw themselves
 - b. Cut out drawings and paste on stiff paper with a tongue depressor between them to fold.
4. Dramatize with puppets
If you were the sensei (give a child a puppet of the sensei) what story would you like to share?
Let each child take the sensei's part, let each child talk about themselves.

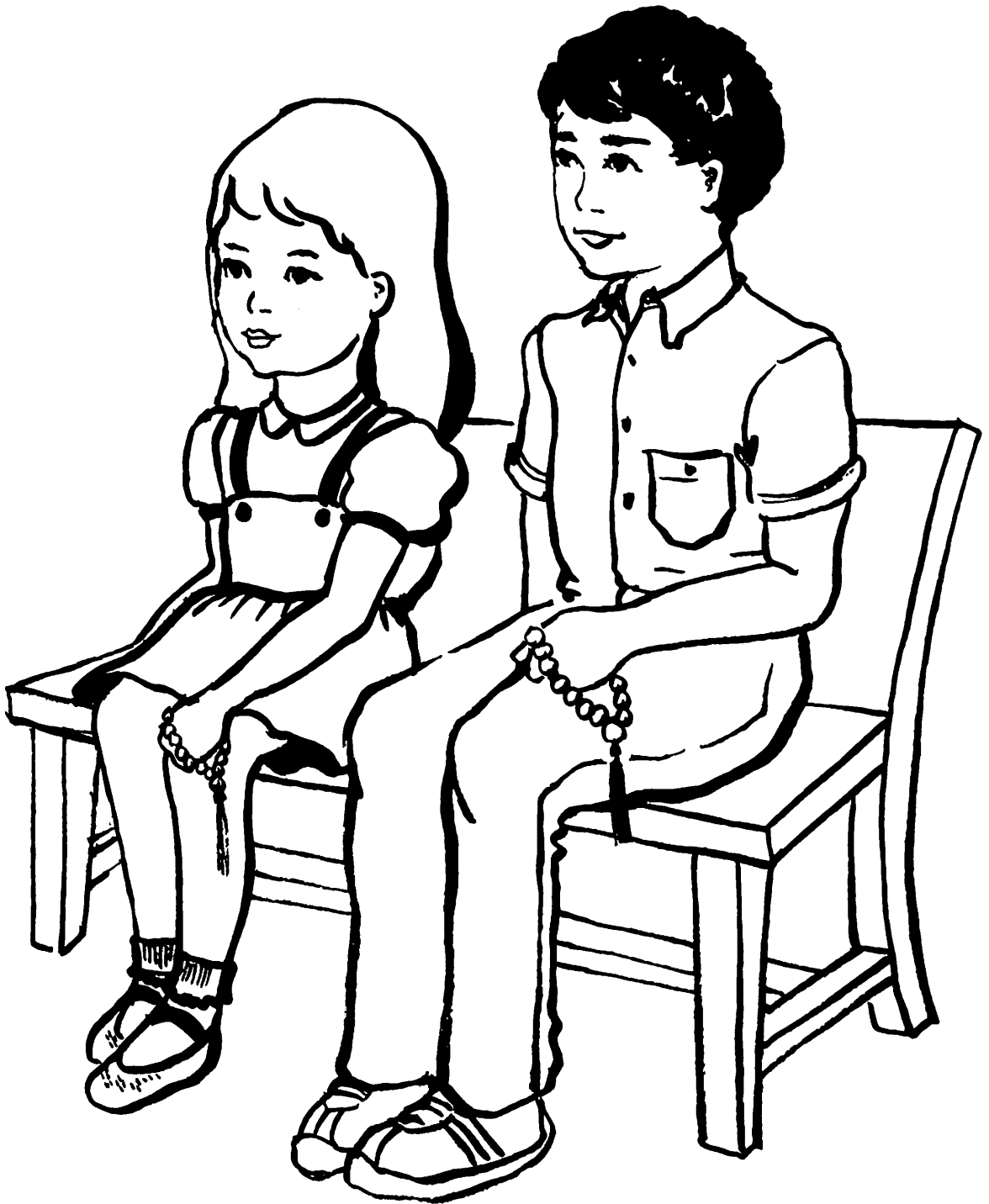
THREE FISHES

Once upon a time there were three fishes living in a cool mountain stream. Their mother taught them all the same things and yet they were all very different. The first was very smart. He used good judgment at all times. He knew how to stay away from the fishermen and where to find the best food. Now, the second fish was only half smart. Sometimes he acted very wisely but often he was reckless and foolish. As for the third fish, he was very foolish. He was always taking chances and snapped at the fisherman's bait or took naps right in the middle of the stream where the water was clear and shallow. One day a very clever fisherman came to the stream where the three fishes lived. He had a net with him. The wise fish knew what to do right away and swam away as fast as he could and hid in the ferns where he was safe. The second fish took a chance and continued to play. The net was closing in on him and then he became terribly frightened and raced this way and that. He luckily escaped the net. The third fish was such a foolish fish that he kept on playing and teasing the fisherman. He thought he was having a wonderful time. Finally he was caught in the net and was made into a wonderful dinner for the fisherman and his wife. It is nice to have fun but we must remember to use good judgment. If we follow Lord Buddha's teachings we will never act foolishly.





The child who plays the part of sensei
holds this simple stick puppet.
The other children hold puppets of
themselves.



We sit quietly in the Temple.
He listen attentively to sensei's story.
We learn at Dharma School about the teachings of the Buddha.

Flower Offering

Materials:

An Obutsudan (you may use Obutsudan constructed by students)

Procedures:

1. Discussion

There are many kinds of flowers but all are beautiful.

Flowers are pretty.

We like to give them to Amida Buddha.

Flowers wither so we must remember to give Amida Buddha fresh flowers often.

2. Construct flowers.

3. Practice offering flowers to the Amida Buddha.

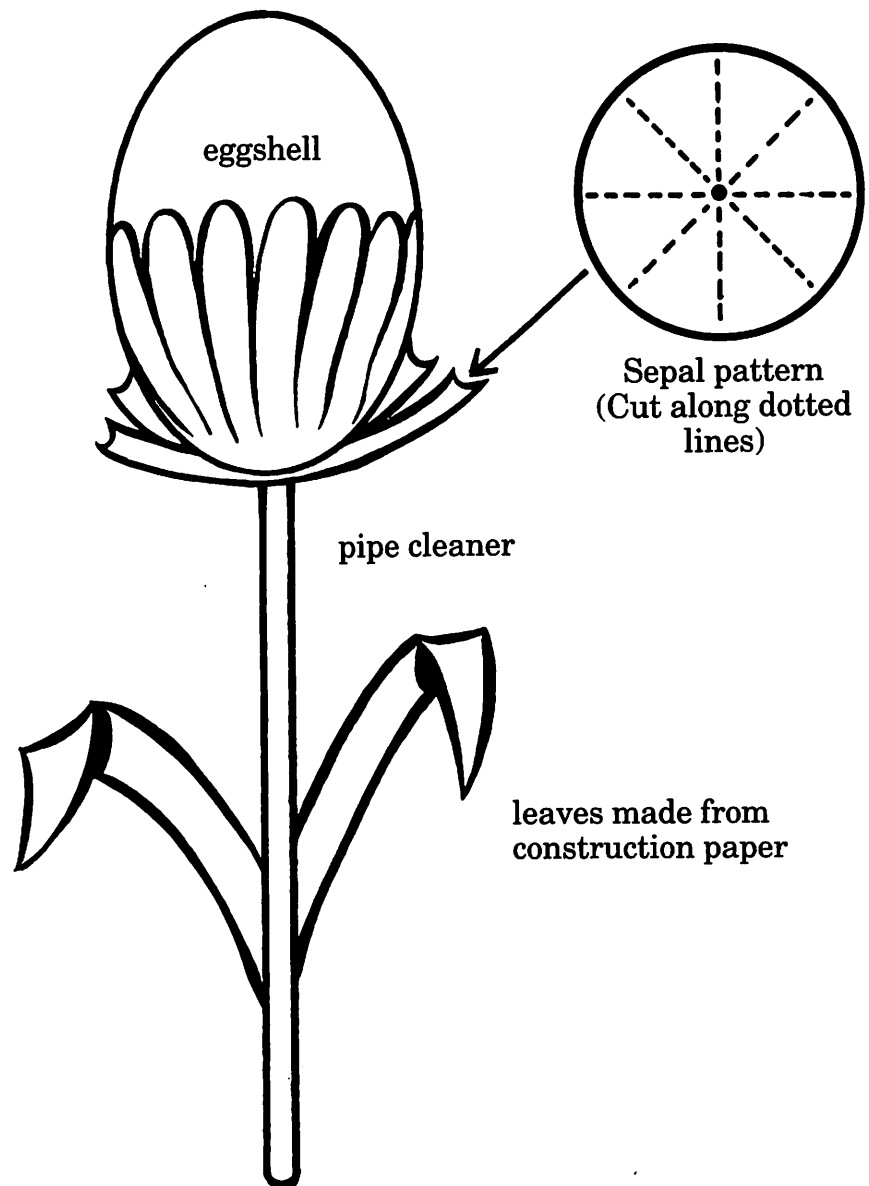
Let each child offer his/her flower to the Amida Buddha during class time. Ask children to bring fresh flowers next Sunday. (Artificial flowers are not given to the Amida Buddha because the significance of flower offering is that life is ever changing.)

4. Display flower projects.

Observe the way children present the flowers to the Amida Buddha the following Sunday.

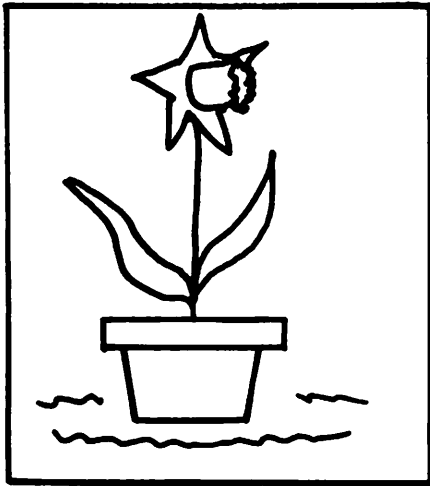
Materials:

1. Empty eggshells
2. paint
3. brushes
4. construction paper
5. scissors
6. pipe cleaners

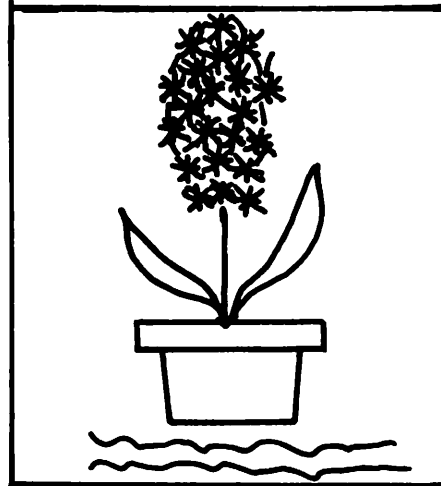
**Procedure:**

1. Paint the eggshells with a downward stroke.
2. Cut out sepal from construction paper and cut along dotted lines and curl with scissors.
3. Place sepal under the eggshell and puncture a hole through it with the pipe cleaner. Push the pipe cleaner on through the hole in the eggshell.
4. Paste the leaves on.

Daffodil



Hyacinth

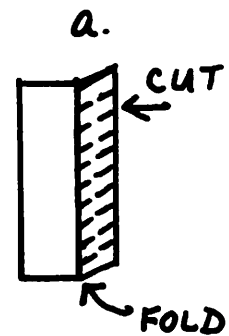


Materials:

1. Construction paper
2. Paste
3. Scissors
4. Crepe paper

Procedure:

1. Cut out the leaf shapes and the stem and the pot.
2. For the flower of the daffodil, cut a star shaped piece.
3. For the center of the flower:
 - a. Cut a long strip of construction paper.
 - b. Cut along the dotted lines and fold.
 - c. Take the strip and make a cylinder and paste together.
 - d. Paste the folded piece on the star shape.
4. For the flower of the hyacinth, cut an oblong piece.
 - a. Cut 1" x 2" strips of crepe paper.
 - b. Crumble and paste these strips.
 - c. Paste on the oblong piece.
5. Mount these potted flowers on any color background paper.
Underneath the flowers: (write)



Flowers are pretty.

We like to give flowers to Amida Buddha.

See: (Teacher's Guide)
Jishin Kyo Nin Shin
for other flower patterns

Gassho

Purpose:

Teach the meaning of Gassho.
To teach why it is important to us.
Teach how to gassho.

Materials:

1. Ojuzu
2. Incense burner and incense
3. Magazines
4. Paper, paste and scissors

Procedures:

1. Open class with gassho. Recite the pledge and Nembutsu.

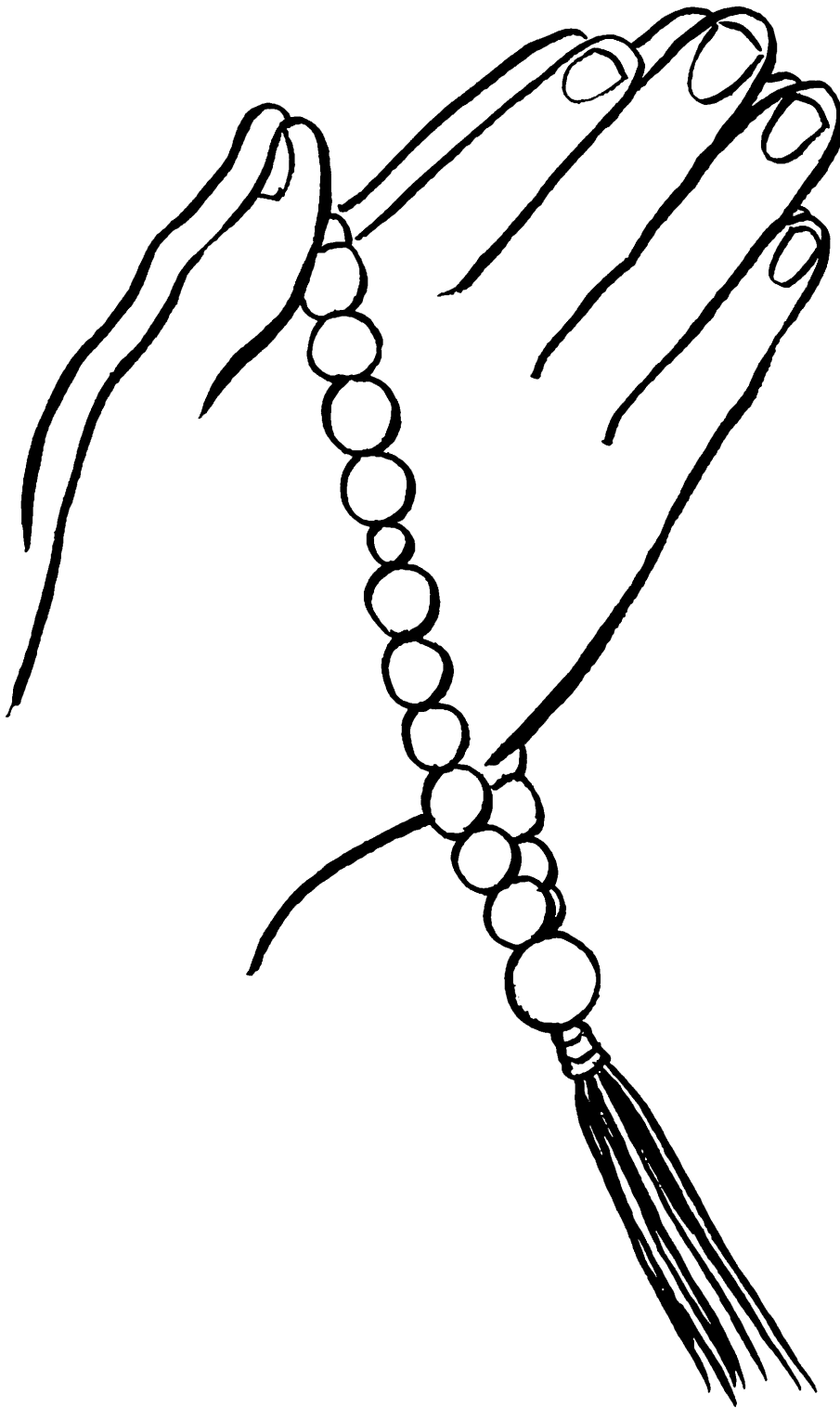
Good morning, Amida
I will try to follow your teaching,
At home, in school, and at play.
Namu Amida Butsu

2. Motivation: Ask various questions.

- a. What is gassho?
- b. What are some things that we should be thankful for?
- c. Why and how do we gassho?
- d. What do we say and who do we gassho to?

3. **Presentation:**

- a. Tell and illustrate the meaning of gassho.
 - (1) Show by putting your hands together in gassho
 - (2) Pass out picture to each child and discuss.
- b. Tell a story about the ojuzu.
- c. Color the picture that was handed out.
- d. Hand out magazine to each child.
- e. Tell them to cut out anything that shows gratitude (anything we are thankful for).
- f. Have them paste their cut-outs on paper.
- g. Let each child have a turn to illustrate and tell about his/her work.
- h. Teach how to gassho.
 - (1) Show the proper way to gassho in front of the shrine.
 - (2) Let each child have an opportunity to go in front of the shrine to gassho.
- i. Close class with gassho.



When we Gassho, we hold our hands this way.

Gassho means to fold our hands in gratitude of Amida Buddha.

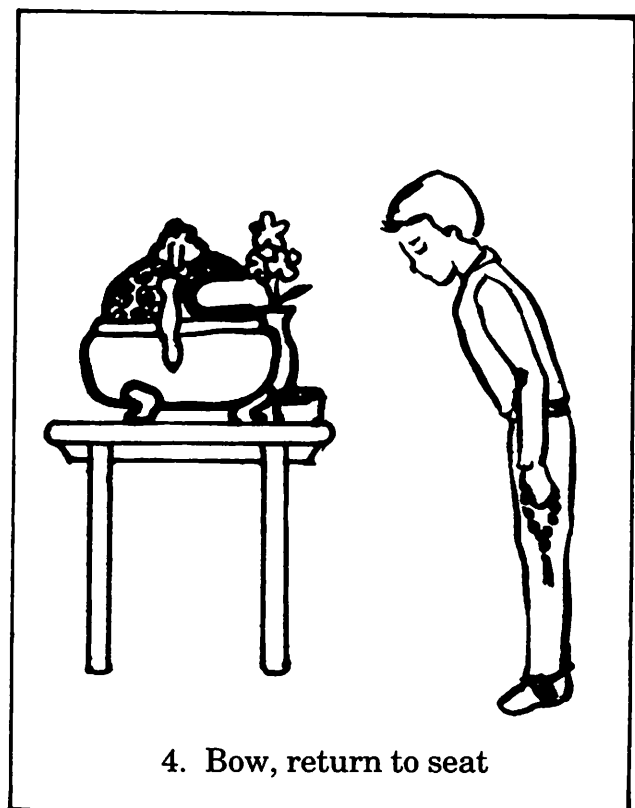
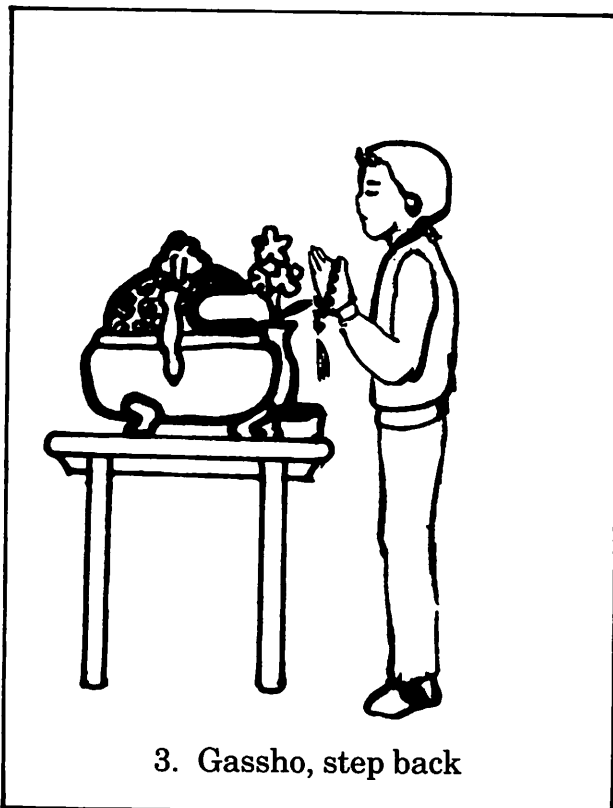
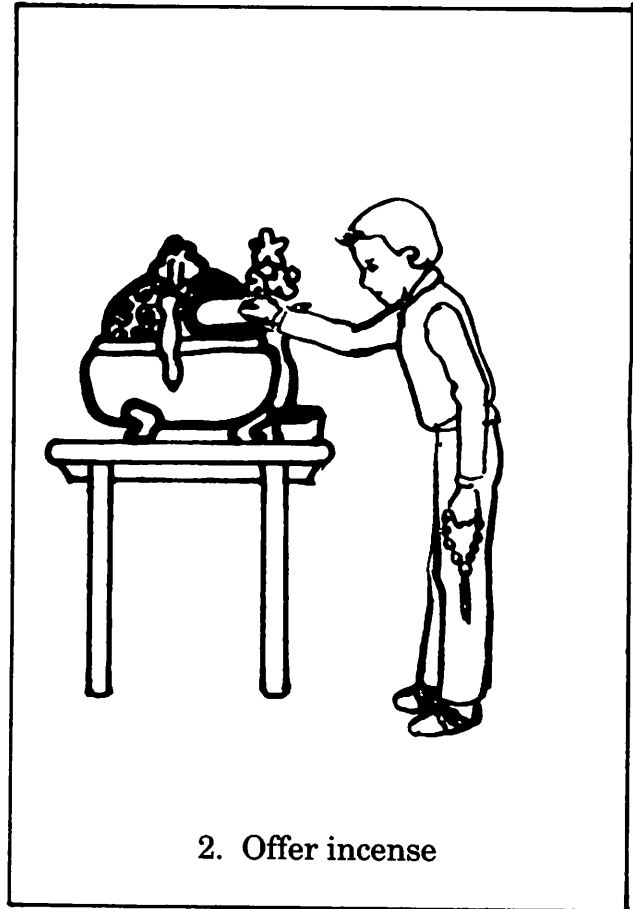
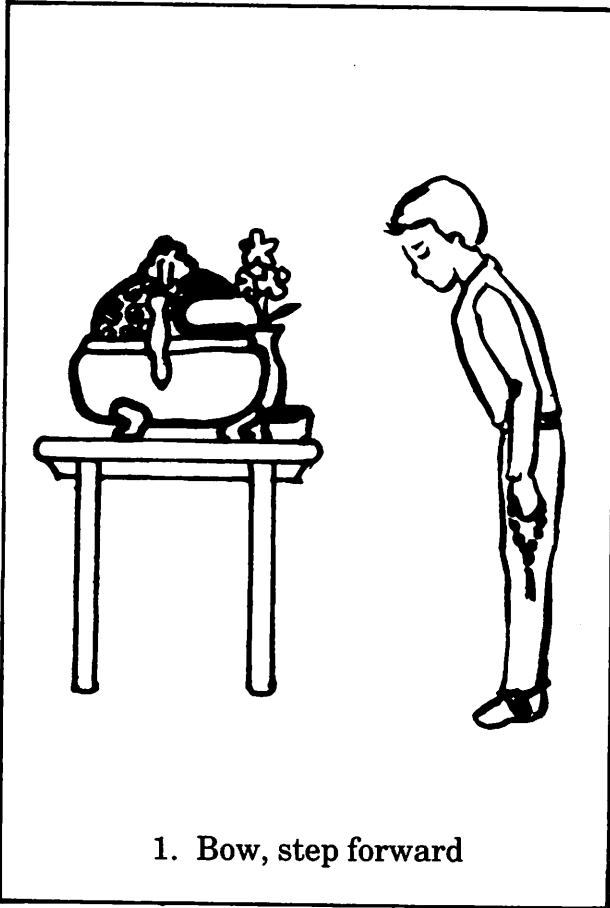
It means to say thank you to Amida.

Amida loves everyone and everything.

You should Gassho everyday.



Let's Gassho



Incense Burning

Purpose:

To learn about Incense Burning

Materials:

1. Story, **The Giving Tree**

Procedure:

1. Read the story, **The Giving Tree—Shel Silverstein**
When we burn incense it helps us to remember to always think kind and beautiful thoughts.
2. Practice Incense Burning
Standard set—gassho, pick up incense and put it in incense burner, gassho.
Let each child have his turn. Use the ojuzus that were made.

Comments:

Explain to the children that you may not get visible or tangible rewards for telling the truth and saying kind things but you are rewarded with the nice things people may say about you or by the friends you may gain.

Practice Gathas

Children enjoy singing gathas from books.

Teach children to sing Gathas.

Draw—words to the Gatha

“Sunbeams”



“Church Bells”



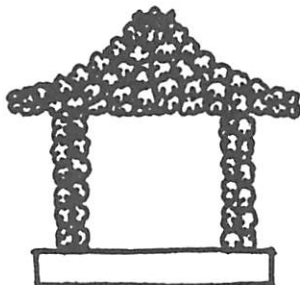
(use bell-shaped cards)

“Buddha Loves You”

In place of the words—bird, pup, pussy-cat and fish. Illustrate with -



“Long Ago in India”



(use Hanamido-shaped cards)

“Thank You, Buddha”



(hand in Gassho)

“Remember”

Awareness

You learned about Amida Buddha within your heart.

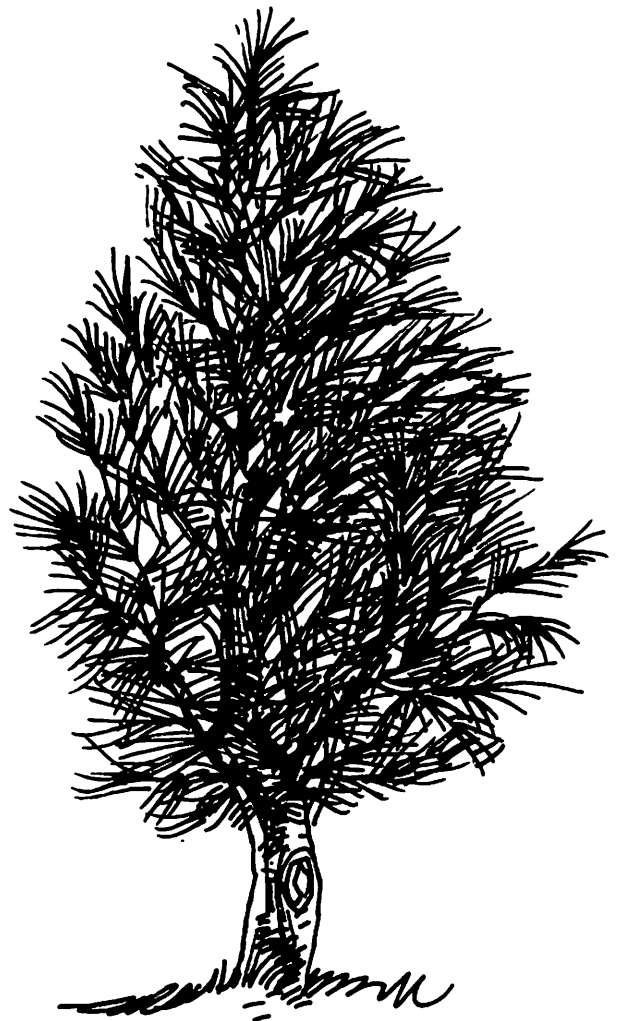
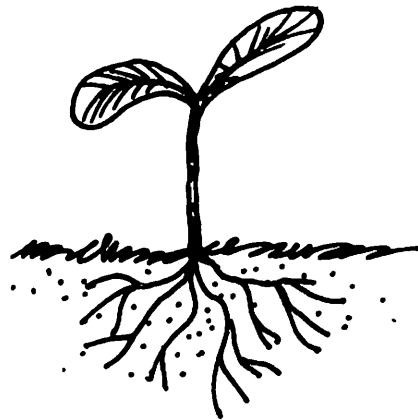
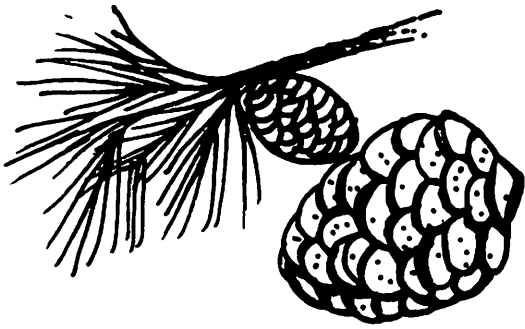
“Can you see your body growing? No, but you know you are. How? Mother and Daddy tell you that you are growing. Auntie and Uncle, and Grandpa and Grandma, and the Teacher, all say, “My but you’ve grown tall.” You yourself may not see it day to day, but you know it, don’t you. Because after a while (oh, a year or so), you *have* grown!!”

“Listening and believing is the beginning of being Buddhists.”

Teacher: Here is a poster. It reads ‘How We Grow.’ Do you see the little radish seed? Yes, it looks quite small, but as it grows it becomes a nice fat, red radish. The sunflower seed looks small too, but it grows to be a tall, tall sunflower. What did we learn about how plants grow? Yes, plants need soil, water and warm sunshine. Next we see an egg. How does it hatch? Yes, Mother hen sits on it for days and days. She keeps it warm and turns it over and over. When it hatches she watches over the chicks constantly. This little baby girl needs love and understanding to grow, too. A happy home, school, and church are very important. We talked about Amida Buddha’s love. The soil and water or like home and school, and the warm sunshine is Amida Buddha’s love. We are surrounded by Amida’s Love always and all the time. This is why we say, ‘Namu Amida Butsu,’ “Thank you, Amida Buddha.’

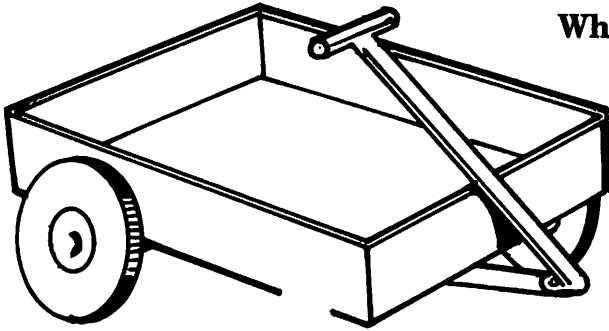
How We Grow



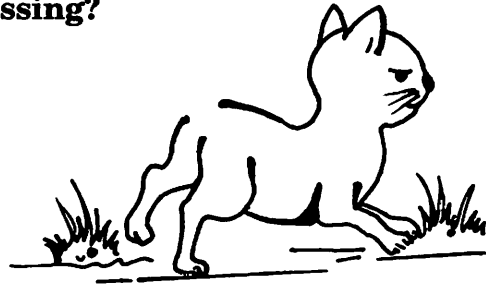


Awareness

What is Missing?



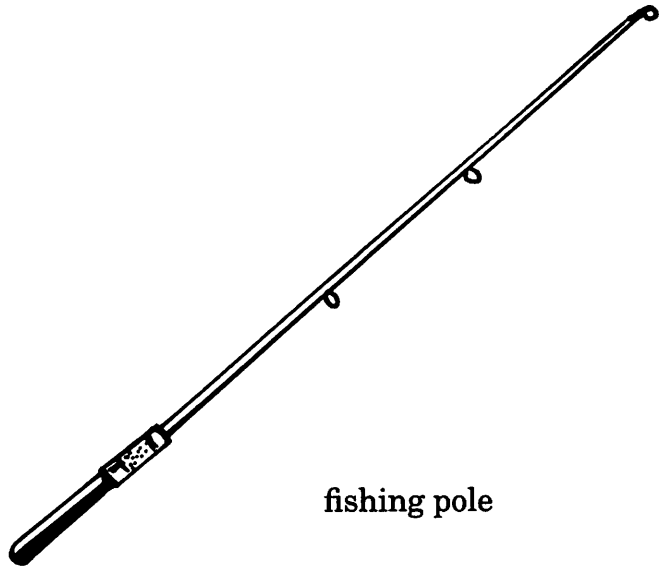
wagon



cat



ice cream



fishing pole



girl



gassho

Namu Amida Butsu

Growing Your Plants

Teacher: Do you like to watch things grow?

What do plants need?

What happens if you don't prepare the soil? No sun? No water?

Children are like little plants. They need nourishment to grow, too.

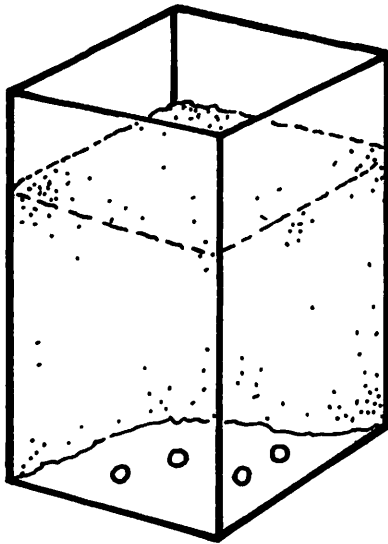
What do we need? (Yes, love, understanding, guidance, and laughter; good food, clothes, Dharma School, etc.)

We come to Dharma School to learn about the Buddha's teachings.

Dharma School, to us, is like having good rich soil for the little seeds. Listening to the stories in class and to the minister in the temple is like the water and sunshine. These are all very important aren't they?

Shall we plant radishes, too?

(To take home)



Radish seeds

Small milk carton
(cut off the tops)

Soil

Punch 4 small holes
in the bottom

Dear Parents,

_____ is taking home a carton with radish seeds planted in it. Just as a rich soil is necessary to grow good radishes, Dharma School training is necessary for the healthy growth of Buddhist Children.

Teacher _____

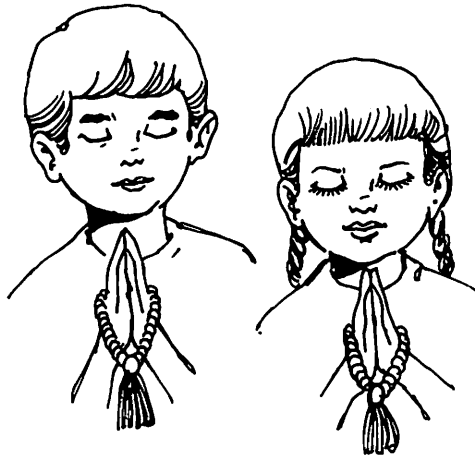


Learn About Amida Buddha's Everpresence

Amida is always with me

1. Mother watches over her baby at all times and takes very good care of the baby.
2. If the mother had other children in the family, she would love them all in the same manner.
3. Amida is like a mother. He watches over us at all times. He is always trying to make everyone happy.
4. Sometimes we have to be alone when big sister or big brother goes to school or mommy or daddy has to go some place. But we need not feel lonely, for Amida is with us. Even though we cannot see Amida, He is with us, around us, in us, everywhere. (That is why Amida's picture is drawn with light shining forth from His body towards everything in this universe.)
5. When we know that Amida is always with us. What is the little girl in the picture doing?

(Buddha Loves You)



In This Big World

In this big world
There are many kinds of sounds.....
Loud ones, sharp ones, soft ones,
Squeaky ones, creepy ones,
Gurgly ones, crashing ones,
Tapping ones.
But one sound is sweetest of all.....
The sound of the Nembutsu.
The Namu Amida Butsu.
Spoken from the lips of a little child.

(Butterfly's Song)

A New Friend

Teacher:

“Today we have a little visitor. Maybe you can guess. He’s small—even smaller than your hand and he lives in the water most of the time.

“No, it’s not a guppy or a goldfish. He has short legs and tiny eyes. He’s green and very quiet. No, not a chameleon—they don’t live in water, do they? He has a shell to protect himself. Yes, it’s a little turtle. This one lives in the water most of the time.”

(Bring in turtle). “Now if you can all stay still and watch, maybe he will walk towards one of you. You see, we must be still as can be—because Mr. Turtle is a little shy. He’s wondering, ‘Where am I?’ Why do you think he has a hard shell instead of smooth soft skin? Yes, to keep him safe. What does he do when he’s frightened. What do you do when you’re afraid?”

You know, when Mr. Turtle first came to live with us, he was afraid of almost everything... when leaves fell from the trees, when kitty sniffed at him, when there was a loud noise, when someone picked him up... He was frightened of a lot of things. But everyday we took care of him. We let him walk in the wet grass, out in the sunshine, into the shadows of the bushes, and soon he felt safe, and loved. We are like Mr. Turtle, too. When we are little and don’t understand too much about Amida Buddha, we are afraid of things around us, but as we grow older and wiser, we try to understand more about Amida Buddha’s love for us and feel safe enough to come out of our shells and say, ‘I’m growing up!’ ‘Thank you, Amida Buddha’.”

Follow-up on Our New Friend

Picture to color

Write your own poem as a class

Telling Stories from Pictures (Discussions)

This teaching-aid helps the child

- a) to gain insight and understanding
- b) to learn to observe a situation
- c) to verbalize what he sees

Mount the pictures attractively.

1. What is each picture about?
2. How can we correct the situation?

Give each child a chance to express his thoughts.

Points of emphasis should be clarified by the teacher.

Do not lose sight of the goal.

Note: Magazines are a good source for pictures. Use pictures that show kindness, unkindness, thankfulness, acceptance of others, thoughtfulness to young and old, sad or happy situations, etc. Make a library of these mounted pictures.

Use the 8 Buddhist Cards (introduced in previous pages)

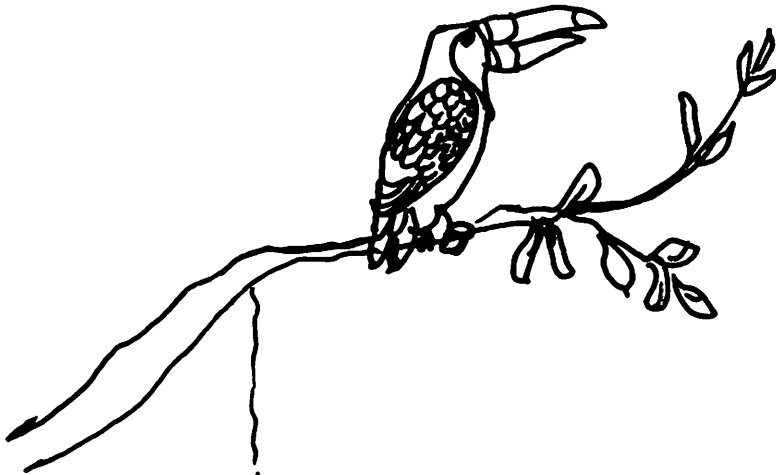
(A Poster to Talk About—Acceptance)

New Friends

Today is _____ first day at Dharma School. She feels very lonesome. What can you say to cheer her? What grade are you in? What is your name? Do you have a pet? Would you like to play with me? May I show you my classroom?

New Friends

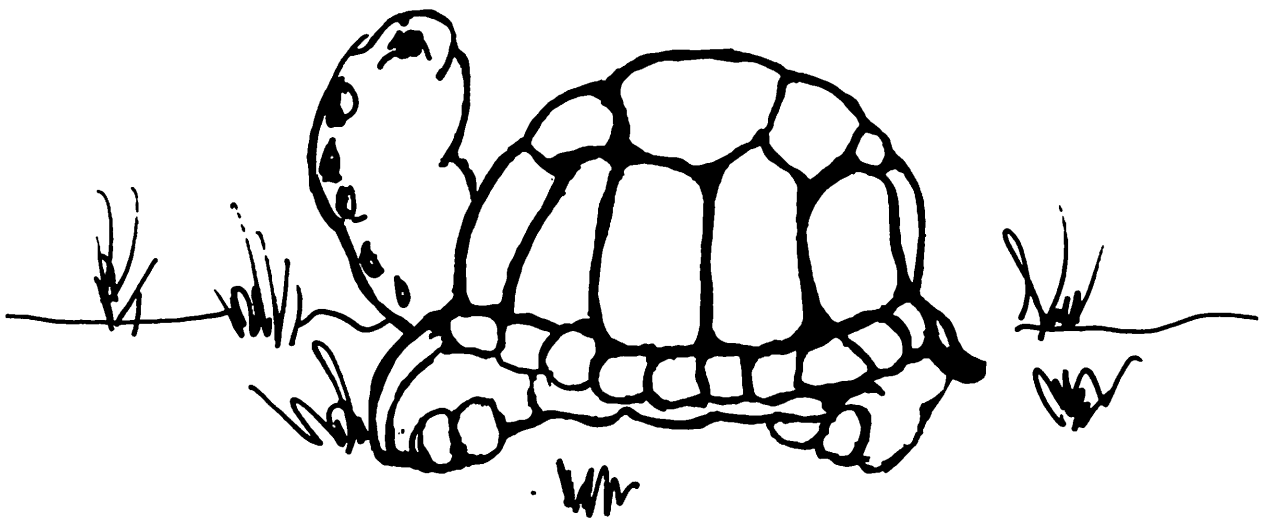
BIRD



CAT



SPIDER



TURTLE

New Friends

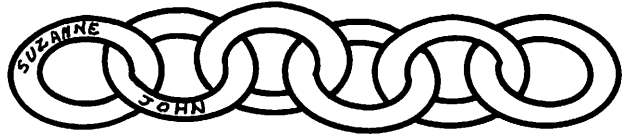
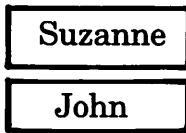


Golden chain of Friendship

Materials

Construction paper, paste, scissors and crayons.

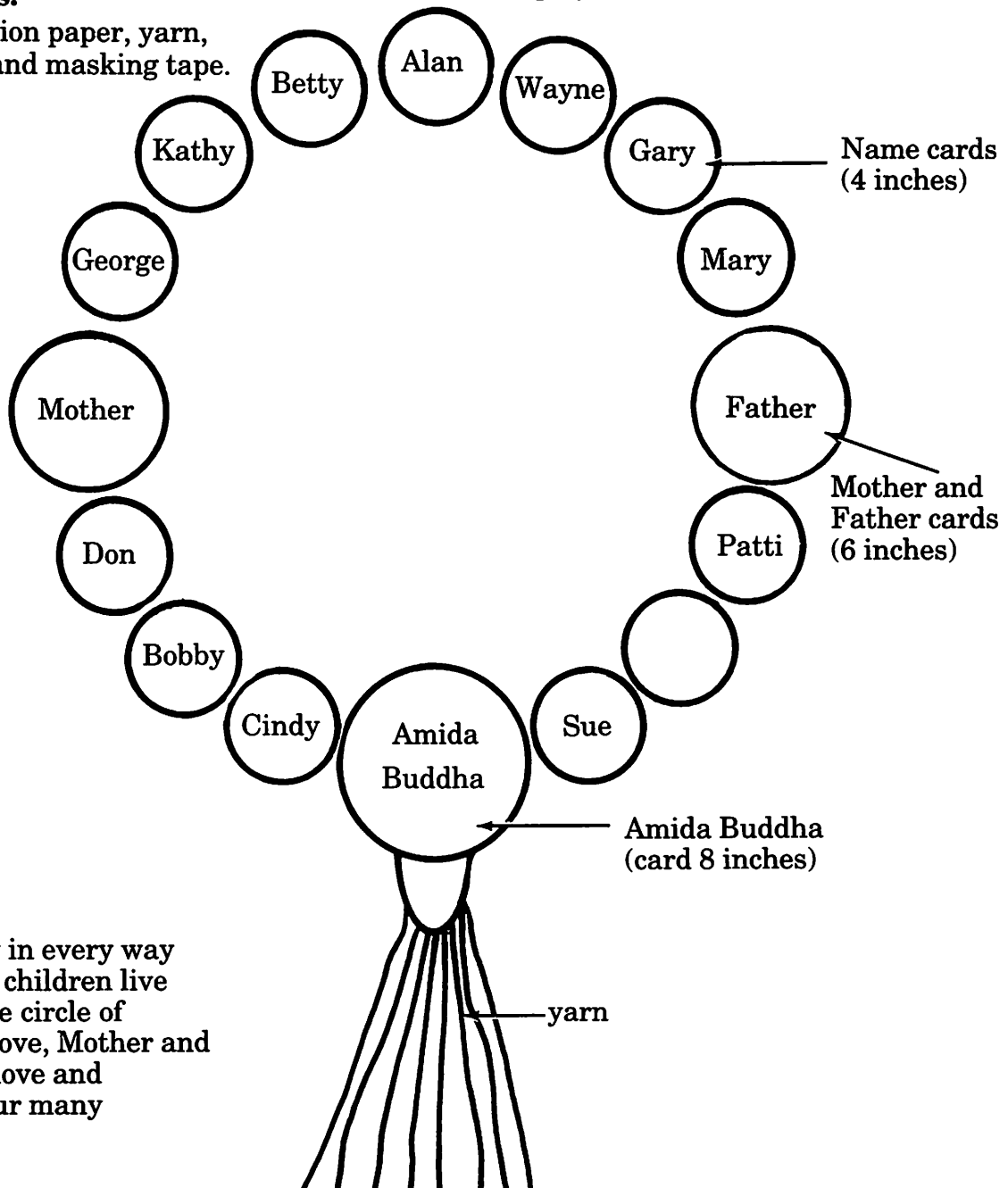
Make simple loops (links) and put a child's name on it and another link with the name of a new friend he made in school.



Materials:

Construction paper, yarn, crayons, and masking tape.

Ojuzu (4 ft. wall display)



Everyday in every way
Buddhist children live
within the circle of
Amida's love, Mother and
Father's love and
Love of our many
friends.

This Is Our World

Here are some beautiful flowers. We are like the flowers. Some are little and blue, some flowers are big and yellow, some are middle-sized and red. Yes, they are all beautiful. Why is the garden so pretty? Because all the flowers are different.

All the people of the world are like flowers, too. Some of us are tall, some of us are short, some of us are slender and some of us are stout. We have different colors of hair, eyes, and skin. Yet, we all smile and laugh the same way and feel sad and shed tears in the same way, too.

When we all stand shoulder to shoulder and help each other with kindness, then this will be a beautiful world.

This is Amida Buddha's World and our world. Let us do our share and make it a beautiful world.

Classroom Mural—Place large sheet of butcher paper on the wall. Cut and color picture and paste into the butcher paper.

One Big World

This is a big world,
In it there are many kinds of flowers.
Pink ones, red ones, yellow ones, many.

Amida loves all the flowers, large and small.
Let us take care of them.

This is a big world.
In it there are many kinds of animals.
Puppies, fat kittens, funny monkeys, fierce lions, many.

Amida loves all of the animals.
Let us be kind to them.

This is a big world.
In it are many kinds of children.
Black ones, white ones, brown ones, many.

Amida loves them all.
Let us learn to love them, too.

Have children write their own thoughts.

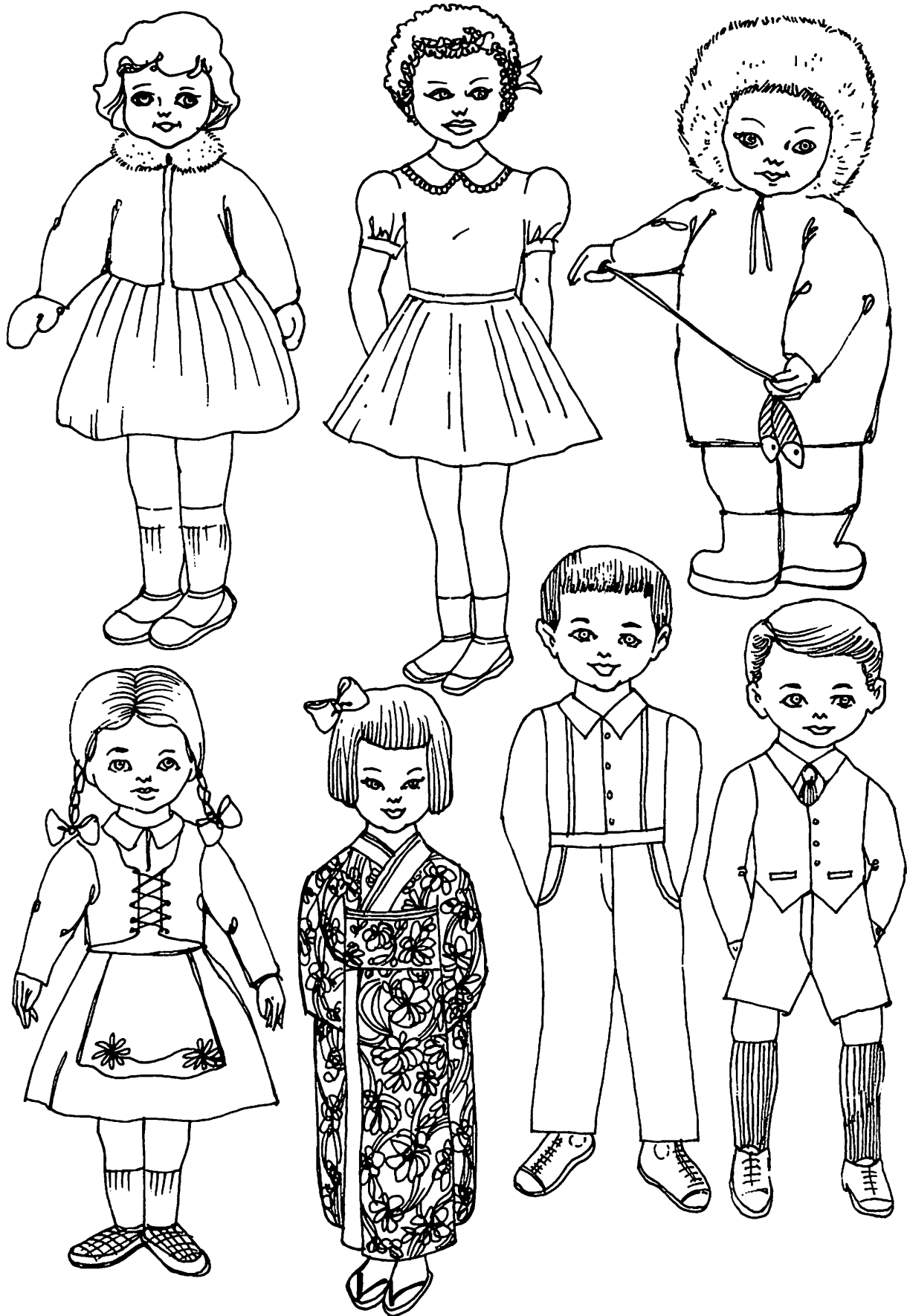
Activity:

Make a vase of construction paper flowers with pipe-cleaner stems and leaves. Use flower patterns that are simple enough for the children to trace and cut. Glue the flowers to green pipe-cleaner stems. Decorate the classroom with a bouquet, or send some flowers home to mother.

'This Is Our World'



“This Is Our World”



Buddhist Family

Purpose:

To help 1st grader understand what family means.

Materials:

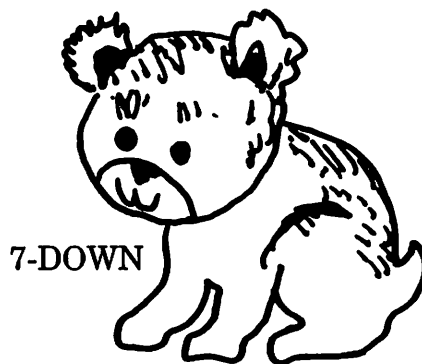
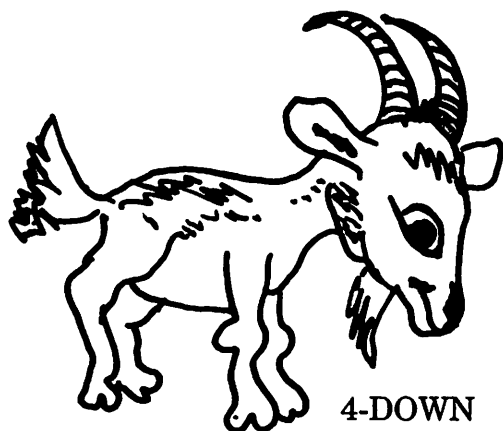
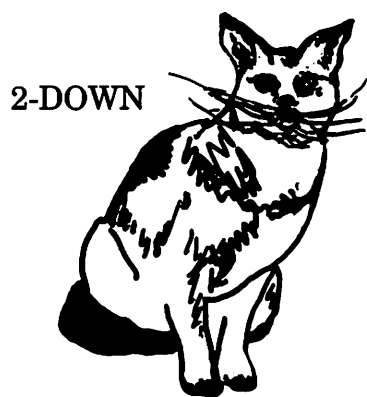
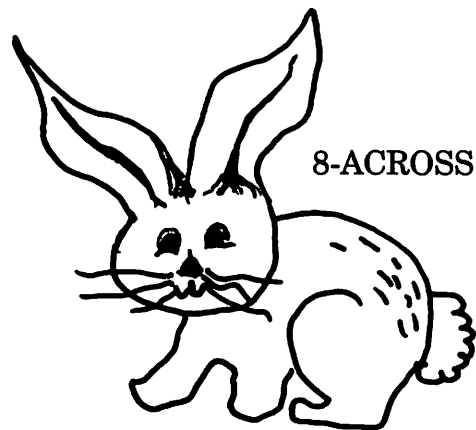
Books showing animal families.

Procedure:

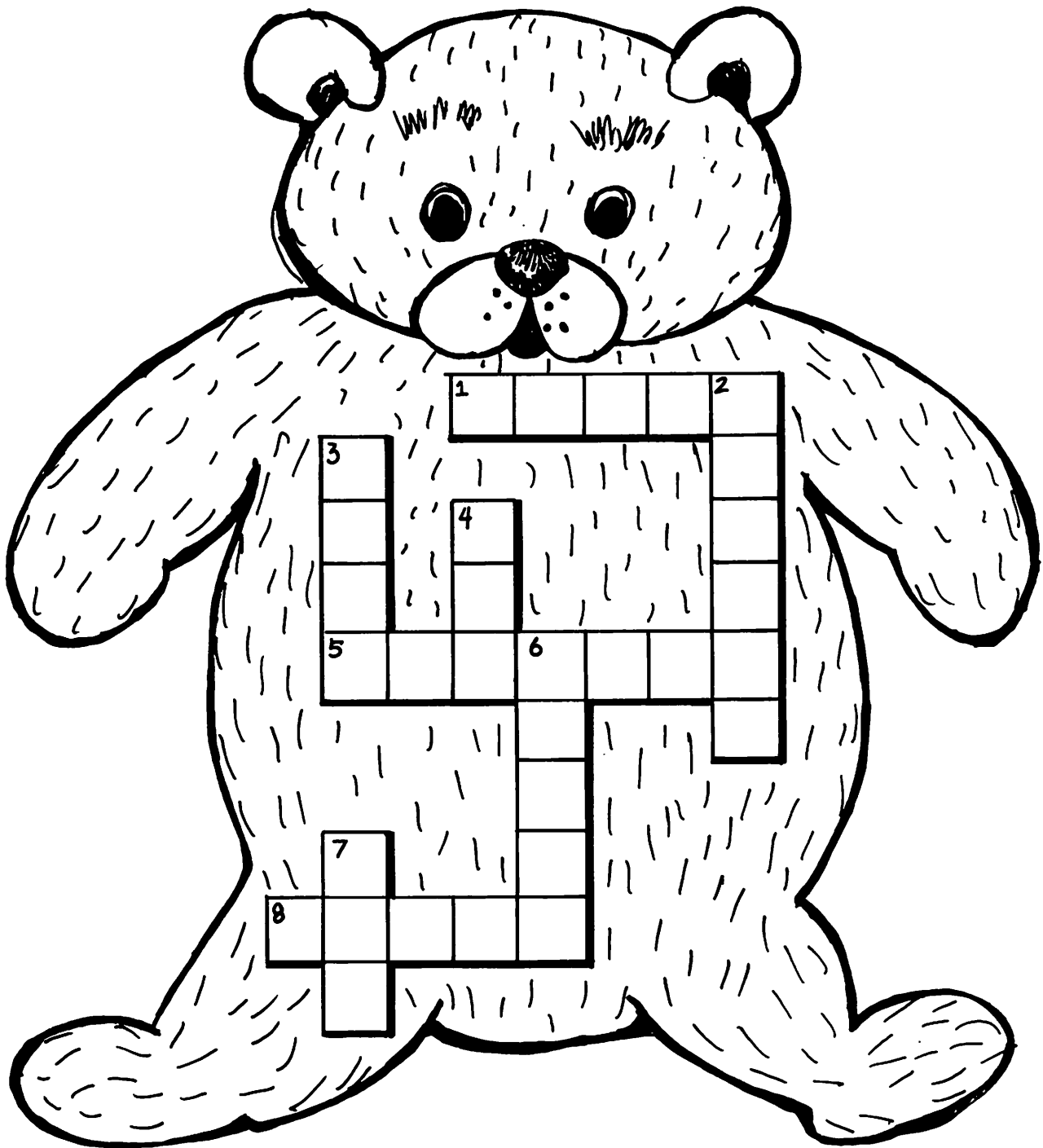
1. What is a “Family”?
2. Can you give examples of families?
3. A Buddhist family is just like any other family.
4. Reciting the Nembutsu together brings the family together.
5. Today, we’re going to put these animal bodies into a crossword puzzle. Before doing that, can you tell me the name of the parents of each of these babies? (chick-hen-rooster; kitten-cat; etc.)

Animal Babies

Many animal babies have different names from their parents. Below are eight animal babies. Can you put their names into the crossword puzzle on the next page?



BUNNY	KITTEN	TADPOLE	COLT	PUPPY	CUB
		CHICK	KID		



Answers: ACROSS: 1-chick, 5-tadpole, 8-bunny
DOWN: 2-kitten, 3-colt, 4-kid, 6-puppy, 7-cub

Learning to Take Care of Pets

Teacher: Do you have a pet?
What does he eat?
What do you do for your pet?

Learning to take care of pets teach us to be kind and gentle. Yes, we learn to take care of other things too. Can you name some?

Kindness to Animals

Little children, should never give
Pain to things that feel and live;

Let the gentle robin come
For the crumbs you save at home,
As his food you throw along
He'll repay you with a song.

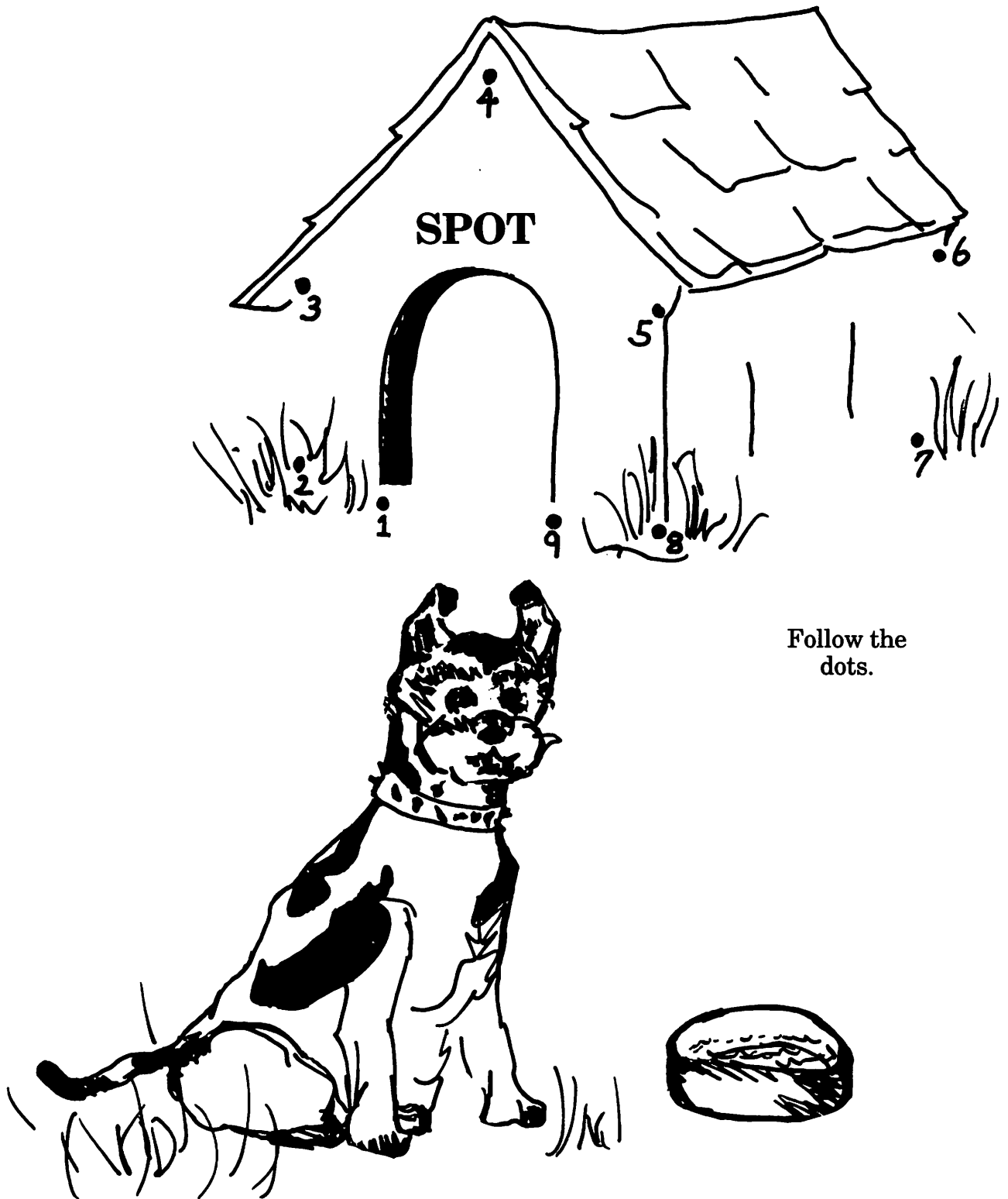
Never hurt the shy little hare
Peeping from her green grass lair,
Let he come and romp and play
On the grass at close of day.

The little lark goes flying high
To the bright windows of the sky,
Singing as tho' it were always spring,
And fluttering on a restless wing,
Oh, let him sing his happy song,
Nor do these gentle creatures wrong.

A poem to read.

(anonymous)





WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS THESE FAMILY GROUPS DO TOGETHER?

I THINK FAMILIES ARE IMPORTANT TO ME BECAUSE:

A TIME WHEN I MISSED MY FAMILY WAS: Think about a time when you were lonely or part of your family was away.

A GOOD TIME WE HAD AS A FAMILY WAS WHEN: (Write, illustrate, paste, etc.)

A MEAL THE WHOLE FAMILY LIKED WAS: (Name foods, include recipes, pictures. Tell how many people ate, etc.)

ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE FAMILY: (Examples of entertainment you and your family enjoy.)

SOMETHING I DO TO MAKE MY FAMILY HAPPY IS:

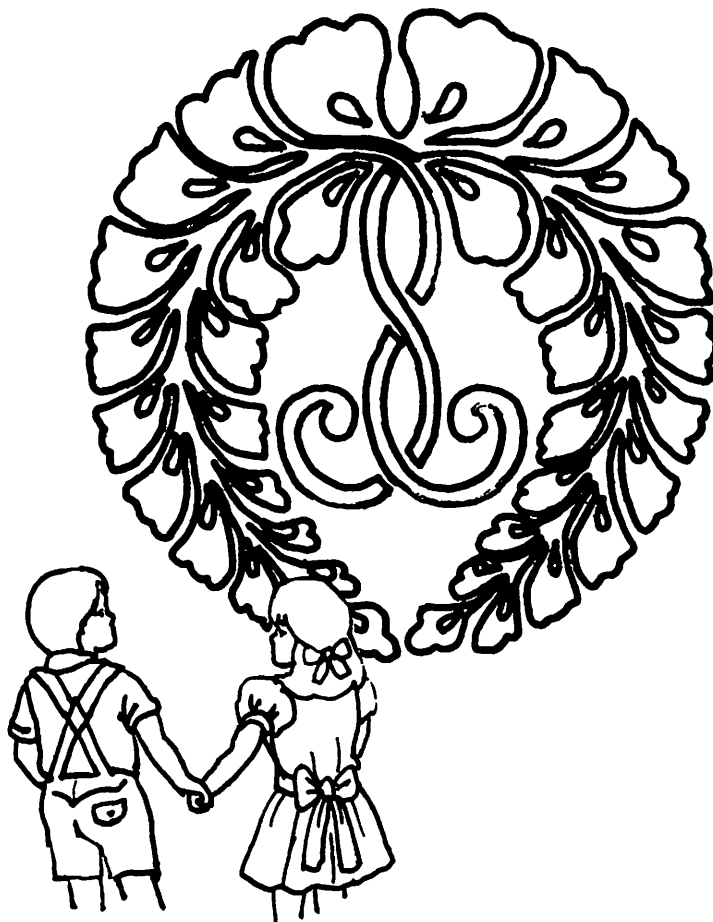
THESE ARE ALL THE FAMILIES I AM A PART OF: (List your family at home, your school, your church, etc. Make a list of your families.)

Amida's Light

I give thanks for the sun,
That makes the whole world bright,
I give thanks for the moon and stars
That shine so bright at night.

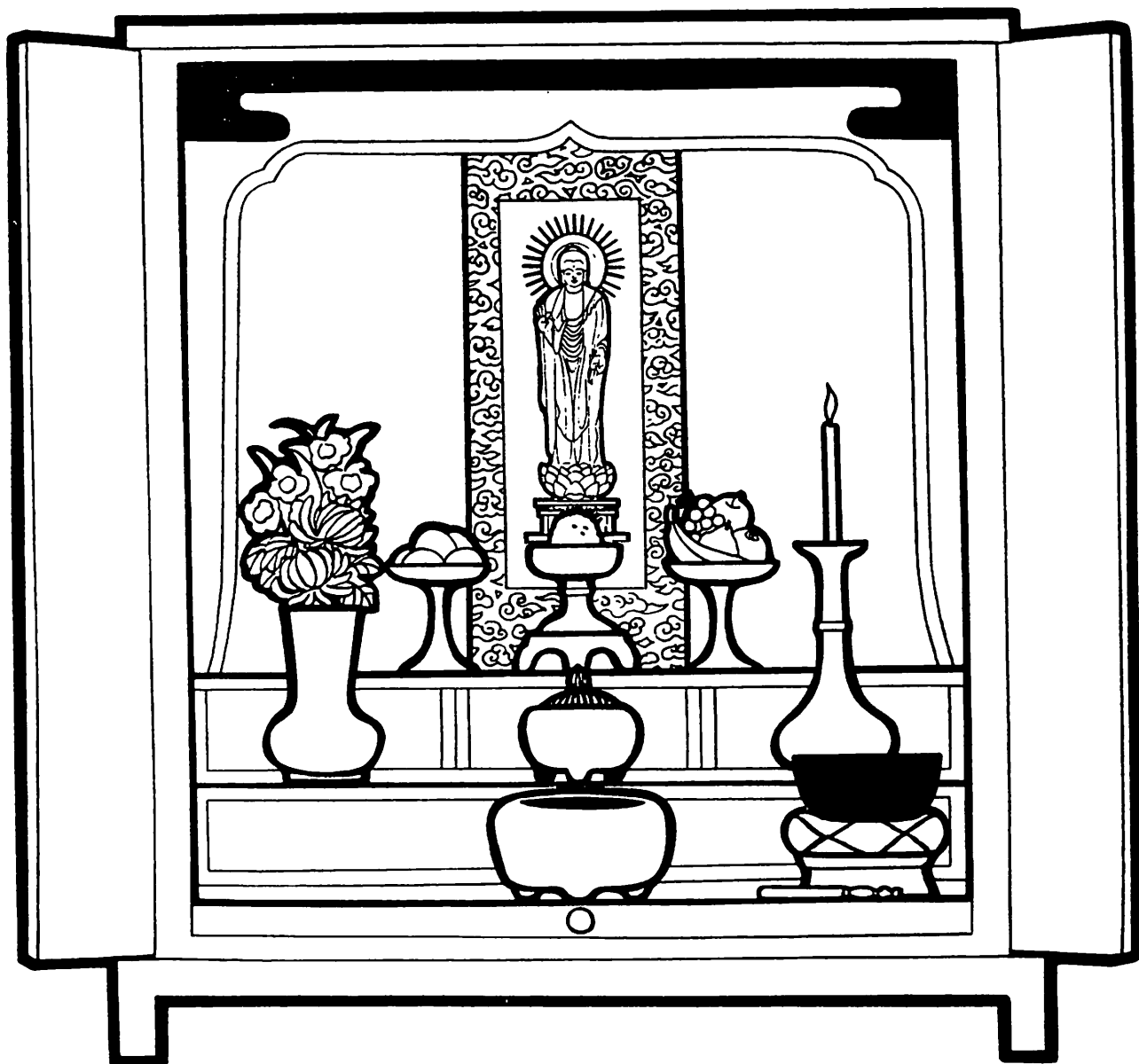
I give thanks for Amida's Light,
That is ever bright and strong,
So I may always see the way,
In choosing right from wrong.

Thank You, Amida Buddha.



All I Can

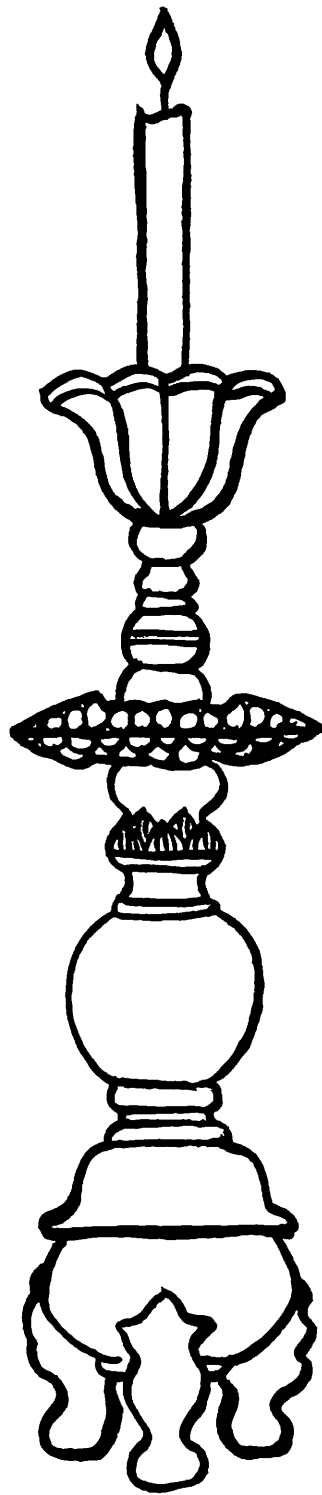
I will do all the good I can,
In all the ways I can,
In all the places I can,
At all the times I can,
As long as ever I can,
Thank You, Amida Buddha.



We love Amida Buddha
We gassho before the shrine.



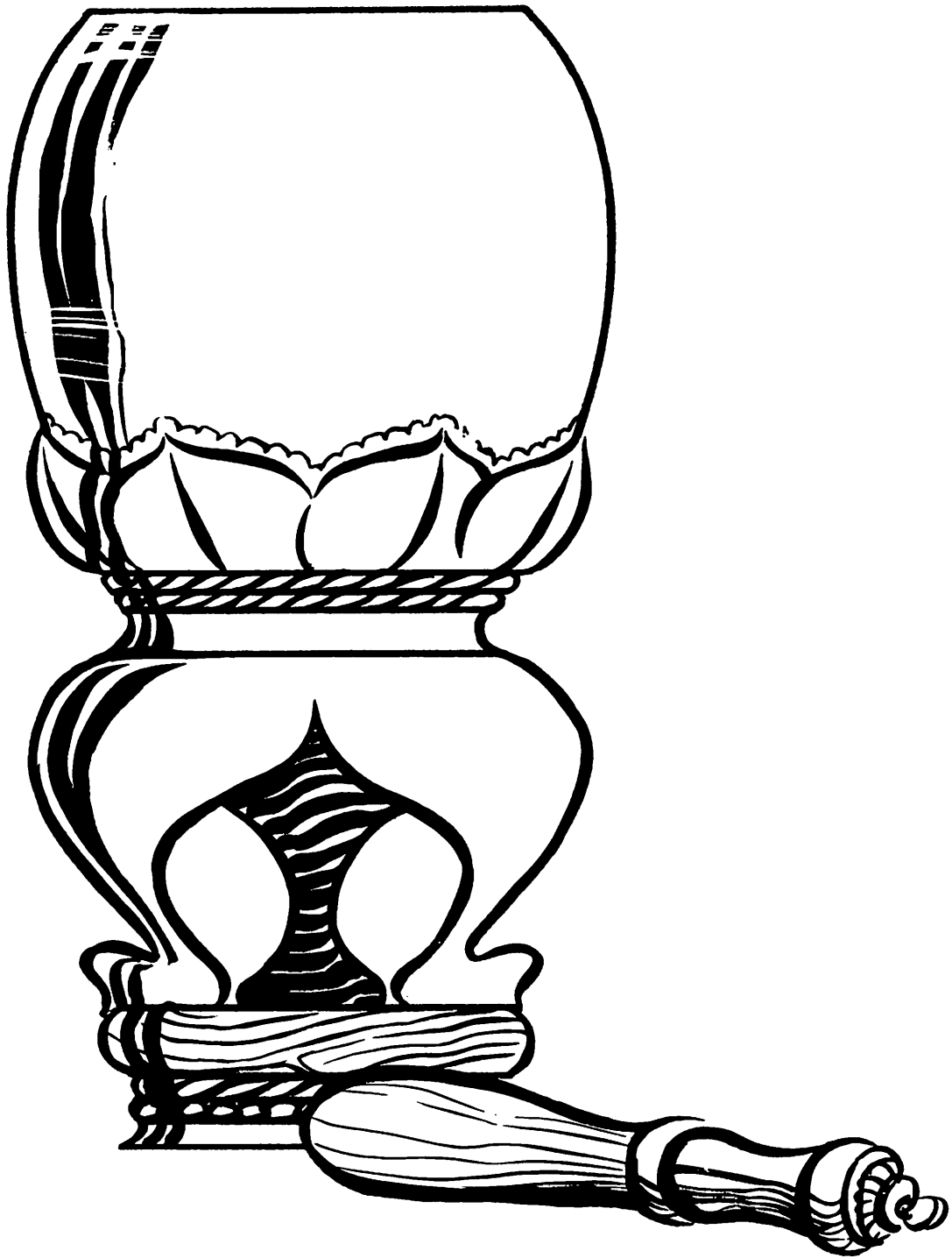
Amida Buddha loves and protects us.



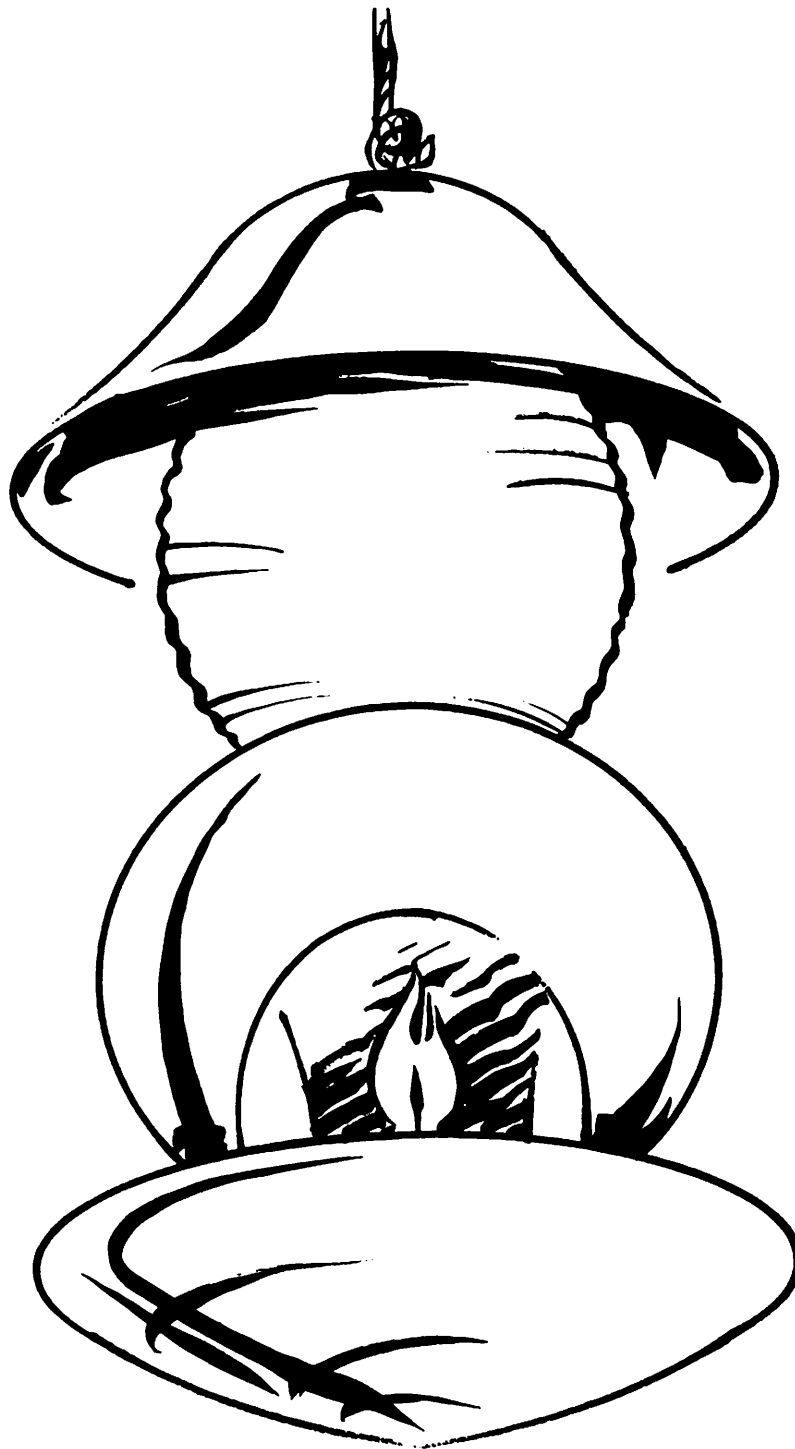
The light of a Candle
takes away darkness.
The light of Amida Buddha's love
keeps our hearts bright and happy.



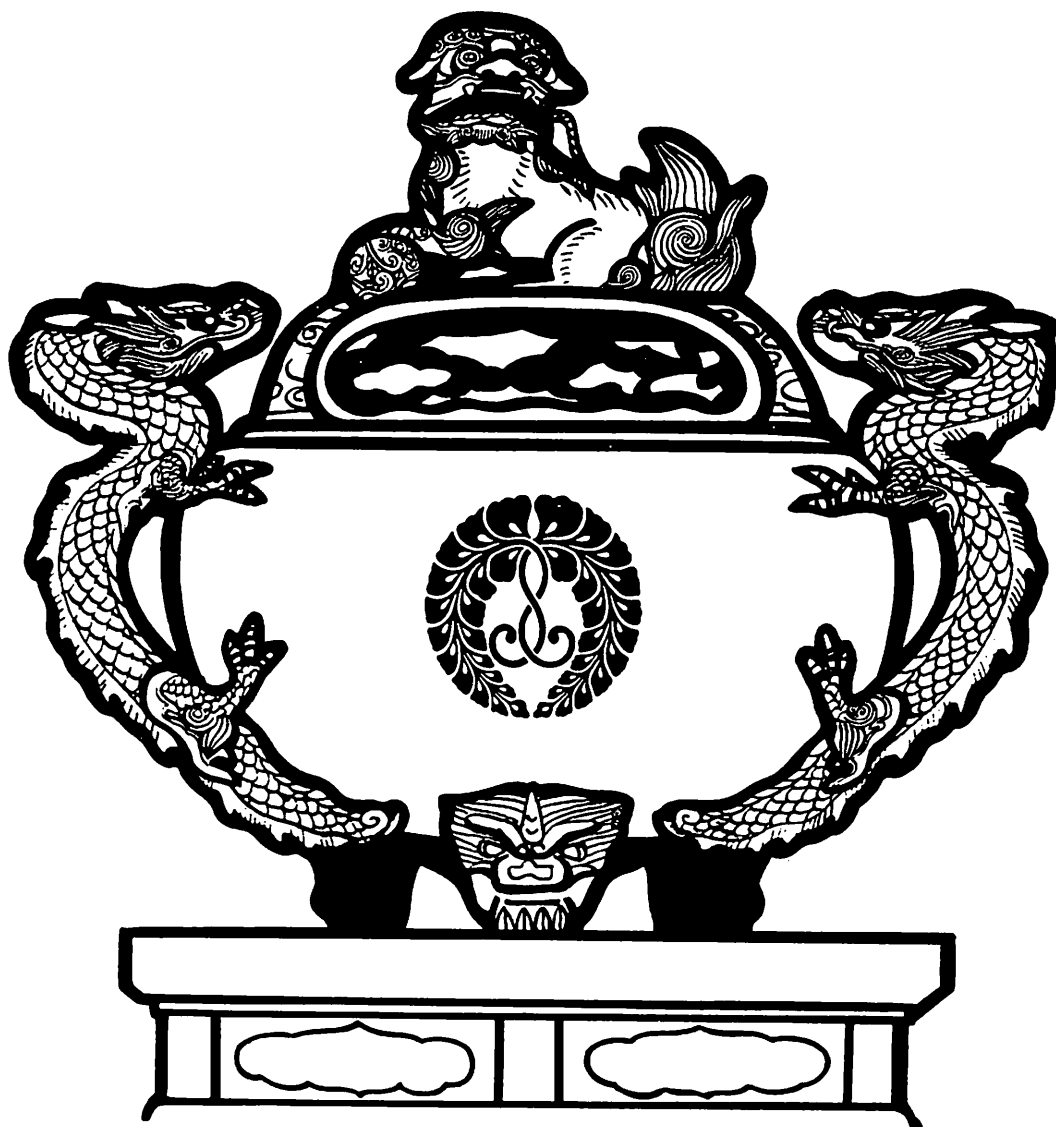
Flowers are pretty.
We like to give them to
Amida Buddha.



This is the Gong
We use it when we chant the Sutras.



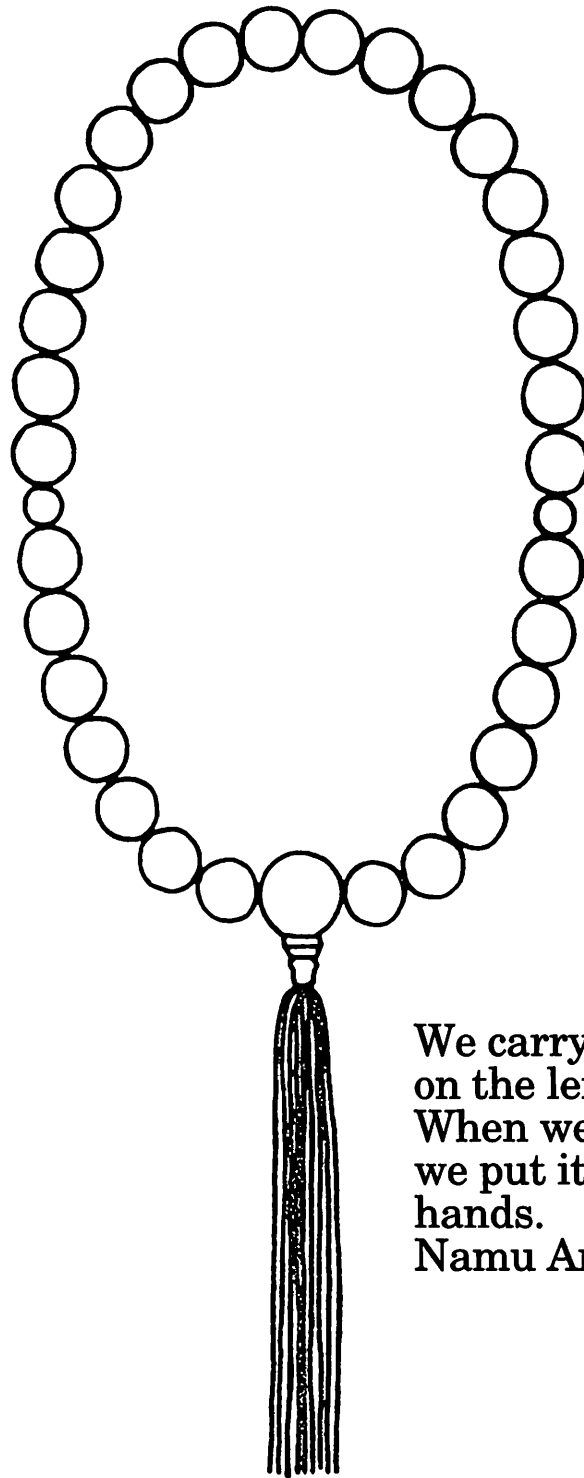
The light of Amida Buddha
reaches into every corner of
the world.



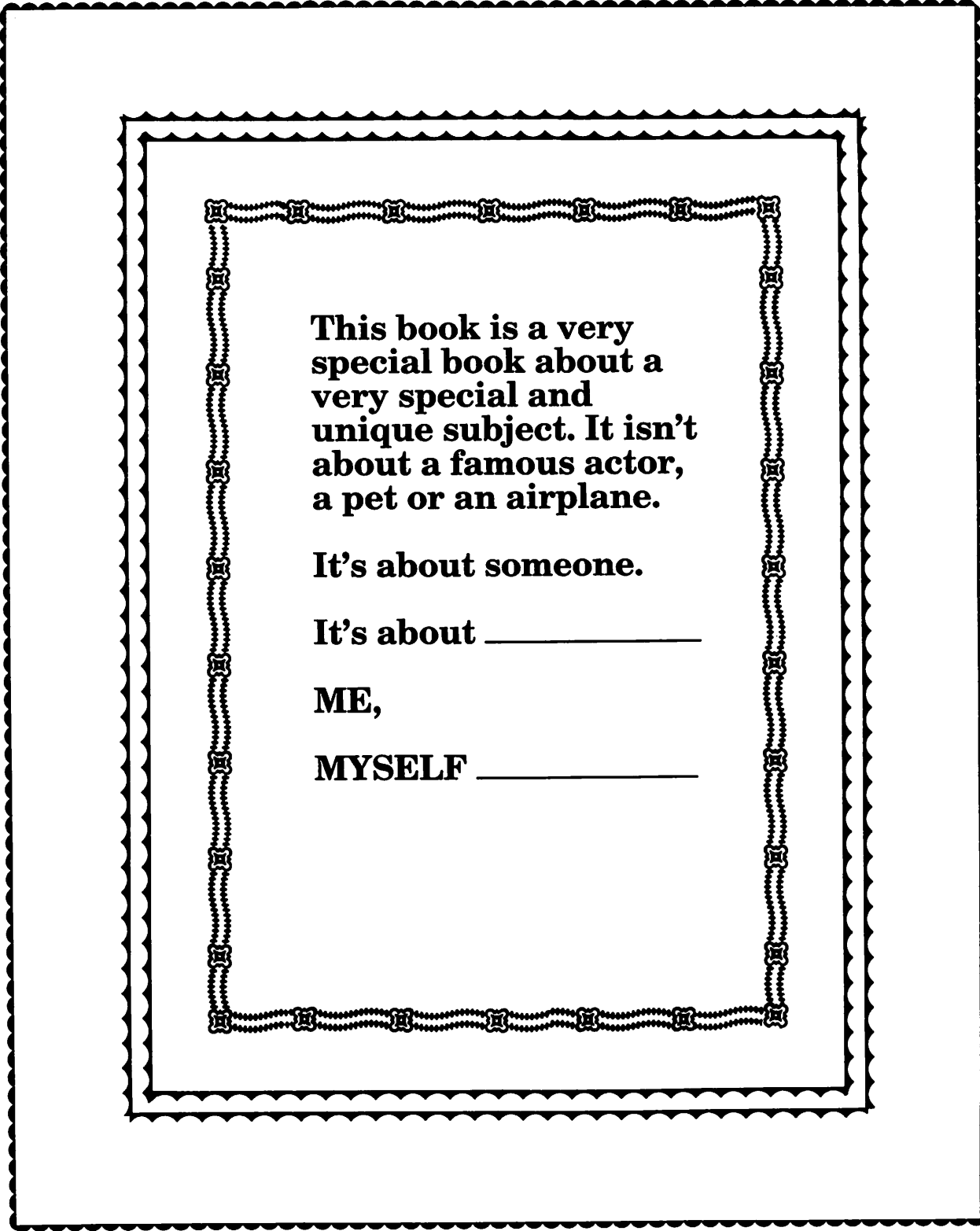

We Gassho and say:
I put my faith in Buddha.
I put my faith in Dharma.
I put my faith in Sangha.
Namu Amida Butsu.



This is our offering of rice to
Amida Buddha.
It is our way of saying thank you
to Amida Buddha.



We carry the Ojuzu
on the left hand.
When we Gassho,
we put it around both
hands.
Namu Amida Butsu.



**This book is a very
special book about a
very special and
unique subject. It isn't
about a famous actor,
a pet or an airplane.**

It's about someone.

It's about _____

ME,

MYSELF _____



Me

The more a student learns about himself/herself, the more he/she will understand his/her self-concept.

Allow your students to draw a portrait of themselves...maybe just from the neck up. Then for fun, everyone adds a mustache and/or beard to their drawing.

Cotton, string, yarn, macaroni, beans, popcorn, and puffed cereal are great for making beards and mustaches.

This is me

Each of us carries a photograph, a mental picture of ourselves, inside our head.

Purpose:

To allow each student a chance to share himself/herself through photographs.

Directions:

Suggest that each child request permission from his parents to include some of his baby snapshots, graduation from nursery school photographs, birthday party snapshots, etc. for inclusion on this page. Encourage each student to use a variety of photographs that illustrate a variety of happenings.

1. Make a picture book of your life. Use a variety of photos including family, friends, etc.
2. Take a snapshot of each student in the classroom. Try to take the picture when the child is unaware. Mount each photo and below it write a question. Place this on a bulletin board or wall. All other students in the classroom can write their answer to the question on a 3" x 5" index card and give it to the pictured student.
3. Take a photograph of each student in the room. Mount on a piece of construction paper or in a frame. Title the photo "Student of the Week." Change the photo every week giving each child in the room an opportunity for being in focus. During the week that a child's photo is being displayed, others in the classroom can write comments and deposit them in a folder near the student's picture.

Drawing

Drawing tools include: pencil, crayons, chalk, felt pen, charcoal, sticks and twigs and paint or ink, pens, brushes, etc.

Drawing is used for:

expressing imaginative ideas

story telling

experimenting with texture, color, movement

investigating the moods and meaning of lines and shapes as they are made with lines

detailed drawings

Drawing

Materials:

1. Pencil, crayons or colored chalk.
2. Newsprint.

Procedure:

A way to get started is to draw an object—a print, or a picture. Look at the object in the picture, follow **the outline or edge of the surface**, which is the contour, with the hand as well as with the eye.

Drawing—Chalk Drawing

Materials:

1. Colored chalk—black, white, brown and red.
2. Brown butcher paper or construction paper.
3. Newspaper.

Procedure:

1. Pass out paper and colored chalk.
2. Working with side of chalk, make shapes of head, body and legs. Look at the shapes made. Do they give the impression of the animal you want to depict—bulky as a bison, graceful as a deer? Blend colors by mixing colors or by rubbing with fingers.
3. With the tip of the chalk add contour lines, details such as ears, eyes and hooves.

This is my name:

...and here are some ways I like to write and print it...

This Is My Name

Purpose:

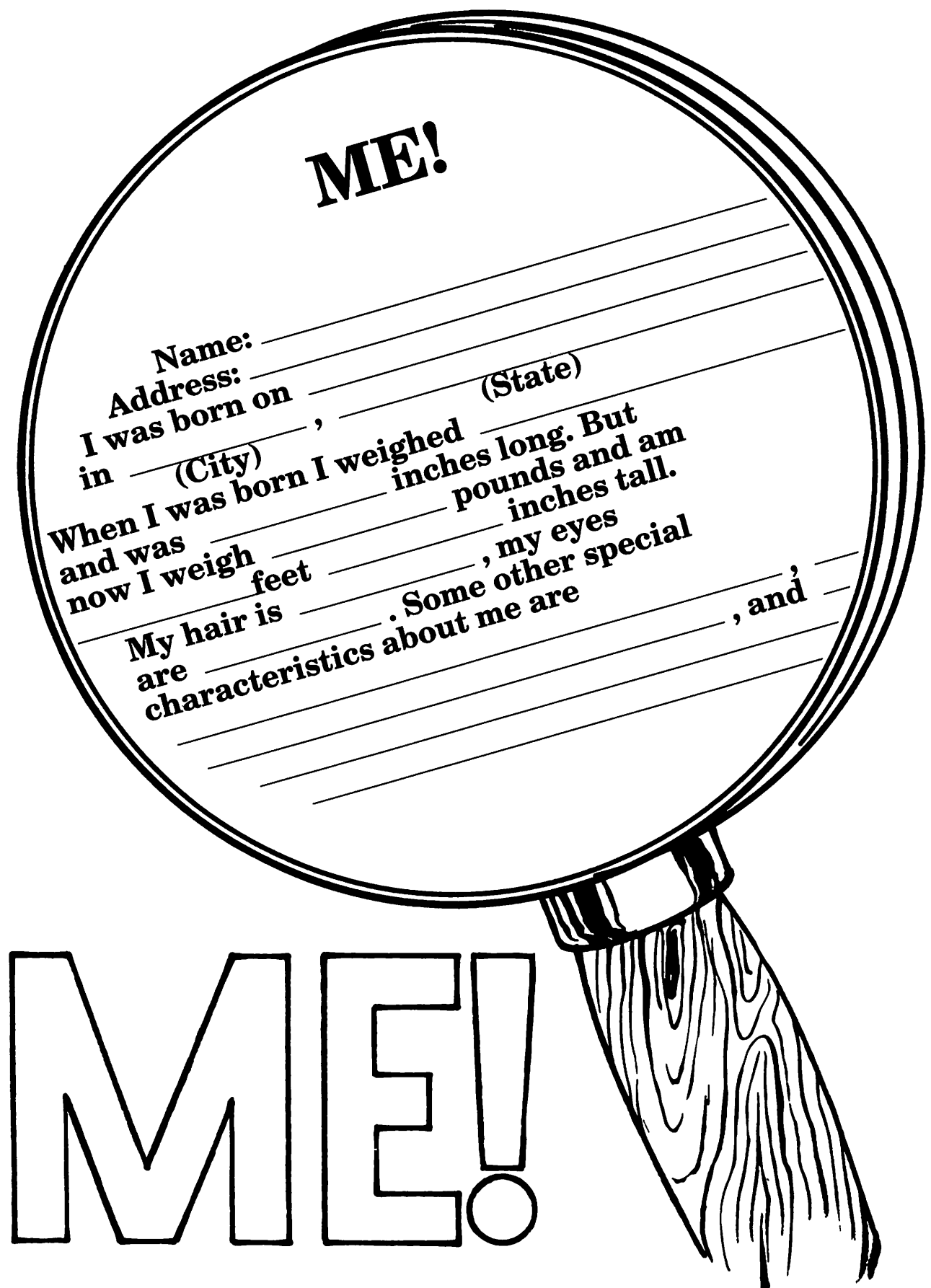
Students can examine the uniqueness of their own name.

Directions:

Explore several possible ways to write names. Choose a name (other than that of a class member) and allow each child to write, print, or draw it on the chalkboard.

Activities:

1. Have students trace the meaning of their names. For example, Peter originally meant rock or stone. Does that mean a person named Peter should be strong, independent, or stubborn?
2. Additional research could be done on last names. Smith comes from the word blacksmith. Originally most blacksmiths were called Smith. What do the names Cooper, White, Baker, and King mean?
3. Make a class telephone directory giving the class members' names alphabetically, last name first. Make a list of interesting hobbies, habits, etc of each class member.



My Birthday

Purpose:

By talking and completing activities about their birthdays, students will realize they are special.

Directions:

Tell your students to close their eyes and pretend they can have any kind of birthday party and presents they want. Ask students to volunteer to describe their party; the people who came, the gifts they received, and the special things that happened. This imagination session should help motivate the students to complete the activity sheet.

1. Birthdays provide an excellent opportunity for students to display their self-portrait. Allow your students to use any art medium available to create their self-portrait.
2. Create a giant birthday cake on one wall of your classroom. As the year passes and the children have their birthdays, each child can add one candle to the top of the cake and a flower for decoration. The candle and flower can be made from construction paper.

MY BIRTHDAY

MONTH

DAY

YEAR

An invitation to my
next party.

Nice things that
have happened
on my birthday.

Other people's birthdays
I don't want to
forget.

Presents I would like
to get.

My Home

Purpose:

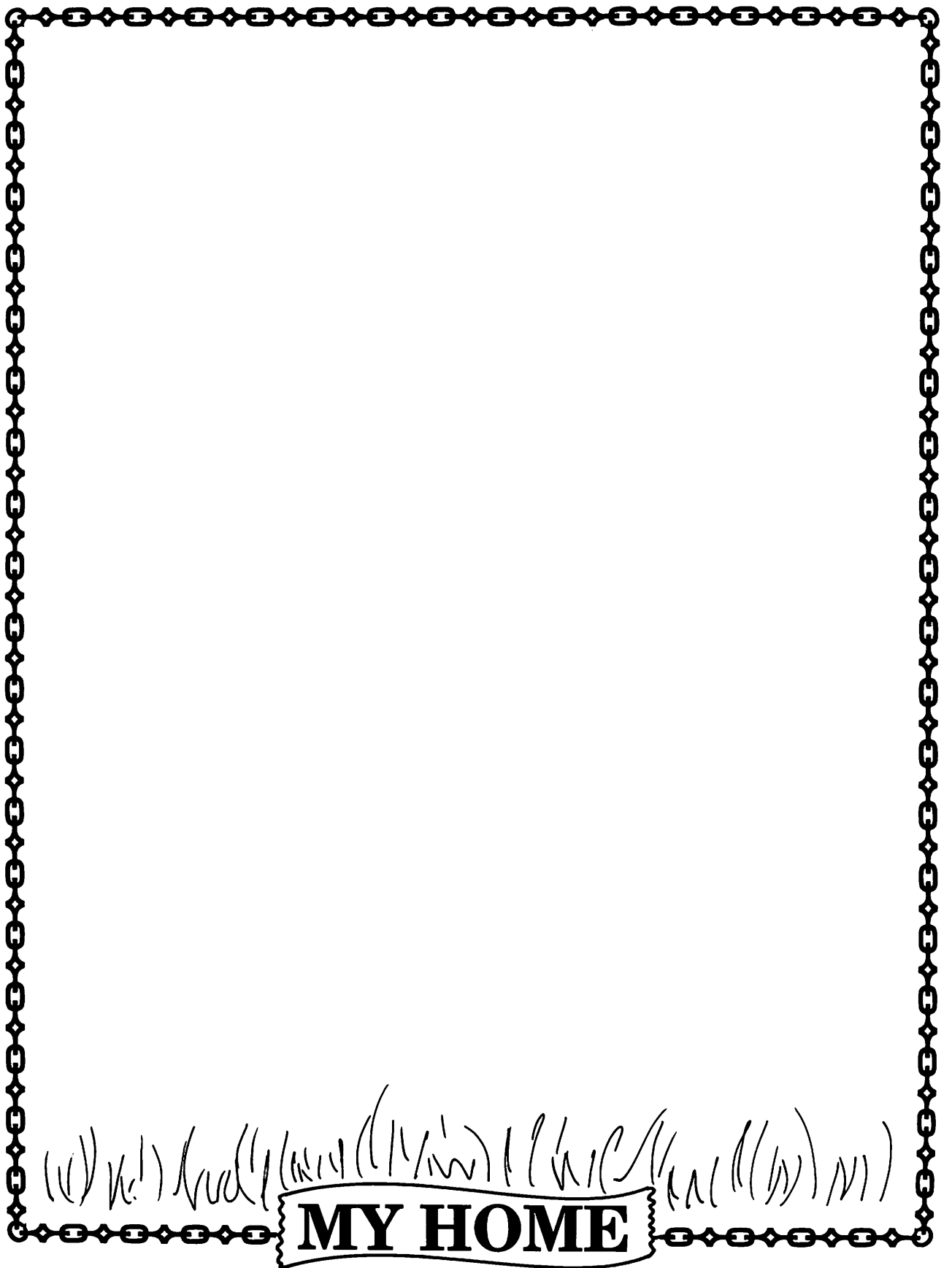
An opportunity for each student to share information about his/her home and to bring the home into the classroom.

Directions:

Suggest to the students that this activity could be completed in any one of the following ways:

1. A drawing of their home
2. A typical family scene that takes place inside their home
3. Four scenes of their home

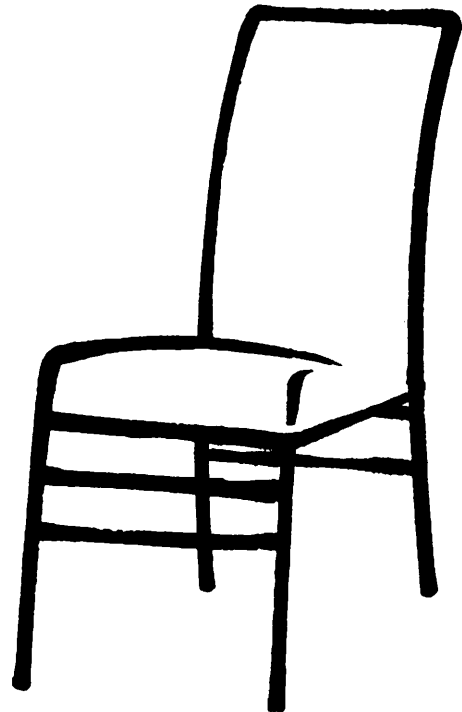
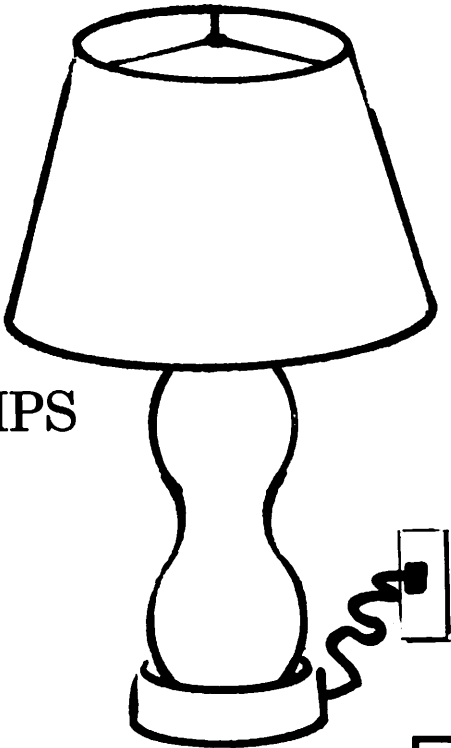
Focus the group discussion on what the difference is between a house and a home. What special things make a house a home?



MY HOUSE
HAS...

BEDROOMS _____

_____ LAMPS



_____ OBUTSUDAN

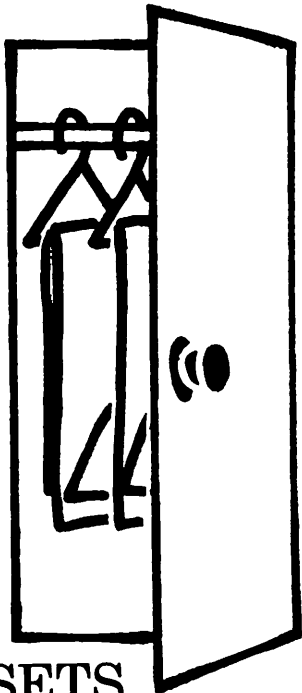
_____ ROOMS

CHAIRS _____

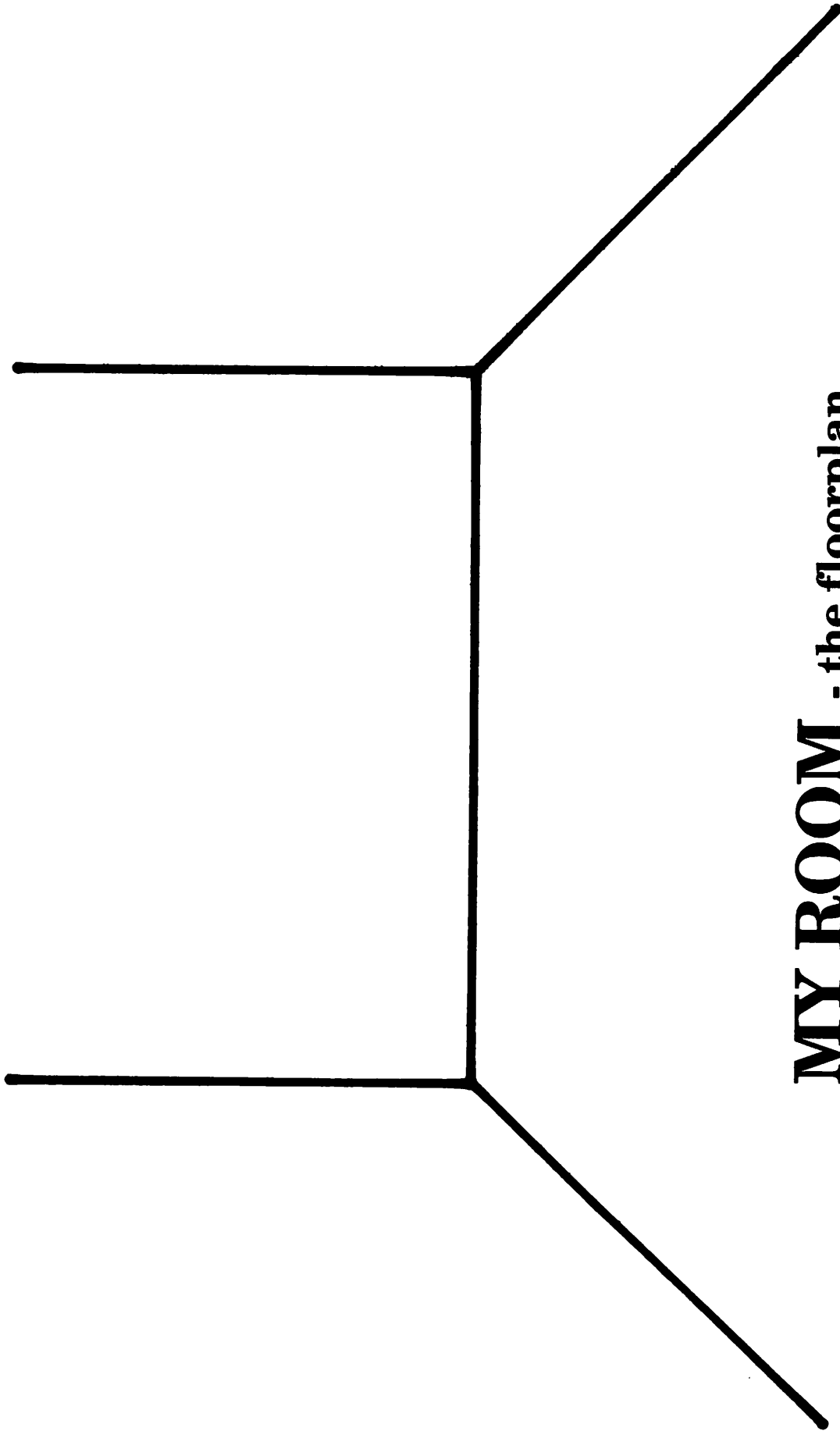
_____ KITCHEN

_____ STEPS

LIBRARY _____



_____ CLOSETS



MY ROOM - the floorplan

Draw your room. Show where the bed, chairs, desk, toybox, etc. can be found.

MY NEIGHBORHOOD

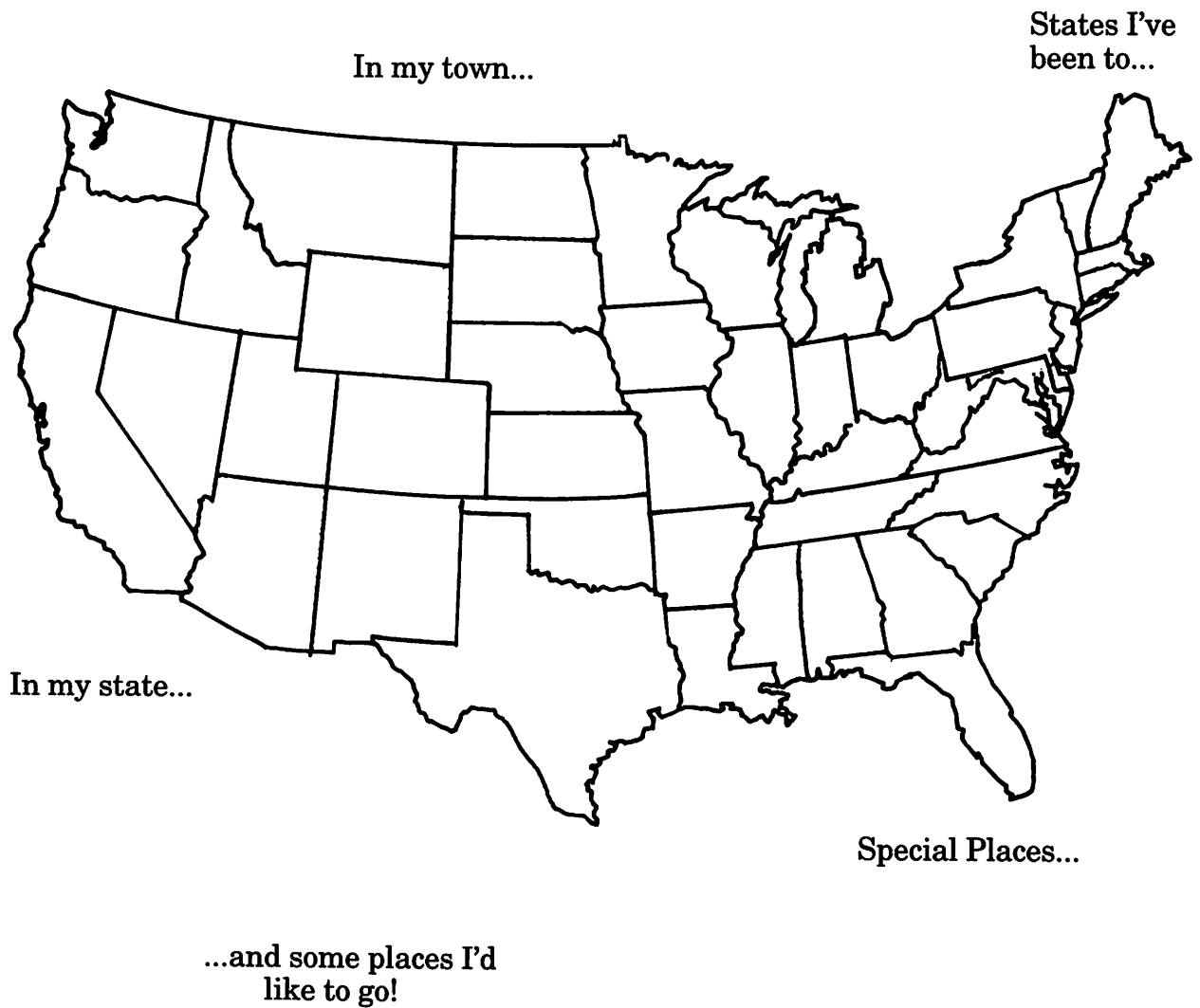
Where is Your Temple?

MAP YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

Place your house first. Then label streets and other houses. You may even want to add trees, bushes, street lights, telephone poles, etc.

PLACES I'VE BEEN...

Temples I Have Visited



Art and “Me” Project

GOALS IN ART LEARNING

TO increase visual awareness.

TO observe, to watch for relationships.

TO learn different ways of working in different situations.

TO explore media.

TO relate own work to art in environment and in a religious environment.

ART EXPERIENCES

The art program should include a variety of experiences. The needs of the class and the individual children in it should be the basic consideration in planning.

line	drawing	one's own art
color	painting	art in daily life
shape	collage	art in culture
space	printmaking	and religion.
pattern	construction	
	selecting	
	arranging	

PLANNING THE ART LESSON

The art lesson may include the following:

a review of previous art learnings

organizing art materials

demonstrating tools and techniques

providing sufficient time for children to work

evaluating the art experience to religious lesson.

CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION AND CARE OF SUPPLIES

In order to facilitate art learnings and develop good work habits, the teacher and students are responsible for keeping the classroom and supplies and equipment in good order.

Children should be taught the proper use of materials and equipment. They should be involved in the distribution, care and storage of supplies.

Following are some suggestions for storage of equipment.

Storage:

Brushes should be stored, bristles up in a can.

Shoe boxes will hold cans of paint for a group.

Turn a shoe box upside down. Punch holes for scissors storage.

Frozen juice cartons are convenient for storing and carrying materials.

Sort paper and fabric scraps and store in shoe boxes. Label them according to color.

Containers for paint:

Use small juice cans, plastic cups, 1/2 pt. milk cartons.
Put only a small amount of paint in the cans.

CARE OF MATERIALS

Proper care and clean-up of material saves time, money and provides more enjoyment for further use.

Brushes: Wash brushes immediately after using. Store brushes with bristles upright in a can, or flat in a box.

Watercolor boxes: Wide lids clean with paper towel. Leave open while drying. Refills are available.

Tempera paints: (Liquid) Keep jar top clean to prevent lid from sticking. Vaseline around top will help. Keep paint covered when not in use.

Chalks, crayons: Be sure materials are replaced in boxes after use. A rubber band placed around container prevents spills, aids in distribution and collection.

Materials and their solvents: tempera and watercolor, soap and water.

SUGGESTED ART EXPERIENCES

DRAWING AND PAINTING

pictures	painting with	tempera
easel painting	brush, sponge	fingerpaint
murals		water
blackboard drawings		chalk
booklets	drawing	
cards and invitations	mixing media:	crayon
program covers	crayon plus	variety of paper
3-dimensional articles	fingerpainting	3-dimensional articles

Suggested Activities

Draw with white or colored chalk on the blackboard.

Use paints, crayons or chalk on various papers to express reactions to people, play, home, school and neighborhood.

Paint directly on large paper with opaque watercolors in making story-telling pictures.

Introduces a second color in fingerpainting.

Design greeting cards and others items.

Decorate self-made and other useful 3-dimensional articles.

COLLAGE

mobiles
stick puppets
decorations
costumes
murals
collage
booklets

cutting, tearing
arranging
fastening
folding

newsprint
colored construction
paper
white drawing paper
tissue paper
corrugated cardboard
egg cartons
butcher paper
newspaper
billboard paper
wallpaper
old window shades
paper bags
sandpaper
laminated paper

Continue to cut or tear paper and fabrics of various colors and textures to create mobiles.

Continue to cut figures from own pictorial expressions to use for decorations, puppets, murals, or other purposes.

PRINTING

fingers
vegetables
sticks, etc.
linoleum
monoprint
spatterprint
string
rubbing
sunprint
woodblock
silkscreen

printing
cutting or tearing
simple stencils

tempera paint on a
variety of paper
printing ink

Suggested Activities:

Printing with fingers, vegetables, sticks, other articles.

Print in tempera or blockprinting ink from a design unit made by gluing pieces of cardboard or sponge to a woodblock.

Hammer nail-point design into linoleum or woodblock and print on paper or fabric.

Simple screen-printing activities.

String-design approach.

Make spatterprints or rubbings or designs created with string or open-meshed materials.

CONSTRUCTING

origami
ornaments
decorations
paper-bag puppets
stage equipment
masks
collage
costumes

folding, cutting
pleating, twisting,
fastening paper
gluing
using simple tools,
sewing, lacing, tying

boxes
cartons
scrap materials
wood
paper bags
fabric
paper

Suggested Activities:

Use papers in making holiday ornaments and decorations.

Use simple tools in building room and stage equipment.

Sew, lace and tie in making various items.

SELECTING AND ARRANGING

Choose and arrange materials for bulletin board and table displays.

Dress dolls.

Keep own work materials in good order.

Painting—Tempera

Tempera paint is an opaque pigment suspended in a liquid which thoroughly covers the painting surface. Tempera comes in liquid form or dry form. Fingerpaint can be made from powdered tempera and starch.

Tempera paint is opaque, may be applied thickly, will allow light colors to be painted over dark colors, may be brushed, stippled, sponged, dropped and spattered, and may be used in dry form. It will easily cover many different surfaces.

Tempera paint is used for:

story-telling paintings

expressing feelings and emotions

developing a sense of design

learning about colors—their hues, values and intensities

PAINTING—TEMPERA—Fingerpainting

Materials:

1. Fingerpainting paper, non-porous butcher paper or glossy surfaced paper, such as shelf paper, 12" x 18", or 18" x 24".
2. Powdered or liquid tempera paint.
3. Liquid starch.
4. Paint containers.
5. Newspapers and smocks.

Procedure:

1. Subject matter of fingerpaintings can be anything the child may choose.
2. Newspapers and fingerpainting paper to be distributed.
3. Children pour liquid starch upon surface or paper.
4. Pour or shake the paint onto the starch and blend with the fingers.
5. Spread it over the surface.
6. Develop awareness of the many parts of the hand, wrist, fingers and fingernails that can be used to make impressions in the paint.
7. Emphasize movement and freedom of entire arm as well as use of smaller controlled movements of hand when desired for detail.
8. Put designs to dry. When dried, press flat under a pile of books.

Variations:

1. Combination of two or three colors. Care must be taken to keep the colors from becoming muddy.
2. Fingerpainting may be done on a crayoned design as a resist, or combined with cut paper.
3. Fingerpainted paper may be used as covers for craft projects.

Printmaking

All forms of printmaking require three basic elements: a shape containing a design or picture, paint or ink with which to print, and a surface on which to print.

Printmaking can be done by:

- printing directly with an object—vegetable or gadget printing
- gluing materials to a block—cardboard or inner-tube printing
- incising a design into a block—linoleum-block printing
- printing through a stencil—stenciling or silkscreen printing
- painting on a surface, then pulling a print—monoprinting

PRINTMAKING—Sponge Printing

Use sponges for stamp printing.

Materials:

1. Small sponges cut into a variety of shapes.
2. Thick tempera and brush.
3. Small aluminum pans for holding paint.
4. Containers for water.
5. White drawing or colored construction paper.
6. Newspaper.

Procedure:

1. Look at design in nature and man-made articles. Call attention to pattern in children's clothes and other things in the classroom.
2. Dampen sponge with water. Squeeze dry.
3. Press sponge into tempera. Print design on trial paper. Then print on good paper.
4. Develop pattern by overlapping shapes, using edge of sponge, alternating colors or double-loading color; or, use a stencil.

Variation:

Combine sponge printing with string printing.

Dip string in paint. Let it fall in random pattern, or guide direction of string as it falls on paper.

Repeat. Change direction.

PRINTMAKING—Vegetable Printing

Use vegetables for stamp printing.

Materials:

1. Potato, carrot, celery stalk, onion, apples, citrus fruits, etc. Cut in half and leave upside down to dry for an hour.
2. Cutting tools may be paperclip or scissors' blade.
3. Thick tempera and brush.
4. Small aluminum pans for paint.
5. Paper for trial prints.
6. Printing papers: construction, drawing, poster, tissue, colored newsprint, etc.
7. Pad of newspapers for padded printing surface.

Procedure:

1. Discuss the ways that shapes can be repeated to make an interesting pattern.
2. Children can be grouped together to share stamps and different colors of paint.
3. A design may be cut on surface of vegetables, such as potato, or edges may be cut to form shapes.
4. Spread paint on cut surface with brush. Make trial prints.
5. Print design on printing paper over padded surface. Use trial paper when experimenting with new stamp or with a pattern design.

PRINTMAKING—Gadget Printing

Use gadgets for stamp printing.

Materials:

1. Many kinds of gadgets: sticks, corks, combs, wood blocks, kitchen utensils, bottle caps and old forks—all kinds of scrap and discarded materials.
2. Thick tempera and brush.
3. Small aluminum pans for paint.
4. Trial papers—newsprint.
5. Printing papers: construction, drawing, poster, tissue, rice paper, etc.
6. Pad of newspapers for padded printing surface.

Procedure:

1. Explore pattern in any of the following ways: contrast large and small shapes, alternate direction of prints, overlap printed units and try different color combinations.
2. Group children together to share gadgets. Two or three or more shapes can be used in one design.
3. With the brush, paint tempera on gadget to be printed.
4. Print on trial paper. Repeat form in pattern.
5. When a pattern is established, print design on printing paper.

PRINTMAKING—Wood-Scrap Printing

Use wood scraps for stamp printing.

Materials:

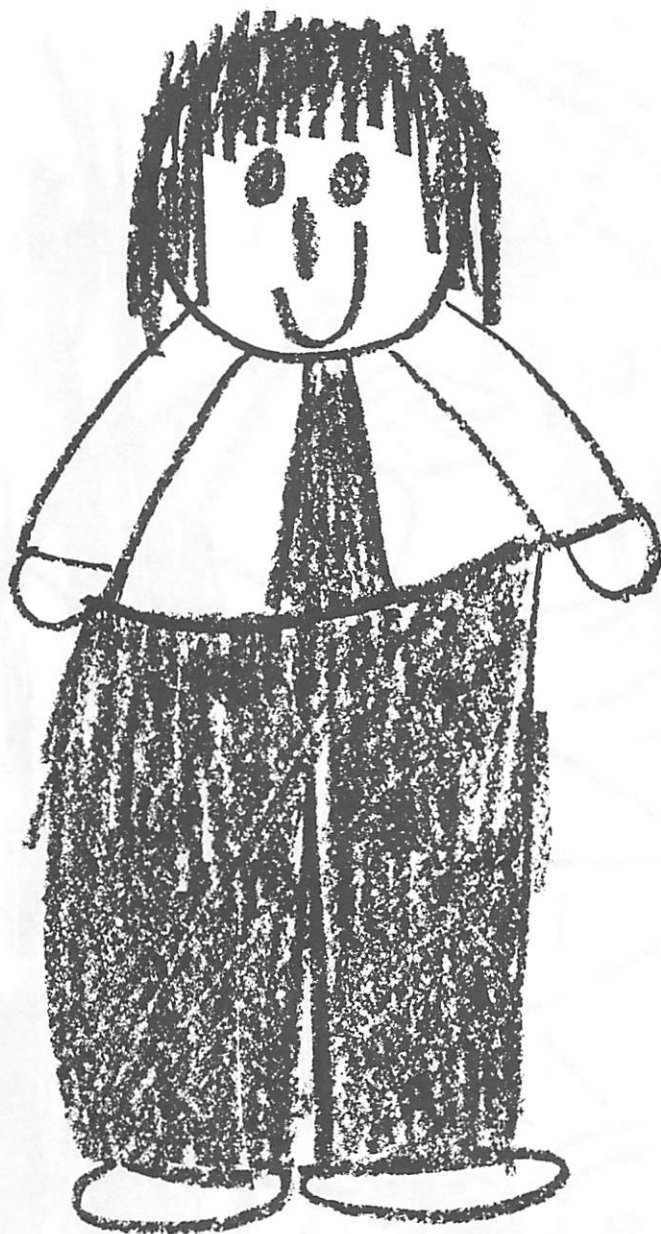
1. Scraps of wood.
2. Thick tempera paint and brushes.
3. Containers for paint.
4. Colored or white newsprint, 18" x 24", or colored or white construction paper, 12" x 15" and 12" x 18".
5. Newspapers for padded printing surface.

Procedure:

1. Analyze shapes of wood available. See how many shapes there are to work with. Show how shapes can be created by printing one shape next to or overlapping another.
2. Arrange children in small groups so that paint and wood can be shared. There should be a few more pieces of wood than there are children, and each group should have a variety of shapes to work with.
3. Distribute newspapers, paper, wood blocks and paint in containers (juice cans work well). Fill with paint only to top of the bristles so there is less danger of spilling.
4. Brush paint on wood surface.
5. Place on printing paper and press down.

Me Project

LOPINK

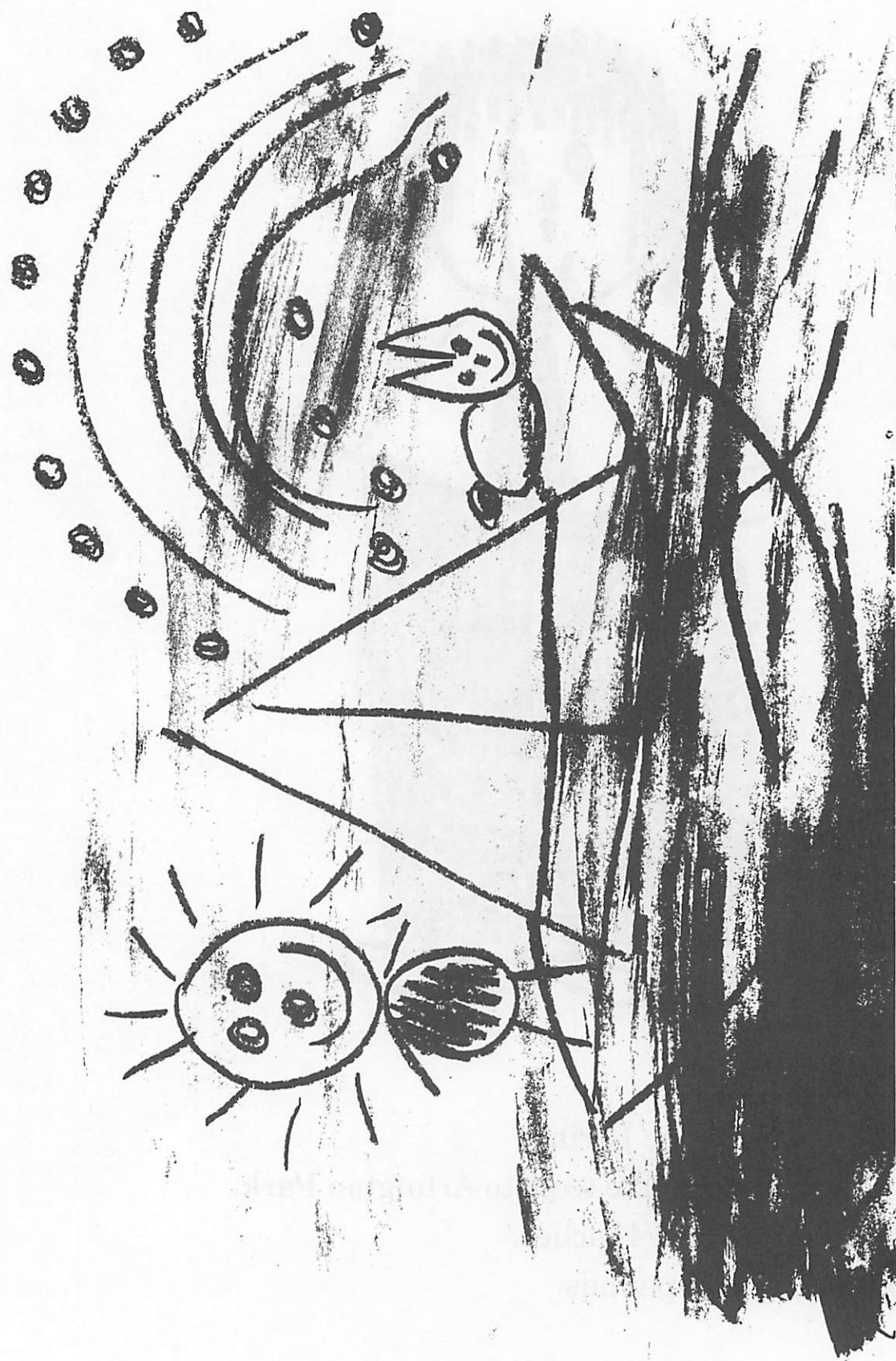


This is me Lorin.

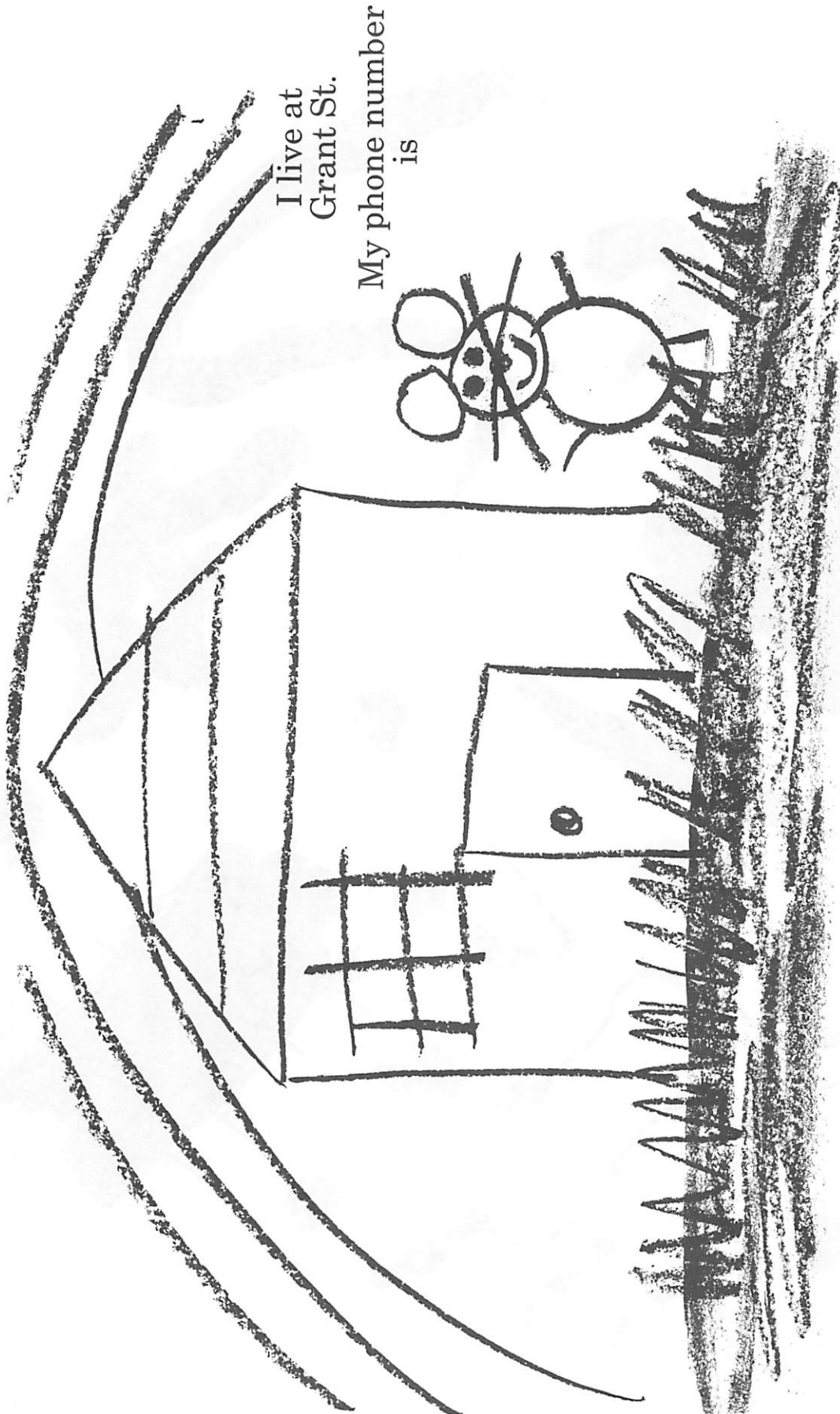
I am 5. I like to go to Arlington Park.

I am 45-3/4 inches.

I am 48 pounds.

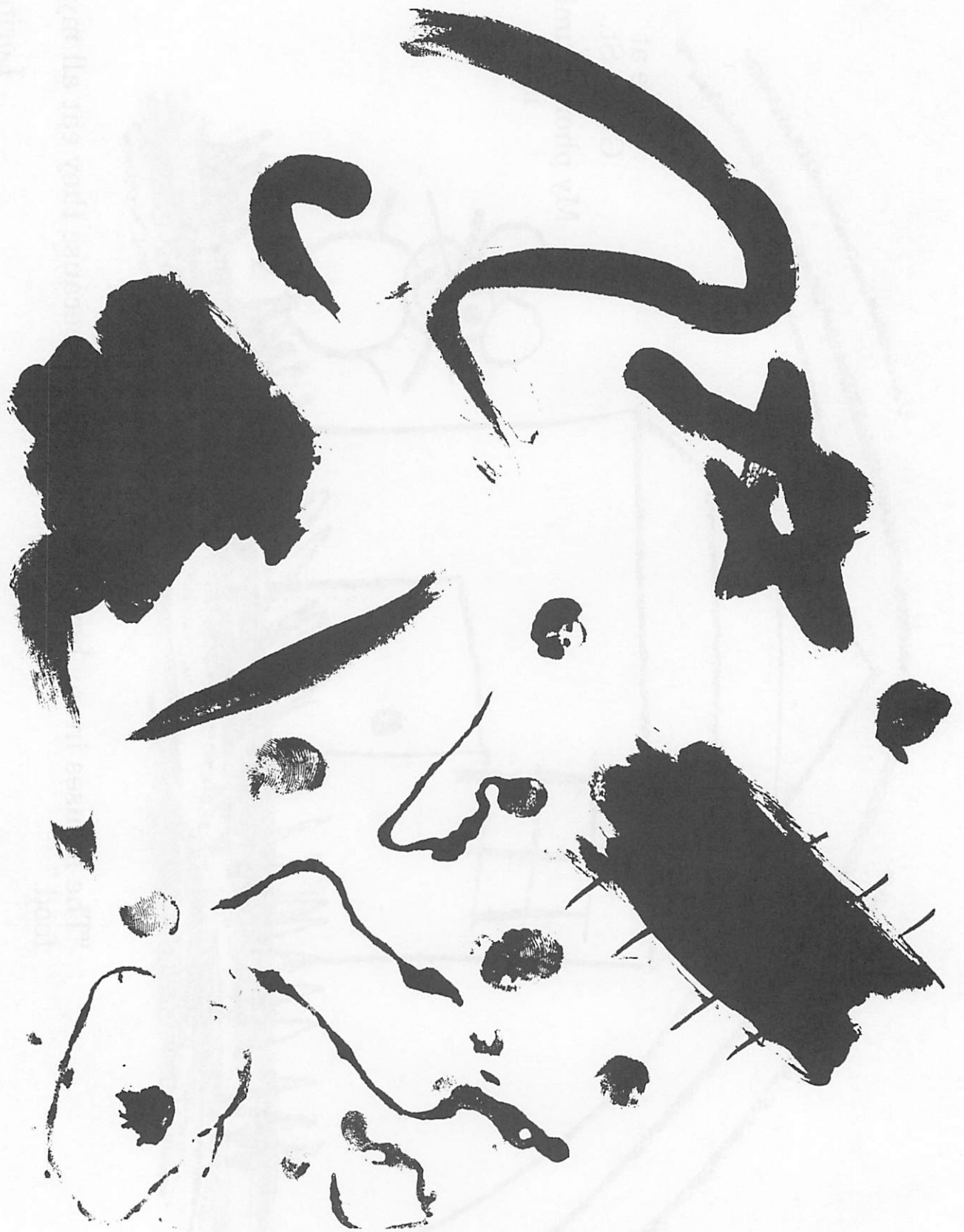


"I'm happy when I have a birthday and when I get older. And I'll always be older than my sister Erin because my sister Erin is three years old. And we're both in the same family but my nana isn't. But I used to be in the same family but I wasn't born yet."



"The mouses in my house make me mad because they eat all my food."

Lorin





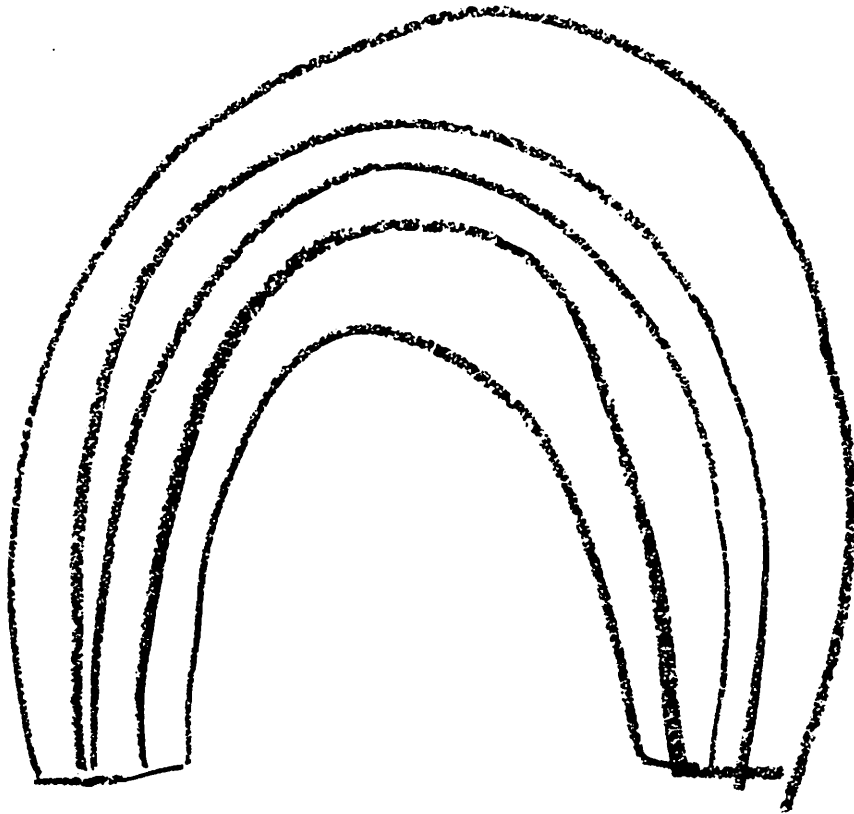
“I like to feel Kuma.”

“I like to eat with my hands.”





I like to stomp in puddles with my rain shoes on.



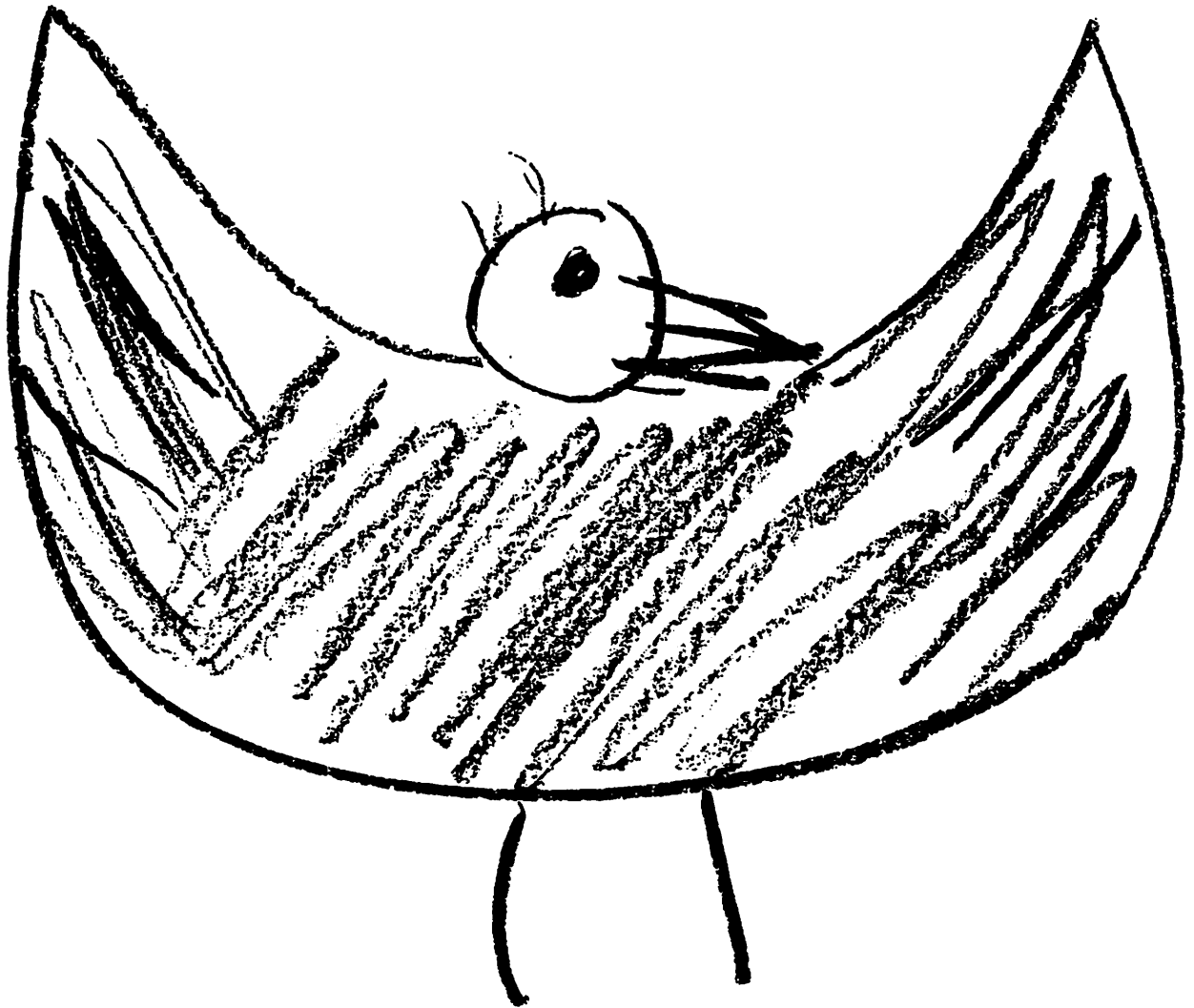
“I wish I was a rainbow.”



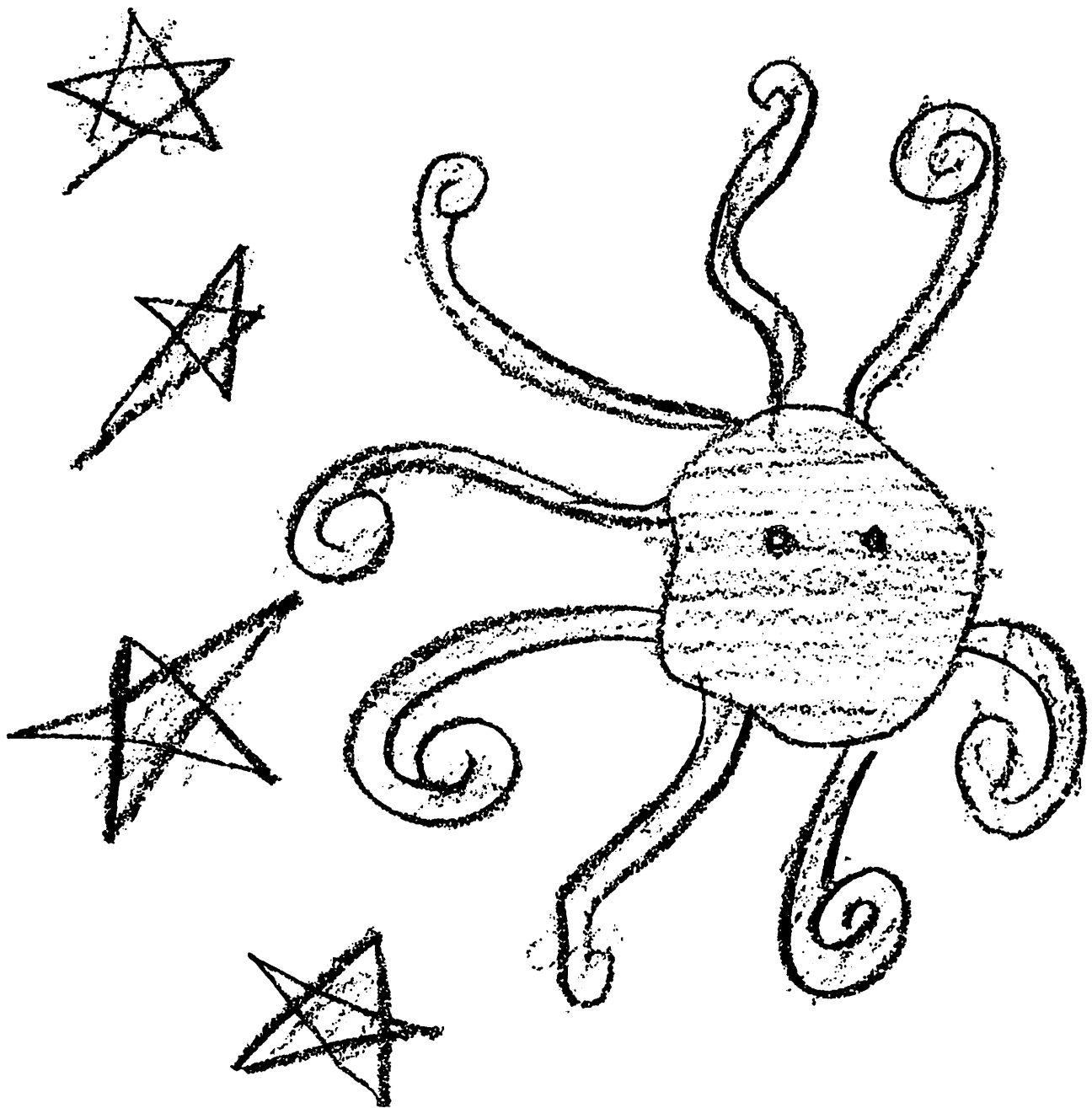
“I like the rainbow fishies. And this is the drawing that I made of them.”



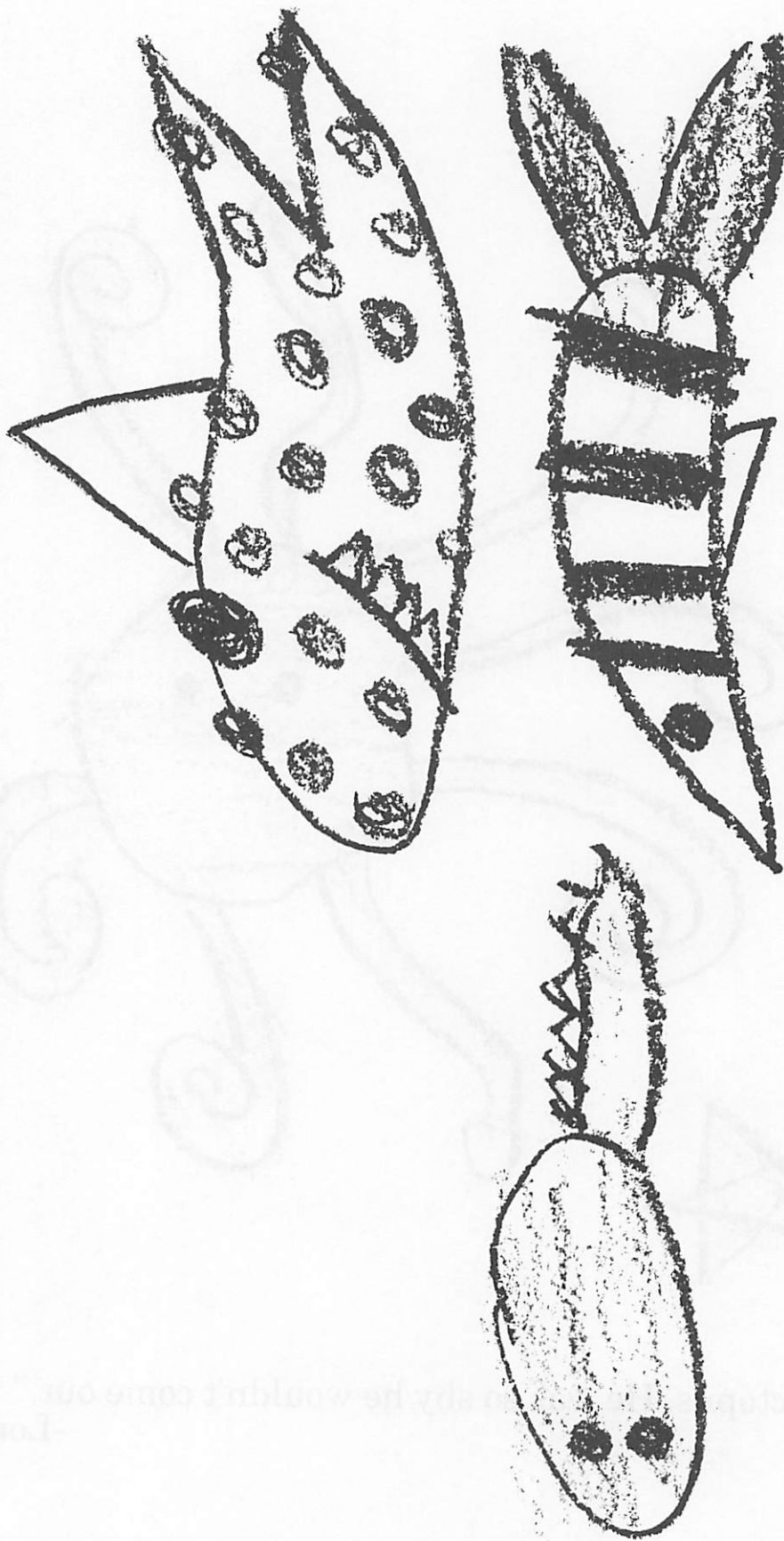
“I wish I was a Cabbage Patch Kid.”



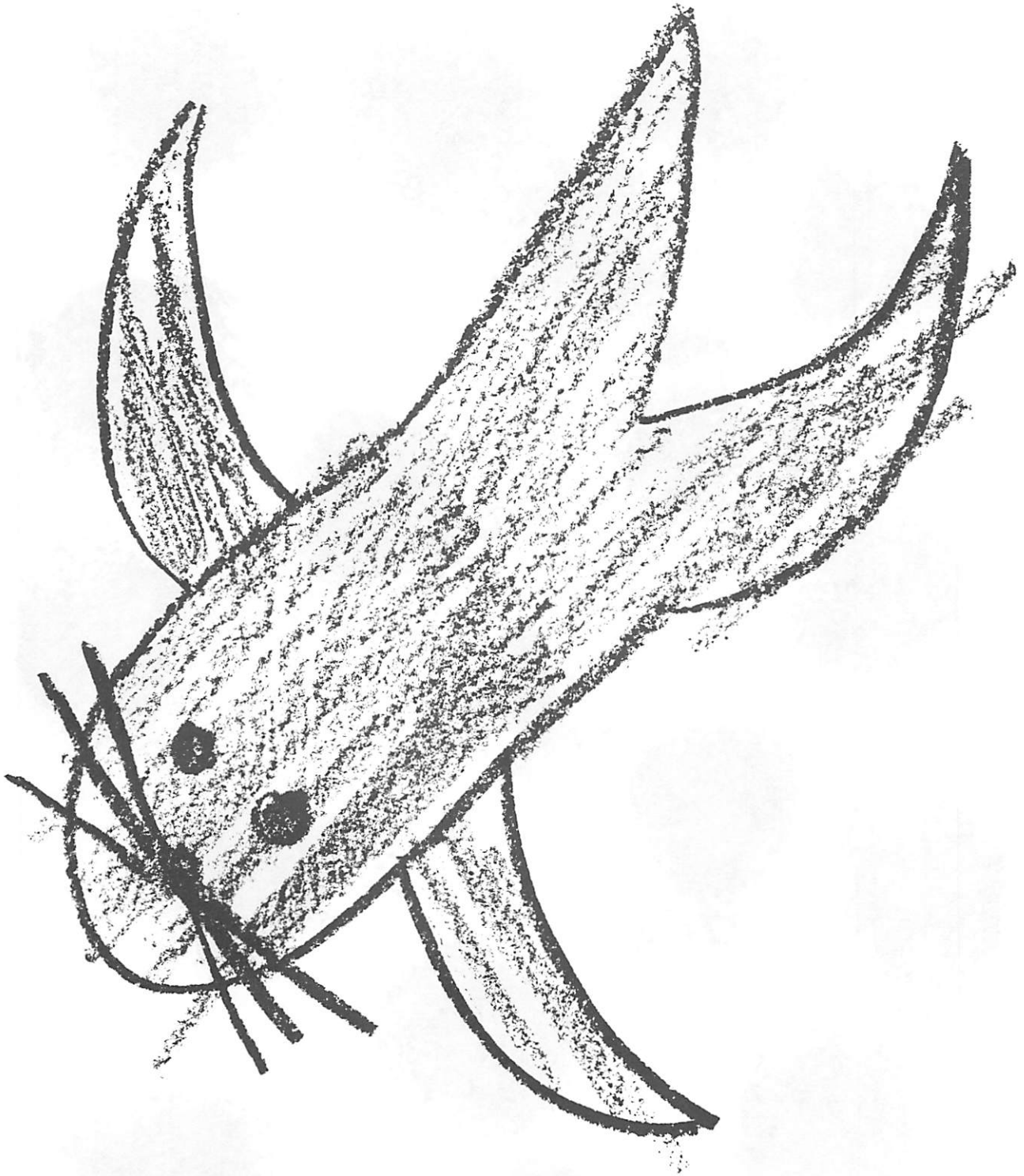
“I wish I was a white crane.”



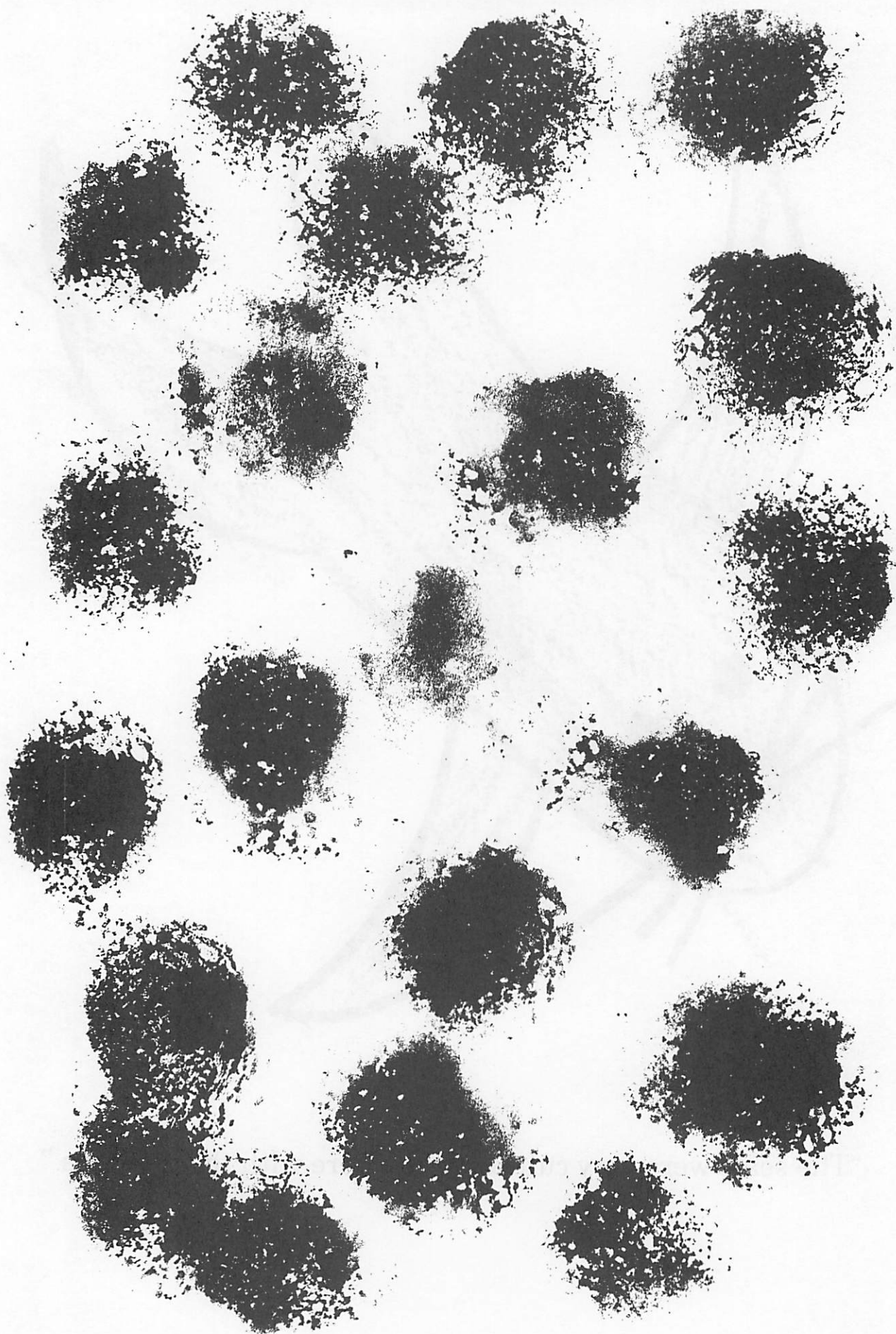
"I'm making an octopus. He was so shy he wouldn't come out."
-Lorin



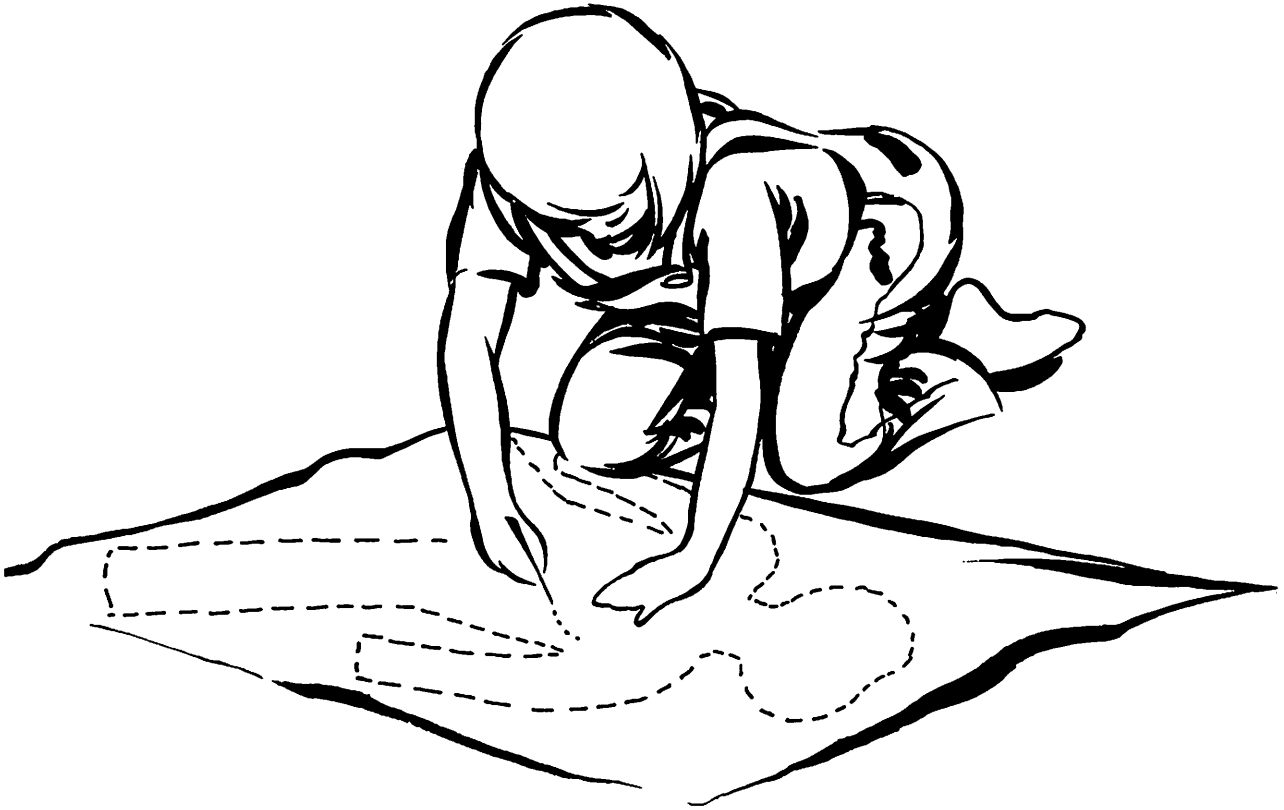
“The green thing is the anemone. And the one with the spots is the shark. And the one with the stripes is the tiger fish.”



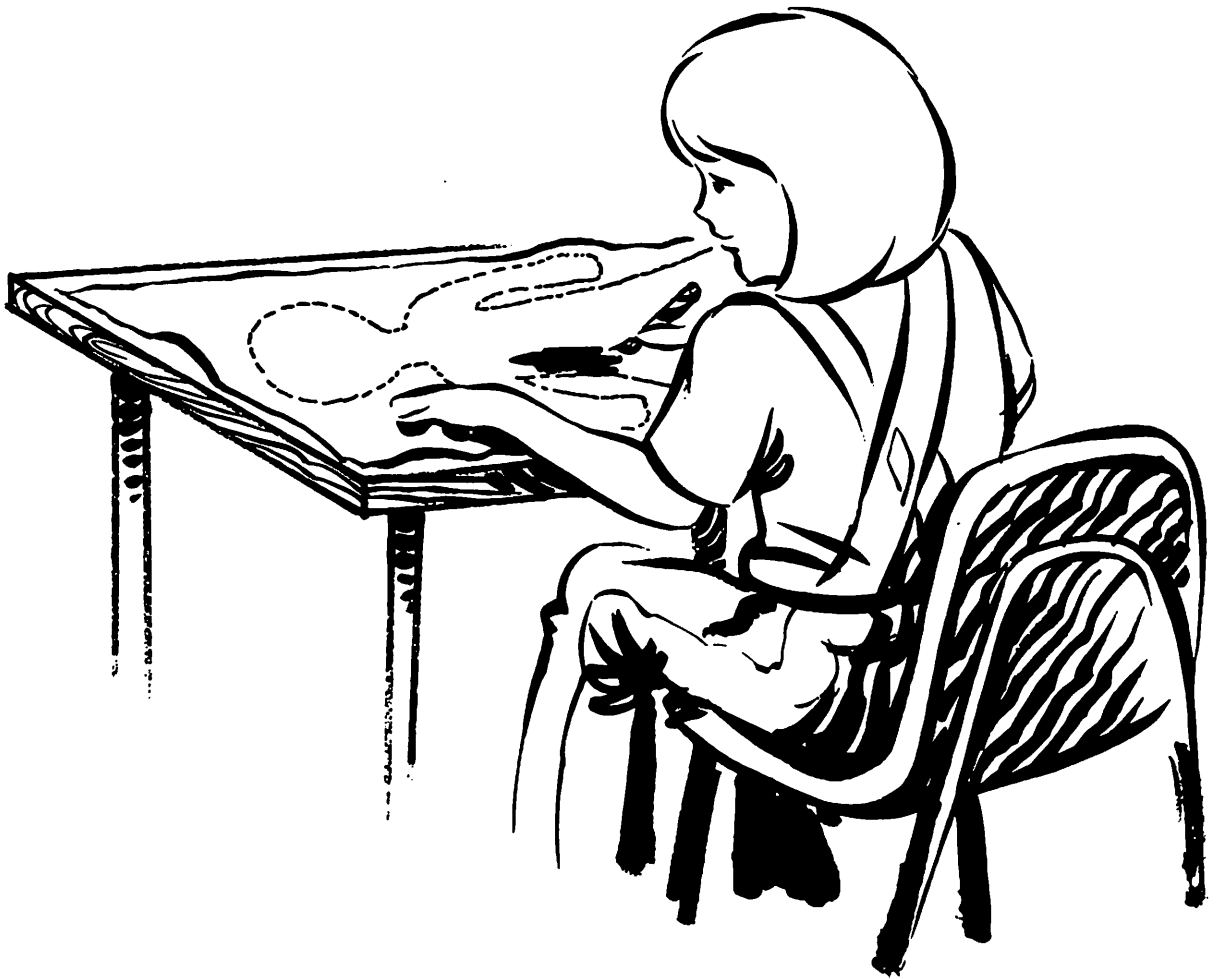
“The seals were very cute and they were with the dolphins.”



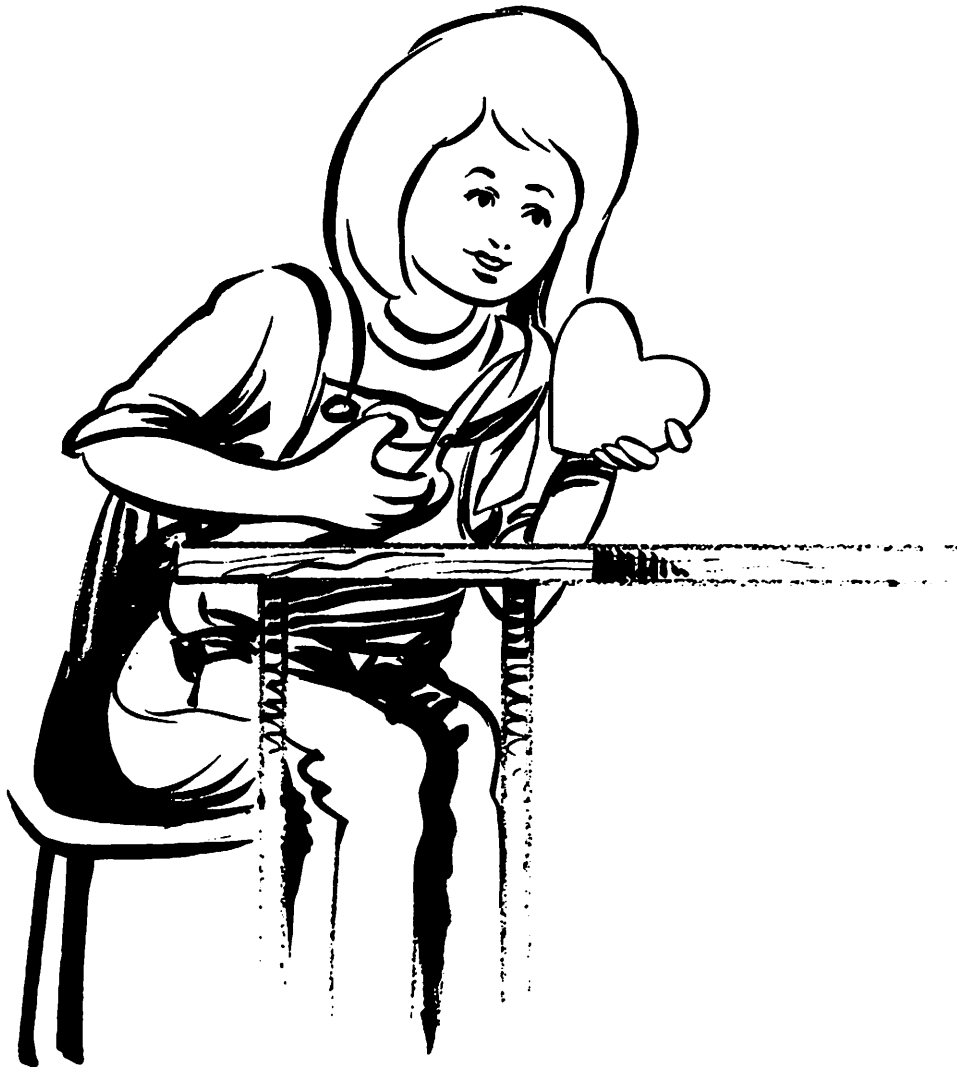
How I made My Doll



First I had to trace.



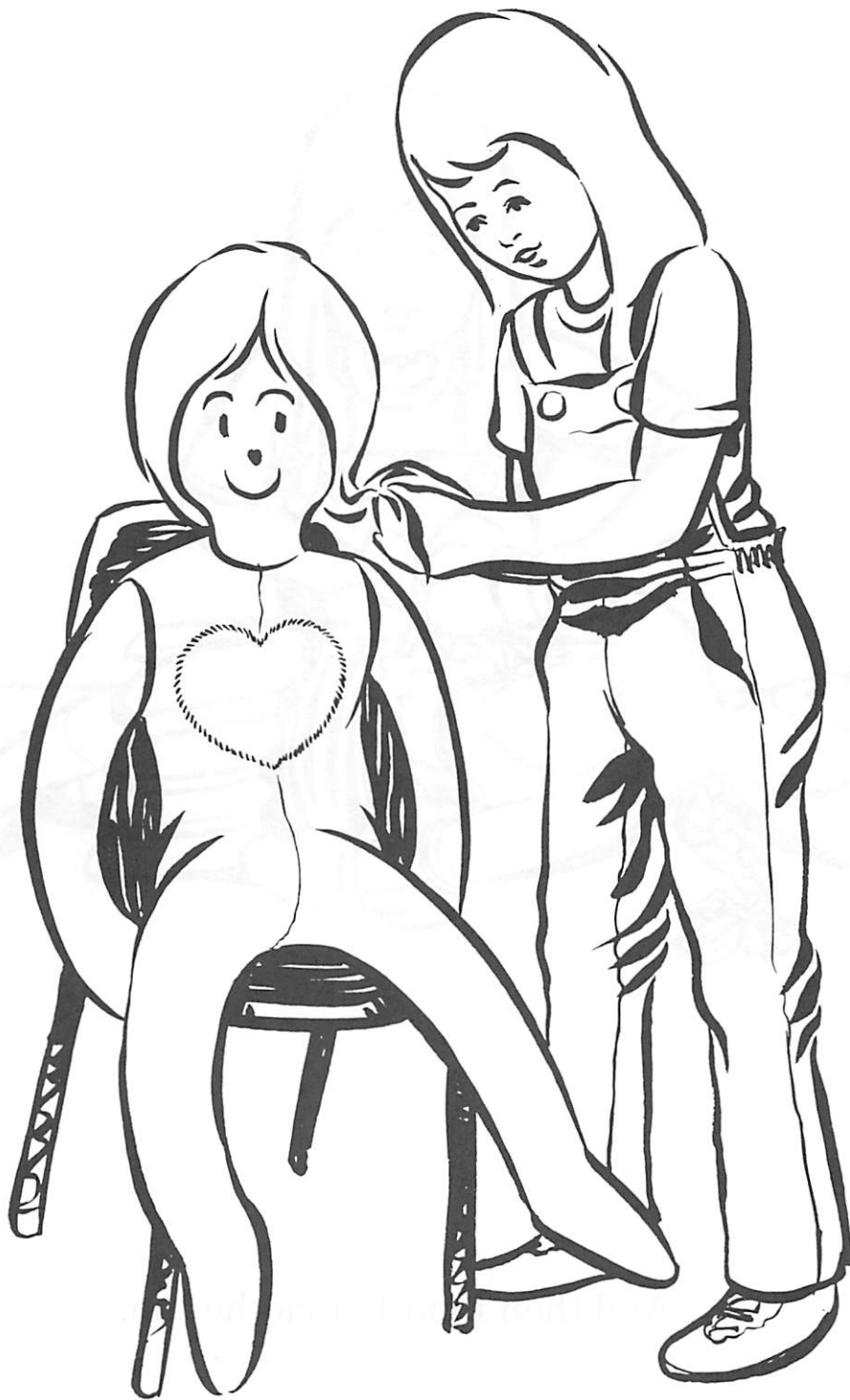
And then I colored my doll in.



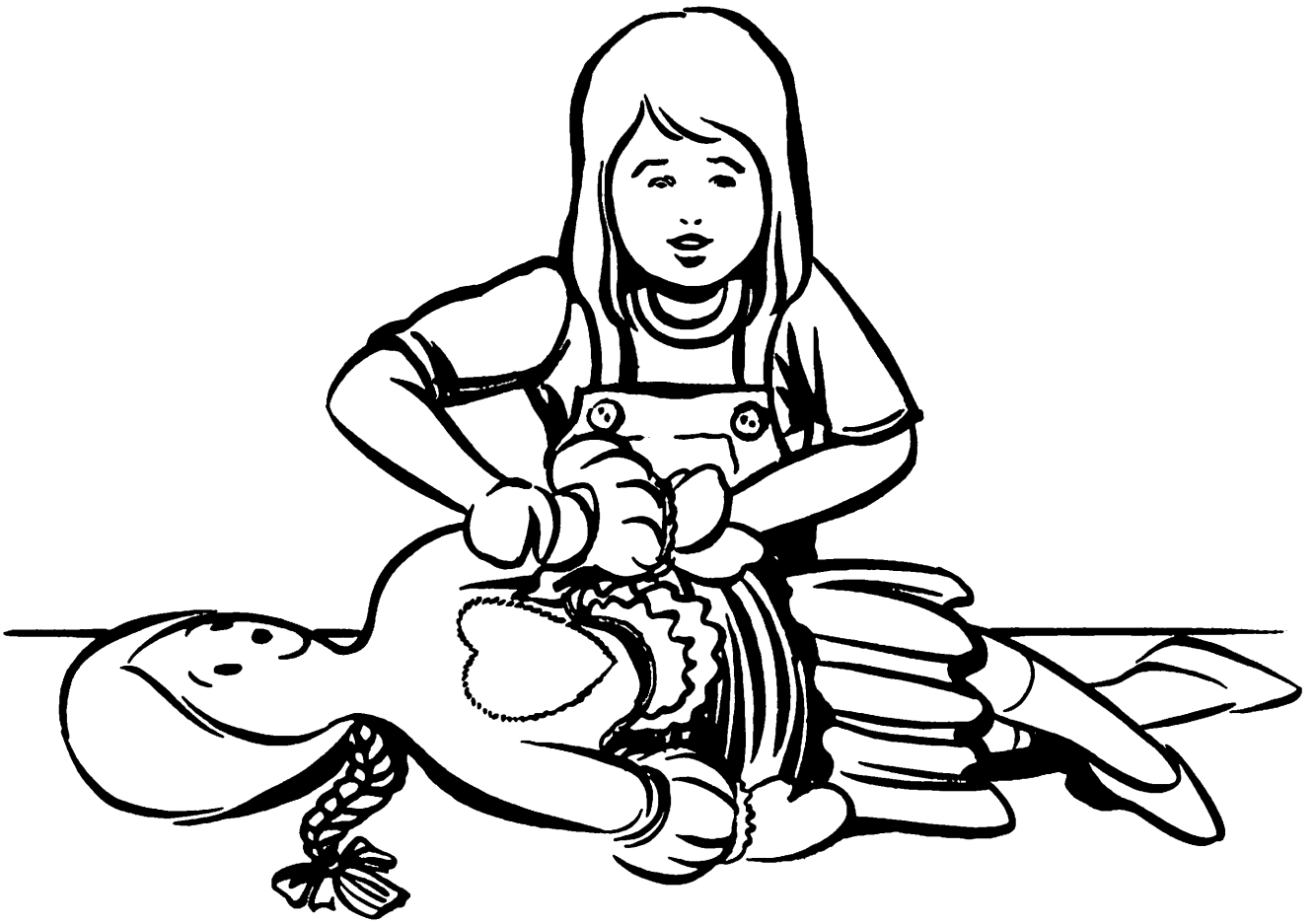
And then I cut the heart out.



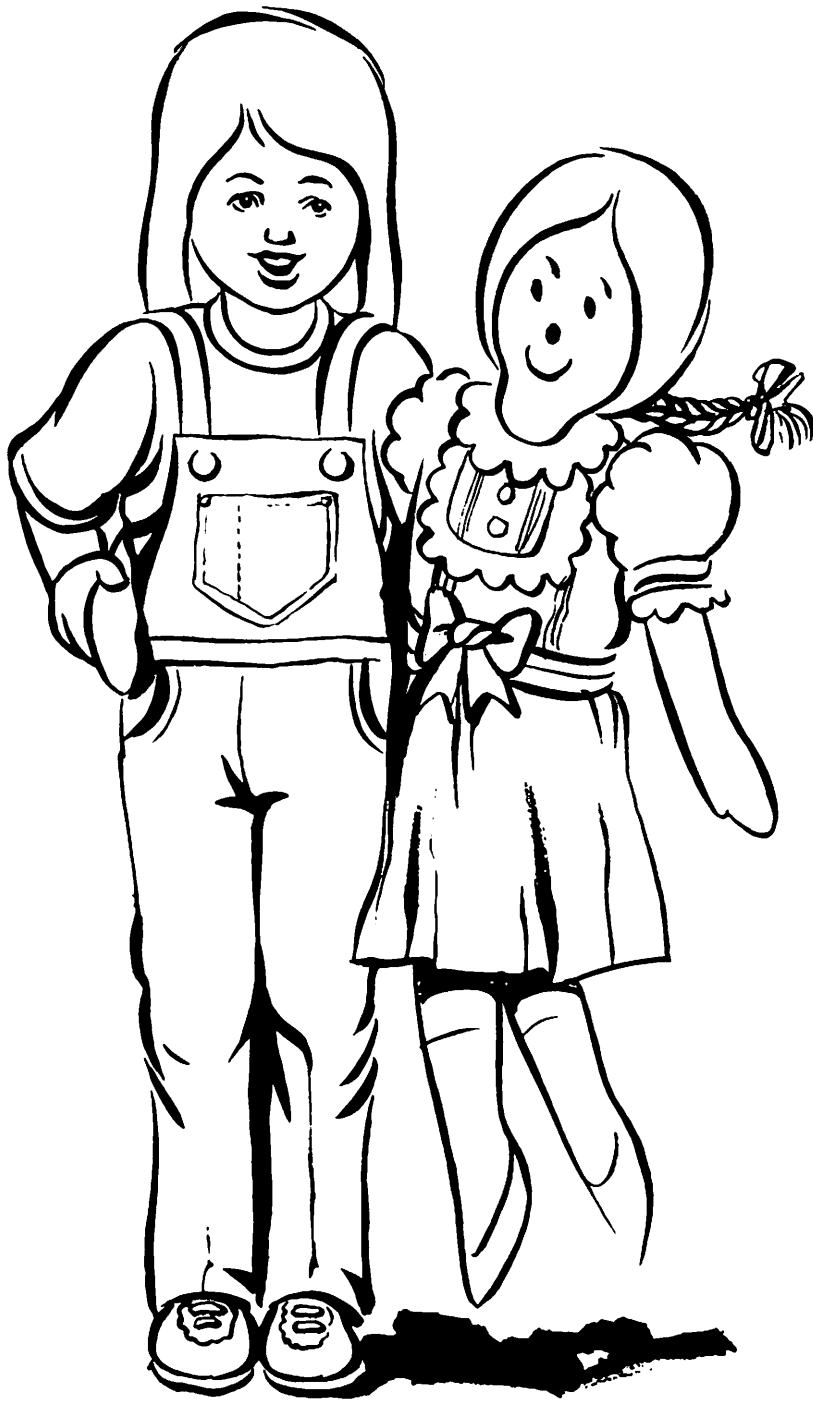
And then I stuffed my doll.



And then I tied her hair.



And then I put her clothes on.



And then I had my doll!

SHINRAN SHONIN

Shinran and Ho-Onko (Day of thanksgiving and gratitude)

January 16, 1262 is the first memorial day of St. Shinran. Ho-Onko is one of the most important holidays in Jodo Shinshu.

Ho = repay
On = gratitude
Ko = gathering

Purpose:

To make children aware of terms: Ho-Onko, St. Shinran and Jodo Shinshu

Shinran's Teaching

Background: Sakyamuni Buddha 580-480 BC discovered Buddhahood which is Amida Buddha. Amida means Amitabha and Amitayus.

A = un
mita = measurable
abha = light

A = un
mita = measurable
ayus = life

Shinran's teaching is to become aware of his compassion. Shinjin is awakening to the wisdom and compassion (infinite light and infinite life) of Amida Buddha and to express our gratitude to him in reciting the Nembutsu.

Gratitude is thank you for food and teaching of Buddha's love, parent's love, home, temple.

Activity: Shrink art

Scrap book on gratitude and thankfulness

Matsuwakamaro

About 800 years ago in a village called Hino, near Kyoto in Japan, a child was born. The parents and the whole village were very happy. His parents named him Matsuwakamaro.

It is said that when Matsuwakamaro was 2 years old, he was looking at the moon and spoke his first word. The word was Namu Amida Butsu.

When he was very young, he lost his father and mother. He was very lonely for his parents, as they were a very happy family and had many blessings.

One day his uncle took him to the temple where he could study the Buddha's teachings. So, at the age of 9, he became the youngest boy to become a Monk.

This boy grew up to be Shinran Shonin.



Shinran Shonin Memorial Day

Shinran Shonin Memorial Day (Ho-onko) commemorates the anniversary of the death of Shinran Shonin, the founder of the Jodo Shinshu Sect. Each year, on the 16th of January, faithful followers of Shinran Shonin assemble together to pay homage to his memory and to Amida Buddha for having awakened man to the existence of life's supreme debt of gratitude.

Confronted by his own blind waywardness and, moreover, rendered helpless by his own inability to free himself of his ignorance and self-centered ways, mortal man has no alternative but to rely on the grace of the power of salvation of the Nembutsu which is none other than the manifestation of Amida Buddha's great wisdom and compassion graciously bestowed upon mankind in the form of His Primal Vow, assuring salvation and happiness for all sentient beings. The realization of this fundamental fact of life turns, in other words, into an awareness on the part of man to the supreme debt of gratitude he owes.

This gives rise to the question of whether or not we of the Jodo Shinshu faith are truly concerned and grateful to Amida Buddha and to Shinran Shonin for having shown us the way of the Nembutsu.

Shinran Shonin Memorial Day is currently being observed by the respective temples, but it appears to be carried out in a very superficial manner devoid of any sense of gratitude. Or can one be wrong and that, in reality, it is being observed out of a deep feeling of gratitude and pious propriety. Should one become aware that he has been merely going through the motions of observing Ho-Onko, it is never too late to change. He must first strive to condition himself towards attaining a true sense of appreciation and gratitude.

Let us pause and reflect for a moment.

Why is it that despite the long hours we spend listening to the teachings on Nembutsu, we continue to remain unmoved and indifferent without any deep feeling of profound gratitude? Is it that we do not possess any sense of gratefulness? Why is this so? What is the underlying source of this problem?

Shinran Shonin interpreted the acknowledgement of gratitude to mean any reciprocal thought or act motivated by a profound feeling of gratitude for Amida Buddha's invocation of his power to enable us to attain faith. Reciprocal acknowledgement is not, therefore, merely giving donations or attending religious services. In other words, it is not just a duty or responsibility. It is, rather, an opportunity—a privilege and blessing—which comes naturally as one becomes more deeply aware that all things, including one's faith, comes from Amida Buddha. Our faith and manner of living which are the very essence of life are bestowed upon us through the grace of Amida's compassion and merciful benevolence.

Man is by nature, from the time of his birth, self-centered and, therefore, does not feel any sense of gratitude unless his greed and selfish desires are satisfied. For example, the absence of any feeling of gratitude towards one's parents is because it is obstructed by selfish interests and a false sense of self-importance. There is the ever-present feeling that one's parents will not do as one wishes and that a person exists of his own accord—separate and individual.

The awareness of one's debt of gratitude means that one realizes the reason and purpose for his own existence. To be grateful towards one's parents is the awareness that one owes his existence to his parents. Gratitude towards the sun stems from the realization that one owes his existence to the sun's light and heat. We can also say for the same reason, that we owe our lives to our country and fellow beings.

Therefore, as long as one remains self-centered, any thought or sense of gratefulness will remain dormant and hidden within. Should we desire otherwise, we must change our attitude toward life from a self-centered one to one molded around Amida Buddha as its center. This change is called the attainment of faith.

As stated in the Hymns of Praise (Wasan), "To enter within the wisdom of faith is to become one who acts out of gratefulness to the Buddha." Faith and acts motivated by gratitude are not two separate aspects of life but are one and the same. Therefore, one cannot possibly say that he has faith but does not feel any sense of gratitude.

In the light of this principle, then, can it be said that people are imbued with a sense of gratitude in their daily conduct? The answer is emphatically, "No!" It is quite apparent that in reality mankind is floundering in the ocean of the three cardinal evils and living in a state of ingratitude and disillusionment without the necessary understanding of the true meaning of life. For this reason, it is imperative that man takes immediate steps, not only to understand the true meaning, but moreover, assimilate the spirit of the reciprocal return of one's debt of gratitude by following the words of Amida Buddha which teach us to persevere with forbearance and act with conviction of purpose.

By doing so, we shall come to the realization that the significance of Ho-onko lies in the assemblage of the faithful followers of Amida in the expression of their gratitude for having been graciously blessed with the means and opportunity of following the path of Nembutsu. From this awareness will rise a deep sense of the gratitude to which each person must reply during the course of his life.

"Though I, my life having run its course,
Return to the Pure Land of Eternal Rest,
Come back shall I to earth again and again
Even as the waves of Wakano-ura Bays.

"When alone you rejoice in the Sacred Teachings
Believe that there are two.
And when there are two to rejoice
Believe that there are three.
And that other shall be Shinran."

Gotan E

I. Introduction

- A. May 21, known as Gotan-e, is celebrated as the birth date of Shinran Shonin, who was born on this day in 1173 near Kyoto, Japan.
- B. Gotan-e service is held to show our joy and happiness on this day of Shinran Shonin's birth and to express our gratitude to him for his teachings.
- C. Shinran told us many things about Amida Buddha and so we are very grateful to him.
- D. Scroll of St. Shinran is hung to right of Amida Buddha in altar.

II. Life of Shinran Shonin

A. Childhood

- 1. Shinran was born in the village of Hino near Kyoto to a noble family and given the name, Matsuwaka Maro, after the pine tree which is always fresh and green.
- 2. When he was very young, he used to make clay figures of the Buddha and gas-sho before them.
- 3. But a very sad thing happened—he lost both parents when he was very small.
- 4. After thinking carefully, he told his uncle, Lord Noritsuna, that he would like to study to become a Buddhist priest.

B. Priesthood at Mt. Hiei

- 1. Thus began for a boy of 9, a lifetime of hard work and long hours of study.
- 2. He studied at a place called Mt. Hiei in Japan for more than 20 years.
- 3. He did not want to become famous but wanted to learn about the teachings of Amida Buddha and how everyone could become a Buddha and enter the Pureland.
- 4. Though he studied for 20 years atop Mt. Hiei he could not find the answer.
- 5. After 95 days of confinement, a vision of Prince Shotoku (as an incarnation of Kannon) appeared before him and whispered, "Nembutsu is the only path through which you can be saved. You will soon meet a great teacher who will teach you the way to eternal peace through the Nembutsu."

C. Becoming a Disciple of Honen Shonin

- 1. Shinran was introduced to Honen, who taught that the way to enter the Pureland was the way of the Nembutsu and calling His name, Namu Amida Butsu.
- 2. He became a disciple of Honen and under his guidance began to lead a new spiritual life.

D. Exile

- 1. As time went on, the followers of the Nembutsu faith increased so rapidly that the scholars of Mt. Hiei and Nara became jealous of Honen.
- 2. The jealous priests convinced the Imperial Court that the way of the Nembutsu was not in keeping with the teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha and Shinran was exiled to Echigo.
- 3. After four long years both Honen and Shinran were pardoned by the government.

E. Shinran as a teacher

1. After the death of his beloved master, Shinran traveled throughout Japan teaching the people the way of Nembutsu; and for the first time, many people were able to hear and appreciate the Buddha's teachings.
2. He was a kind and gentle teacher and he went from place to place even when it was very difficult.
3. At the age of 29 he abandoned the method of finding enlightenment by his self power (jiriki) and placed his faith in Amida's power (tariki) to realize Buddhahood.
4. Until he passed away at the age of 90, Shinran's life was simple and humble in outward appearances, but was a life of profound spiritual experience.
5. In November of 1877, 615 years after his death, Emperor Meiji honored Shinran Shonin with the title of "Kenshin Daishi", which means "The Great Master Who Saw the Truth."

Gotan E Projects

I. Show and Tell

- A. Have the children draw or bring (out of magazines) pictures of persons or things to whom we must be grateful. Let each child explain why we must be thankful to the person or thing in the picture.
- B. Have them pin their contributions to a bulletin board or butcher paper under the title "We Are Grateful—Namu Amida Butsu."

II. Story

- A. Method: Using the simplified outline of the Life of Shinran Shonin on the preceding page, tell a story about his life using patterns on following pages.
- B. Discussion after story
 1. What kind of boy was Shinran? List the responses.
 2. What did he decide to become when he was only 9 years old? Why?
 3. Which people helped him during his lifetime? How?
 4. What can we learn from Shinran?

III. Cardboard image of Shinran

A. Materials

1. Ditto of figure of Shinran on heavy construction paper
2. Colored crayons
3. Scissors
4. Strips of heavy paper, approx. 3½" long, 1" wide for stand
5. Elmer's glue

B. Assembly

1. Color figure of Shinran Shonin
2. Cut out figure
3. Fold tab and paste to back so the figure will stand up
4. Take home and place next to family shrine (Obutsudan) so we can express our thanks to him also.

- C. Make a Shinran Shonin Booklet and write a story about his life.

IV. Story

Life of Saint Shinran

Do we all know who Shinran Shonin was? He was a great teacher who told us many things about the teachings of Amida Buddha.

Listen carefully now as I tell you the story about this very important person because I'm going to ask you some questions later.

The legend goes that about 800 years ago in Japan, there was born a boy who was given the name, **Matsuwakamaro**. His proud parents named him Matsuwaka Maro after the **pine tree** (called matsu in Japanese) because this tree is always unchangingly fresh and green.

When he was very young, Matsuwakamaro used to make **clay figures** of the Buddha and gassho before them.

But a very sad thing happened to him. He lost both his parents when he was still very young. He missed them very much and was always thinking of how he might be able to meet them again. At such times he longed for the peaceful world of the Buddha.

Finally when he was 9 years old he told his uncle, "Dear Uncle, please let me become a monk." Boys and girls, do you know what a monk is? It is a person who spends all his time studying about the Buddha and leads a very strict life with no time to watch T.V. or go to the movies, like other people.

As the story goes, Matsuwakamaro told his uncle he wanted to become a monk so that he could learn about the teachings of the Buddha and meet his father and mother again.

So at the age of 9, he **climbed the mountain** called Mt. Hiei, but he could not find the answer. He then decided to **sit and meditate** for 100 days. After 95 days he dreamed that a prince, **Prince Shotoku**, told him that the Nembutsu, or reciting Namu Amida Butsu, was the only way he could be saved and find comfort and happiness.

After leaving Mt. Hiei, he met a wonderful teacher, Honen Shonin, who taught him about the importance of the Nembutsu. After hearing Honen and having his eyes opened to the truth, Shinran spent the remainder of his life teaching others what he learned. Shinran traveled throughout Japan teaching people about how wonderful and important Namu Amida Butsu was. He was kind and gentle and he went from place to place teaching even when it was very difficult.

One story tells about how Shinran and two of his helpers reached a very small village late at night. It was a **very cold winter's night** and the blizzard (heavy snow) made it very difficult to walk. They came upon a house where a warm fire could be seen through the window. They asked the man of the house if they could stay overnight but the man would not let them. So Shinran sat outside in the cold and began saying the Nembutsu very softly over and over again. The night was dark and very cold but their hearts were warm with Amida Buddha's love and compassion.

During the night, the owner of the house was awakened by the sound of "NAMU AMIDA BUTSU, NAMU AMIDA BUTSU". He suddenly felt very ashamed that he was so mean. He hurried to the door and invited Saint Shinran and his friends to the fireplace. The man and his wife bowed deeply and asked forgiveness for being so unkind. Shinran kept reciting the Nembutsu without being angry or feeling sorry for himself; only thankfulness for their belated kindness was on his mind.

Until he passed away at the age of 90, **Shinran's** life was simple and humble but he understood how important saying Namu Amida Butsu was. Many, many years after he died, the Emperor of Japan (like a king or President of the U.S.) gave him the very important title of "The Great Master Who Saw The Truth."





NEMBUTSU IN GASSHO

Nembutsu

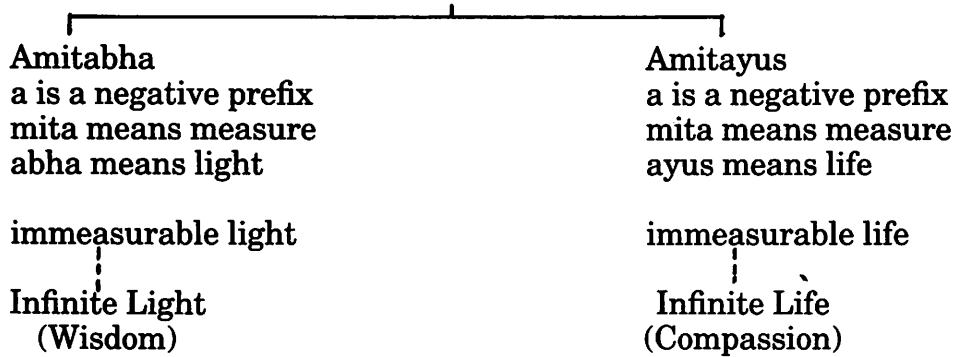
Nem ㊦ : meditate and invoke (recite) butsu ㊦ : Buddha

- 1) Meditate on Buddha or think of Buddha
- 2) Invoke the Name of the Buddha or recite His Name

Buddha: the Enlightened One...Amida Buddha

Amida Buddha: Amitabha Buddha...Amitayus Buddha

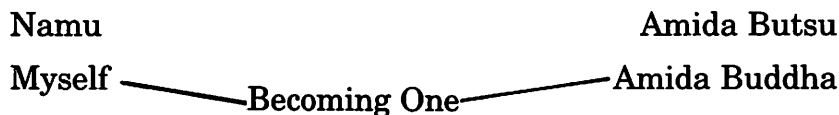
Amida Buddha



Therefore, Amida Buddha is the Buddha of the Infinite Light and the Infinite Life (the Buddha of Wisdom and Compassion). Nembutsu in Jodo Shinshu means reciting the Name of Amida Buddha, which is Namu Amida Butsu.

Namu Amida Butsu

The name of Amida Buddha, which literary means, "I take my refuge in Amida Buddha."



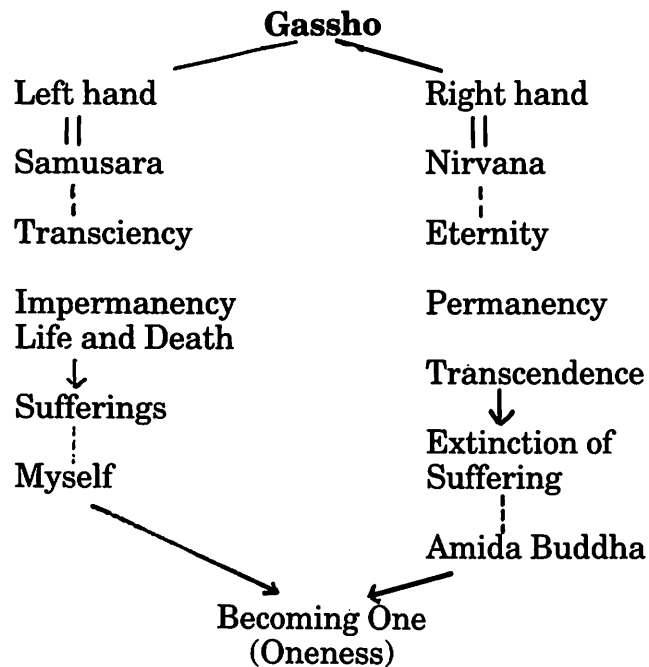
In reciting Namu Amida Butsu, I become One with Amida Buddha, which means I rejoice in the joy and happiness of the Infinite Light and the Infinite Life of Amida Buddha in Gassho.

Gassho

Gas 合 : join and agree

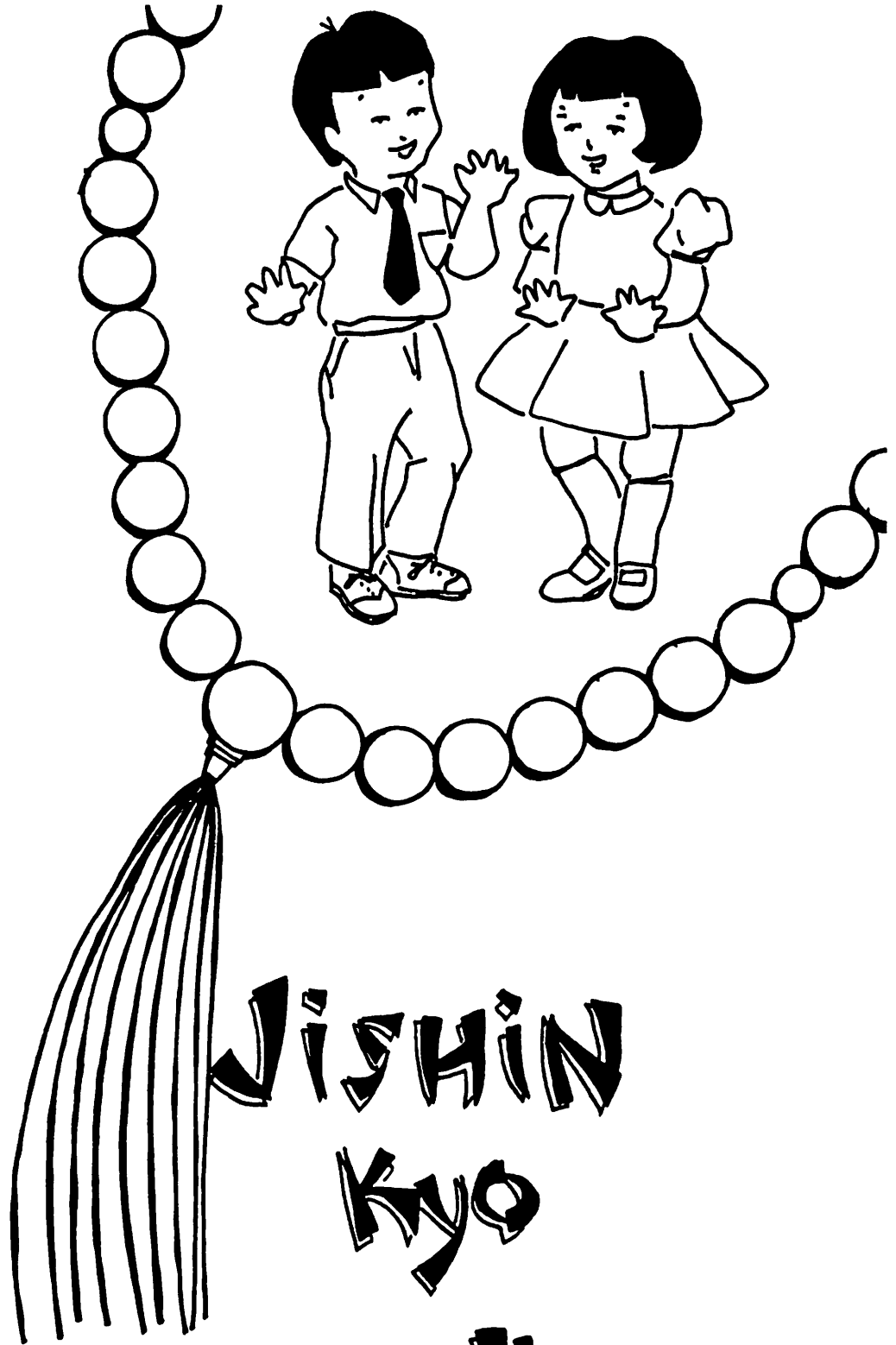
sho 掌 : hands, the palms of the hands

Putting hands together the right hand and the left hand. The right and left hands meet together and become One.



Therefore, Nembutsu in Gassho is to realize become One with Amida Buddha of Wisdom and Compassion in rejoicing the joy of living with the Infinite Light and the Infinite Life by Reciting the Name, Namu Amida Butsu, with Shinjin (Awakening and Gratitude).

自信教人信



Jishin
Kyo

Ninshin



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INTRODUCTION

The second grade teachers' guide will continue to reinforce the first grade lessons and cover the topic of Gratitude.

Grade Level	Focus	Aims And Objectives
Second Grade	GRATITUDES	Learn about the Four Gratitudes in Buddhism and how it affects them
	BUDDHIST HOLIDAYS	Kindness to fellow living beings Kindness to family
	ACTIVITIES	Kindness to your surroundings Three Treasures

Introduction To The Class

TEACHER:

Introduction:

Introduce yourself to the class, and write your name on the board.
Have the children introduce themselves to the class, and give them name tags.

Materials:

Name tags for the children
A sign for the door to identify the classroom
Pencils
Materials for individual folders (if you are planning to have them use folders)

STUDENTS:

Activity:

Give a brief explanation of the theme and the plans for the coming year.
Have the children discuss the word “Gratitude”. It means to be thankful.
In how many language can the children say “Thank You”?

Four Gratitudes

Children can be taught to say “Hello,” and “Thank You,” and many other forms of courtesies. They first learn to say words by mimicking the sounds of the adult. As their vocabulary increases, they learn to communicate and relate to others in increasingly meaningful ways.

Young children can also be taught the philosophy of Buddhism, its history, and the development of Buddhism. This can be accomplished through listening to the Sensei and teachers, and through reading Buddhist books.

In the second grade we are attempting to teach the children the Four Gratitudes. This, however, cannot be accomplished just by presenting factual information about the Gratu-
tudes. The children must become actively engaged in projects and first hand experi-
ences. They must observe and have many discussions in order to develop understanding
so that the feeling of gratitude is internalized and becomes a part of his personality.

The teacher must have a deep faith herself. Through her sincerity she will be able to convey to the children her complete faith in the teachings of the Buddha. She should encourage discussions and work with the children in examining themselves, and to develop insights into their own feelings in relation to Buddhist teachings. She should help them to realize that to take a positive point of view about situations in their own lives is to live a life of gratitude.

By living a life of gratitude, the children will emerge as useful, participating members of society.

Gratitudes

To teach the children the Four Gratuities of Buddhism and the meanings of each.

Gratitude is a big word. First, let us discuss the meaning of gratitude. (Thankful appreciation, thankfulness, thanks). Can anyone tell me what it means? There are Four Gratuities in Buddhism. Let us examine our own lives and try to think of the people and things that have helped and guided us. Now—can anyone guess what those Four Gratuities might be?

Gratitudes

Good morning, everyone. Isn't this a lovely morning?

The aroma of the chicken teriyaki drifting through the Temple is certainly making me hungry. Your parents and grandparents have been busy since yesterday preparing for this Temple fund raising event. Much planning and hard work went into this event by the committees, and it is a wonderful feeling—a most gratifying feeling—to see so many people from the Temple, Fujinkai, YBA and Dharma School working together for the benefit of the Temple today. Boys and girls, this is one form of dana—giving of the self—and we must be very grateful we are able to perform this dana in good health.

When it rained so much last month, we complained about the weather, didn't we? Although there is such a thing as too much rain because of the damages and harm it causes, we must not forget that rain helps flowers, vegetables, trees and shrubs to grow. Birds and animals drink rain water. Rain provides energy in the form of electricity for us.

You may complain about having to go to school, but if there were no learning, we would not have televisions, stereos, movies, the convenient appliances and the many wonders we have today. It is through education that people become capable of inventing, producing and constructing the wonderful things we enjoy today.

During the winter, we wait for summer. When summer comes we wait for the cool autumn. We are forever waiting for this or for that to make us happy.

Have you ever said, "Oh, I want a Peugeot bike more than anything else in the world"? Or, perhaps, some of you may have said, "I can't be happy unless Dad buys me that snazzy Transam." Boys and girls, do you think getting material things such as a Peugeot bike, Transam, Z28 or a Mustang will truly make you happy forever? No, I don't think so. A new bike will become old and so will a snazzy car.

However, there is one thing which will never get old or obsolete. Can anyone tell me what the one thing is? Yes, it is Amida Buddha's Love! As we learn about Amida's Love, we become more thankful to Amida. We become thankful to our parents. We become thankful to our teachers, neighbors and friends. We become thankful to our country. We will also become thankful to our little pets that follow us around at home and even the plants that beautify our home and yard. We call this the four gratuities.

Once again, the four gratuities are: Gratitude to parents; to all life; to the country; and to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

I believe I gave you this recipe for happiness once before, but I would like to give it to you again. Hopefully, this will help us to live a life of meaning and gratitude.

Take cupfuls of the following ingredients:

Friendliness
Kindness and
Smiles

Mix with sincerity and thank you's,

Stir in plenty of kind deeds,

Bake in a warm, tender loving heart,

Then divide into spoonfuls and share it with everyone.

Let us try this recipe.

Thank you.

Sermon by: Rev. S. Fukuma

Gratitude

To discuss the meaning of Gratitude, so that the children will have a basic understanding of the word, before we introduce the Four Gratitudes in Buddhism.

Introduction:

Write the words: GRATITUDE, THANK YOU, APPRECIATION

Materials:

Pumpkin picture

Story:

Today we will hear a story by Mrs. Margie Mizuta Lessmow. Although it is not Halloween we would like to share with you a story about a pumpkin.

Teacher:

Discussion of the story

Relate this story to their own lives

Make a collage

Magazine pictures showing people helping people

The Warm Glow From Within

One frosty fall morning, Joey bounced out of bed and dressed quickly for school. After eating breakfast, he began to walk out the door, turned and remarked to his mother, "Don't forget, mom. Today, after school, we go to Uncle Jerry's to load up the leftover pumpkins." With a kiss and a hug for mom, he was off on his bike. Pumpkins and Uncle Jerry dominated his thoughts.

Uncle Jerry grew a tremendous pumpkin patch next to Grandpa and Grandma Mizuta's farm. Joey spent most of his free time at the farm helping in many ways. The pumpkin patch was his favorite spot but autumn also meant the harvest of potatoes, onions and other crops and everyone was busy with these seasonal crops.

Joey had been busy also during the past two weeks at the farm. His job was selling pumpkins to customers who stopped to buy a variety of other produce.

Halloween was tomorrow night and still several pumpkins were left in the field with no home. Many of these were misshapened, green in color or missing their stem.

After school, Joey and his mom drove to the pumpkin patch and began to load all of the leftover pumpkins into the pick-up. "Mom, these are heavy!" Joey said, as he lifted each one over the side of the pick-up. With a full load, they headed home to carve them into bright jack-o-lanterns for Halloween night.

As mom carved faces, the pumpkins began to develop character, each one different from the next. Neighbor children soon joined in on the front lawn and helped by cleaning out the seeds. Finally, all thirty-two jack-o-lanterns were finished and loaded back into the pick-up.

The next day was Halloween. When school was out, Joey hurried home. "Mom, it's time to set out the jack-o-lanterns. Let's hurry!" Away they went to the farm to display their work. Each jack-o-lantern was carefully placed on the front lawn of Grandpa's farm house.

Darkness soon came and the candles were set in each pumpkin. With a long jack-o-lantern match, the jack-o-lanterns were lit and their lids put back in place.

Joey left to go to a Halloween party with neighbor friends. Upon his return, it was time to check the candles. As he and his mom walked out with a bag of new candles, they stood back and gazed at the jack-o-lanterns.

"That one looks like a clown," Joey said to his mom.

"And that one looks like a naughty little boy," said his mom.

"Mom, let's do this every year. I think it looks great."

They began to add new candles to each jack-o-lantern so that they would remain bright for a while longer into the night. As they were going from one lantern to the next, Joey turned to his mom and said,

"You know what, mom. These jack-o-lanterns are like real people. They're not all perfect on the outside just like people are not all perfect on the outside. But if you just give them a chance, they all have the same warm, inner glow on the inside. I'm sure glad we gave these ugly pumpkins a chance, 'cause in the dark you can't tell they're ugly. They certainly give off a beautiful glow from within."

Observing these jack-o-lanterns helped Joey realize that people cannot be judged strictly by their outside appearance. Through Amida Buddha's teachings, we learn to overlook outside appearances and to search for the true being deep inside. By giving people a chance, they can show that they too, have that same warm, inner glow that was shown by each one of Joey's jack-o-lanterns.

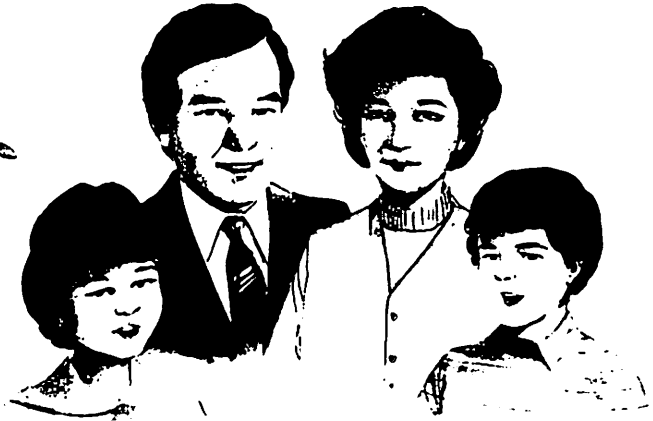
We are thankful for the Buddha's teachings.

GRATITUDE



GRATITUDE TO ALL LIFE

The attitude of appreciation for life and non-injury of living beings is to be cultivated as the first step in developing character and personality, in becoming a real human being.



GRATITUDE TO PARENTS

The attitude of respect for family life and parents is to be nurtured as the basis for his/her later development as a human being, citizen and Buddhist.

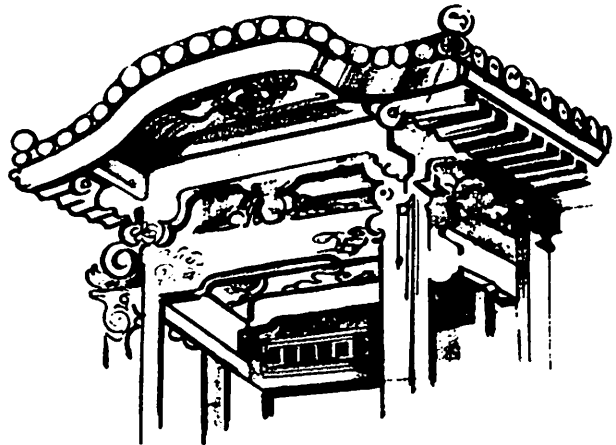


GRATITUDE TO COUNTRY

To be taught the meaning, role and responsibility of being a citizen in a given society. From the attitude of this gratitude there arises concern for the welfare of the country and its proper functioning, the development of a real citizen.

GRATITUDE TO BUDDHA, DHARMA, SANGHA

The appreciation for the Three Treasures is the source of the spiritual development. The Buddhist grows in spirituality as he/she grows in the gratitude to Buddha; the light of compassion who is with us in the Nembutsu; gratitude to Dharma, the truth of life which is the source of timeless peace; gratitude to Sangha, the men/women who selflessly devote their time and effort to spreading the teachings so we may share in its wisdom.



Making a Workbook

After a brief introduction of the Four Gratitudes, the teacher can start the children in the making of a workbook entitled “FOUR GRATITUDES”.

They may start by working on the cover since the work on the inside is to continue throughout the year as their study progresses. For example, as the children study about Gratitude to Parents, they can cut out pictures from magazines or make their own drawings showing their gratitude to parents.

The contents of the workbook need not be limited only to cut outs from magazines and children’s drawings. Try to employ all forms of arts and crafts to make learning interesting and worthwhile.

Sample Letter to Send Home on the First Sunday

Dear Parents:

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the Second Grade class of the _____ Buddhist Dharma School. It is the hope of both parents and teachers that through the child’s participation in the Dharma School activities, he will be able to understand the Buddha’s Teachings, and that in time, these teachings will become a way of life for him.

The focus of the second grade studies will be on the Four Gratitudes. Through classroom projects, stories, discussions and first-hand experiences, we hope to study the following: gratitude to all things, gratitude to our parents, gratitude to our country, and especially gratitude to Amida Buddha.

It is my hope that you will follow your child’s Dharma School activities with interest, and may I extend an invitation to come and visit us some Sunday.

With Gassho,

The Four Gratitudes of Buddhism

1. Gratitude to parents: Early in the life of a child, the attitude of respect for family life and parents is to be nurtured as the basis for his later development as a human being, citizen, and Buddhist.
2. Gratitude to all life: The attitude of appreciation for life and non-injury of living beings is to be cultivated as the first step in developing character and personality, in becoming a real human being.
3. Gratitude to country: The child is to be taught the meaning, role and responsibility of being a citizen in a given society. From the attitude of this gratitude, there arises concern for the welfare of the country and its proper functioning, the development of a real citizen.
4. Gratitude to Buddha, Dharma, Sangha: The appreciation for the Three Treasures is the source of the spiritual development of the child. The Buddhist grows in spirituality as he grows in the gratitude of Buddha, the light of compassion who is with us

in the Nembutsu; gratitude to Dharma, the truth of life which is the source of timeless peace; gratitude to Sangha, the men who selflessly devote their time and effort to spreading the teachings so that we may share in its wisdom.

The true gratitude to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha is the symbol of a real Buddhist. The Buddhist expresses this basic gratitude in family life as gratitude to parents, in this world as gratitude to all life, and in society as gratitude to country.

What Do The Four Gratitudes Mean?

TEACHER:

Introduction:

It would be interesting to have a discussion with the children at the beginning of the year to find out what gratitude means to them. Their response would give the teacher an idea of how much understanding the children have on the subject. This material can be saved for the last class session for the year when the question can again be asked of the children as an evaluation of the year's program and as check for the teacher to see if there were any changes in their attitude or understanding.

Materials:

Someone who can act as the recorder or secretary during the discussion to take down children's reactions verbatim.

STUDENTS:

Activity:

"This year we are going to study about the Four Gratitudes in Buddhism. Gratitude is a big word. Can you tell me what it means?" Allow for discussion. "Earlier I said that there were four Gratitudes. Can anyone guess what those gratitudes might be?"

Discussion:

The First Gratitude is to our parents. What do you suppose this means?

The Second Gratitude is to all fellow beings. What does this mean?

The Third Gratitude is to our Country. What does this mean?

The Fourth Gratitude is to the Three Treasures. What are the Three Treasures? What does it mean to be grateful to the Three Treasures?

Some of these Gratitudes are a little difficult to understand right now, but we will be doing many things and will have many discussions all this year and perhaps when you are ready to go into the next class, you will understand the Gratitudes more clearly. Just for fun, I am going to put away these ideas you mentioned today, and at the end of the year we will talk about the things we have done. At that time we will discuss these ideas again and compare them with the ones you have told me today. In this way, we can see if you have grown in your understanding and in your way of thinking.

A Life of Thanksgiving

The fact that we exist means we owe a deep debt of gratitude to many, many things. No individual lives solitarily. Hence, we must all live a thankful life. To live a life of thankfulness is the way of life set forth by St. Shinran. To live a life of thankfulness is to live by striving to repay the debt of gratitude we owe.

A life of thankfulness is the just and moral way of life. To be thankful to everything for our existence will enable us to live without inflicting harm or injury to others, without abuse or slander, or without discrimination.

KINDNESS TO SURROUNDINGS

Objective:

To have the students show kindness to their surroundings.

Materials:

Paper bags or garbage bags

Activities:

Begin with a group discussion.

What do you do if you have a candy wrapper? Coke can? Gum?

Gum wrappers? Popsicle wrappers? Sticks?

What if you were at a place where there were no trash cans?

What would you do with your wrapper or old cans?

What do you think would happen if no one put their litter in a trash can?

Today we are going to go outside and pick up trash around the Temple

After trash is collected, follow up lesson by discussing why it is important to keep the Temple yard and other places clean.

KINDNESS TO FELLOW LIVING BEINGS

Objective:

To have the students show kindness to fellow living beings.

Materials:

Pictures of living and non-living things

old magazines

paste

art paper

writing paper

pencils

plants

Activities:

Show pictures of living and non-living things. Have students identify if they are living or non-living (pets, rocks, flowers, cans, plants, fish, etc.) Then begin discussion.

What are the needs of animals that are the same as human beings?

Do any of you have a pet at home?

What are the needs of your pet?

Do any of you have plants at home?

Do the plants have needs?

What are their needs?

Students can participate in a writing activity “How I am Kind to Animals” or “How I am Kind to Plants”

or

Students can make a collage of living beings by cutting out pictures from old magazines.

End of lesson—give each child a plant to take home and care for.

LESSON ON KINDNESS**Objective:**

To have the students define and show kindness.

Materials:

Pictures illustrating acts of kindness

coloring pictures

art paper

crayons

Activities:

Begin with a group discussion.

What is kindness?

How can you show kindness?

When was somebody kind to you?

How did you feel?

When were you kind to somebody else?

How did that make you feel?

Can you say something kind about the person next to you?

Can you do something kind for the person next to you?

Show pictures and have students interpret what is happening in the picture. Have students decide why the picture demonstrates a kind act.

Another activity to show kindness to family: have students keep track of times they said or did something kind to a member of their family by making a Reminder Chart.

Each time a kind word is said or kind deed is done, color a square.

Gratitude To Our Minister

A. Objectives:

To help children:

1. Respect the minister as a representative of the church
2. Understand the minister's relation to the children and his work

B. Information for the teacher:

The minister is the representative of our temple and he is the individual who interprets and explains to us the teachings of the Buddha. The minister tells us stories so that we can understand the way to be happy Buddhist children.

We should address all ministers as Reverend _____., or if we don't know his name, call him Sensei.

C. Activities:

1. Discuss with children how the minister help us. The minister:
 - a. Tells us stories to explain Buddha's teachings.
 - b. Visits people when they are ill.
 - c. Comforts us when we lose someone dear to us.
 - d. Joins our family when we have a memorial service.
2. What should we do to show our gratitude to the minister?
 - a. Remember to greet him and always show politeness in his presence.
 - b. Listen quietly to his stories.
 - c. Try to practice the things which will make us better Buddhist children.

Friendship

TEACHER:

Introduction:

The rule of friendship means there should be mutual sympathy, each supplying what the other lacks and trying to benefit each other, always using friendly and sincere words. If one has a friend he should protect him from falling into evil ways; he should protect

his property and wealth; should help him in his troubles; if he has misfortune, give him a helping hand; even help support his family if necessary. In this way friendship will be conserved and friends will be increasingly happy together.

A true friend, the one with whom a man may safely associate, will always advise sticking closely to the right way; will worry secretly about his friend's welfare; will console him in misfortune; will offer him a helping hand when he needs it; and will always give him good advice. It is very hard to find a friend like this, but one should try very hard to be a friend like this. As the sun warms the fruitful earth, so a good friend stimulates a man.

Friendship

There is a lovely word in our English language full of meaning, and beauty...

It is the word.....FRIEND.....

A friend is one whom we like...one we choose above the others to share our thoughts, words and actions. We have one person with whom we best like to go places, to laugh with and to share our secrets, joys and troubles. A friend is one we admire because of certain things he or she may think, say or do.

Where do we find our friends? The best places to find friends are from among our neighbors, schoolmates, Camp Fire or Scout troops and most especially from among our Dharma School members.

One of the nicest things in the world is to have a true and lasting friend.

A true friend is one who never, never tells another something we have confided in him. He is one who does not scold us when we have made mistakes...yet does not encourage us to make more mistakes. He does not laugh at us when we are shamed...nor hurt us with unkind words. Most especially, a true friend does not desert us when trouble arises.

The smartest student in the class, the prettiest girl, the handsomest boy, the best dressed youth, the school's baseball star or fastest talker, often seem to have a great many friends. Often times when someone grows suddenly rich or famous, they are surprised to find themselves SUDDENLY popular. Then should they lose this money or fame, the friends soon disappear into thin air. This is not true friendship.

Once there was a beautiful girl. Every day, going and coming, she was surrounded by a large group of girls. They copied her way of speaking, her hair style, the way she laughed and so on. If this girl did not like a certain person or thing, the others blindly followed. What the girl chose to like, they liked also. One morning, the girl did not leave her door for school. Instead, she groaned in the hospital with bad burns about the face and arms. It was months before she was able to return to school. Now, her beauty was gone. One former friend after another whispered, "Oh, I still like her, but golly, I just can't stand to look at those awful scars." This girl, once so beautiful, learned the bitter lesson, as she walked alone each day.

There is one thing friends often forget. While they are ever quick to whisper troubles or gossip to their friends, they completely forget to repeat the beautiful stories heard, the interesting bits learned here and there or the wonderful things they saw. Lord Buddha wants us to help our friends...not by scolding, or acting shocked, or by preaching or being bossy...but by gently and quietly encouraging them to think, speak and act in a loving manner.

Two little friends can do much good in the world. They can be patient and loyal to one another, thereby bringing joy into their district. Together, they can do good deeds. If you NOW have a good friend, be very thankful. Look about you. See that boy or girl who is always alone, and without a true friend. Be helpful to him. Find a friend for him to enjoy.

To be a true, loyal, helpful and sympathetic friend is to climb the ladder to Nirvana, bit by bit. If you can be true, loyal, helpful and sympathetic to one friend...you will, before long, have many friends. Friends are to share, not to keep greedily to ourselves. If we are true friends, we need never to fear to lose the ones we like to call our friends. If we act in a right and loving way, we will gain at least one new friend a year.

Gratitude To Our Friends

A. Objectives:

To help children:

1. Understand that Amida Buddha is a friend to all
2. Be aware of the qualities that one looks for in a friend
3. Be a good friend by making oneself a better person

Information for the teacher

Everyone needs a friend. There are some people who have many friends. Others have a few friends. A person who has no friend is a lonely person.

What are the qualities that one looks for a friend? Is it a material thing—because he always has seeds or candy after school, because he has lots of toys, or he has nice clothes, etc.—or is it a personal quality in their personality that is attractive to us?

One comforting thought to those who feel that they have no friends at all. Amida Buddha is a friend who loves you unconditionally.

B. Discussion:

1. Do you have a special friend?
2. Why do you like him? (on chalk board or on an experiment chart list reasons given by children).
 - a. Fair play
 - b. Good sport
 - c. Shares things
 - d. Does not boast
 - e. Respects people's property
 - f. Does not tease
 - g. Thoughtful and considerate
3. Be a good example and don't expect only other people to have the good qualities. In other words, follow the rule—"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

C. Activities (Select appropriate activities)

Pass our duplicated sheets of the following:

I like my friends because

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I want to be a good friend. I want to make myself better in these ways:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

We are thankful for our friends. We are especially thankful that Amida Buddha is our friend and loves us just as we are.

TEACHER:

A family is a place where a mind lives with other minds. If these minds love each other, the home will be as beautiful as a flower garden. But if these minds get out of harmony with each other, it is like a storm that plays havoc with a garden. If discord arises within one's family, one should not blame others but should examine his own mind and deeds respecting his parents' wisdom. Buddha's providence abides in the home where the parents are held in respect. Indeed, the parents are Buddha's providence.

A chart for the classroom to be used during the study of gratitude to parents.

Father's love extends higher than the highest mountain.

Mother's love reaches deeper than the deepest sea.

A Mother's Love For Her Children

TEACHER:

Introduction:

Whether children are aware of it or not, all mothers, be it animal or human, have a great love for their children. This love for their children is shown in many ways.

Observe how the mother cares for her young with love, gentleness and protective concern.

A mother's love for her children is great, but Amida Buddha's love is greater than this. Amida Buddha's love includes **all** living things, and his Compassion and Wisdom reaches out to all of us at all times.

Materials:

If possible, plan an excursion to visit baby animals on the farm or at a home.

If this is not possible, arrange to have an animal and her litter come visit the classroom. Have available food and appropriate shelter for the animals.

A larger wall chart to be completed by the children (see next page).

5 inch diameter circles for their drawings.

STUDENTS:

Observe how the mother cares for her family.

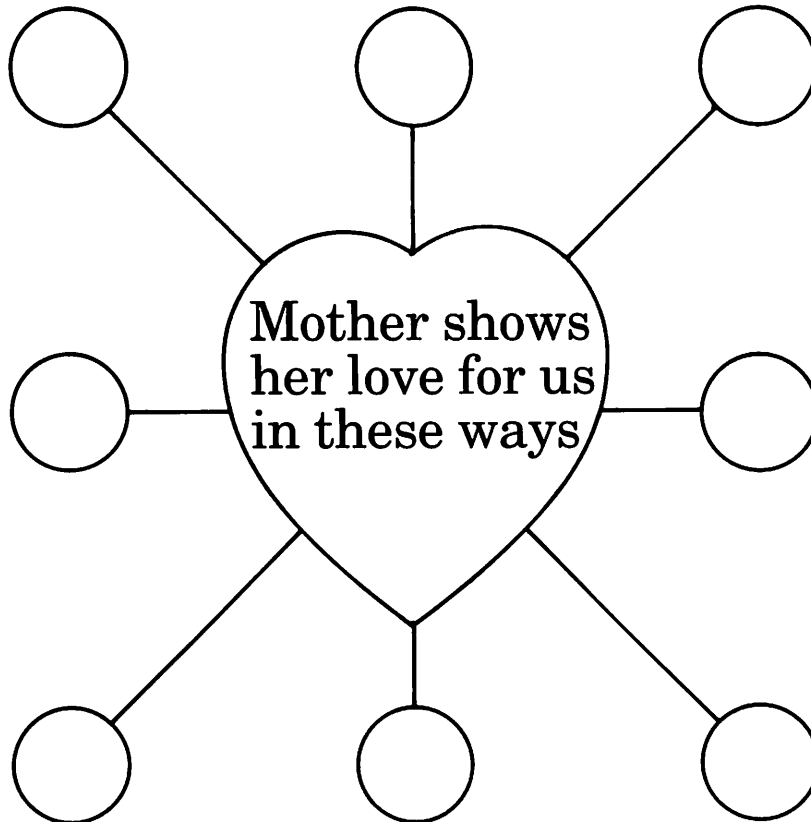
Discuss with the children their experiences in observing other animal families.

Discuss the many ways their own mothers care for them:

1. Cares for them when they are ill.
2. Concern for them when they are sad or unhappy.
3. Sharing the children's happiness.
4. Helping them in time of need.
5. Providing food for them.
6. Teaching them to be good children, etc.

Have children choose one idea after the discussion and draw their idea on the round paper.

When the drawings have been completed, have the children come up one at a time to tell the class about their picture and paste it on the chart.



Gratitude To Father

A. Objective:

1. To help children understand their fathers' role as moral and ethical guide.
2. To have children be grateful for their fathers' love and care.
3. To guide children in expressing their gratitude to their fathers in words and deeds.

B. Information to the teacher:

What is father's place in the family for the children? Father gives them strength, security and love. He is the provider for the family. He tries to give not only material things, such as food, clothing, shelter, money for recreation and comfort, but also education, moral and ethical guidance, that will help his children to grow up to be wise individuals and good members of society. With mother he works hard to achieve this goal. Like mother, he does countless things for his children, not just because it is expected of him, but because he loves and understands his children.

What can children do to express their gratitude to their father? The children should come to recognize their father's love and care; they should try to express their gratitude in words and deeds.

C. Activities:

Read a story or make up a story

1. Prepare an experience chart or write on chalkboard: Write suggestions given by the children.

I can make my father happy by doing these things:

I will mind him.

I can run errands for him.

I can bring tools for him when he is fixing the lawn mower.

I can help him wash the car.

2. Have the children select one thing from the chart or of their own plan that they will do during the week to show gratitude to their father.
3. At the next Dharma school class, go over the experience chart. The children can review it by reading it and by reporting on what they did for father during the week.

Gratitude To Father

TEACHER:

Introduction:

Just as mother gives us tenderness, care and love, father gives us strength, security and love.

Father is the provider for the family. It is his wish to give his family all the things that he is able, and that his family should not be in want. This does not mean just the material things, but all the things that will help us to grow up to be mature and responsible people. This is the hope of both the mother and the father.

A father may be a dentist, a gardener, a mechanic, a farmer or a teacher. Regardless of what your father's work may be, he does his job in the best way he knows.

STUDENTS:

Activity:

Discuss with the children all the things their fathers do for them:

- Provides shelter, food, etc.
- Provides for our education
- Gives us encouragement and guidance
- Gives us love and understanding

Ways in which we can help father:

- Being obedient
- Taking good care of what we have received
- Helping him at home the best we can

Can make a chart similar to the one for the mother.

Gratitude To Our Home

A. Objectives:

To help children:

1. Develop and express gratitude for their home
2. Explore ways of making the home a comfortable, pleasant, and secure place to live

B. Information for the teacher:

All animals require a home of one sort or another.

1. Some animals homes are self-constructed.
 - a. Beavers make beaver "dams".
 - b. Birds make nests.
 - c. Prairie Dogs make "tunnels".
2. Some animals search for suitable habitat to call their homes.
 - a. Bears and bats occupy caves.
 - b. Raccoons look for hollow logs.
 - c. Hermit crabs dwell in shells of others sea animals.
3. Some animals depend on human beings to furnish their homes.
 - a. Farm Animals
 - b. Zoo Animals
 - c. Circus Animals

Our homes differ widely in terms of size, age, color, number of rooms, material used, location in relation to the temple, furnishings, members of the family, and the like but basically they all serve the same purpose.

1. Homes offer shelter from heat, chill, rain, wind, dust, snow, etc.
2. It is where we eat, sleep, keep our possessions.
3. The family lives here. Each member of the family identifies himself with the family by working together, caring for one another, participating in leisure time activities, etc.

We should show or express our feeling of gratitude by:

1. Keeping our homes neat and clean. The Obutsudan should never be neglected.
2. Taking good care of family possessions.
3. Cooperating with the members of the family in trying to make the home a secure, comfortable, and pleasant place to live.

C. Activities:

Make a map to show our home in relation to the temple.

Draw pictures of our home.

Cut out pictures of animal homes and people's homes from old magazines.

D. Materials:

1. Art Supplies
 - Crayons
 - Manila drawing papers
 - Pairs of scissors

Gratitude To Relatives

A. Objectives:

To help children:

1. Know who the family members and relatives are.
 - a. Father, Mother
 - b. Brothers, Sisters
 - c. Grandparents
 - d. Aunts, Uncles
 - e. Cousins
 - f. Nieces, Nephews and others
2. Appreciate the role of relatives
3. Realize ways of expressing gratitude to relatives

B. Information for the teacher:

1. Introductory questions
 - a. Do we know who our relatives are?
When does a person become a grandparent or an aunt?
 - b. How many relatives do you have?
Where do they live?
2. Why should we feel grateful to our relatives?
 - a. They enrich our lives with their companionship.
 - b. Relatives are part of the family.
 - c. They help us in time of need.

3. How can we express our gratitude to them?
 - a. Respect and love our relatives.
 - b. Help whenever there is a need.
 - c. Have family get-together.
 - d. Honor Grandmother on Grandmother's Day in October.

C. Activities (Select appropriate activities)

Class Discussion

- a. Who are our relatives?
- b. Give each child an opportunity to tell the class something about his relatives.
- c. Why should we feel grateful to our relatives?
- d. How can we express our gratitude to them?

Art Activities

- a. Make a family tree.
- b. Draw pictures of favorite relatives.

The Four Gratitudes

**WE ARE THANKFUL TO OUR PARENTS FOR
THEIR LOVING CARE FOR US.**

**WE ARE THANKFUL TO OUR FRIENDS AND ALL
OTHER LIFE FOR THEIR HELP IN PROVIDING
FOR OUR WELL BEING.**

**WE ARE THANKFUL TO OUR COUNTRY FOR ITS
BELIEF IN FREEDOM FOR ALL PEOPLES.**

**WE ARE THANKFUL TO THE THREE TREASURES
FOR SHOWING US THE WAY TO BE BORN INTO
AMIDA'S PURE LAND.**

NAMU AMIDA BUTSU

The Four Gratitudes

Objective:

To relate a student's possession (such as a pair of shoes) to the Four Gratitudes

Materials:

Blackboard/Butcher Paper

Approach:

Ask the students to trace the processes and means that their shoes must go through before the student will want to wear them as acceptable shoes.

Presentation:

Guide the discussion so that the students will include the four gratitudes. This can be done by asking specific questions (examples below).

Use the blackboard/butcher paper to list the important points brought out during the discussion.

Example:

Question: "Those are good looking shoes you are wearing today! Where did you get them?"

Probable Answer: "At the store," "My mom got them," or "My dad got them."

Question: "Where do you suppose the store got them?"

Probable Answer: "From the factory, shipped by truck, airplane..."

(The discussion could be expanded to cover friends, community and country. List the important points on the blackboard.)

Question: "Do you think Buddha had anything to do with these shoes?"

Answer: Students will probably need help here. You can relate the interdependence of the parents, shoe store, factory, machinery, cattleman, animal kingdom and the teachings of harmony, togetherness, and oneness.

Impression:

This is a good lesson to stimulate student participation. Students forget about themselves. They get involved in thinking. The answers are very original and surprising to the teacher sometimes.

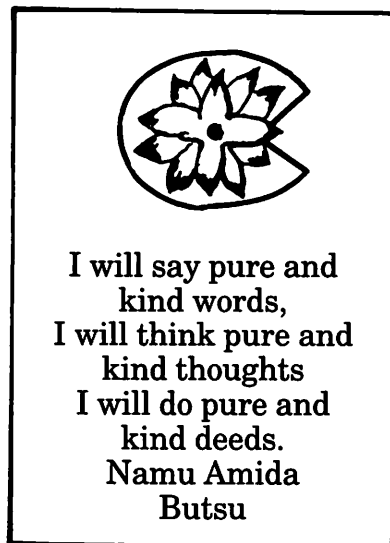
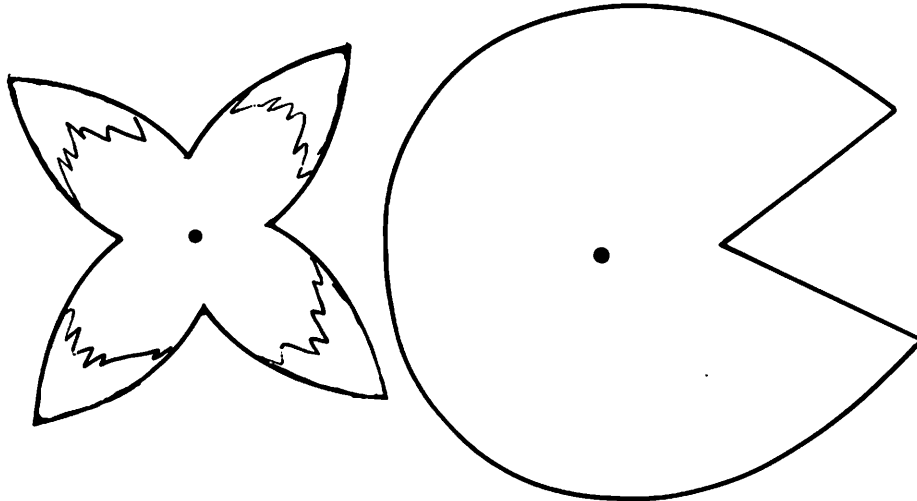
Four Gratitude Activities

I. Materials:

Colored construction paper for flower, leaf
crayon or colored pencil to accent flower petals.
scissors
brass paper fastener
oaktag paper (approx. size—6"x9")

II. Procedure:

1. Trace and cut three flowers and a leaf.
2. color ends of water lily petal with crayon or colored pencil for an attractive finish.
3. Secure cut outs on backing with brass paper fastener.
4. Have the children write a pledge on the card.



5. Adopt this project by having children write 4 gratitudes on each petal of top layer.

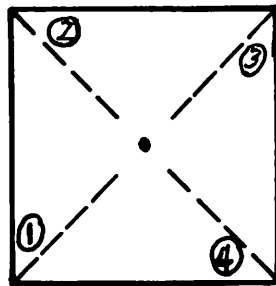
The Four Gratitudes Pinwheel

Materials:

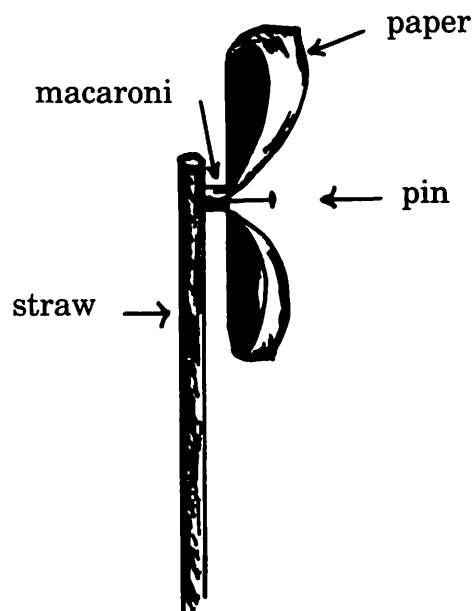
White Construction Paper (Square cut)
Long Stick
Macaroni
Pin
Scissors
Crayons or felt tip pens

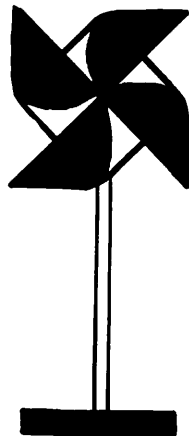
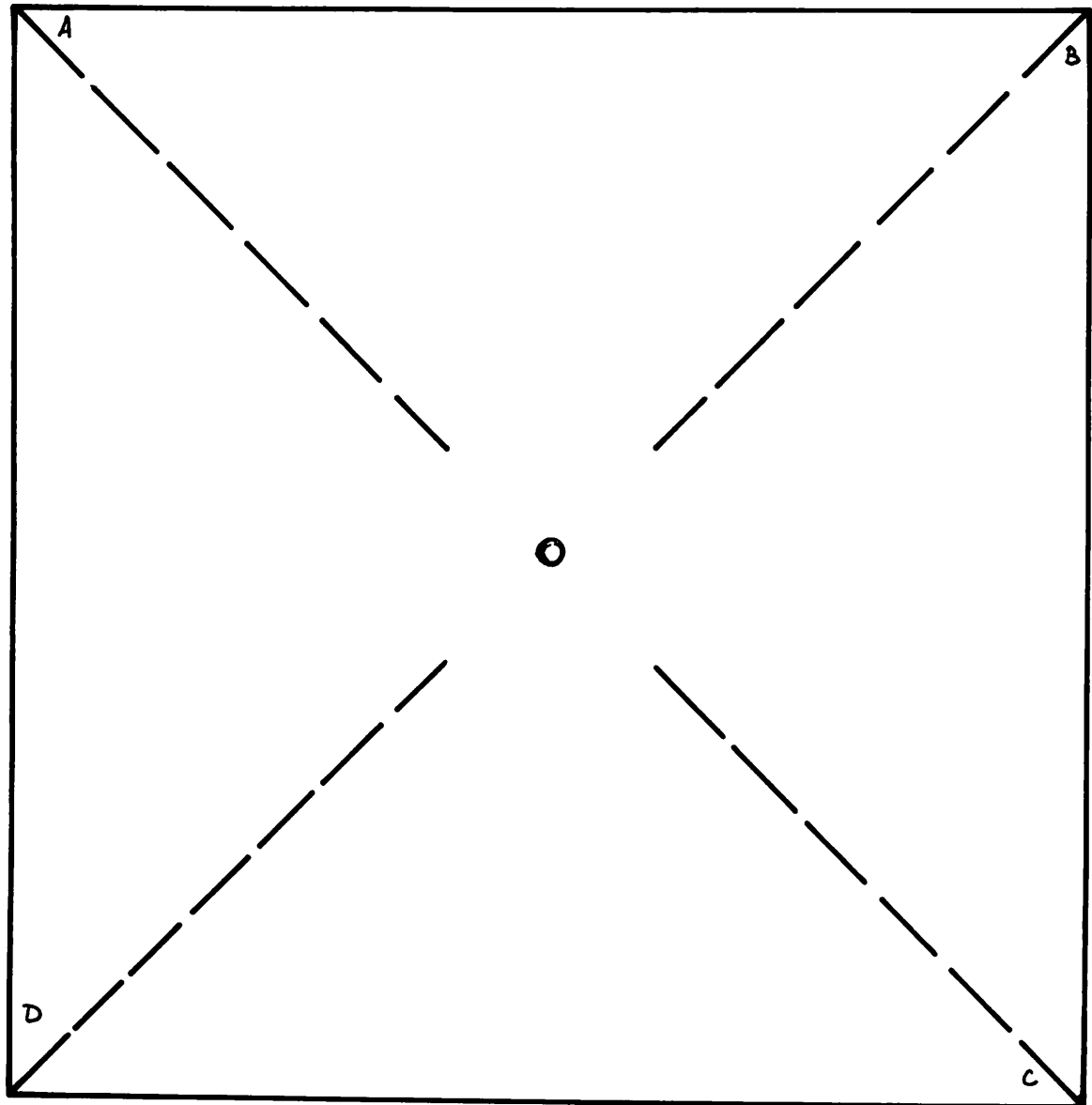
Procedure:

1. Cut paper diagonally from each corner.



2. Write the four gratitudes on it (1, 2, 3, 4).
Make sure the words are written on the same side so that the direction will be the same when the pin wheel is put together.
3. Fold corners at paper to center; secure on straw with pin and macaroni.
You should be able to see the four gratitudes.





Cut along diagonal lines
Gather lettered corners and
staple
Pierce with pin and place
straw between the pin wheel
and the stick
Mount the stick on stand.

The Four Gratitudes Potato Printing

Materials:

1. Potato (carve surfaces of potato with pictures of the gratitudes before class).
2. Paints or inks.
3. Paper
4. Newspaper
5. Padding (absorbent cloth, cotton, or paper towel).
6. Plate or bottle covers.

Procedure:

1. Spread newspaper on table.
2. Prepare inking pad by pouring paint on soft cloth or cotton until saturated.
3. Press potato on pad then onto the paper. Repeat process.

	The Four Gratitudes
We are grateful for:	
Our Parents	
All Living Things	
Our Country	
The Three Treasures	

Gratitude To Mother Pin Cushion

Materials:

1. Styrofoam ball—cut in half
2. Red corduroy material
3. Bottle cover
4. Cardboard
5. Gold braid trimming
6. Glue
7. Scissors
8. Thread and needle

Procedure:

1. Cut a circle from scrap of corduroy. The diameter of the fabric should be larger than the diameter of the styrofoam base.
2. Sew edge of corduroy with running stitches. Place over styrofoam, pull thread to create gather in fabric. Tie thread securely.
3. Trace the perimeter of the bottle cover on a piece of cardboard. This will be glued to the bottom of the bottle cover.
4. Place the covered styrofoam ball in the cover.
5. Glue gold braid trimming along the sides of the cover to make the craftwork an attractive one.

Gratitude To Father Pencil Holder

Materials:

1. Pages from magazine—colored illustrations preferred
2. Scissors
3. Glue
4. Knitting needle
5. Soup can
6. Pipe cleaners

Procedure:

1. Cut magazine pages into 5" x 5" squares.
2. Roll paper squares around knitting needle. Secure with glue.
3. Glue rolls on sides of the soup can.
4. Put little loops of pipe cleaners on the edge for an attractive finishing touch.

Gratitude To Parents

After explaining and discussing gratitude to mother and father, ask children to draw two pictures and show us the various things that their parents do for them.

Sometimes, the mother is doing household chores or doing things exclusively for the child. Example of a student's work—Her father was taking her to see a movie or the mother was repairing a broken toy.

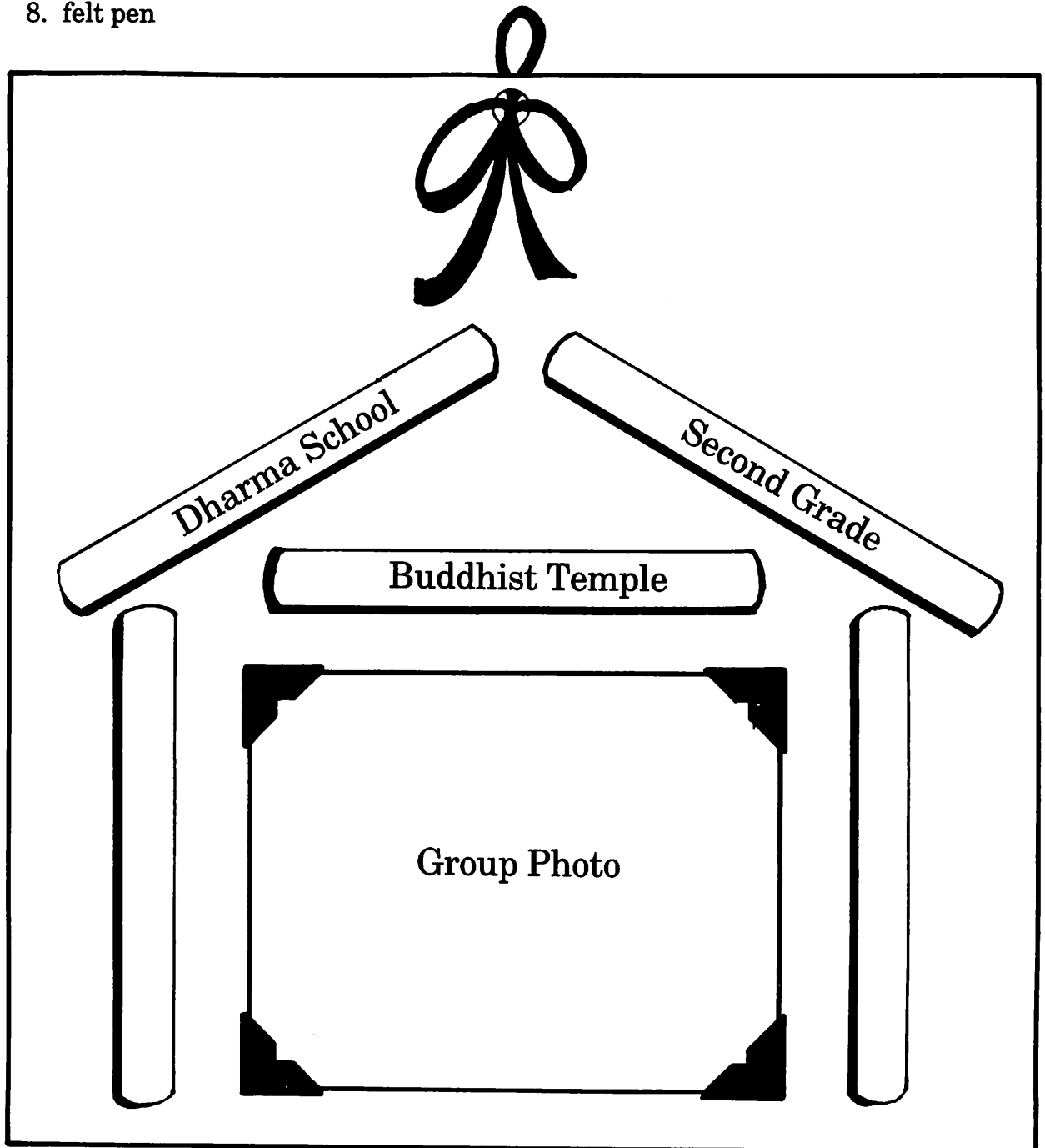
The imagination of the student can be interestingly expressed.

Class Photo

Annual project to end Dharma school year as a gift of gratitude to parents.

Materials:

1. Group photo of whole class in front of temple
2. five popsicle sticks
3. construction paper, light and purple
4. piece of yarn
5. two toothpicks
6. mounting corners for photographs
7. hole puncher
8. felt pen



Flower Vase

A. Materials:

1. Jar (a soft drink bottle makes an excellent bud vase).
2. Colored tissue paper (example: apple green, yellow, orange).
3. White Elmer's glue.
4. Water
5. Shallow dish to mix glue.
6. Shellac

B. Procedure:

1. Mix equal portions of glue and water in a shallow dish.
2. Choose a shape which you would like to work with (example—round, square, oblong, rectangle, etc.). You might also consider colors which seem to go well together.
3. Tear tissue paper into shape chosen. The frayed edges of the paper makes gluing easier.
4. Let layers of tissue dry thoroughly. Shellac jar.

Hand Print (In plaster of Paris)

The hand represents “Gassho.” It is a gift to their parent on Parent’s Day. It is the children’s way or means of saying “Thank You.”

A. Aim:

1. Express gratitude to mother.
2. Learn the Buddhistic way of expressing gratitude to Buddha-Dharma.

B. Interest, Appeal:

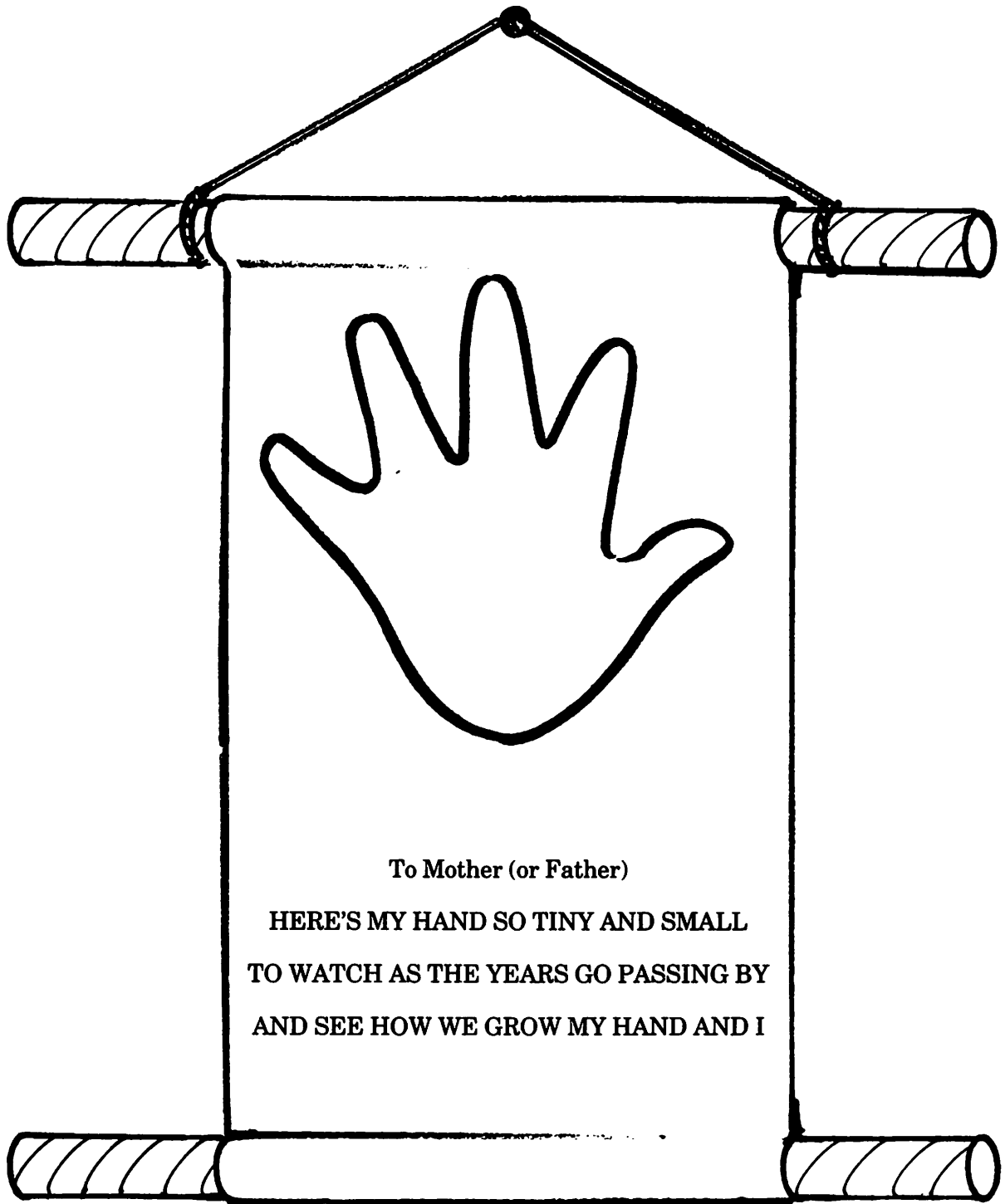
1. Involvement in making handprints with plaster of paris.

C. Materials:

1. Pie pan (disposable foil preferable).
2. Plaster of paris
3. Large can or old bowl to mix plaster in
4. Water
5. Lots of newspaper
6. Beads or broken juzu
7. Yarn to make tassel of juzu
8. Scissors
9. Candle
10. Apron or father’s old shirt to keep the child clean.

D. Steps:

1. Spread newspaper on working area. Have child wear apron.
2. Read directions on using plaster of paris and mix accordingly.
CAUTION: Avoid rinsing hands, bowl, etc. in the sink. The plaster will harden in the pipe and cake it up, becoming difficult to remove. Sunday school teachers are advised to carry out activity outdoors.
3. Pour into pie pan. Have child make impression of hand. Draw a **slight** line for the juzu. Place beads on line. The child may write a significant word or phrase on plaster.
4. After plaster has dried, etch the name of child, date, and age. As the child matures, he can see the changes he is undergoing by comparing the size of his hand each year.



SCROLL: (6" x 12")

Use construction paper and two straws (striped ones preferable).

Have children draw their own hands.

Type the poem on a paper so each child can paste on the construction paper.

Have the yarn already tied on one of the straws as it is hard for the children to do this.

Memo Pad

Aim:

Making a memo pad for your parents is a way of expressing gratitude to parents. Parents can hang it up in the kitchen near the phone to write messages on or to use in writing shopping lists or for whatever purpose they find.

Materials:

- poster paper
- string
- scotch tape
- small memo pad (@ 5¢)
- yarn
- stapler
- small pencil
- glue

Introduction:

At the beginning of the lesson, discuss with the children reasons for gratitude to our parents. Ask, "What are some of the things parents do for us?" We come up with such answers as "They take care of us when we are sick, they iron, clean and cook for us, etc."

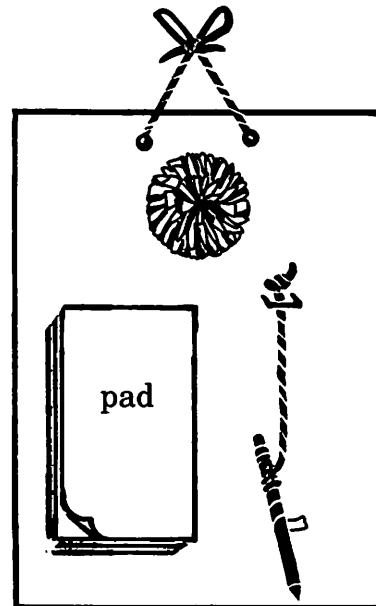
Suggest that since Mother's Day or Father's Day is coming up, wouldn't it be nice to make something for parents to show appreciation for all that they have done for us.

Procedure:

The size of the poster paper should be half the size of this paper. If you should make it too large, it will consume a lot of space.

- pompon made from yarn
- knot at end
- staple

- scotch tape
- holding string and pencil together



Conclusion:

At the end of the project, tell children although one day a year is set aside to show our thanks to our parents, we should show our appreciation everyday and willingly help them by doing the dishes, mowing the lawn, washing windows, making our beds, minding them, etc. Ask the children for other ideas as to how we can help them.

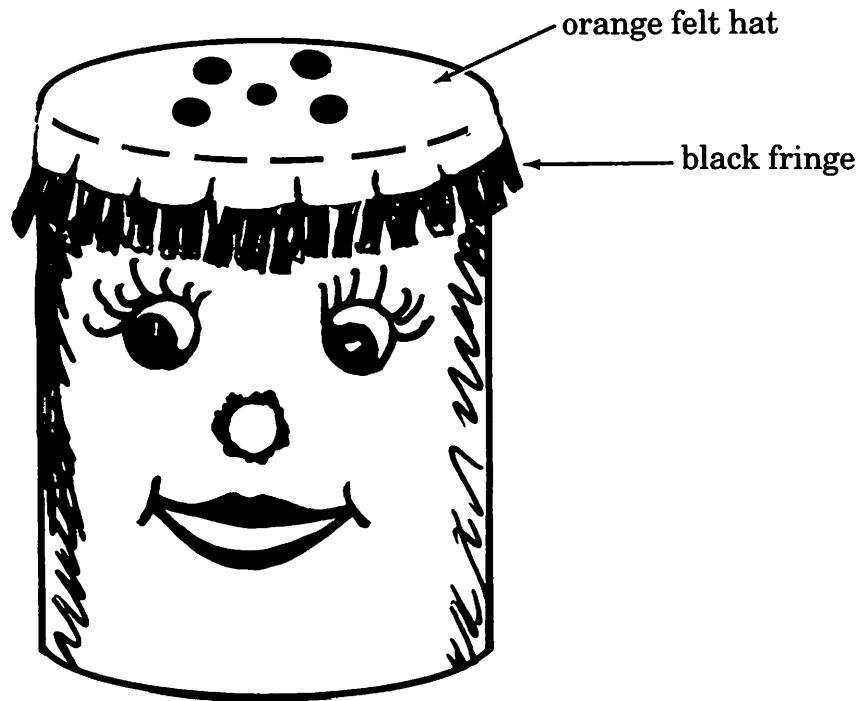
Pencil Holder

A. Materials:

1. soup can
2. contact paper to fit around can (flesh colored)
3. black fringed yarn around top edge of can
4. black fringed balls (for nose)
5. red felt (mouth)
6. eyes may be purchased at a craft shop
7. felt hat with five holes for pencils (plain orange)

B. Procedure:

1. Cut contact paper to fit can. Leave at least 1/2 inch for overlapping.
2. Glue on black yarn around top edge of can. Black fringed decoration may be purchased in the fabric department of the store.
3. Apply facial features.
4. Cut a piece of round felt 1/2 inch larger than the can. Make five holes for pencils. Glue on top of can



Gratitude

(worksheets using large print)

"Thank you," is a universal expression used by all people.

In English, we say "Thank you."

In French, they say, "Merci."

In Spanish, they say "Gracias."

In German, they say "Danke."

In Japanese, they say "Arigato."

In Italian, they say "Grazie."

The words may sound different to our ears, but the feeling of the words is the same. We are expressing a feeling of gratitude for something that is done for us. When we say "thank you," all people are joined in a feeling of thanksgiving. The Buddhist way to say "thank you," is to say the Nembutsu, _____

Thank you is a universal expression used by all peoples.

In English, we say
"_____"

In French, they say
"_____"

In Spanish, they say
"_____"

In German, they say
"_____"

In Japanese, they say
"_____"

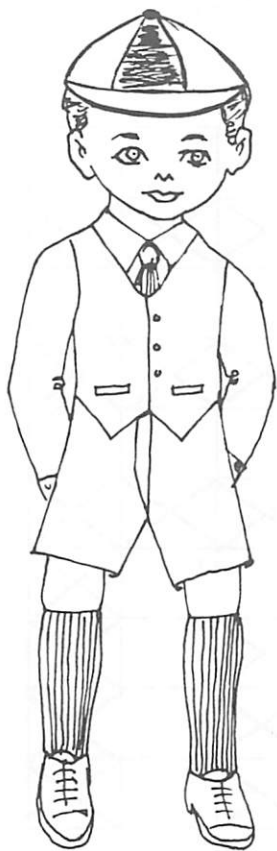
In Italian, they say
"_____"

The words may sound different to our ears, but the feeling of the words is the same. We say, "thank you," whenever someone does something for us. These two simple words, "thank you", join people all over the world in a feeling of thanksgiving.

WORDS TO REMEMBER:

Thank you
Merci
Gracias

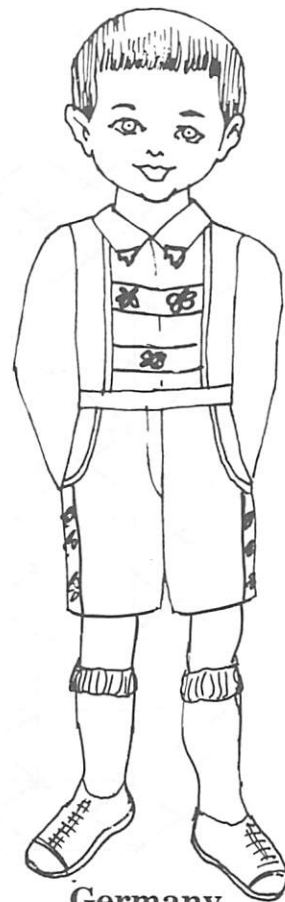
Danke
Arigato
Grazie



England



France



Germany



Spain



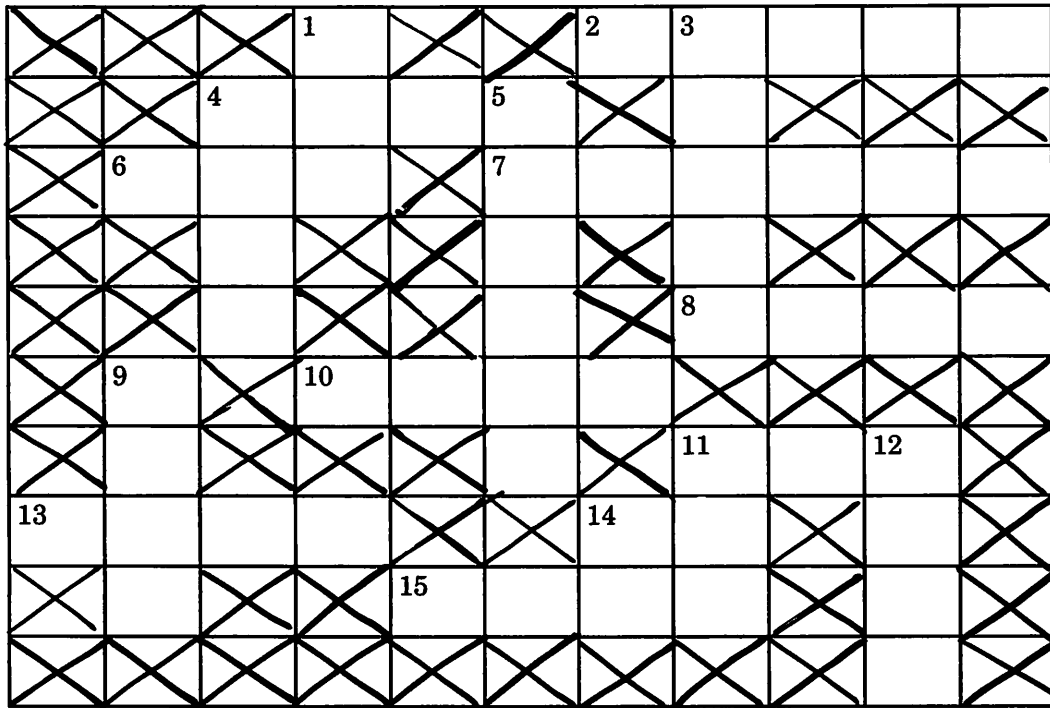
Italy



Japan

Things We Are Thankful For

Crossword Puzzle



DOWN

1. Another name for father.
3. You live in a _____.
4. What you call your cats and dogs.
5. You go to this place to learn every day.
9. Things you play with.
11. An animal that meows.
12. Most of us eat it every day.

ACROSS

2. Something that belongs on your feet.
4. Another name for friends.
6. You sleep on a _____.
7. Where you go every Sunday.
8. What you hear with.
10. You need this to stay healthy and well.
11. Something you ride in.
13. You see with your _____.
14. Real short name for mother.
15. You wear this when it is very cold.

Things We Are Thankful For

Crossword Puzzle

ANSWERS

DOWN

1. dad
3. house
4. pets
5. school
9. toys
11. cat
12. rice

ACROSS

2. shoes
4. pals
6. bed
7. church
8. ears
10. food
11. car
13. eyes
14. ma
15. coat

Gratitude To Nature

A. Aim:

To feel gratitude to nature through construction of a mural.

B. Interest, Appeal:

Working together as a group.

C. Materials:

1. Pencil or chalk
2. Crayon
3. Origami Paper
4. Long white sheet

D. Procedure:

1. Discuss countryside with the children. How is it different from the city?
What do we find there? It's important that the children develop some background on any project that they undertake.
2. Ask students to draw a scene of the country.
3. Using origami paper, ask them to make birds, flowers, etc. Paper folding activities should be very simple because second graders are not mature enough to be well-coordinated.
4. Glue origami to mural.

Gratitude To Things Around Us

I AM THANKFUL

TO THE TREE

TO PLANTS AND FLOWERS

TO INSECTS AND LITTLE CREATURES

TO THE CLOUDS

TO THE SUN

TO THE RAIN

TO THE MOON

TO THE STARS

TO THE SEASHORE

TO THE MOUNTAINS

ESPECIALLY TO AMIDA BUDDHA

The Tree

TEACHER:

Introduction:

We never think of trees very much, or say “thank you,” to them. Sometimes we should stop to consider all the ways in which we are indebted to a tree. Besides the general purpose of comfort and pleasure, there are numerous ways in which a tree serves mankind; e.g. lumber for our homes and temples, furniture for our rooms, paper for our books, magazines, newspapers, etc.

If we stop to think about it, we will find that practically everything in this world helps us in some way, and so we should remember to give thanks to them.

Materials:

Flannelboard
Figures for the story
The workbook page
Crayons

STUDENTS:

Discuss the story with the children.

Can you remember all the ways that the tree helped those around it?
Can you tell us a few ways that a tree has helped you?

Have the children draw in as many things as they can remember of the things that were helped by the tree.

RESOURCE:

The Giving Tree - By Shel Silverstein

The Tree

Every day when the sun rose in the morning, it looked down on a large, old tree in a meadow. The sun could see the tree offering itself to many people and animals all through the year.

In the spring, the birds came to build their nests and raise their families. The bees and the butterflies came to gather the honey from the sweet-smelling blossoms. The farmer's children came to admire the beautiful flowers that covered the tree.

When the weather grew warmer, the farmer's children came and built a little swing for the baby on one of the branches. The branches were now covered with shiny, green leaves, and here and there, little baby fruits could be seen. The little wildflowers that liked the shade grew in the cool shadows of the big tree.

On very hot days, the farmer came to rest in the shade of the tree. On Sundays, families from the city came to have their picnics under the shade of the tree. Even animals came to rest in its shade.

When the weather began to get cooler, the squirrels that lived in the tree could be seen busily gathering nuts and bringing them to their home for the winter. The farmer and his children brought large baskets in which to put the fruit that was now ripe, and ready to be picked.

All through the year, the tree offered itself to the people and the animals. They all knew that the tree was there and had helped them during the year and they were all grateful to the big, strong tree.



Amida Buddha's love is like the tree
Everyone finds comfort in Him.

The Giving Tree

PLAY

Story based on a book by Shel Silverstein

Hanamatsuri Program

Open curtain: background scene— outdoor scene

STORY

ONCE THERE WAS A TREE . . .

enter tree to center of stage (mark X for tree)

AND HE LOVED ANIMALS AND EVERYDAY THE ANIMALS WOULD COME

music: enter the animals: rabbit, deer, beaver, skunk, two raccoons gather around the tree and walk in a circle around the tree

AND THE ANIMALS WOULD GATHER HIS LEAVES

Pre-school, k, 1, 2 on stage to be gathered by the animals and directed off stage one by one

AND MAKE THEM INTO CROWNS AND PLAY KING OF THE FOREST

put crowns onto their heads and walk around the tree

THE ANIMALS WOULD CLIMB UP HIS TRUNK

attempt to climb by making climbing motions

AND SWING FROM HIS BRANCHES

swinging motions

AND EAT THE APPLES

the apples enter one by one, pass in front of animals and walk off stage

AND THEY WOULD PLAY GAMES AND SING

pre-school, k, 1, 2, sing _____

AND WHEN THEY WERE TIRED, THEY WOULD SLEEP IN HIS SHADE

sit around tree and sleep

AND THE ANIMALS LOVED THE TREE . . . VERY MUCH

hug the tree

AND THE TREE WAS HAPPY

the tree sways and moves his branches
as the tree is swaying, the animals leave the stage very quietly

BUT TIME WENT BY AND THE ANIMALS GREW OLDER. AND THE TREE WAS
OFTEN ALONE

tree remains very still and then moves one or two branches

THEN ONE DAY THE ANIMALS CAME TO THE TREE AND THE TREE SAID,
'COME ANIMALS, COME AND CLIMB UP MY TRUNK AND SWING FROM MY
BRANCHES AND PLAY AND BE HAPPY'. "WE ARE TOO OLD TO CLIMB AND
PLAY", SAID THE ANIMALS. "WE ARE HUNGRY", CAN YOU GIVE US FOOD?"

give reaching motions

"TAKE MY APPLES," SAID THE TREE. AND SO THE ANIMALS GATHERED HIS
APPLES AND CARRIED THEM AWAY. AND THE TREE WAS HAPPY.

apples come on stage one by one and led off stage by the animals one by one

BUT THE ANIMALS STAYED AWAY FOR A LONG TIME AND THE TREE WAS
SAD. AND THEN ONE DAY THE ANIMALS CAME BACK AND THE TREE SHOOK
WITH JOY.

animals come in slowly, tree shakes

"WE NEED SHELTER", SAID THE ANIMALS. "CAN YOU GIVE US SHELTER?"
"THE FOREST IS MY HOUSE BUT YOU CAN CUT OFF MY BRANCHES AND
BUILD YOUR SHELTER AND THEN YOU WILL BE HAPPY". AND SO THE ANI-
MALS CUT OFF HIS BRANCHES AND CARRIED THEM AWAY TO BUILD THEIR
SHELTER AND THE TREE WAS HAPPY.

cut branches and carry them away one by one

BUT THE ANIMALS STAYED AWAY FOR A LONG TIME. AND WHEN THEY
CAME BACK THE TREE WAS SO HAPPY SHE COULD HARDLY SPEAK. "COME,"
SHE WHISPERED, "COME AND PLAY". "WE ARE TOO OLD AND TOO SAD TO
PLAY," SAID THE ANIMALS. "WE NEED A RAFT TO GET ACROSS THE RIVER
FOR MORE FOOD. CAN YOU GIVE US A RAFT?" "CUT DOWN MY TRUNK AND
MAKE A RAFT," SAID THE TREE. "THEN YOU CAN BE HAPPY". AND SO THEY
CUT DOWN HIS TRUNK TO MAKE A RAFT TO CROSS THE RIVER. AND THE
TREE WAS HAPPY BUT NOT REALLY.

beaver chews off the trunk and raccoons takes it away

AFTER A LONG TIME THE ANIMALS CAME BACK AGAIN. "I AM SORRY," SAID THE TREE, "BUT I HAVE NOTHING LEFT TO GIVE YOU."

animals kneel around the tree

"MY APPLES ARE GONE".

apples walk across stage

"WE ARE TOO OLD AND WEAK FOR APPLES," SAID THE ANIMALS.

"MY BRANCHES ARE GONE," SAID THE TREE, "YOU CANNOT SWING ON THEM".

branches carried across the stage

"WE ARE TOO OLD TO SWING ON BRANCHES," SAID THE ANIMALS.

"MY TRUNK IS GONE," SAID THE TREE.

carry the trunk across the stage

"WE CANNOT CLIMB, WE ARE TOO TIRED TO CLIMB," SAID THE ANIMALS.

"I AM SORRY," SIGHED THE TREE. "I WISH THAT I COULD GIVE YOU SOMETHING . . ."

"BUT I HAVE NOTHING LEFT. I AM JUST AN OLD STUMP. I AM SORRY . . ."

"WE DON'T NEED VERY MUCH NOW," SAID THE ANIMALS.

"JUST A QUIET PLACE TO SIT AND REST."

"WE ARE VERY TIRED."

"WELL," SAID THE TREE

"WELL, AN OLD STUMP IS GOOD FOR SITTING AND RESTING."

"COME, SIT DOWN."

"SIT DOWN AND REST."

AND THEY DID.

AND THE TREE WAS HAPPY.

close the curtains very slowly
music

Gratitude To All Living Things

A. Aim:

1. To learn about the interdependency of different elements (sun, water, love, etc.) for growth.
2. To learn to nurture and to give a plant proper care.

B. Interest, Appeal:

Observing gradual growth of plant and the effects certain factors may have on it.

C. Materials:

1. A package of bean seeds.
2. Empty tin cans with holes on bottom to permit proper drainage.
3. Soil
4. Water
5. Chart

D. Procedure:

1. Have children discuss aspects of growth in relation to love and physical growth.
2. Then have each child plant a seed. Discuss ways of taking care of plant properly. Encourage children to care for plants and to record the daily growth on individual charts.

example:

Day	Inches	Description
1		
2		
3		
4		

3. Option for teacher: Raise three plants for a controlled experiment. This will enable the children to compare the differences in growth.

example:

plant #1	sunlight, no water
plant #2	no sunlight, water
plant #3	no sunlight, no water

E. Conclusion:

Have the children compare the differences between the plants which they have grown at home with the three control plants. Have them relate differences to spiritual and physical growth needs. Show that there is interdependence.

example:

no love =	no sunlight, no water
some love =	no sunlight, water
some love =	sunlight, no water
lots of love =	sunlight, water

Poster

The second grade theme is Gratitude. Use Peanut characters because they are well-liked by children. This poster could be shown in classroom the year round.

A. Aim:

1. To show gratitude to the Sangha
2. Have the children identify and learn the names of their classmates at the beginning of the year.

B. Interest and Appeal:

Children enjoy the innocent appeal of Charles Schulz's comic strip. His style of art would be an advantage in the Sunday School classroom.

C. Materials:

1. paper or poster board
2. pencils
3. erasers
4. crayons or colored felt tip markers
5. class pictures (optional)

D. Creating the poster:

Draw caricature of each child in your classroom.

For those seeking an easier method of making a poster, ask each child to bring individual photographs. (Schools often have pictures of the children taken annually.) Cut out the heads and draw a body to match.

The children will probably enjoy identifying themselves with a "new" body.

You can involve the children in the project by having them color the poster. Or, trace the letters for the title and have the children cut and paste them onto the poster.

Be sure to discuss the significance of the poster.

Gratitude To Plants

- I. Prepare the children by discussing the development of plants with the aid of flannel board.

Draw pictures representing the following objects:

1. Seeds
2. Round, yellow circle for the sun.
3. Watering pail
4. Planter
5. Green stems
6. Leaves
7. Pretty flowers
8. Soil

Using the flannel board, discuss with the children how seeds are planted and the importance of sunshine and water in growing a beautiful flower.

II. The second phase of the lesson involves the planting of an actual seed.

The class will need:

1. Seeds (beans)
2. A small plastic container
3. Soil
4. Fertilizer

Plant the seed and encourage the children to care for the plant.

With proper care, the children may see the products of their efforts.

Discuss the necessity of sunshine and water on plants. Then ask the class to list ways in which plants help us.

Gratitude To Our Country

THE TEACHING OF BUDDHA

TEACHER:

Introduction:

We live in a democratic country. We elect the representatives to the Congress who run the country for us. We go to the church of our own belief. We are given the privilege to attend public schools. Above all, we are in a country of justice, liberty, and equality for all. That's why we like to live in our country. How glad we are.

How can we always keep our country the best place to live? Our country's strength lies in the character of its people, in our willingness to sacrifice leisure, comfort, and a share of our talents for the welfare of our country of which we are a part. We have to realize we have obligations as well as privileges. A democratic country is our own making, and does not come to us free. We must earn our way in the democratic way of life. We cannot look to our government purely for its benefits and deny it our obligations.

This means each one of us must be a good citizen. Good citizens under democratic government spring from an appreciation of the great values of our institutions, (Democracy, churches, schools, communities, families, etc.) and from active participation in them. We cannot claim freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom of worship and freedom of speech unless we are ready to share them with every other person in this country. We must be willing and ready to defend these freedoms in case they are in peril.

Gratitude To Our Country For Religious Freedom

TEACHER:

Introduction:

One of the principles upon which our country was founded is the separation of religion from the government. Because we enjoy religious freedom, we are able to attend the Buddhist Church and learn about Buddha's teachings.

We can learn about the freedoms our forefathers established and express our appreciation for the privilege of living in a democracy. Freedom involves responsibilities. What are the child's responsibilities in a democracy?

Observing rules
Not belittling other religions and racial groups
Respecting property and ideas of others, etc.

Let's learn about, and make an American flag for the classroom.

Materials:

Making the flag. (see instructions)

Butcher paper, or brown wrapping paper
3 or 4 cardboard stars for a pattern
White construction paper for the cut-out stars
Paste, scissors
Red, white, and blue poster paint
Brushes

Worksheet

STUDENTS:

Activity:

Say the pledge to the flag
Discuss the meaning of the words
Discuss briefly how the flag came into being
Make a flag for the classroom
Complete the worksheet

Note: Comment On "God" In The Pledge To The Flag

This month, all over our great country, we will celebrate the freedom and independence of our land. In colorful ceremonies, many will repeat our PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE....saying....

"I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND TO THE REPUBLIC FOR WHICH IT STANDS. ONE NATION, UNDER GOD, INDIVISIBLE, WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL."

About the words "UNDER GOD"...in this great country, every man is free to see God as he wishes. We are not told that "God" is this or "God" must be that. To us Buddhists, "God" is the supreme, loving, compassionate, power that pervades every corner of the world. This power is AMIDA BUDDHA. And so when we pledge allegiance to our beloved flag, we truly know that it is under the guidance of "God"...or AMIDA BUDDHA, as we prefer to say.

Our Flag

The colors of our flag are _____ , _____ and _____ .

The flag has _____ stars. The flag has _____ stripes;
_____ are white, and _____ are red. The _____
stand for the 50 states. The flag stands for the _____
of _____ .

A Buddhist child always respects and take good care of the flag.
We are thankful to our country for our freedom to attend the
Buddhist Temple.

The Flag

Overall dimensions: 16-1/4 x 24 inches

Blue field: 8-3/4 x 10 inches

Width of stripes: 1-1/4 inches

7 short stripes

4 red

3 red

6 long stripes

3 white

3 red

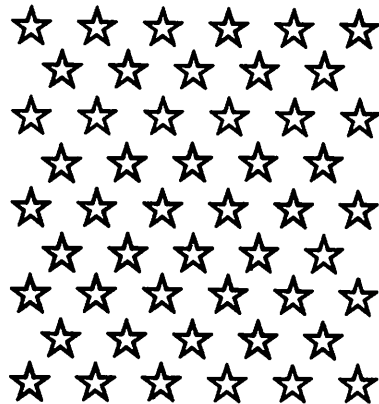
The first and the last stripes are red

Stars on the field:

5 rows of 6 stars

4 rows of 5 stars

First row:



Size of star:



Paint blue field first

Have a group paint the alternating stripes

Have a few children trace the stars on the white paper

Have all the children help in cutting out the stars while the paint is drying

When the blue field is dry, let the children paste on the stars

(Wheat paste mixed with water works the best on painted surface)

Take care that the stars are arranged correctly.

The BUDDHIST FLAG (show samples)

The Three Treasures

I TAKE REFUGE IN BUDDHA

I TAKE REFUGE IN DHARMA

I TAKE REFUGE IN SANGHA

I put my faith in Buddha. This means that you truly trust the Lord Buddha. You love Him even as He loves you. By putting your faith in Lord Buddha, you become a Buddhist child. Many millions of children all over the world daily say....I put my faith in Buddha.

I put my faith in the Dharma. Dharma means teachings. This means that you have faith in the lessons that you learn at Sunday School. You know that they are full of truth and wisdom. You know that these teachings will lead you to happiness. Your mind will grow strong. Your heart will be loving and kind. You will learn to love all people and all creatures. The Dharma will show you how to be brave and not pay any attention to silly superstitions....to think about nice things and never about ugly things. Those who follow the Dharma learn not to speak in an unkind way or to tell untrue stories about yourself or anyone else. The Dharma tells us to be friendly and not to go around looking for trouble. Buddhist children try to help others so that they won't become selfish and want too many things. The teachings of the Buddha show us how to think before we speak and then to think mostly about Lord Buddha and His wonderful teachings. The Dharma shows us how to live in such a way that our life will be a happier one.

I put my faith in the Sangha. Sangha means all of us. This means that we trust one another. We try to be fair and helpful to all those that we meet day after day.

By putting your faith in Buddha....Dharma....and Sangha, you will grow loving and wise. You will be a happy Buddhist child.

The Three Treasures are called the **Tisarana**. In some Buddhist books they are written in the Pali language.

Buddham saranam gacchami
(I take my refuge in Buddha)

Dhamman saranam gacchami
(I take my refuge in Dharma)

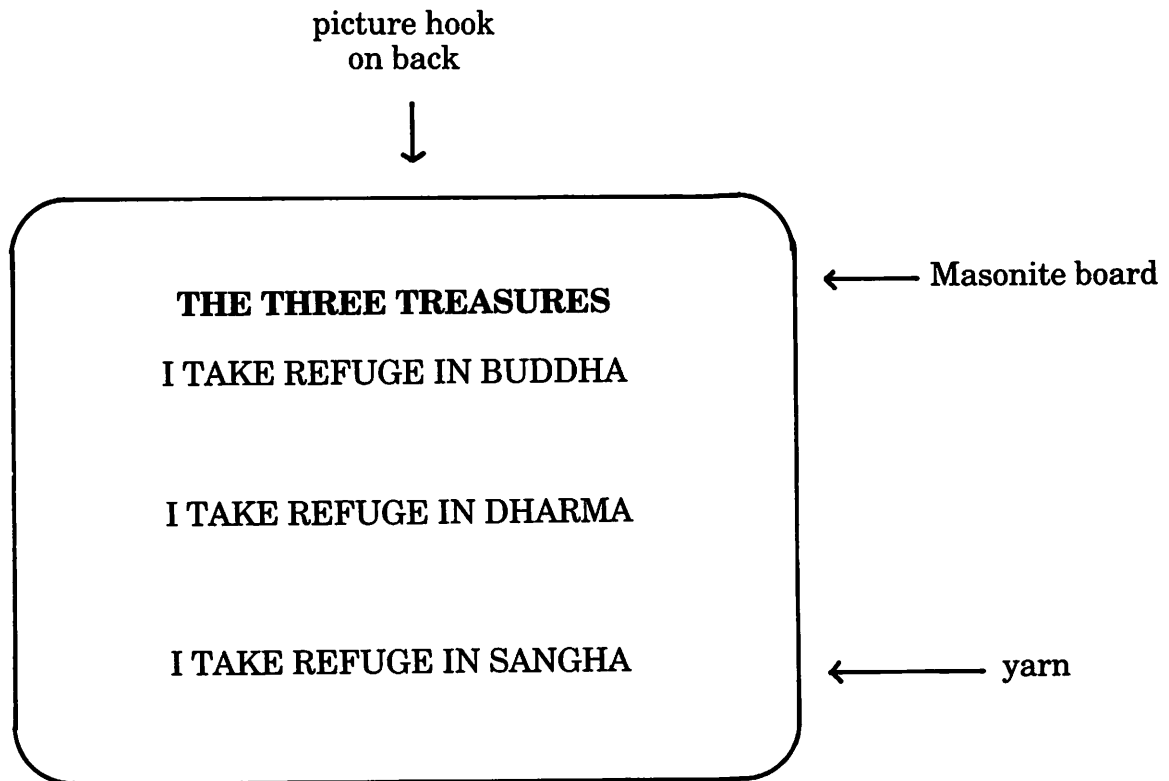
Sangham saranam gacchami
(I take my refuge in Sangha)

Buddhist children recite the Tisarana every day.

Three Treasures

Materials:

1. Masonite boards 4" x 6"
2. Alphabet macaroni
3. White glue
4. Thick yarn
5. Adhesive picture hook
6. Shellac



Procedure:

1. Glue alphabet letters on board.
2. Shellac front side, covering letters and board.
3. Glue yarn to cover rough edges where boards have been cut.
4. Adhere picture hook on back.

The Golden Chain

I am a _____ in Amida's Golden _____ of _____
that stretches around the _____. I will _____ my link _____
and _____.

I will try to be _____ and _____ to every living thing, and
protect all who are _____ than myself.

I will try to think _____ and _____ thoughts, to _____
pure and beautiful words, and to _____ pure and beautiful deeds, knowing
that on what I do now depends not only my _____ or _____ but
also those of others.

May every _____ in Amida's Golden Chain of _____ become
and strong, and may we all _____ Perfect _____.

do
weaker
world
link
happiness
gentle

bright
beautiful
love
peace
keep
pure

kind
unhappiness
chain
weaker
say
attain

Golden Chain

We discuss the meaning of the "Golden Chain" and write it down. We made yellow circles about 1-1/4" to 1-1/2" in diameter. The circles were labeled—one circle had the name of the student and the other, the name of anyone or anything that would make a link in the chain of love. These were passed into a circle and linked together. In the center of the circle, we wrote "We are all a part of Buddha's Golden Chain of Love."

GOLDEN CHAIN



I am a link in Amida Buddha's golden chain of love that stretches around the world. I must keep my link bright and strong.

I will try to be kind and gentle to every living thing,
and protect all who are weaker than myself.

I will try to think pure and beautiful thoughts,
to say pure and beautiful words,
and do pure and beautiful deeds.

May every link in Amida Buddha's golden chain of love
become bright and strong, and may we all attain perfect peace.

Gratitude Toward Amida Buddha

This is a lesson given to a second grade class at the Hongwanji Mission School in Honolulu as part of the religious education class held weekly. About two-thirds of the students are non-Buddhists but we try to make the students become aware of the fact that Amida Buddha is always with us and that we should be grateful to him.

One morning, the school bus was hit in the back by a car and several children were quite shaken up by the accident. Four of the students were rushed to the hospital for observation. Fortunately, no one was severely injured and all were discharged.

I took the opportunity to discuss this with the Mission School children and said that we were truly grateful that no one was seriously injured or had died from the accident. I emphasized that Amida Buddha must have been with the children and must have been their protector. Therefore, we should be thankful to Amida Buddha and say our Nembutsu with hands clasped in Gassho.

This incident brought forth much discussion on the part of the children about various incidents they met with, the need for observing rules in the community and school, and finally, the fact that our classmates mean so much to us. Therefore, we share our joy and happiness with them. This is compassion.

Emphasis was also made that in the Nembutsu we are together. For this we are always grateful.

Amida And I Are One

Collage

Materials:

1. Magazines
2. Scissors
3. Glue
4. Poster board

Procedure:

1. Have children look through magazines and cut out pictures showing various emotions (e.g. compassion, love, sorrow, etc).
2. Paste pictures on a poster board and make collage-type posters.
3. Explain to children that wherever you are and no matter how you feel, Amida Buddha is always with you.

Ojuzu

Aim:

To understand the significance and the various parts of the ojuzu.

Materials:

1. Styrofoam meat container. You may get these 6" x 9" containers from your local grocery store when purchasing meat.
2. Sheet of construction paper.
3. Macaroni: Approximately
 - 10 small salad macaroni
 - 2 big salad macaroni
 - 1 spaghetti
 - 20 shell macaroni
4. Scissors
5. Glue

Introduction:

We try to stress the importance of using our ojuzu and that we should use it everyday.

The children discuss the use of the ojuzu in church and the meaning of the beads and the tassel. We explain that the tassel represents the teachings of the Buddha, the beads represent all of us, and the colored beads stand for Shinran Shonin, Sakyamuni Buddha and Amida.

We then go into the project.

Procedure:

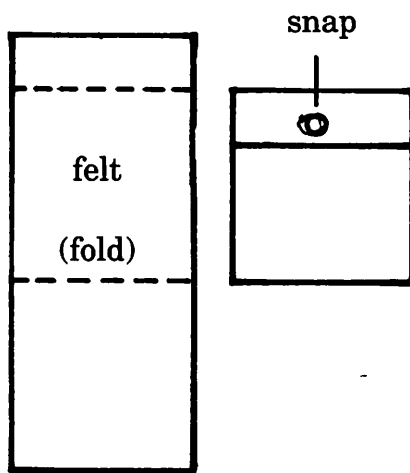
1. The children trace their hands on the construction paper, and cut it out, and paste it on the styrofoam container.
2. They then decorate it with the macaroni. The small ones are used to make the beads of the juzu. The larger ones which represent the colored beads are placed in the appropriate spaces. The spaghetti is broken into pieces about two inches long and glued to the end of the juzu.
3. The shell macaroni is then used to decorate the edge of the styrofoam plate.
4. The children may paint the macaroni if time allows.

Ojuzu

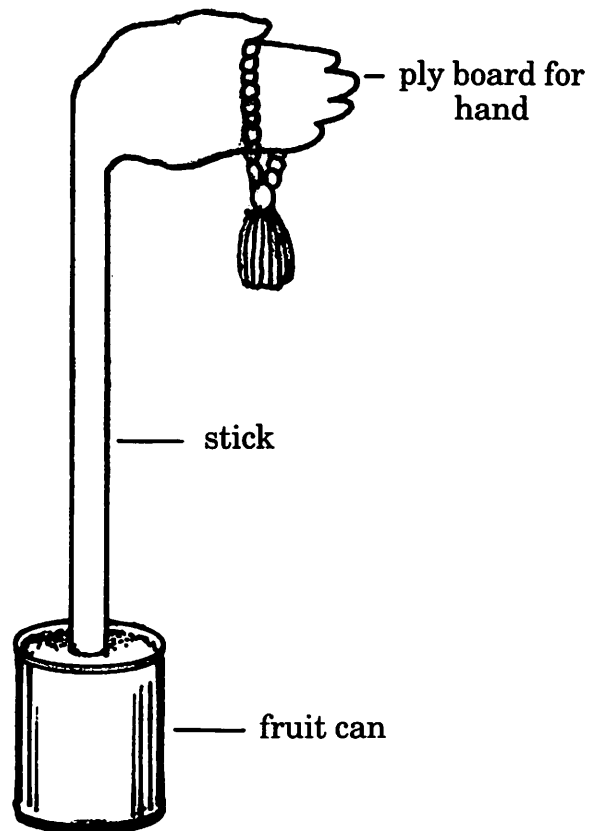
Activities and Lesson Ideas

1. A large board (peg) to hang lost and found ojuzu at church.
2. Make macaroni ojuzu (tassel with yarn).
3. Teach them to take care of ojuzu, such as ojuzu is not a toy.
4. Make a very simple ojuzu bag with felt material.
5. Make an ojuzu stand to keep juzu neat at home by each child's bed or by family altar.

JUZU BAG



JUZU STAND

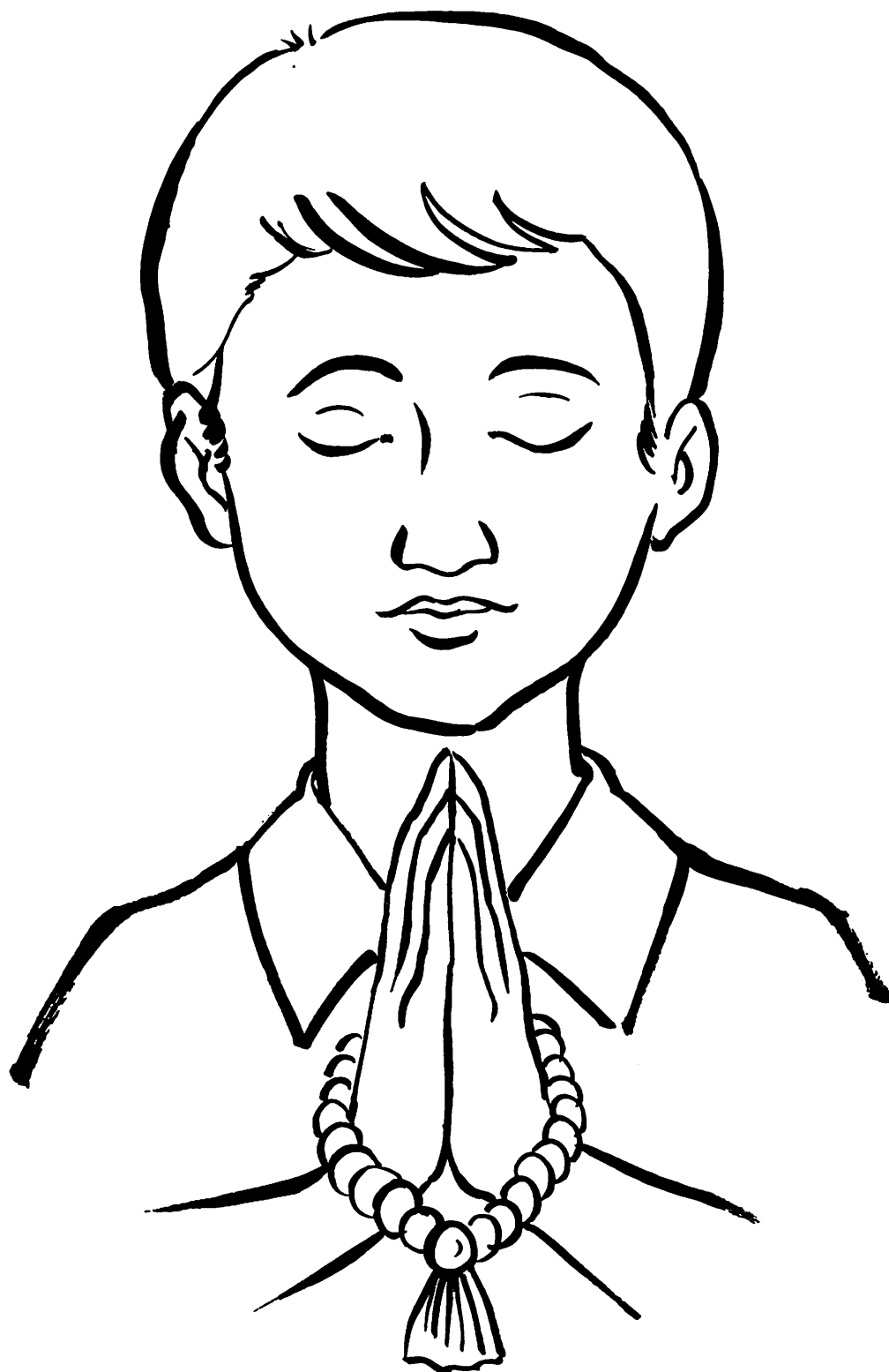


(paint it black)



I come before Amida Buddha
with a thankful heart.

Namu Amida Butsu



I come before Amida Buddha
with a thankful heart.

Namu Amida Butsu

Thank You, Buddha

TEACHER:

Introduction:

Learning Gathas is another way to learn about the Teachings of Buddha.

Materials:

The Gatha, Thank You, Buddha, written on a chart large enough for all to read.

STUDENTS:

Activity:

Read the words of the gatha together

Have the children tell you what they think the words mean

Pass out work pages and have the children draw appropriate pictures to illustrate the words of the Gatha.

Learn the Gatha

Thank you, Buddha
Draw the Verse

Thank you, Buddha, for my mother true
She cheers me so, when I am sad and blue

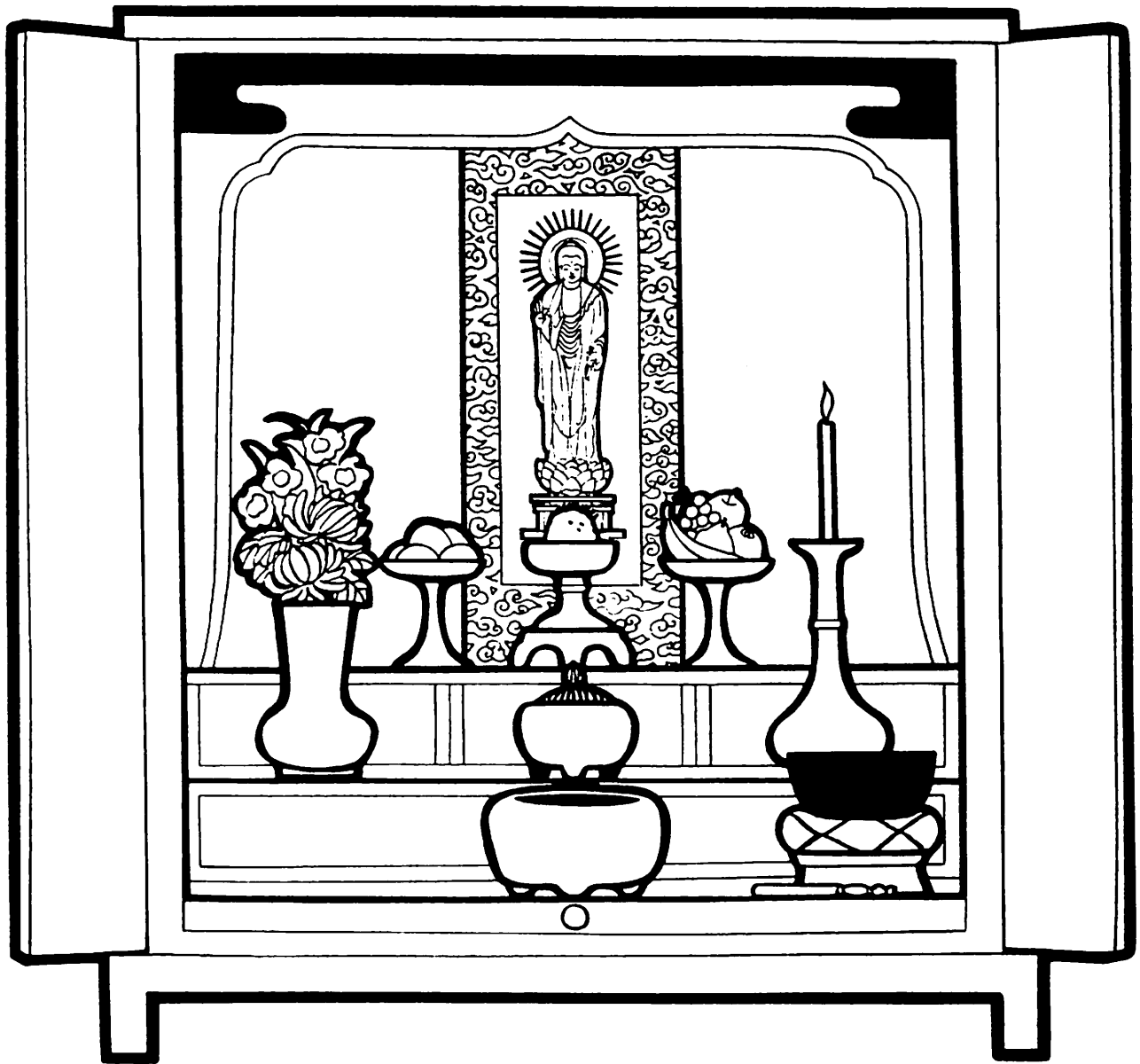
Thank you, Buddha
Draw the Verse

Thank you, Buddha, for my father dear.
He's oh! So strong! He never sheds a tear.

Thank you, Buddha
Draw the Verse

**Thank you, Buddha, for my little toys.
'Cause they're such fun for little girls and boys.**

Thank you, Buddha



Thank you, Buddha I come to your shrine,
each day, each night. I'll Gassho, rain or shine.

Daruma-san

Long ago, there was a very great Buddhist by the name of Bodhidharma. He traveled to many places telling the people about the good teachings of the Buddha. As he walked from one place to another, he encountered many hardships. But, Bodhidharma would always continue with his work. He would not give up.

The children of Japan call Bodhidharma, “Daruma-san” and the great spirit of the monk is depicted in a toy that has long been one of their favorites. A “Daruma-san” doll is like the great monk in the way it stands in the upright position, no matter how it is pushed down. It helps us to remember our proverb, “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try, try again.”

Daruma-san reminds us to recite the Nembutsu:

Namu Amida Butsu
sets me right
Throughout each
and every day.
Hogen

Now, let’s make a Daruma-san. We can use contact paper to make the face, eyes, mouth, hands, and clothes. Yarn can be used for hair.

Materials: Plastic egg, bottom half partially filled with dough. Different colored contact paper or tape, scissors, yarn and glue.

Use your imagination to create anything you want. Keep in mind that your Daruma-san will remind you to recite the Nembutsu and try to live a life of gratitude.

Interdependence

TEACHER:

Introduction:

Help the children become aware of the Buddhist principle of interdependency—how important the sun, water and soil, as well as the care of human hands involved in the growing of a seed.

Help children develop a feeling of respect and appreciation for all growing things.

Materials:

1/2 pint milk carton for each child
Soil and fertilizer
Bean seeds
Letters to parents to accompany the plants (see following page)
Weekly growth charts to be kept by the children in their folder

STUDENTS:

Activity:

We will plant a seed to have the experience of caring for a plant from the planting to the harvesting. The children will have the responsibility of caring for this plant. Perhaps this will give them an idea of the constant care growing things require.

Have the children plant their seeds in the carton

Discuss the proper environment that is required for the seed to develop into a plant

Discuss the proper care of the plant after they take it home

Have the children keep a growth record and make weekly entries in their notebooks

Discuss the Buddhist principle of inter-dependency of all things in nature

Letter To Accompany The Planting Project

Dear Parents:

The Second Grade is learning about the Four Gratitudes, and one of the things for which we are grateful is the food we eat each day. Most of us buy our food at the grocery store or supermarkets and we consume the food with little thought to the great amount of work that many people had put into the preparation of the food.

We have planted some bean seeds and we would like to have you help your child in growing the plant at home.

We hope he will gain from this experience an understanding of the following points:

1. Many people have given their time and energy for the food we eat.
2. Plants require regular care in order to be healthy.
3. To develop an awareness of living things, so that he will be more appreciative of all growing things.
4. Nothing can survive absolutely by itself—we have to depend on other people and things in order that we may live. (The elements in nature, other people, animals, etc.)

As the project progresses at home, we hope that you will work along with your child and that you will discuss the idea of interdependence of all things. We are hopeful that this understanding of interdependence will develop in him a feeling of gratitude that will become a part of his personality.

With Gassho,

Growth Record Of The Bean Plant

PLANTING DATE _____

First week: _____

Second week: _____

Third week: _____

Fourth week: _____

Fifth week: _____

Sixth week: _____

Seventh week: _____

Eighth week: _____

Ninth week: _____

Tenth week: _____

Eleventh week: _____

Twelfth week: _____

Interdependence

Insight

Urban children often think of man as the maker and provider of food. The question “Are you a plant eater?” creates momentary surprise. Children then begin connecting their food to the plants of the earth rather than to grocery stores.

Preparation

Locate area with known edible plants, e.g., Temple ground, neighbor’s garden, farm or wilderness. Or use lunch menu and bag lunches in classroom. (Have children pack a lunch for a Dharma School Class)

Action

1. Ask “Are you a plant eater?” and allow discussion by children.
2. Ask children: “Who ate plants for breakfast” or, “Who brought plants for lunch?”
3. As you smell and taste plant samples, say “Thank you, plant.” Have children guess what plant part they are eating. e.g., root, stem, leaves, buds, flower, fruit or seed, pollen.
4. Some puzzle questions:
How long can you live without plants?
How do they help our lives? (food, air, shelter, clothing)
Besides humans, can you think of other plant eaters?
If all plants disappeared, could we live here by eating meat?

Follow-up

1. Follow the same procedures with the title: “ARE YOU A MEAT EATER?”
Some good questions to ask:
“Who brought meat (beef from cows, pork from pigs, chicken or turkeys from birds or lamb or mutton from sheep) for lunch?”
“Who is wearing something made from animal skin today?” (shoe leather)
“If there were no animals other than man, how differently would we live?”
2. Hold a Secret Pal day and have each child bring a favorite plant sample as a gift to his or her pal.

Me Unit

Goal:

To help the children develop an appreciation and awareness of themselves both physically and spiritually.

Rationale:

Children must be able to accept and appreciate themselves as they are if they are to be able to accept and appreciate others as they are.

Implementation:

1. Centering exercises to help them to learn to get in touch with their inner selves.
2. Having children perform Shinshu rituals routinely (oshoko and chanting sutra such as Ju Sei Ge) in an attempt to have them assimilate Shinshu Buddhism in the form of active meditation.
3. Design projects which help children to realize who they are externally ("me" maps, personal crests, etc.)
4. Encourage student-determined projects to help student gain a sense of self-worth and self-acceptance as well as working on projects which are most meaningful and appropriate to them.
5. Use of stories about situations which children can readily identify with as a means of transmitting Shinshu Buddhist concepts.

Developing The Whole Person

There is a feeling of balance and inner strength that we feel when we are centered. A feeling of a solid integration of mind and body.

A balance of learning emphasizes the development of cognitive, rational and intellectual processes as well as the affective, intuitive, and creative processes in students.

We hope to teach meaningful skills to better understand and live the Buddhist Life.

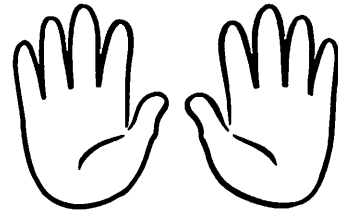
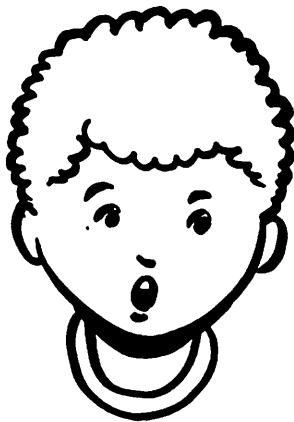
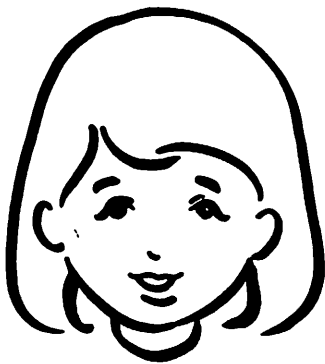
Exercise:

Feeling the center

Sit up straight
Back away from the chair
Squarely on the seat
Spines straight
Hands relaxed in lap
Breathe deeply and smoothly
Relax your feet
Relaxation feeling in your chest and stomach
Relax your neck and face
Relax your arms and hands
Inhale slowly through your nose. Let your stomach fill up then your chest. Breathe out smoothly, chest first and then your stomach.

My Story

1. My name is _____.
2. Sometimes my family calls me _____ (nickname).
3. I live at _____ (address).
4. I am _____ years old.
5. There are _____ in my family counting me.
6. I am the _____ oldest _____ youngest _____ in the middle.
7. I am _____ tall and weigh _____.
8. One thing that makes me very special is _____.



I am _____ right-handed
_____ left-handed

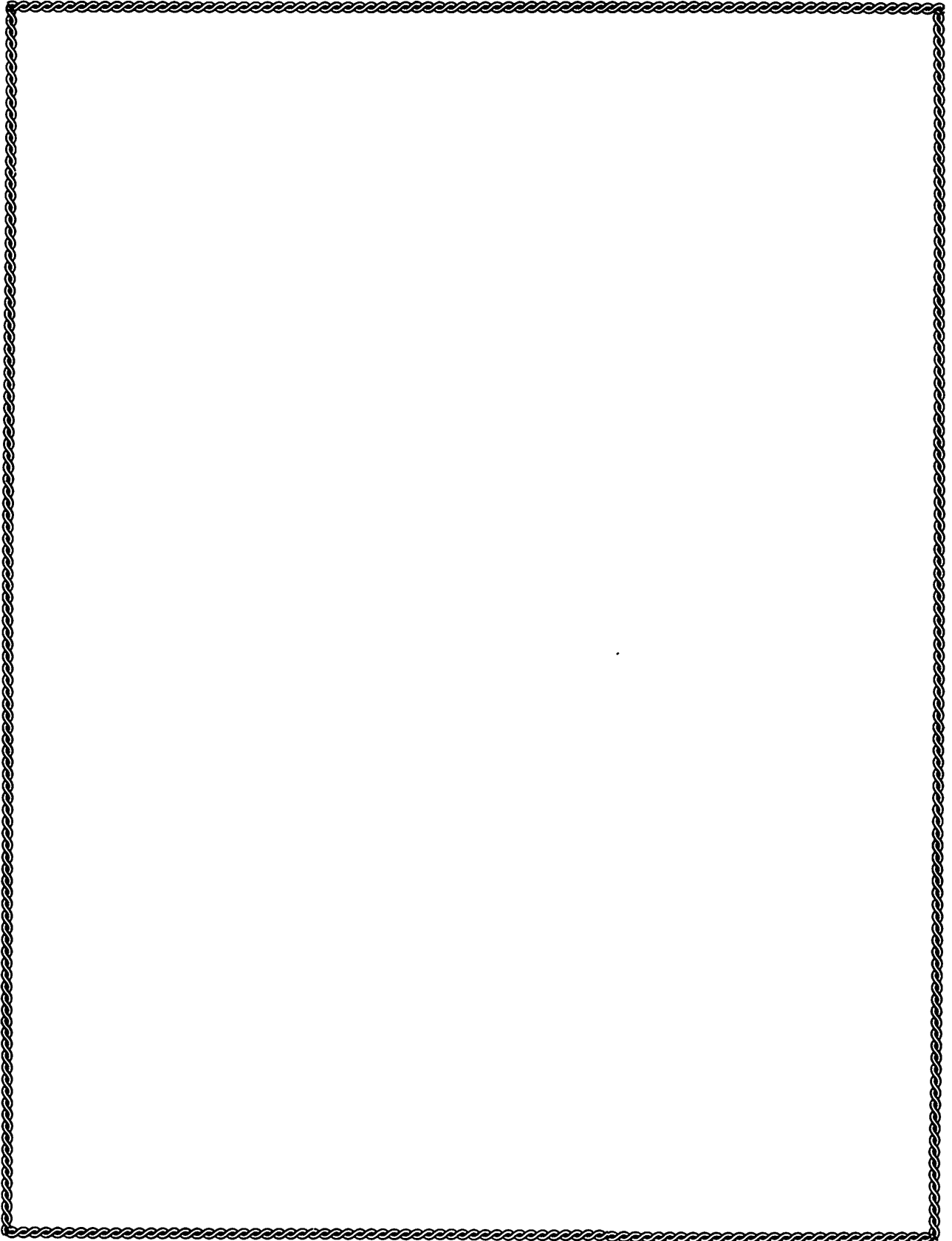
My hair is _____ curly
_____ long _____ straight
_____ short _____ thick
_____ medium _____ thin



I do _____ do not _____
wear glasses.



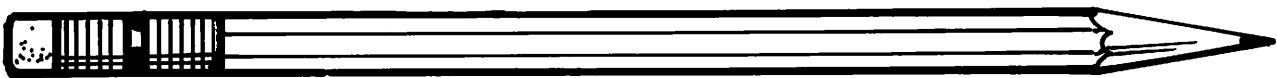
A Picture Of Me



My Handwriting

This is a sample of my best handwriting.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 10 sets of three horizontal lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid) for writing practice.



My Goals For The Year

At Dharma School & Home

This year in Dharma school I would like to:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

This year at home I would like to try harder to:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The Strong Me

1. In Dharma school my best time is _____.
2. The game or sport I play best is _____.
3. My friends think I am great at _____.
4. I know someone who is proud of me: That someone is
_____ (name) . _____ (She or He) is proud
of me because I _____.
5. I can show _____ how to
_____.

The Positive Me

1. My favorite ways to spend my free time are _____

_____.
2. My favorite person is _____.
3. I like to read _____.
4. I like to listen to _____
_____.
5. I like to talk about _____
_____.
6. I like to dream about _____
_____.
7. I like to write about or draw _____
_____.
8. I like to visit _____
_____.
9. What I like about my family is _____
_____.
10. What I like about Dharma School is _____
_____.
11. What I like about myself is _____

_____.

My Special Interests

1. I enjoy collecting _____ .

2. I take _____ lessons.

3. I would be fun to learn more about _____
_____ .

4. I have fun doing:

_____ at home

_____ at Temple

_____ with my friends

_____ with my family

_____ all by myself

My Favorite Things

1. I like to eat _____
_____ .
2. I like to play _____
_____ .
3. I like to talk about _____
_____ .
4. I like to watch _____
_____ .
5. I like to go _____
_____ .
6. I like when my mother _____
_____ .
7. I like when my father _____
_____ .
8. I like when my brother/sister _____
_____ .
9. What I like best at church is _____
_____ .

Someone Special

(Pick someone in your family to tell about—your mother, father, grandmother, grandmother, aunt or uncle.)

1. His/Her name is _____ .

2. He/She helps me do these things: _____

_____ .

3. He/She is special to me because _____
_____ .

4. I like to go _____ with him/her.

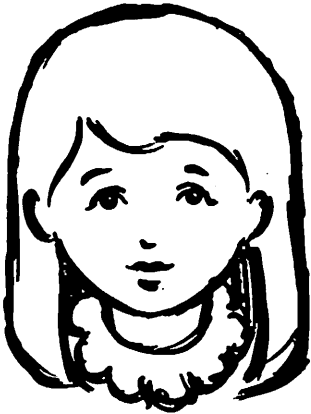
5. His/Her favorites:

Food _____ Book _____

Hobby _____ T.V. Show _____

Brothers and Sisters

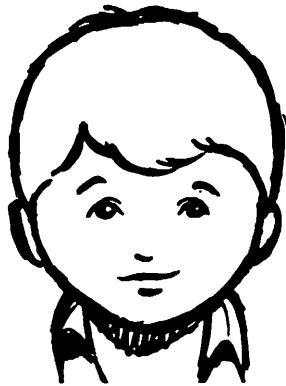
1. I have a sister named _____ Age _____



_____ Age _____

_____ Age _____

2. I have a brother named _____ Age _____



_____ Age _____

_____ Age _____

3. Two things I enjoy doing with my brothers and sisters are:

_____.

4. Brothers and sisters are fun because _____

5. Brothers and sisters are not so much fun because _____

6. I don't have any brothers or sisters. This is the name of my friend who is like a brother. _____.

This is the name of my friend

who is like a sister. _____.



7. The best part being an only child is _____

_____.

I am the _____ generation of my family to live in the United States.

My family's ancestors came to the United States from the country of ____ .

The most interesting thing about my parents is _____
_____ .

The most interesting thing about my brothers and sisters is _____
_____ .

My family speaks _____ and English. I speak _____
and English.

My name in another language is _____ .

My Feelings About Temple

1. I am in the _____ grade.
2. The name of my Temple is _____ .
3. My teacher's name is _____ .
4. The best day I had at the Temple was _____ .
_____ .
5. The worst day I had at the Temple was _____ .
_____ .
6. I would not have had this bad day if _____ .
_____ .

If I Were The Minister

If I could be the Minister....

1. I would teach all about _____ .
2. I would **always** _____ .
_____ .
3. I would **never** _____ .
_____ .
4. I would let all the Sangha _____ .
5. Here is a picture of me as the Minister.

My Buddhist Flag

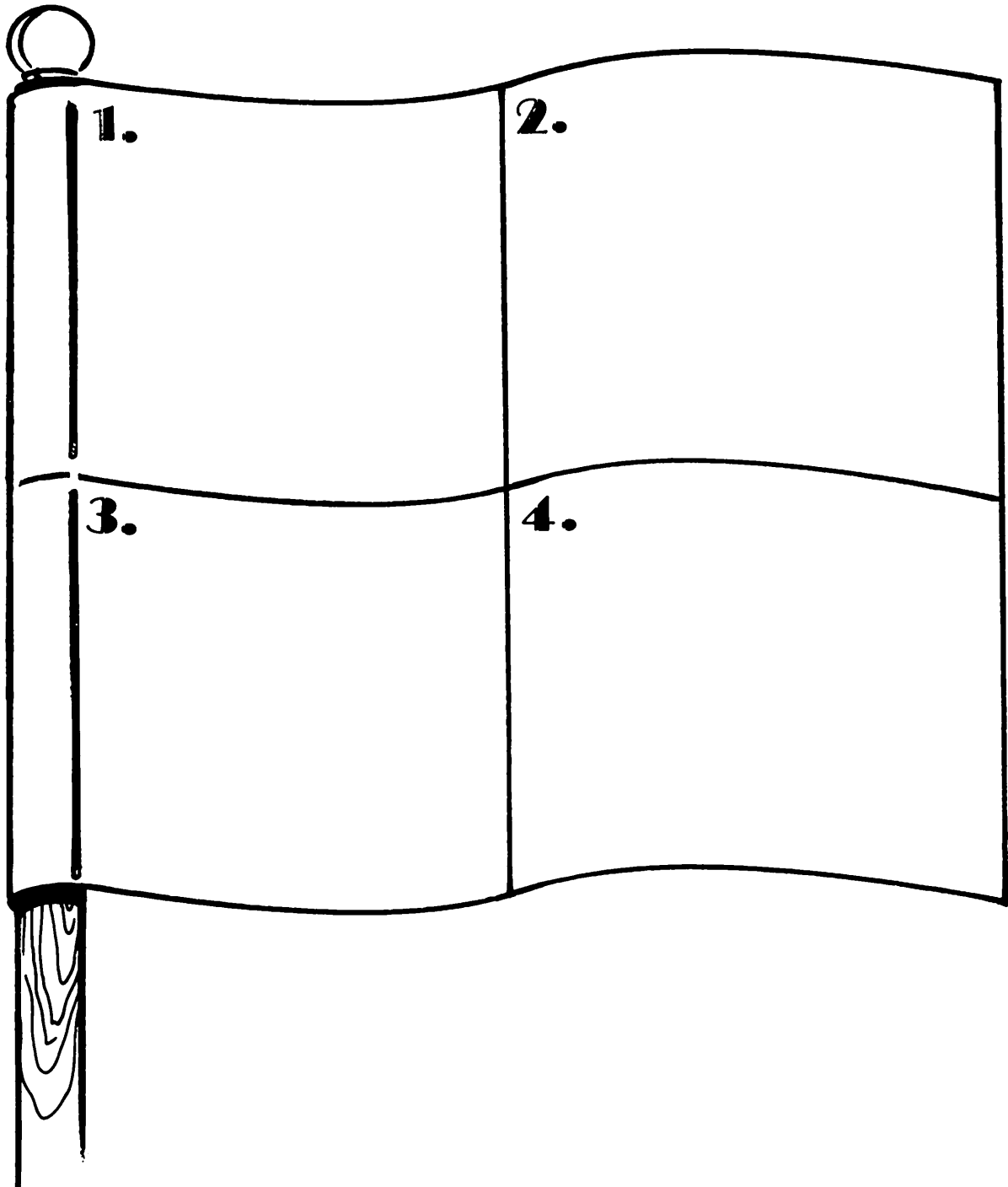


Picture 1 shows me the colors of the flag

Picture 2 shows something my friends and I enjoy doing together.

Picture 3 shows one thing my friends and I like to talk about.

Picture 4 shows what the flag stands for.



Pick A Friend

If I could pick a friend....

1. To sit next to at Dharma school, it would be _____.
2. To spend the night at my house, it would be _____.
3. To tell a secret, to it would be _____.
4. To be my brother, it would be _____.
5. To be my sister, it would be _____.



Buddhist Observances

Special observances, in Japanese, are called gyoji—literally “religious happenings.” They are special occasions when the Sangha gathers to observe ritually the principles of Buddhism. It is a time to gather and a time to share. It is a time to reflect upon and appreciate the intricate bonds that enable us to live and a time to show our gratitude for the teachings and the teachers who serve as guides in our journey to spiritual understanding.

MONTH	BUDDHIST OBSERVANCE	DATE	TITLE	DESCRIPTION
September	B.C.A. Founding Day Higan	September 1 September 23	Higan E	B.C.A. Founding Day Autumnal Equinox
October				Halloween
November				Thanksgiving Eitaikyo Service
December	Bodhi Day Joya E	December 8 December 31	Jodo E Joya E	Enlightenment New Year's Eve
January	New Years Shinran Shonin Memorial	January 1 January 16	Shusho E Ho-on-ko	New Years' Day
February	Nirvana Day	February 15	Nehan E	Passing of Sakyamuni into Nirvana Presidents' Day
March	Higan	March 21	Higan E	Spring Equinox
April	Buddha Day	April 8	Hanamatsuri	Birth of Gautama Buddha
May	Shinran Shonin Day	May 21	Shuso-Gotan E	Placed his faith in Amida's power Mother's Day Memorial Day
June, July	Obon	June, July, August	Obon	Obon Festival Father's Day Independence Day

Sample Activities

New Year And The Nembutsu

Objective:

To have the children realize that each time we recite the Nembutsu, our feelings of gratitude and compassion are renewed and strengthened through faith in Amida and the teachings of Shinran Shonin.

Introduction:

New Year's is a time for looking forward to improving ourselves and learning from past mistakes. When we recite the Nembutsu with our hearts and mind filled with gratitude and compassion, we can easily renew the warm and friendly feelings of true happiness. Thank you Shinran Shonin for giving us the Nembutsu Way to embrace the Buddha's wisdom and compassion.

Material:

Illustrations of various stages from baby-hood to present age
Paper and crayons

Procedure:

Remember how simple life was when you were a baby? You were new to life and needed lots of love, care, and understanding. Everything was done for you. When you were hungry, you were fed. When you were tired, you slept. When you were wet, your diaper was changed. And when you cried, you were given lots of attention and carried by persons who loved and cared for you very much. You depended upon others to make you happy. You were not aware of making others happy, just yourself.

As you grew a little older you began to feed yourself, crawl by yourself and not only feel happy, but able to share your happiness with others. You became aware of making others happy, instead of just yourself.

Now, you are aware of many feelings, moods, actions; etc. You know what you need to be loved and you need to give love, in order to be a truly happy person.

What are some things that make you unhappy? Here are some pictures that show unhappiness.

What can you do to make the pictures into happy ones?

Example: I would share my toy with the boy.

I would give the boy another toy to play with.

I would tell the boy to come outside with me, because he is too young to play with my toy and might break it.

How can we make ourselves and others happy? Let children reply in own words. Write the words on the blackboard/Butcher paper.

Example: Be kind, thoughtful, nice, helpful and thankful. We hope someone will say the word Nembutsu. If not, write it on the chalkboard. Mention that by reciting the Nembutsu we are thanking Amida Buddha for his everlasting love and understanding. We are grateful in our hearts and mind to Shinran Shonin for teaching us to have faith in Amida.





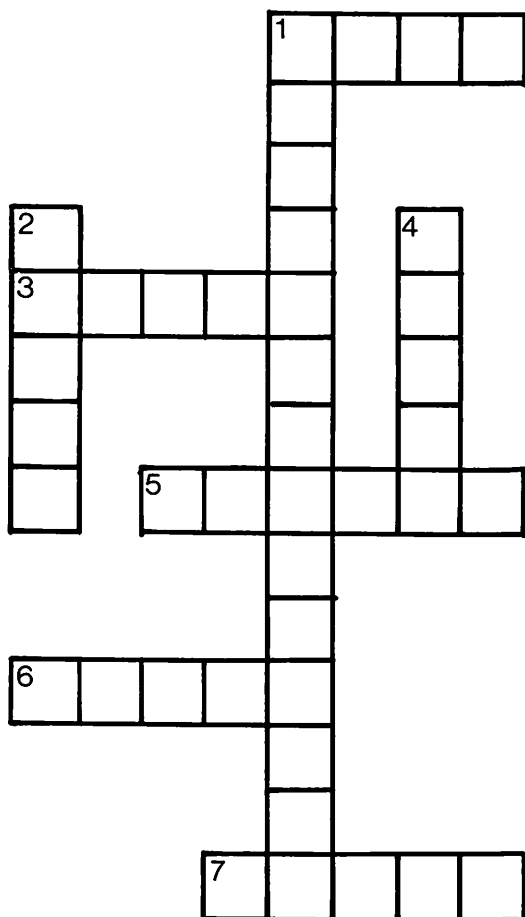
Hoonko

a	b	u	t	s	u	b	c	h	u	r	c	h
d	u	c	y	h	o	p	g	a	s	s	h	o
j	d	h	a	r	m	a	h	o	o	n	k	o
n	d	k	c	o	m	p	a	s	s	i	o	n
d	h	a	r	m	a	m	m	t	w	x	y	n
s	a	i	n	t	s	h	i	n	r	a	n	k
a	o	q	i	a	m	i	d	a	z	a	o	o
c	p	u	r	e	t	n	a	m	i	d	a	n
n	i	r	v	a	n	a	m	u	s	o	b	e
p	x	t	a	t	a	n	o	m	a	j	d	m
i	s	o	n	e	m	b	u	t	s	u	p	b
t	a	n	a	m	u	t	c	h	s	z	o	u
o	b	e	p	p	u	r	e	i	h	u	m	t
x	c	n	f	l	a	n	d	e	o	a	e	s
y	h	o	n	e	n	f	g	i	n	a	m	u

Find these words in the puzzle:

saint shinran	nirvana
dharma	nembutsu
buddha	temple
hoonko	ojuzu
namu	gassho
amida	church
butsu	pure
compassion	land
honen	mt hiei

Crossword Puzzle



1. Down
1. Across
2. Down
3. Across
4. Down
5. Across
6. Across
7. Across

Put your hands together and repeat _____
 _____ Amida Butsu

Put your _____ together in gassho

Namu _____ Butsu

I put my _____ in Buddha, Sangha, and Dharma

I put my faith in _____

When you put your hands together your _____ is around
 your hands

Namu Amida _____

Ohigan (Dana Paramita)

TEACHER:

Introduction:

Dana Paramita is one of the Six Paramitas. Our discussion today will be about DANA....which means to give. There are many ways to give something without involving money. One of these ways is to give with our eyes. This means not giving sharp looks or scowls. Our thoughts are reflected in our eyes and we can truly give with our eyes only by thinking good thoughts. Giving with our eyes will come naturally through leading a life of gratitude.

Materials:

Little purse mirrors for each child, or one or two long mirrors.

(When using little mirrors, make sure that there are no sharp edges...cover the edges with adhesive or masking tape to protect the children from injury.)

STUDENTS:

Activity:

Have the children get a partner and face each other. Describe an unfriendly look. Have the partner and the individual carefully examine the way the eyes look. "Do they look kind, happy, sad or mad? Does it make you feel good to see people with cold, unfriendly looks in their eyes? What kinds of thoughts make your eyes look that way? Would you say they were pleasant or unpleasant thoughts?"

Describe a very positive kind of action. "Now, what happens to the eyes? They look much prettier and happier. What are the kinds of thoughts that make your eyes look happier?"

"As you can see, what we feel inside shows in our eyes. When you are angry, even though you try to smile, it is not a true smiling face, for your eyes are giving away your angry thoughts. Let us try to keep our thoughts happy and kind so that these feelings will show in your eyes, and then we are truly giving with our eyes."

Name _____

Giving without money
or things I can give.



FRIENDLY LOOKS



HAPPY SMILES



KIND WORDS



GOOD DEEDS



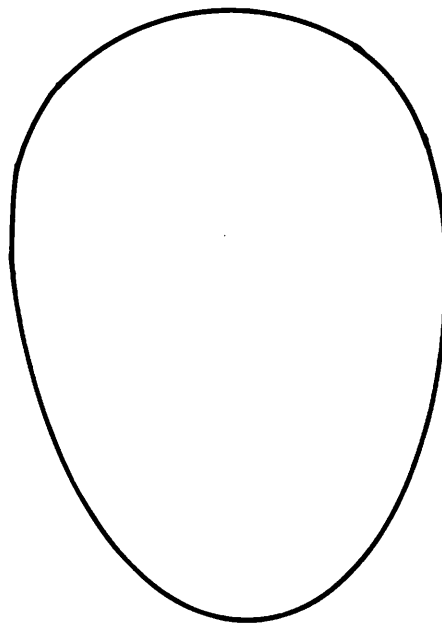
I can give

The First Paramita (Dana...to give)

Give with your eyes and face.

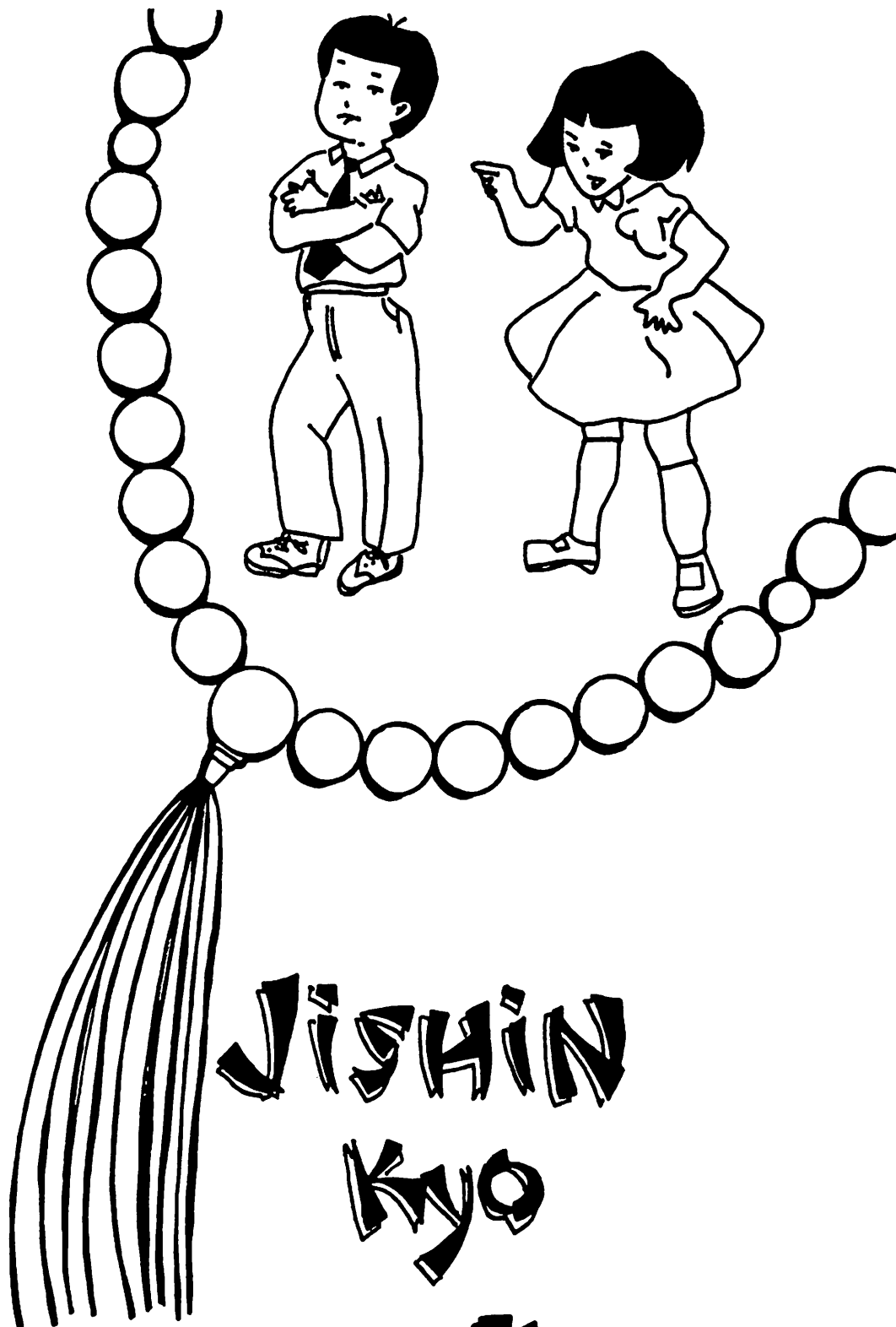
These thoughts make our eyes
and face look like this.

(angry thoughts)
(kind thoughts)



Make 2 separate pages

自信教人信



Jishin
Kyo

NINSHIN



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INTRODUCTION

Grade Level	Focus	Aims And Objectives
THIRD GRADE	OUR TEMPLE	Learn - appreciation and understanding of our Temple
	BUDDHIST HOLIDAYS	Knowledge of the shrine and explanation of articles in the shrine
	ACTIVITIES	Meaning of shrine

For the Teacher

The purpose for teaching the Buddhist symbols is to create in the minds of the children an appreciation for things connected with the temple.

The Buddhist shrine symbolizes the Buddha's world. The teacher's job, then, is to try to help in every way possible to awaken the spirituality of the children to see the wondrous teachings of the Buddha's world.

The subject on the Buddhist symbols should be taught in the lower grades. The third grade seems to be the most appropriate level for teaching the subject.

Lessons on many Buddhist symbols are included within the text. The teacher should emphasize those symbols used in his/her own temple. A field trip may be arranged to visit a nearby larger temple so that the children may see a more detailed form of shrine arrangement.

Beautiful things within the temple are not meant to be merely decorative. They are there to remind us of Buddha and Buddhism. These reminders, in turn, should lead the individual to spontaneous acts of beautiful deeds and beautiful speech.

The lesson should lead the children from the outside of the temple to the inside where many things can be visualized as well as sensed in other ways.

Try to embark upon each lesson as a new adventure. Make each step along the way a new discovery. Children should learn to have concern for others. It is not enough to speak on these subjects, action must take place. As the teacher, find avenues where relief work can be successfully undertaken by children this age. Read the newspaper to find out about other children's groups that are doing things. Call up hospitals, Red Cross, etc. to find out if there is anything that third grade children can do. Consult your superintendent and minister about these matters.

When teaching Buddhist symbols to the children, teachers must be very careful to avoid giving the impression that Buddhism is a form of idol worship. In this respect, the following quotation should be very helpful.

"The Buddhist makes use of reminders, or symbols, to prevent his losing sight of the fundamental precepts."

Julius A. Goldwater

"The Buddhist does not use statues or pictures so that they might adore them. We do not adore or worship the pictures of our family that we place about our homes. We do not worship the flag of our country. We like the pictures because they remind us of the ones we love. We feel the greatest respect for the flag of our country, because it represents the land in which we live. We use statues or pictures of the Buddha as a means of keeping him in our minds."

Knowing and understanding the significance of the Temple and the symbols upon the shrine should help the children in many ways. It should help them to understand better the services.

Whenever children bring new friends to the temple, help them introduce their friends to the minister, teacher and class.

Steps In Deciding And Planning Lessons

Initial Orientation:

This Guide Book is a guide and one resource for you to use. Don't feel you must follow it or stick with it or expect it to do more for you than it is intended to do. You can get your ideas from it or from your own instincts, experience and resources. Let it help as you find it useful to you.

Get familiar with the Guide, its different sections and the information it provides. Don't let it overwhelm you.

Divide the Book into divisions to make it easier to find the information you want. What you find you want to use will vary with each person and may change as you use the guide.

Locate your grade level focus and aims.

Decide upon a format keeping in mind:

1. students need to be actively involved
2. students need to have some fun doing the activity
3. allow for wide differences
4. try to increase the communication (interactions, exchanges, sharing with each other where possible).

Select ideas that you find useful. Don't use what you can't relate to. Develop a personally meaningful definition of your lesson.

The aim of this lesson:

Is to introduce the material in simple terms in a way the children can grasp and relate to.

Material:

1. Definition of lesson
2. A story to illustrate it
3. Questions about the story
4. Chalk and blackboard or illustrations.

Lesson will be presented by:

Giving definitions.

Telling a story to illustrate it.

Asking questions to be answered. Closing summary.

Presentation of lesson:

Theory Of Learning

The following principles of learning are the framework around which learning can be enhanced if one understands and practices them.

1. The learning process is experiencing, doing, reacting and implementing.
2. Learning best occurs when children are interested in or excited about what they are doing.
3. Learning experience is always holistic, affecting a pupil's feeling as well as intellect.
4. A child learns best when the task is adjusted to his individual level of maturity and capacity.
5. Learning is more efficient when it is related to the pupil's purposes.
6. For most efficient learning, individualization is often necessary.
7. Success reinforces learning and the enjoyment of it.
8. Concept building must be based upon a rich foundation of first-hand perceptual experience.
9. Learning to be retained, must be used.
10. Behaviors that are reinforced (rewarded) are more likely to recur.
11. The learning situation, to be of maximum value, must be perceived by the learner as realistic, meaningful and useful.
12. The learning process is stimulated to best effort when it encourages a diversity of learning experiences and opportunities.

Introduction

The teacher should allow the first Sunday to discuss with the children what they will be learning during the year.

Open the discussion by talking with the children about what they do during the service as gassho, reciting the Nembutsu, and the Temple service format etc. Write on the board as many things as they can remember.

Ask the children about the items that are in the shrine. How many items can they name? Write the items named by the children.

Tell the children that they will be learning about the items written on the board.

Spend the rest of the period making folders for their lessons. These folders are to be taken home by the children at the end of the Dharma School year to keep for themselves and also to show their parents what they have learned.

Our Temple

Our temple is a place that has been built especially for our use. In many ways, it is like a second home because we are always welcome, and without us, it would not be a happy place.

Our temple is a place of worship. At the temple, we learn about the Amida and offer our respects, and thanks.

When we stop to consider the many people who have worked to build a place for us to gather so we can hear the teachings of Amida Buddha, we are grateful. Our feeling of gratitude can be expressed in the Nembutsu.

Our Temple

Purpose:

To learn how the Buddhist Temple came to be and what it stands for.

Materials:

Lesson sheet to be passed out to boys and girls as written below.
Worksheet.

(Verbal introduction to the reading material). Inside the temple there are many beautiful reminders of the Buddha and his teachings, but before anything could be put inside, the temple had to be built, didn't it? In our lesson sheet for today we will learn how some of our temples here in America came to be.

The temple is the home where we learn and appreciate Amida Buddha. Many people helped to make it possible for us to have our temple.

Long ago in America, when there were only a few Buddhists, there was no place for them to meet together. However, they did not forget the Buddha or his teachings. Most Buddhists had something at home to remind them of the Buddha. In some cases, it was an ojuzu or a small shrine. In other cases, it was a book on the Buddha's teachings.

As the years went by, there were more Buddhists. It was their fond hope to build a large place where people could come and learn together about Buddhism.

They spent many hours talking about how the temple should look and what it should have. Many faithful Buddhists offered financial assistance.

When the temple was completed, it was a monumental accomplishment. Here, indeed, was a place each Buddhist could call home. Here was a place where people could come find peace and quiet.

We can show our gratitude by:

[illegible]

Gratitude For Our Temple

Purpose:

1. To learn that there are many Buddhist temples in America. They are different in size and the number of people who attend, but all who go there believe in Amida Buddha and feel thankful for his love.
2. To be thankful that we have temples we can attend to learn about Amida Buddha.

Materials:

Lesson Sheet
Large paper for each child to draw the temple
Crayons

Presentation:

Read the sentences on the lesson sheet with the children.
Discuss the sentences with the children.
Have the children draw a picture of their own temple.
Staple lesson sheet to child's drawing.

To find out more about other Buddhist temples in America, the children might send drawings of their own temple to other Buddhist Dharma Schools and ask those students to send a drawing of their temple.

Discuss how we would feel if we moved and attended another temple. Welcome new students to the class.

Lesson Sheet

(Staple this lesson sheet to each child's drawing)

There are many Buddhist temples in America. There are big temples and little ones.

Although each temple may look different, each temple was built for the same purpose. Each temple was built to show love and respect to the Buddha.

I am grateful for my temple and my Dharma School, where I can learn about Amida Buddha.

This is the temple I attend _____

Though our temples look different, we are grateful we have a Dharma School where we can learn about Amida Buddha.

This is my Temple:

General Temple Etiquette

Purpose:

1. Good behavior in relation to the Buddha, His Teachings, and His Brotherhood.

Materials:

1. Picture of children in the temple
2. Picture of minister talking to the children

Procedures:

1. Introduce good behavior by using pictures
2. Discussion:
 - a. How to walk in the Temple
 - b. How to sit in the Temple
 - c. General behavior in the Temple

What Is Etiquette

The concept of etiquette in general is concerned with the refinement of human behavior in its relationship with other human beings. Common courtesy, cordiality, grace and beauty, along with tradition, are all involved.

BUDDHIST ETIQUETTE takes into consideration this concept of etiquette, but it is more concerned with the refinement of our behavior in relation to the Buddha, His Teaching and His Brotherhood.

Thus, while it is necessary for the Buddhist to observe the ordinary rules of good conduct toward his fellow men, it is more important that he move with reverence and gratitude toward all things which are related to the Buddha.

Reverence and gratitude for Compassion and Wisdom of the Buddha form the basis of Buddhist etiquette. Without this basis, the learning and practice of the outward forms become empty and meaningless. Gassho is meaningful only when it is the Nembutsu in action—when it is the expression of our gratitude and reverence. Therefore, in teaching the forms of BUDDHIST ETIQUETTE, or in practicing them oneself, it must be to express the spirit of gratitude and reverence.

When Shinran spoke of “Shomyo Nembutsu”—the actual utterance of the Nembutsu—he was saying that it is not enough for man to think about noble thoughts and deeds: they must be expressed in words and action.

The purpose of etiquette in the lives of Buddhists becomes clear: we must put into action the reverence and gratitude which we feel for the Buddha. In teaching small children, then, it should be enough to convey this feeling of reverence and gratitude, and the bare basic forms of etiquette. Children will learn through the examples set by their teachers.

For the teachers, however, it becomes necessary to learn and observe the details of etiquette so that they may set the proper example.

USE OF THE SIETEN (AND GATHA BOOKS)

Since the Seiten contains sacred words, it should be handled with proper care. The Issei “itadaku” the book before using, i.e., they reverently hold it with both hands and bow in a gesture of gratitude. It is hoped that such an attitude of reverence will be perpetuated by the younger generations.

ENTERING AND LEAVING THE HONDO (TEMPLE)

The Hondo should be entered quietly and with due reverence. Upon entering, gassho facing the shrine. Take your seat and wait quietly for the service to begin.

Avoid being late, but when you must enter the Hondo after the service has started, be especially careful not to disturb the others. Try to find a seat in the back rows. If you enter during a period of meditation, wait until it is over before moving toward the front.

Before leaving the hall, after the service is over, turn to face the shrine and gassho.

RECITING OF THE NEMBUTSU

As Shinshu is based on the realization of the Nembutsu, the importance of reciting it correctly cannot be overemphasized. “Namu-Amida-Butsu” should be recited clearly.

LISTENING TO THE READING OF SACRED WRITINGS.

The minister often reads excerpts from the “Sacred Writing of St. Rennyo” (Gobunsho) or other scriptures before or after delivering his sermon. The congregation should sit with heads bowed and listen to the words.

RESPONDING TO THE SPEAKER’S BOW

When the speaker bows in greeting the sangha, or when he bows after his talk, the sangha should return his bow.

LEADING THE SANGHA IN READING

Leading the sangha in reading, whether it is the “Golden Chain” or excerpts from the Dhammapada, is an honor and therefore should be performed in that spirit. Before beginning the reading, gassho and bow toward the shrine. Hold the book with both hands. Read slowly and distinctly so that the congregation can follow together.

After the reading, gassho.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The manner of personal appearance is another way of showing respect. Neatness, cleanliness, or in general, “looking one’s best” is a good rule to follow, especially in the temple.

HOW TO WALK IN THE TEMPLE

Children are naturally inclined to jump and run instead of walking quietly, but they must be taught that “in the temple” they must walk. The teacher walking beside some of the energetic children may be able to help them remember this.

HOW TO SIT IN THE TEMPLE

Again, even the best-mannered child will need constant reminding on how to remain seated quietly throughout a service. Instruct the children that “Buddhist children” sit up straight facing the shrine.

GENERAL BEHAVIOR IN THE TEMPLE

Etiquette in general requires children (and grown-ups too) to refrain from talking out of turn; from whispering and chit-chatting when in a large group; and from poking or otherwise annoying their friends. It is even more important that such behavior be discouraged in the temple. Try to direct their attention to the part of the service being conducted.

Emphasize the need to do everything quietly and reverently; turn the pages of the Gatha Book quietly, close the book quietly, etc. Any necessary movement should be made in a quiet and respectful manner.

It should also be pointed out that it is impolite to the speaker and to everyone else, as well as being disrespectful to the Buddha, to leave the hall during the service. Teach the children that, except for the rare emergencies, they are to remain quietly seated until the service is over.

DIVIDING INTO CLASSES

The system for dividing the Dharma School into classes differs with the individual temples. In some temples the children file out in row-by-row order. In this case, the children should wait quietly for their turn to leave. In other temples a more informal dispersal takes place. Whatever the system, supervision by the teacher can keep the process orderly and efficient.

In Front of Our Temple

Purpose:

To learn that the temple itself stands for the Buddha and his teachings, therefore our actions outside the temple need to be just as proper when we are inside.

Preparation:

When taking the class out, ask for assistance from parents if the class is large and difficult to handle by yourself. If parents come along, be sure and tell them beforehand why they are being asked to help. Make assignments very clear.

Presentation:

Many people do not come inside our temple, but whenever they see or pass by the temple they know that this is the place where people come to hear and learn of the Buddha and his teachings.

Do you run around or act disorderly in front of the temple?

Would this be the way to act in front of the temple?

Do you help keep the outside of the home that has been built for Amida Buddha as clean and neat as possible?

Activity:

Take the class out to observe the front of their temple. Are there any papers thrown around? Have the plants been trampled? Talk about where the class should walk and where they should not walk. If children want to play, show them where can they play.

Inside Our Temple

Purpose:

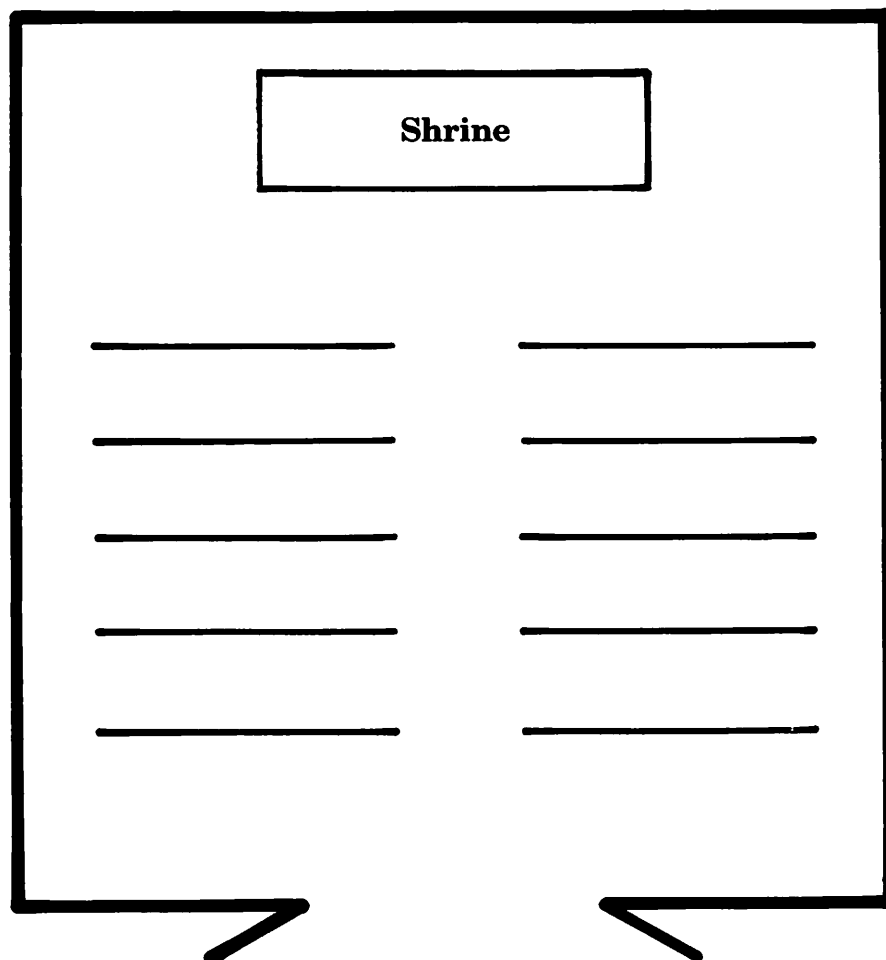
To become familiar with words used in connection with generalities inside the temple.

Material:

Large wall diagram of temple interior.

Presentation:

Explain in your own words so that the children may understand. The whole area in the front where the shrine is placed is called the shrine. We sit in chairs. We who are gathered at the temple, together with the minister, form the Sangha.



Reminders Upon the Shrine

Purpose:

To get an overall view of things placed upon and around the shrine.

Material:

Large drawing of all the shrine symbols arranged according to correct custom.

Duplicate of the larger drawing for children to keep in their folder.

Children's worksheet "What is Wrong with This Shrine?"

Presentation:

Last Sunday, it was learned that the front area (as we face the temple) is called the _____. Does anyone remember what this area is called?

There are many things placed on and around the shrine, aren't there?

Use visual aids as you talk with the children about the various symbols on the shrine. Ask leading questions such as, What do you see? What do you smell when you enter the temple? (incense, flowers). How do you feel when you are in the temple? How are things arranged?

Comment to the children that many things upon the shrine are made of gold. Why do you suppose this is so?

Gold is used because it is a metal that is very precious and does not tarnish. We are reminded that even as gold does not tarnish, neither do the pure teachings; for the pure teachings are eternal truths that do not change with time.

Help children to develop a deep sense of appreciation for what they see. "If one goes to a temple where Buddha's Land is modeled and purifies his mind by looking at it, he will in course of time cultivate a clean and noble character."

What is Wrong With This Shrine

Put a circle around the things that are not correct. Be ready to explain.



Buddhist Shrine

This is a simple explanation of the history and significance of the shrine:

A. History and Significance of the Shrine:

In the ancient times of Sakyamuni Buddha the center of mediation or devotion was not used and it was not necessary because of the presence of Buddha himself. However, after the passing of Buddha people wanted to show their devotion to Amida Buddha and this expression of reverence that people have within their hearts serves as a central focal point in expressing devotion to Amida Buddha.

The use of the shrine developed greatly during the spread of Buddhism in Japan and especially in the last several hundred years. The decorative scheme became highly developed so that it became a part of Buddhist art of Japan.

B. Central Shrine Piece: The Image of the Amida Buddha, The Holy Name and the Statue of the Amida Buddha.

The image of Buddha as the central shrine piece reminds us of what we may someday become. It stands for Enlightenment. The image of Amida Buddha is usually depicted standing with eyes half-closed, with right hand up making a circle with the index finger and thumb, and with left hand palm upward as if to scoop something. The whole statue as seen from the side is leaning forward slightly. All these have symbolic meaning. The gentle facial expression reflects unbound wisdom, knowledge, compassion and love. The statue having the eyes half-open and half-closed shows that half of the vision is directed internally for self-reflection. The right index and thumb forming a circle depicts complete harmony. The left hand palm upward signifies the idea that Buddha is going to save all; in other words, the love and compassion of Buddha saves all beings. The statue leaning forward means that Buddha's compassion is not static or just "sitting around" but that Buddha's compassion is active and reaches forward to touch all beings.

Use an Obutsudan, flannel board or drawing to explain the component parts of the Obutsudan.

Visit different temples. Bring a friend to the temple. Discuss different churches in the community. Make an Obutsudan out of shoe box, paper box, or draw an obutsudan.

Buddhist Shrine

Shrine Symbols

The figure of Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Infinite Wisdom and Compassion occupies the central position on the shrine. In some temples and home shrines, instead of the statue, a scroll bearing the Japanese characters, Namu Amida Butsu, meaning "I place my faith in Amida Buddha," or a picture of Amida occupies the central position.

The adherents of Buddhism do not worship the figure of Amida Buddha, but bow their heads in reverence before the Wisdom and Compassion of Amida which the statue symbolizes.

In many of the larger temples the shrine is more elaborate. On the right, facing the shrine, is hung a scroll bearing the image of Shinran Shonin (1173-1262) the founder of the Jodo Shinshu or the Pure Land Sect. On the left hangs a picture of one of the Chief Abbots, a descendant of Shinran Shonin. Besides these, there may be other symbols, such as a scroll depicting the image of the masters who contributed the most to the development of the teaching of salvation through the power of Amida's Wisdom and Compassion. Amida Buddha alone is the object of worship and these figures are placed on the altar out of respect and thanksgiving for the contributions they made to the teachings.

Adornments (Shogon)

The shrine (chancel) is composed of many symbols besides the main object of our worship. From the elaborate and fine overhanging adornments (yoraku) symbolizing the wonderful trees, down to the huge altar lamp (rinto), each of these symbols has its own original meaning. However, the altar in its entirety is man's effort to create the beauty of harmony, depicting the realm of Jodo or the pure realm. The various articles have their basis in the many sermons of the Buddha (Sakyamuni), especially in the three basic sutras of Jodo Shin Buddhism.

Light Offering

Light symbolizes the Wisdom of Buddha which drives away the darkness in man's mind. In Shin Buddhism this is directly related, for the name of Amida Buddha. Buddha Amitabha, depicts light of unobstructible power.

In the shrine there are various kinds of light offerings, including the traditional candlelight and many lanterns.

Incense Burning

Incense is burned as one's willful participation in a religious observance or to pay homage to Buddha. The original meaning in Buddhism was one's effort to purify one's self as he approached a person or object of reverence. The burning is symbolic of the extinction of impure thoughts and the fragrance drives away unfavorable odor, which again means one form of purification. As to the number of times one may offer the incense, Shin Buddhism requires only once. However other denominations may require more than once.

Burning of incense is done in the following manner:

A. Take two or three steps before the incense burner, bow lightly.

B. Walk to the incense burner, take a pinch of incense powder, and place it in the incense burner over the burning incense sticks or charcoal. (This should be done once only, and it is not necessary to bring the incense to your forehead.)

C. Bow in homage to Amida Buddha in gassho.

D. Take two or three steps backward, bow lightly, and return to your seat.

Floral Offering

Flowers are also offered on the shrine. They are symbolic of the wonderful trees which are listed as one of the splendors of Jodo.

Flowers should be kept fresh at all times. Flowers with thorns or unusual odors should not be offered.

Monetary and Other Offerings

Monetary offerings are made to the temple as well as to the ministers. Offerings are not made with the intention of paying for or compensating the services of the minister, but with the feeling of gratitude. The wording to be used in this case is either "Offertory" or "Dana." Offerings of cooked rice, confections, cakes, and fruits are also made. Fish or any form of animal flesh are never offered.

Buddhist Symbols

The Buddhist Flag

The Buddhist flag was jointly designed by Mr. J. R. DeSilva and Colonel Henry S. Olcott to mark the revival of Buddhism in Ceylon in 1880. The flag was first used in 1888 when Wesak was celebrated as a public holiday.

At the time, Colonel Olcott felt a need for a symbol for local Buddhists to rally around. He then designed a flag for the Buddhists from the colors of the Aura that is said to have emitted from the head of the Buddha. The first five stripes of the flag are self colors. The Pali words for the five colors are Neale (blue), Peeta (yellow), Lohita (red), Odata or Avadata (white), and Manjetta (light red). The sixth color, Phabhassara, is a conglomeration of the five, but for design, it has been broken up into its constituents.

The Colonel's flag later came to symbolize the unity of Buddhists. It was accepted as the International Buddhist Flag by the World Fellowship of Buddhists in 1950, and its acceptance was further confirmed at the World Buddhist Conference in Tokyo in 1952. Thereafter, its use has become world-wide.

The Wheel of Law

The Wheel of Law is also known as the Wheel of Life or Dharma Wheel. It is called Dharmacakra in Sanskrit and Dhammacakka in Pali. The eight spokes of the wheel represent the Noble Eightfold Path. Their equal length symbolizes justice. The tire around the wheel represents the all-embracing Wisdom of Buddhahood. The hub teaches us modesty and thoughtfulness. The axle is the unchanging Truth upon which the Wheel turns.

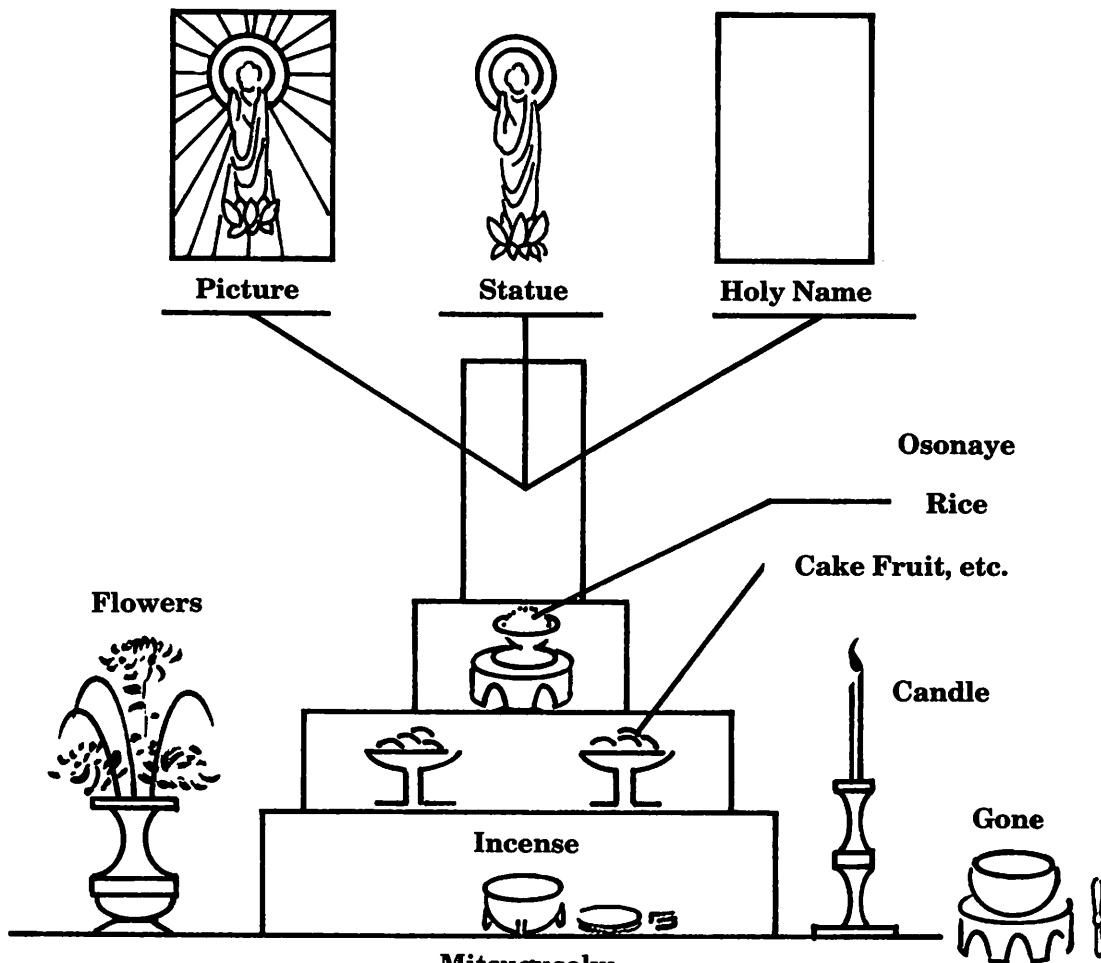
The Wisteria Crest

The double Wisteria crest is the temple crest of the Honganji. The wisteria blooms with its blossoms hanging low. Thus, the wisteria crest symbolizes humility and sincere reverence to Amida Buddha.

The Lotus

The lotus is an often used symbol in Buddhism. The lotus grows with its roots anchored in mire. Its stem rises through the murky water and its blossoms bloom in full glory, pure and white, above the water. The Buddha taught that we should be like the Lotus. We may live in a mad world but we must rise above it and attain perfect peace of mind.

Shrine Adornment Simple Scheme Using 3 Adornments



Scheme Using 5 Adornments



Family Obutsudan

Purpose:

To acquaint the student with the family Obutsudan and the care of it.

Materials:

Obutsudan, flowers, candles, incense, offering, cookies, candy, fruits, etc.

Flannel board and cut outs

Picture of Incense Burner

Procedures:

1. Explain simply in your own words about the family Obutsudan.

The Family Shrine (Obutsudan)

The family shrine is the heart of the Buddhist home. Because this is so, we must pay homage to our shrine in every way possible. It should be kept as beautiful as possible. It should never show signs of neglect or carelessness. The best flowers available should always be offered and each altar piece kept in proper position. (If a student in the Dharma School has no family shrine, he should be helped in obtaining an omyogo from the Temple.)

2. To prepare the family shrine for a service, the following points should be remembered:
 - a. Opening of the Shrine
 - b. Flowers
 - c. Offerings (Osonaye)
 - d. Candles - Light the candles
 - e. Incense
 - f. Gong
 - g. Closing the Shrine
3. Give a demonstration of where each item goes by using an Obutsudan drawing.
4. Practice in the classroom.

A Place for the Buddha (at home)

Purpose:

To learn that the Buddha and his teachings should be remembered not only on Sunday but everyday. To help achieve this objective, have children make their own shrine to use and care for at home.

Materials:

Story for the children to read
Directions for making shrine
Directions for making flower vases
Letter to parents

Presentation:

Talk with the children about making their own home shrine for the Buddha.

Is it necessary to have the home shrine as elaborate as the one at the temple?

Explain to the class that for our purposes, we shall only make a shrine and a flower holder.

Discuss some important things to be remembered about the shrine at home. (To keep it clean, to offer fresh flowers, to gassho to the Buddha with gratitude).

Caution children not to use candles or burn incense unless with parents.

There is a place in your home that is sacred. It is the little spot holding the obutsudan. You can stand before the obutsudan each day and recite the Nembutsu.

One day there was a very poor little Buddhist girl who was invited to the home of another girl. In the home of the other girl was a large, shiny obutsudan. How the poor little girl wanted to have such a beautiful obutsudan. She cried herself to sleep that night. But during the night she had a dream. In this dream a gentle voice spoke to her saying, "You must remember that it is not the size of the obutsudan nor the richness of it that is important. It is the spirit of the person who stands before it. Buddha is happy just to know you are faithful."

When the poor little girl awakened the next morning, she felt very happy. She took a little picture of the Buddha from a calendar. She pasted in on a clean piece of paper. Little flowers from the yard were carefully put in front of the picture and there was the most precious little obutsudan that she ever saw.

Directions for Making the Shrine (Obutsudan)

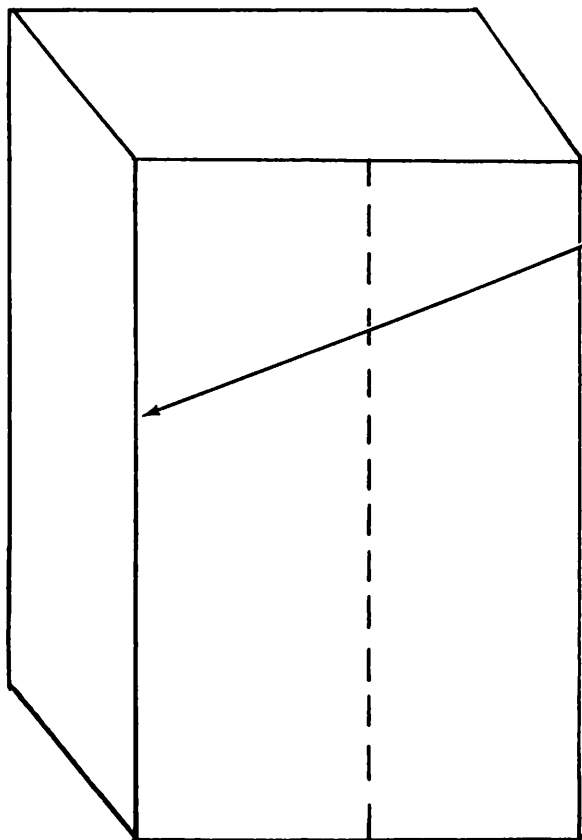
Materials:

1. Shoe Box
2. Contact Paper: Yellow, Black
3. Scissors
4. Ruler
5. Picture of Amida Buddha

Note:

Plan on this taking approximately 2 Sundays

Project: Obutsudan



1. Cut along dotted line.

2. Put masking tape along edges.

3. Cover inside with yellow contact paper.

4. Cover outside with black contact paper.

5. Put Amida Buddha's picture inside.

Making Pretty Flower Vases for the Home Shrine

1. Make flower vase from empty juice cans sprayed with spray paint. Glue artificial flowers and leaves on the outside of the can. Apply tissue paper around the can. Spray crystal clear paint over the tissue paper.
2. For a variation of the flower vase mentioned above, apply heavy glue on outside of can and roll in crushed dry egg shells. Spray with gold paint and set to dry.
(See Teacher's guide for more flower patterns)

Sugesstion:

1. When the shrine and vase have been completed by all members of the class, make arrangements with the minister to hold a mass "Nyubutsu Shiki" (a service to welcome the shrine of Amida Buddha into the home). Having such a service may help to add more meaning for the child rather than having him merely take home the shrine.

Each little shrine made by the children may be placed on a table before the shrine. This service can take place as part of the regular Sunday morning service.

2. As it is to be expected, these shrines made by the children may need to be replaced in the future by a more permanent type of shrine. The shrine can be purchased for the use of the entire family or a small shrine can be purchased as a gift for the children's room.

Sample Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

As you know, _____ is learning all about the symbols used upon the shrine.

The Dharma School lessons have covered objects on the shrine. It is gratifying to see the boys and girls come closer to understanding the symbolic meaning behind the use of flowers, lanterns, incense burning etc.

The adornments upon the shrine which they thought were mere decorations have more meaning for them now. The rituals to which they have been conforming through habit have become a necessary part of the service. They now understand the purpose behind what they have been taking for granted until this time.

The class has undertaken the project of making a shrine and flower holder to be used at home. Even if there is a shrine in your home, please accept the shrine that your child has made. Talk over with him/her about a suitable place in his/her room where the shrine may be placed. Help him/her to keep it clean, to gassho before the shrine and to place fresh flowers in the flower holder.

In this way, you will be helping your child to put into practice in his daily life what he/she has learned in the Dharma school.

Through observances of this nature at home, your child may in time be able to carry the image of Amida within his/her heart so that whether he/she has a shrine before him/her or not, the spirit of Amida Buddha may always be with him/her.

Buddhist Family

Purpose:

To help the children to recognize the family unit as a large part of the practice of Buddhism.

1. Our family centers its life around Amida Buddha.
2. Our family worships daily before the family shrine.
3. Our family attends the temple regularly and gives full support.
4. Our family builds a home that is physically and spiritually clean.
5. Our family loves the young and respects the elders.
6. Our family cherishes peace and harmony.
7. Our family upholds the dignity of work.
8. Our family values learning.
9. Our family extends a hand of compassion to all men.

Have children draw a picture of the whole family in which all members are taking part in an activity together.

Symbols - Flowers, Offerings, Candles, Incense and Gong

Purpose:

To familiarize the students with the Buddhist Symbols and meanings.

Materials:

1. **Flowers:** The flowers upon the shrine exhibit one of the most beautiful and yet most transient of the forms of nature.
See that fresh flowers have been offered. Since flowers are symbolic of transiency, artificial flowers should not be used.
2. **Offerings (Osonaye):** The osonaye is made in thanksgiving.
Rice has become the traditional main offering. As it was the staple food in Japan, it became the practice to offer the first portion of each day's rice to the Obutsudan. Other customs regarding offerings on important Buddhist occasions developed. They include:

New Year	— Omochi (okagomi)
Ohigan	— Odango
Hana-Matsuri	— Sweet tea and flowers
Obon	— Somen and things customarily connected with the Thanksgiving season and harvest such as cucumber, eggplant, peaches, melons, etc. (Kyuri ya nasubi ya momo suika...)

Offerings of Ohatsu are made in the sense of giving the first of the season to the Buddha. Other offerings, made to present the best or the most important items, may include the first slice of a birthday cake, presents received, pay checks, and letters.

3. **Candles:** The candle is used as an offering and symbolizes the light of Truth which illuminates the darkness. No one can see things in the dark but when the light is on everything becomes clear. In this way the candle is a reminder that Buddha's wisdom and compassion will show us clearly everything that is to be known about life and His Light will always shine brightly to guide us through each day. Light the candles and douse the match by fanning it or pinching it (not by blowing).
4. **Incense:** The incense we burn in front of the shrine reminds us that everything must burn away all our selfishness and put our whole trust in Buddha by reciting the Onenbusu—Nama Amida Butsu.
5. **Gong:** The gong is used during the service and the main significance of its use is in calling attention at the beginning of a sutra chant and in dividing the sutra into portions. Only those familiar with the sutras and the proper punctuation points should use the gong.

Flowers Upon the Shrine

Purpose:

To learn why flowers are placed upon the shrine.

As an offering to Amida Buddha

Materials:

Construction paper suitable for use as background paper

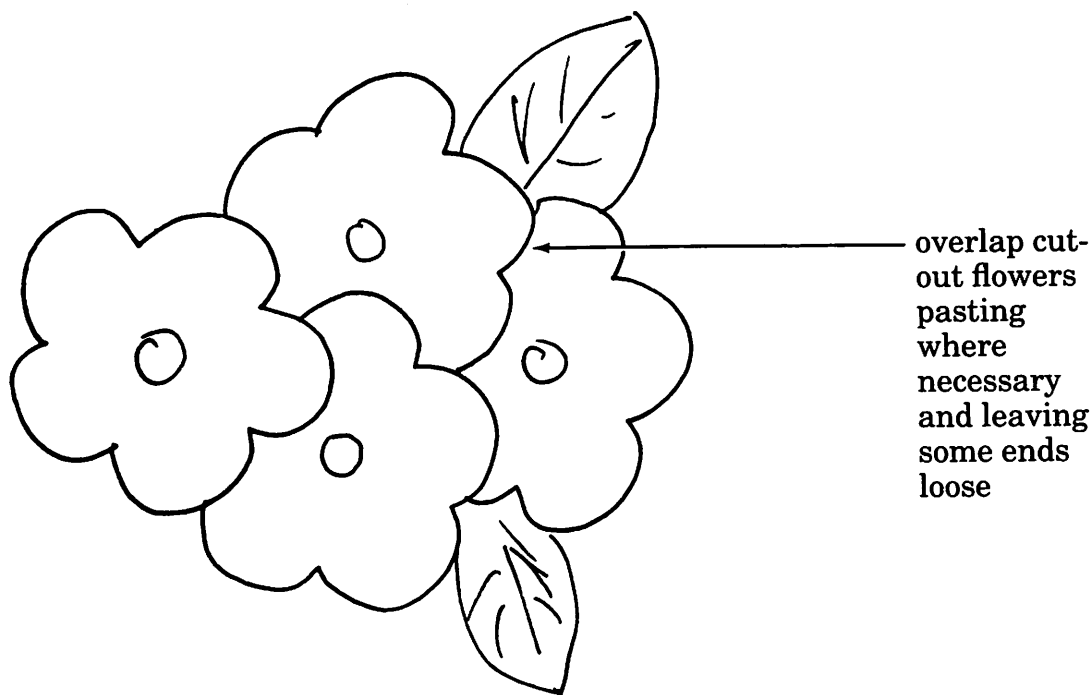
Outline drawing of vase to be cut and pasted on the background paper by children

Pictures of flowers from a flower catalog, flower magazine or wallpaper samples to be cut, arranged and pasted on background paper.

Paste, paste brushes

Scissors

When pasting flowers, a three dimensional effect can be created if flowers are not pasted down flat on the paper. Paste some flowers only half way and have another flower peeking from underneath. Children will have fun creating different effects. When working on art projects, discuss color combination, balance, etc.



Someone who arranges the flowers for the temple may be asked to come in and demonstrate the care with which flowers are arranged upon the altar.

Flowers Upon the Shrine

Purpose:

To learn why flowers are placed upon the shrine.

1. To remind us of the transiency of life.

Material:

Obtain, if possible, specimens from the same plant showing bud, blossom, and faded flower. Use a visual aid in the lesson.

Worksheet (Name Some Positive Ways in which You Have Changed).

Presentation:

One of the most important truths taught by the Buddha is that all things are constantly going through change. Although we cannot see change in ourselves, you and I are constantly going through the process of change. We cannot see change in ourselves because change takes place so gradually in human beings.

In animals, we can see change take place a little faster. A baby kitten born in the spring will be almost full grown by winter. (Show picture, if possible).

Compared to human beings and other animals, the life span of the flower is very short. Most flowers bloom and fade within a few days.

Flowers help us to remember about change that is taking place all around us.

Flowers remind us that just like them, we are constantly changing. Are we eating good food so that the changes in our body are toward good health? Are we trying to form good habits so that changes in our behavior are always toward good? Do we remember that our grandparents are aging? Do we help them in any way we can?

(Have children write as many things as they can under the correct heading)

Now

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Offering

Purpose:

To learn why rice is offered in front of the Shrine.

Preparation before class:

Contact Sensei to make arrangements for the class to see the rice offering upon the shrine. It seems like a very small point, but teaching becomes much more effective if children can actually see what is being discussed in the lesson.

Presentation:

Have you seen the tiny rice cake (manju) upon the Shrine? It is put there as a gift to Amida Buddha.

Placing a rice cake upon the shrine of Amida Buddha is a custom handed down to us from the East. To the people of the East, rice is very important because it is their main food. Hardly a day goes by without some form of rice being served on the table.

If you were to ask a young boy or girl from the East “What do you like best to eat?” The boy or girl may give you many different answers probably naming sweets and food to his special liking. But if you were to ask more directly, “What is the most important food in your country?” “What do your people depend upon and eat most?” The answer would most probably be rice.

From such answers, you may come to understand why they offer rice when they wish to offer something of their very best to show gratitude to the Buddha.

When we see the rice offered to the Buddha at the temple or at home, we must remind ourselves that we, too, should offer something of our very best to the Buddha.

Various Forms of Light Upon the Shrine

Purpose:

To learn why the candles and lanterns are placed on the shrine

Materials:

Story - Nanda's Lamp from “Buddhist Stories for Children”

Picture of lamp to be colored by children

Crayons

Presentation

Talk with the children about the value of light. Imagine for a moment how things would be without any light. Talk about the many ways in which light helps us. In a way, the Buddha's teaching is like a light. His teachings help us and guide us. When we behave badly, and we lose control of ourselves, it is like we are in darkness. We need the light of the Buddha's teachings. to help us.

Let's close our eyes and think of the things we did this week. We tried to act as good as possible, but were there times when we could have acted better? The lights upon the shrine remind us not to remain in darkness but to brighten ourselves with the Buddha's teachings.

One form of light used on the shrine is the candle. The other form of light is the lantern.

Light

Purpose:

To understand the wisdom of Amida Buddha.

To understand that the candle light in the shrine represents the wisdom of Amida Buddha

Procedure:

1. Begin class with gassho.
2. Motivation: Pretend that you are in a very dark room. All of a sudden you discover that you don't know where the door is. It is very, very dark and still. How do you feel? (scared perhaps?) What would you do to find a way out of the room? You begin to move around on the floor on your hands and knees, and then your right foot touches something hard and it moves a little. You quickly place your hand by your right foot to find the object. You've got it! It is long and has a button on top of it. You press the button and a light appears on the ceiling. What do you suppose it is? (a flashlight!) You found a flashlight. As you move the flashlight around, you begin to laugh at yourself because now you can see that the door was right in front of you all the time.
3. Presentation: Our bad thoughts and wrong deeds are the darkness found in the room. The door stands for Nirvana which is very peaceful and beautiful. The flashlight is like Amida Buddha's wisdom with it we can find the path to Nirvana. We can now understand the power and greatness of Amida Buddha's wisdom. Amida Buddha's wisdom is Amida Buddha's light. It shines everywhere. The power of Amida Buddha's light is so great that we can, by placing our faith in him, see the path to Nirvana clearly with our eyes. (Remember how much easier it was to find the door with the flashlight?) By placing our faith in Amida Buddha we can rise above the bad thoughts and deeds because Amida Buddha's light will always show us the path that leads us to Nirvana.

We place a candle in our Obutsudan to remind us of Amida Buddha's wisdom. Remember that Amida Buddha's wisdom is Amida Buddha's light that shines on us always.

Who can tell us where the candle can be found in our Obutsudan? (Show a picture of an Obutsudan). Discuss all the things we find and can see in our Obutsudan.

Lanterns

Purpose:

To learn about the beautiful legend connected with the hanging of lanterns.

Note to teachers: Like all legends handed down to us from long ago, there are variations of the same story.

For example, some say the principal character in the story was a little girl rather than a grown woman. Also, the way in which the girl or woman got the money to buy oil differs according to legend.

According to one legend, the girl bought the oil by selling her hair. Another legend tells that the girl sold the ring given to her by her mother as a keepsake.

Nevertheless, no matter how facts connected with the legend have been changed, the theme itself has always remained the same. The purity of giving to others is emphasized in all.

Presentation:

1. Before reading the story, "Nanda's Lamp," it might be well for the teacher to go over difficult words and names of places such as Jetavana Vihara, disciples, Moggallana etc.

2. Introduce story by talking about lights.

When it gets dark at night and you cannot see, what do you do?

Before the electric light was invented, what did people do to help them see at night?

Do you think Buddha used oil lamps?

Do you think he purchased the oil himself?

Today's story is about a poor woman who gave oil for one of Buddha's lamps. Let us read this story carefully, for some say that the reason for hanging lanterns upon the altar comes from this story.

3. After reading Nanda's Lamps, discuss with the boys and girls different kinds of giving:
 - a. giving when there is ample reserve
 - b. giving to keep up with others
 - c. giving to feel better than others
 - d. giving out of pure heart.

Nanda's Lamp

In India, long ago, there lived a poor woman named Nanda. She was poor indeed; so poor, that she could barely get food for herself to eat. But she was a kind woman and carried deep faith in Buddha's teachings.

In those days, it was a custom for the people to offer gifts to Buddha and his disciples. Everyone, from the King to the poorest beggar, offered whatever he could.

Nanda was filled with desire to offer something to Buddha, but alas, she had not even a penny to offer.

However, one day, she came in possession of a few pennies. It made her happy to think that now she could offer something to Buddha. After thinking for awhile, she decided to buy some oil to light the lamp of the Jetavana Vihara where Buddha stayed.

When evening came, the many lamps flickered brightly in a long line in and out of the Jetavana Vihara. Of course, included in the row was one lit by Nanda. Nanda saw this, and her heart filled with joy as she went home.

The next morning, a strange thing happened. All the lamps burned out during the long night except one. This one still burned brightly in the sun. Moggallana, the disciple, saw this and said to himself, "There is no need to burn the lamp in this sunlight," and tried to wave it out. Strangely, the light did not go out. He tried harder this time, but still the light remained.

Buddha passed by at this time and asked what Moggallana was doing. When Moggallana explained, Buddha smiled gently and said, "A very poor woman offered the oil to light this lamp. Rather than buy something for herself, she thought of others. Knowing of the woman's kindness, the shop owner gave her the best oil. Moggallana, when things are shared and offered to others, the deed will shine brightly like the lamp that was lit by Nanda."

Burning of Incense

Purpose:

To learn about Incense burning

Materials:

story, "Incense"

Presentation:

1. Tell story "Incense"

When we burn incense it helps us to remember to think kind and beautiful thoughts, we must try to get all the bad thoughts out of our minds.

2. Practice incense burning. Let each child have his turn.

- (1) Walk up to the front of the shrine and bow at a distance of about two steps in front of the Incense table.
- (2) Step up to the table and with the right hand take a pinch of powdered incense and drop it into the burning-incense bowl.
- (3) Gassho and bow.
- (4) Take two or three steps backward, bow and return to your seat.

Since it is very easy for many children to forget the procedure for burning incense, it might help them if the teacher reminds them why certain things are done first and other things follow afterwards.

We bow first to show our respect to the Buddha. (Gassho is not done at this time because gassho acknowledges gratitude to the Buddha).

Next, we burn incense to remind ourselves to do away with our petty thoughts and selfish acts.

Now is the time to gassho in gratitude. What will you do next? Would you take your seat immediately after gassho?

Would you leave your friend's home silently without saying "goodbye?" (No).

When you have come before the shrine of Amida Buddha to burn incense, the last thing that you do is to take a few steps backward and bow to the Buddha before taking your seat.

Note:

Most of all the older religions in the world use incense. A lovely, fragrant odor gives us a happy uplifting feeling. In the same way, we draw away from an evil odor. The incense used in Buddhist Temples is specially made to have a gentle fragrance and to fill our minds with pure thoughts. Watch the incense slowly burn away and then make a strong resolution to try and burn away any bad, unkind or selfish thoughts. Let every breath you breathe out into the world be one of sweetness and love. This will be the incense you carry with you day and night. When we smell incense our mind immediately pictures our peaceful temple. If you are angry or upset at home, try burning incense before your obutsudan...your mind will become happy.

Incense

Patti's friends began to wonder.... "What is she doing? Where does Patti go everyday?" They would see her at one moment and then she would be gone almost like magic. Where?

Sensei began to wonder, "What is Patti doing?"

Everyday, Patti came to the temple and tiptoed before the shrine. At first Sensei thought that maybe she had forgotten something from the Sunday before. But Patti never seemed to have anything when she left the temple. She just went in and a minute later, went out.

Sometimes Patti came in the mornings. Sometimes she came in the afternoons and after school. Day after day went by and Sensei would hear little footsteps going through the temple door and out again.

One day Sensei happened to be sitting in quiet meditation before the shrine. He was surprised to see the little girl come before the shrine most lovingly and happily. It was very quiet in there. Sensei did not move. He did not want to frighten her.

Patti walked before the shrine and took a tiny pinch of incense and put it in the incense burner.

Sensei wondered... "My! Does that small girl have matches too?"

But Patti did not have matches. She did not mind that the incense was not burning. She just put her palms together in gassho taking three little steps backward from the burner, she bowed happily.

“Good morning,” said Patti very softly. Then she tiptoed out to play again.

After that, Sensei was always very happy to see Patti or to hear the quick little footsteps. He knew there was one small girl who remembered the beloved Buddha every day. How he wished that all little boys and girls would stop, even for one minute, to stand before the shrine.

Of course some of you may live too far away to come and offer incense each day. But you can do the same at home. Every Buddhist home has a small shrine or even a picture of the Buddha. Mother and Daddy will be happy to burn the incense for you. They will show you just what to do every day. You too can say, “Good morning” or “Good night.” And of course you know how to say THE THREE TREASURES:

I take refuge in Buddha.

I take refuge in Dharma.

I take refuge in Sangha.

Symbols-Shrine Image, Gold Wisteria Crest And Dharmacakra

Purpose:

To familiarize the students with the Buddhist symbols and their meanings.

Materials:

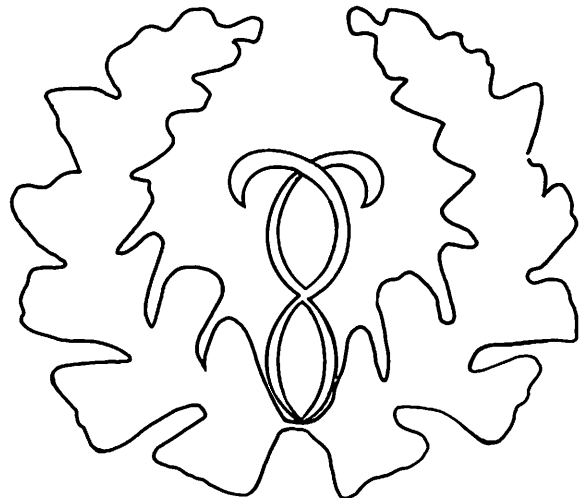
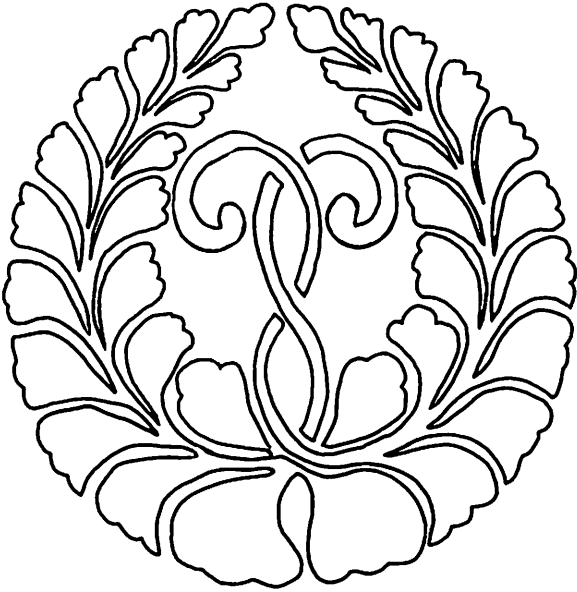
1. Statue or Image of Amida Buddha
2. Picture of Wisteria crest
3. Picture of Dharmackra

Procedures:

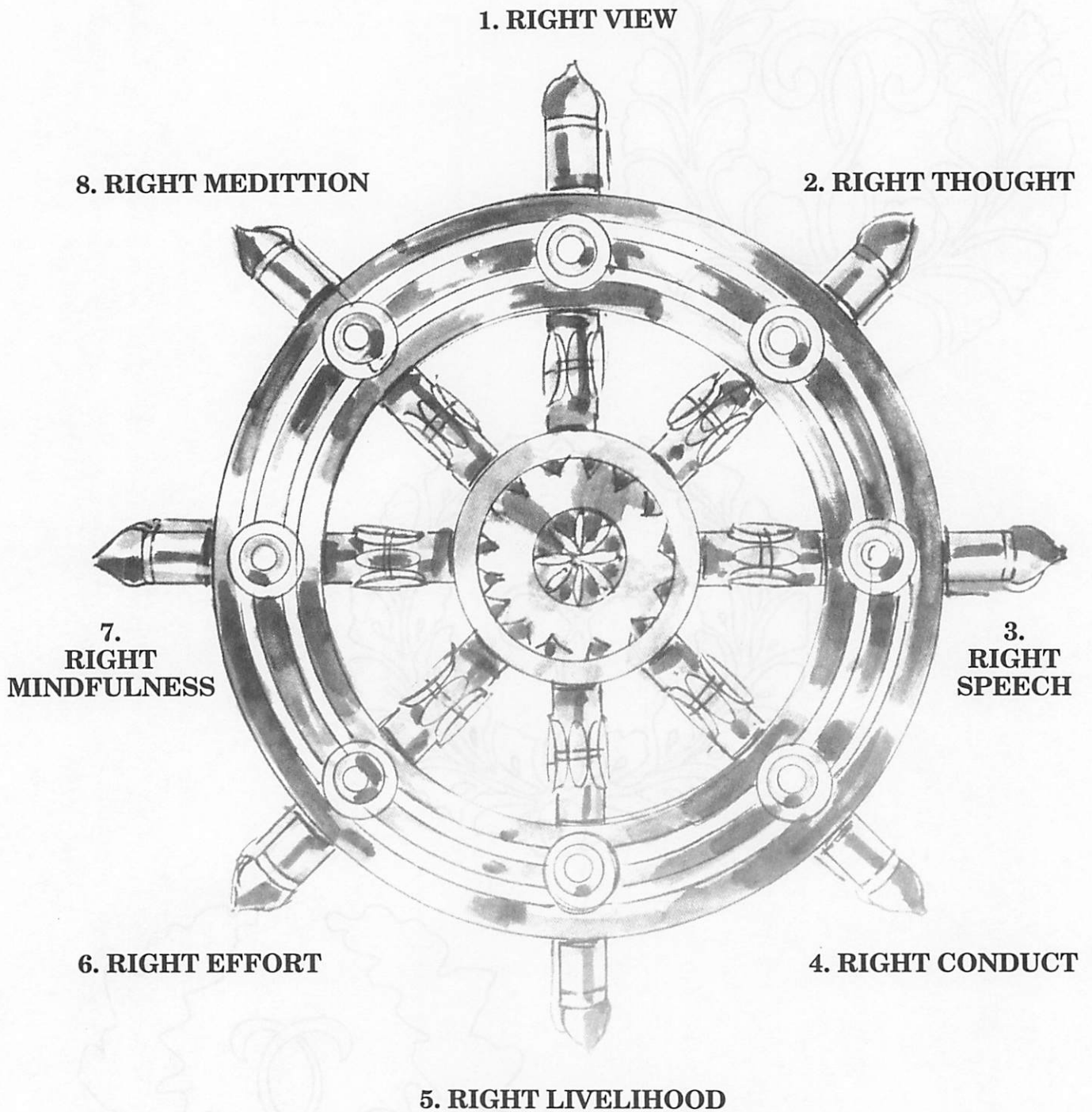
1. Review Central Altar Image in previous lesson.
2. Explain the following simply:
 - a. Gold: In shrine decoration the gold color is used for the reason that gold is untarnished with age, and, in a like manner, Buddha's teaching is forever pure and untarnished.
 - b. Crest: The double wisteria forming a circle is the family crest of Shinran Shonin, therefore is the official crest of the Jodo Shinshu Denomination of Buddhism. The wisteria vine in full blossom hangs gracefully towards the earth. We Buddhists, just as the wisteria, must express feelings of humility and humbleness before the shrine of Amida Buddha.
 - c. Dharmacakra (The Buddhist Wheel): The Dharmacakra, The Wheel of the Law, the Wheel of Righteousness, or the Wheel of Life is one of the well known and accepted symbols of Buddhism. A few years ago this symbol was adopted as one of the official symbols to be used by the Buddhist Churches of America as the Buddhist symbol. Historically, this design existed in the time of Sakyamuni Buddha and it denoted authority. When Sakyamuni Buddha gave his first sermon to the five disciples at Benares Deer park, this sermon became known as the sermon which started "the rolling of the teaching (Dharma)." The wheel is symbolic of this event.

The turning of this wheel means to preach or set in motion the Buddha's doctrine. The circle represents all encompassing Wisdom. The spokes are the rules of Right Conduct and their equi-length is Justice. There are eight "varying aspects of life (gain, loss, fame, ignominy, praise, blame, happiness and sorrow)." The hub represents the Modesty and Thoughtfulness. The axle represents the Dharma on which the wheel of life turns in constant birth and rebirth. When the wheel becomes the true "Wheel of Righteousness," it becomes steady; this represents Nirvana.
3. Have students color the symbols. and write a few words to explain the symbols.

Wisteria



DHARMACAKRA



NOBLE EIGHT-FOLD PATH



RIGHT VIEWS

I shall seek
the thruth.



RIGHT THOUHTS

I shall have pure
thoughts.



RIGHT SPEECH

I shall speak
truthfully



RIGHT CONDUCT

I shall act truthfully.



RIGHT LIVELIHOOD

I shall live
honestly.



RIGHT EFFORT

I shall follow the
teachings of
Buddha.



RIGHT MINDFULNESS

I shall thing of
the Buddha.



RIGHT MEDITATION

I shall recite the
Nembutsu.

Tisarana

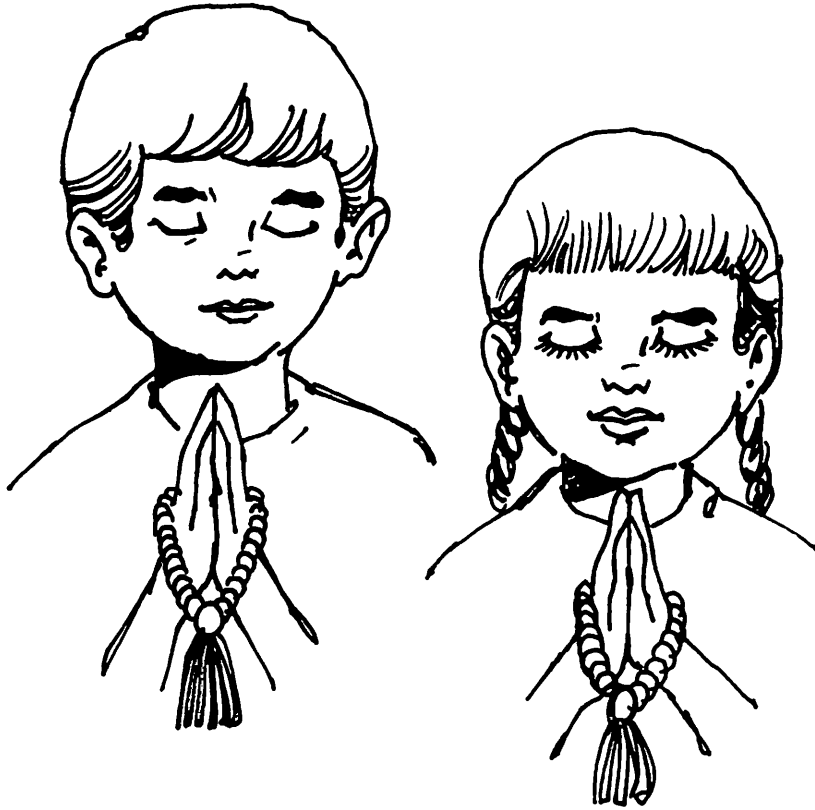
The Three Treasures are called the Tisarana. In some Buddhist books they are written in the Pali language.

Buddham saranam gacchami
(I take my refuge in Buddha)

Dhamman saranam gacchami
(I take my refuge in Dharma)

Sangham saranam gacchami
(I take my refuge in Sangha)

Buddhist children recite the Tisarana every day.



The Three Treasures

I take my refuge in Buddha
I take my refuge in Dharma
I take my refuge in Sangha

I take refuge in Buddha. This means that you truly trust Amida Buddha. Many millions of children all over the world daily say....I take refuge in Buddha.

I take refuge in the Dharma. Dharma means teachings. This means teachings. This means that you have faith in the lessons that you learn at Dharma School. You know that they are full of truth and wisdom. You know that these teachings will lead you to happiness. Your mind will grow strong. Your heart will be loving and kind. You will learn to love all people and all creatures. The Dharma will show you how to be brave and not pay any attention to silly superstitions....to think about nice things and never about ugly things. Those who follow the Dharma learn not to speak in an unkind way or to tell untrue stories about yourself or anyone else. The Dharma tells us to be friendly and not to go around looking for trouble. Buddhist children try to help others so that they won't become selfish and want too many things. The teachings of the Buddha show us how to think before we speak and then to think mostly about Buddha and the wonderful teachings. The Dharma shows us how to live in such a way that our life will be a happier one.

I take refuge in the Sangha. Sangha means all of us. This means that we trust one another. We try to be fair and helpful to all those that we meet day after day.

By putting your faith in Buddha...Dharma....and Sangha, you will grow loving and wise. You will be a happy Buddhist child.

The Five Precepts

Purpose:

To instill in the minds of the children the basic values of our religion.

Materials:

1. The Five Precepts
2. Picture and story, **Buddha Rescuing the Dove from Devadatta**
3. Chalkboard or chart, with the precepts listed

Procedures:

1. Introduce the five precepts to the class.
THE FIVE PRECEPTS ARE:
 1. I shall not harm any living thing.
 2. I shall not take what does not belong to me.
 3. I shall not do anything impure.
 4. I shall not tell falsehoods.
 5. I shall not take harmful foods and drinks.
2. Tell the story of **Buddha Rescuing the Dove from Devadatta** which explains the first of the five precepts, and is given below.
Siddhartha's playmate was Devadatta, his cousin. One day the young prince saw a dove fluttering to earth with an arrow pierced in his wings. Prince Siddhartha, with a deep compassion in his heart, took the arrow and was about to nurse the bird back to health when Devadatta came to claim the dove because he had shot it down with his arrow. An argument ensued. The two boys brought the matter before a wise man who finally decided to give the dove to the Prince. The dove belonged to the one who gave it life and not to the one who attempted to take it away.
3. Have a group discussion of the story.
4. Begin the Class:
ALL I CAN
I will do all the good I can,
In all the ways I can,
In all the places I can,
At all the times I can,
As long as ever I can,
Thank you, Amida Buddha
5. Which one of the boys do you think did the kindest act? Who did the Prince grow up to be? Which one of the precepts did the story show?
6. Some children may have pets at home; ask them how they may sometimes be cruel to their pets, ask them how they can be kind to them.
7. Have a discussion of the rest of the precepts.
8. Color the picture

PRINCE SIDDHARTHA AND DEVADATTA





Symbols-Buddhist Flag And Lotus

Purpose:

To familiarize the students with the Buddhist symbols and its meanings.

Materials:

Picture of the Buddhist Flag and Lotus.

Procedures:

1. Explain the following:

a. The Buddhist Flag:

The six colored Buddhist Flag is the combined idea of the late Colonel Henry Steel Olcott, co-founder of the Theosophical Society, who afterwards became a Buddhist, and the Venerable Hiddaduve Sri Smangala, who was the foremost scholar in Ceylon in his day.

The six colors of the flag represent the sura of the Buddha's body, blue, golden, red, white and orange, and the last a combination of these five. It has been in use in Ceylon since 1882. In 1950 at the first World Buddhist Conference held at Colombo, it was resolved that it be accepted as the International Buddhist Symbol. The proposal found universal acceptance and it is now used by Buddhist groups everywhere. It has thus greatly helped the feeling of unity and solidarity among Buddhist in all countries.

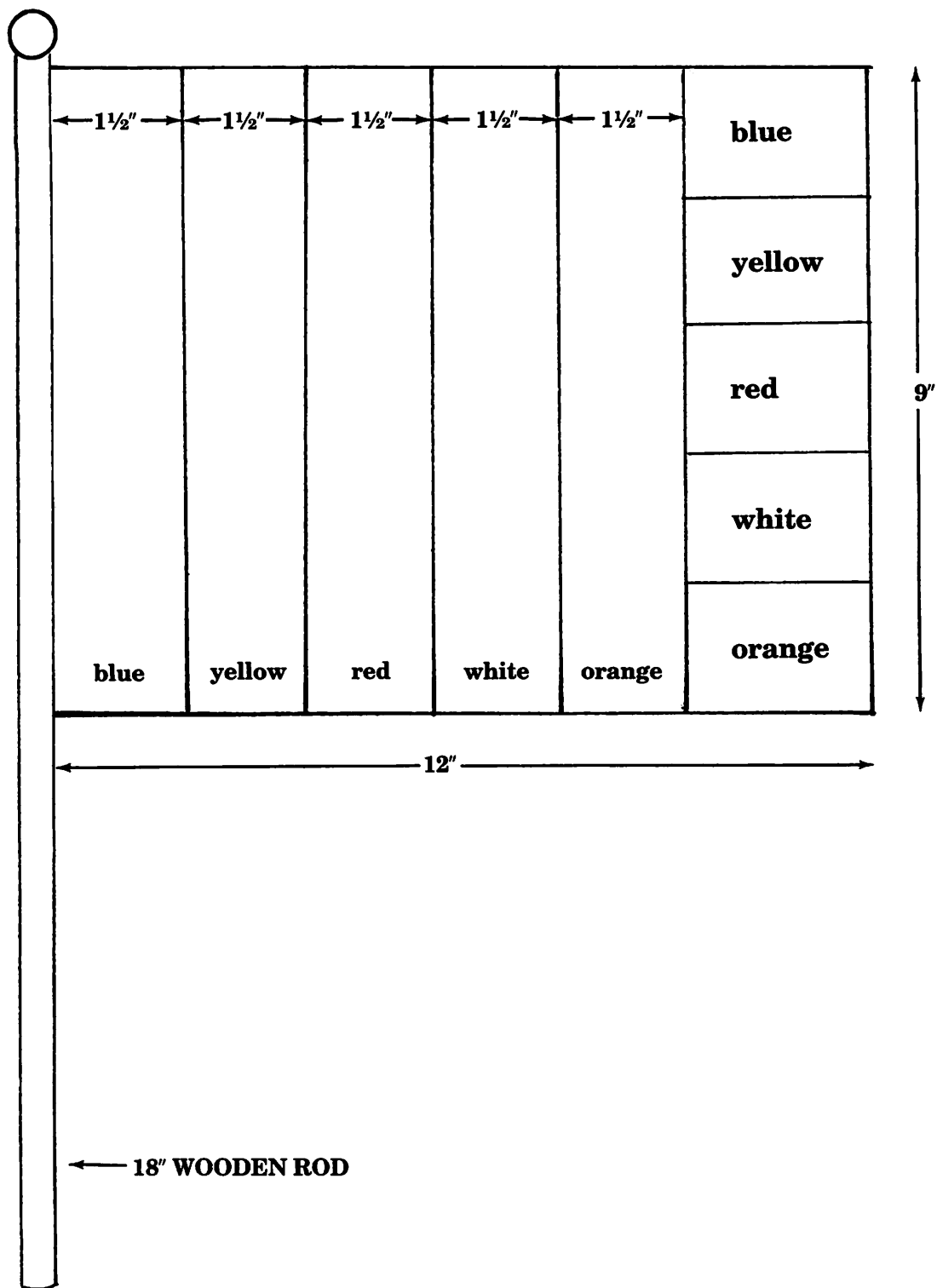
b. Lotus:

The Lotus has its roots in the mud, comes up through the water, breaks through the surface of the water and makes a perfect blossom of exquisite beauty and purity to meet the first ray of sunshine. So too, we humans have our roots in the mud of darkness and ignorance. It was the privilege of Gautama Buddha to lift himself above the surface of the water. He is the lotus-flower of mankind. His followers should, therefore, be single-minded and whole-hearted, ever striving to go straight through the quagmire and foul water of passion and desire until they are free and pure enough to meet the first ray of the Immeasurable light of the Eternal Buddha.

2. Color the Buddhist Flag or lotus with crayons or water colors.

3. Make the flag with construction paper.

Buddhist Flag



The significance of Amida Buddha in the Shrine

The figure of Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Infinite Compassion and Wisdom, occupies the central position in the shrine. In some temples and home shrines, instead of the statue, a scroll bearing the Japanese characters, *Namu Amida Butsu*, meaning “I place my faith in Amida Buddha,” or a picture of Amida is hung.

The Truth of the universe, absolute and inexpressible, is represented by the form of Amida Buddha before human eyes. Amida is standing with his right hand held up in a gesture of reassurance, dispelling the fears of mankind, and his left hand lowered in a gesture of conferring blessings on all. Instead of being seated in meditation, Amida Buddha is standing. This posture symbolizes his eternal activity of bringing enlightenment to all things.

The adherents of Buddhism do not worship the figure of Amida Buddha but bow their heads in reverence before the Wisdom and Compassion of Amida, which the statue symbolizes.

The picture or statue of Amida Buddha is usually depicted standing with eyes half closed, with right hand up making a circle with index finger and thumb, with left hand palm upward stretched out toward the worshippers. The statue of Amida as seen from the side is leaning slightly forward. All these have religious meaning.

The gentle facial expression reflects infinite wisdom, serenity, compassion and love. The statue having the eyes half-open and half-closed shows a perfect harmony of outer and inner life as the half of the vision is directed outward externally (concern for outer world) and at the same time the other half of the vision is directed internally for proper self-reflection. The right index finger and thumb forming a circle depicts complete harmony. The left hand palm upward expresses the dynamic compassion of the Buddha to save all beings. The slightly leaning form of Amida’s statue indicates that the Buddha’s compassion and saving power reaches all beings.

The rays of light behind Amida Buddha symbolizes the light to illuminate the dark world of ignorance and greed. The rays are drawn forty-eight in number which represent the great forty-eight Vows of Amida to embrace every living being.

The Shrine of Amida Buddha (Obutsudan)

Purpose:

To help children to understand what the main object (statue, name or picture) in the shrine symbolizes.

Material:

1. A large picture of Amida Buddha
2. A scroll bearing the Japanese characters “*Namu Amida Butsu*”
3. A statue of Amida Buddha (see The Teacher’s Guide for more information. *Jishin Kyo Ninshin*).

Presentation:

The main object is the shrine. Within the shrine is Amida Buddha. There are three ways in which Amida Buddha is represented in the shrine. (Show the 3 different materials mentioned above). Some people use the picture of the Buddha. Some use a scroll with “Namu Amida Butsu” written in Japanese. Others use a statue. Which one does your temple use?

You will learn in the lessons why the word Namu Amida Butsu has a very special meaning, but now let us turn our attention to the picture or statue of Amida. Knowing about the statue or picture of Amida Buddha is a lesson in itself because it tells us so much. (Constantly refer to the statue or picture to show the children what you are talking about. Point to the half opened eyes, his standing figure, the position of hands, the 48 rays).

Allow children, at any time, to ask pertinent questions. Make sure they understand what you are saying.

Amida Buddha and The Buddhist Shrine

Purpose:

To help the children realize the presence of Amida Buddha

At this grade level, the presence of Amida Buddha can be taught through the study of the shrine. The shrine is a beautiful reminder of Amida and his teachings, a visible symbol of Amida Buddha. As children of the Amida Buddha, it is the first place we turn to in happiness or sorrow.

Procedure:

We are going to learn about Amida Buddha through a careful study of the shrine.

Show a picture or visit the temple shrine.

Put cut-outs on the board as each part of the shrine is discussed.

First we will start with the figure of Amida Buddha. Ask children, “Can you give me some words which would tell about this statue? What kinds of feelings do you feel? How does it look to you? A response might be, “He looks kind.” Write the words on the board. Ask for an example of kindness. Affirm all responses to encourage as much free participation as possible. After all responses are acknowledged, you can say, “This statue of Amida Buddha is all that we’ve mentioned and more.

1. Notice the gentle expression of the face: It shows compassion (love), wisdom, and serenity (peacefulness).
2. The eyes are half open and half closed: They show concern for the outside world and at the same time looks within.
3. The right index and thumb forming a circle shows complete peace.
4. The left hand palm upward shows the powerful love of Buddha to bless and save all living things.
5. The slightly leaning form shows that Buddha’s love reaches all living things.

6. The halo or rays of light behind Amida Buddha are 48 in number and stands for his vows (promises) to help everyone. They glow to light the dark world of ignorance and selfishness.

This statue reminds us of Buddha's teachings and his love for all beings. We bow our heads in respect for the great love and wisdom of Amida Buddha. When we put our hands together in gassho, it's our way of saying, "Thank you, Amida, for all the wonderful teachings."

Instead of the statue in some temples and home shrines, the wisdom and compassion of Amida Buddha is in the form of a picture or written in Japanese, "Namu Amida Butsu".

Below the figure of Amida are three important items which help us to remember Amida:

1. The candle that glows in the darkness, telling us that we should not live in dark and ignorance. Accent the Amida's live light.
2. A vase holding green leaves all year round. The vase gives the leaves water to remain fresh. In the same way, the Buddha gives us his wisdom for a peaceful and happy life.
3. Burning incense which purifies the temple. It reminds us that we are together with Amida; that Amida Buddha is always with us.

The shrine is our way of saying, "Thank you, Buddha." We show our gratitude by sharing our daily food; i.e., rice, fruits.

We also thank Amida Buddha for his teachings by placing offering of flowers, candles and burning incense and by saying, Namu Amida Butsu.

Lamps light up the shrine as Amida's light brightens every corner of our world.

The gong rings to tell us that the service is about to begin and seems to say, "Let us listen to Amida's teachings."

Activity:

1. A shrine skit (see page 47)
Prepare a flannel board study of the parts of the shrine as used in the lesson. The children are assigned the parts, and as the teacher reads the skit, they are to position the parts correctly on the flannel board.
2. Make a Buddha statue
Prepare dough art:
1 cup salt
2 cups flour
1 cup hot water
Knead until smooth
Have the children make a statue of Buddha with this dough. Take advantage of the fact that this dough art statue is easily misshapened or crushed. Offer thoughts as Amida Buddha is not like this statue of impermanence (as visible symbols would be.) It is his teachings which are permanent and important to us.

Skit: A Buddhist Shrine

“This morning our class is going to do a little skit involving the Buddhist Shrine. The shrine is the sacred place in the temple or the home, the first place we turn to in happiness or sorrow. It is a visible symbol of the presence of Amida, a beautiful reminder of Amida.

Position the statue on the board. Assign parts of the shrine to the children and explain that they are to position the parts on the flannel board as they hear their names.

“See how peacefully the Buddha stands in the shrine! Glowing with warmth and reminding us of his promise to help everyone!

(Name of child) Will hang our lamp on the shrine to light up the darkness, as the light of Amida’s love reaches every corner of the world. Glow brightly, little lamp!

() is bringing in our gong. it rings loud and clear to tell us that the service is about to begin. It seems to say, “let us listen to Amida’s teachings”.

The shrine is also our way of saying, “Thank you, Buddha, for your kindness. What a wonderful way of showing our gratitude, by sharing our daily food with Buddha.

() Will present our offering of rice in the shrine.

() will present our bowl of fruits.

() will burn the incense in the shrine.

Class, let us all now Gassho in front of the shrine we have built and say, Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu.

Narration may be divided by two teachers; Commentaries by one teacher; children participation by another.

AMIDA'S GIFT

Purpose:

To teach the children Amida's greatest gift is Faith. To teach the meaning through the Three Treasures.

I take refuge in Buddha.

I take refuge in Dharma.

I take refuge in Sangha.

Introduction:

I take refuge in Buddha means that you truly trust Amida Buddha. You love him, he loves you. By putting your trust in Amida you become a Buddhist child.

I take refuge in Dharma means trusting in the lessons that you learn in Sunday School. You know they are full of truth and wisdom. You know that these teachings will lead you to happiness. Your mind will grow strong. Your heart will be loving and kind. The Dharma will show you how to be brave and not pay attention to silly superstitions...to think nice things. The teachings of the Buddha shows us how to live in such a way that our life will be a happier one.

I take refuge in Sangha means to trust one another. We try to be fair and helpful to everybody that we meet day after day.

By taking refuge in Buddha...Dharma...Sangha, you will grow loving and wise. You will be a happy Buddhist child. This is His gift to us.

Materials:

1. Chart or mobile with the Three Treasures on it.
2. Ojuzu
3. Story: FAITH IN AMIDA BUDDHA

Procedures:

Recite Three Treasures

Show chart or mobile of the Three Treasures

Explain meaning as you show the chart, as given in the introduction.

Also show the ojuzu and reinforce the meaning.

Large bead — Amida Buddha

Two side beads — Mother and Father

Other beads — All of us (sangha)

Tassel — Amida's teachings (Dharma)

Tell story: FAITH IN AMIDA BUDDHA

Make a circular mobile. Write the Three Treasures on it.

I Put My Faith In Amida

What does it mean to put your faith in Amida?

First, let me tell you of all the happenings about our house. Bright and early in the spring, Mrs. Robin Redbreast took over the eaves of our front porch. Before long, two little robins were chirping. Every time Mother Robin left the nest, they watched and watched with wide open mouths until she returned. They never seemed to be thinking about anything else except to wait for their Mommie. The baby robins put all their faith in Mother Robin.

Then one morning about four o'clock, we awakened to hear COO...COO...COO...COO... Guess where? In the eaves at the back of the house. Looking out the window we saw one baby pigeon. We watched the baby pigeon every day. Soon, he was following his mother, flying to the roof. Back and forth, back and forth, from the eaves to the garage, from the garage to the eaves. The little pigeon trusted his mother. He put his faith in her.

Have you watched the tiny kittens creeping close to Mother Cat? Have you seen fluffy fat puppies crowding one another getting closer to their Mother? Have you watched little brother or sister hold their arms out to Mommie?

All Mommies and Daddies watch over their little ones with love.

AMIDA WATCHES OVER ALL OF US WITH AN EVEN GREATER LOVE. AMIDA LOVES AND GUIDES US. WE PUT OUR FAITH IN AMIDA. WE TRUST HIS TEACHINGS. WE ARE HAPPY TO SAY....

I PUT MY FAITH IN AMIDA.

Namu Amida Butsu

Purpose:

Learn that the Nembutsu is recited in thankfulness to Amida Buddha.

Materials:

1. Suitable pictures that depict harmony in nature and harmony among living things.
2. Illustration showing Amida

Presentation:

Certain words are recited whenever we put our hands together in gassho. Can anyone tell me what the words are? (Namu Amida Butsu).

We recite "Namu Amida Butsu," did you know that we are calling Amida's name?

(Print plainly on the board the words, "Namu Amida Butsu." Underline the word Amida to show boys and girls how Amida's name is in the Nembutsu). (Reference "Jishin Kyo Ninshin")

We say Namu Amida Butsu reciting Amida's name to help us remember that Amida is always with us.

When we say his name “Namu Amida Butsu” it is as if we are saying in response, “Yes, you have reached me. Thank you. Thank you for helping me to remember all the things you stand for. Thank you for helping me to see your way.” It is with these feelings that we say namu Amida Butsu over and over again in thankfulness.

You may have wondered why we recite the Nembutsu so often during the services, but when we remember that we are saying thank you to Amida Buddha, it really doesn’t matter how often these words are recited, does it?

Repeat the Nembutsu with the children in class.

Note:

“American Shin Shu followers do not recite Nembutsu spontaneously. Children should be trained to lose their self-consciousness when reciting the Nembutsu. Encourage them to say Nembutsu several times in between in half-whispers” — to discourage the idea that Nembutsu is recited only in response to the Nembutsu as led by the minister or the chairman.”

Amida’s Wisdom

Introduction:

Amida is all encompassing knowledge. His wisdom is everywhere and embraces all living things.

Materials:

1. Outline of a face
2. Cut-outs of facial features.
3. Large handkerchief.

Procedure:

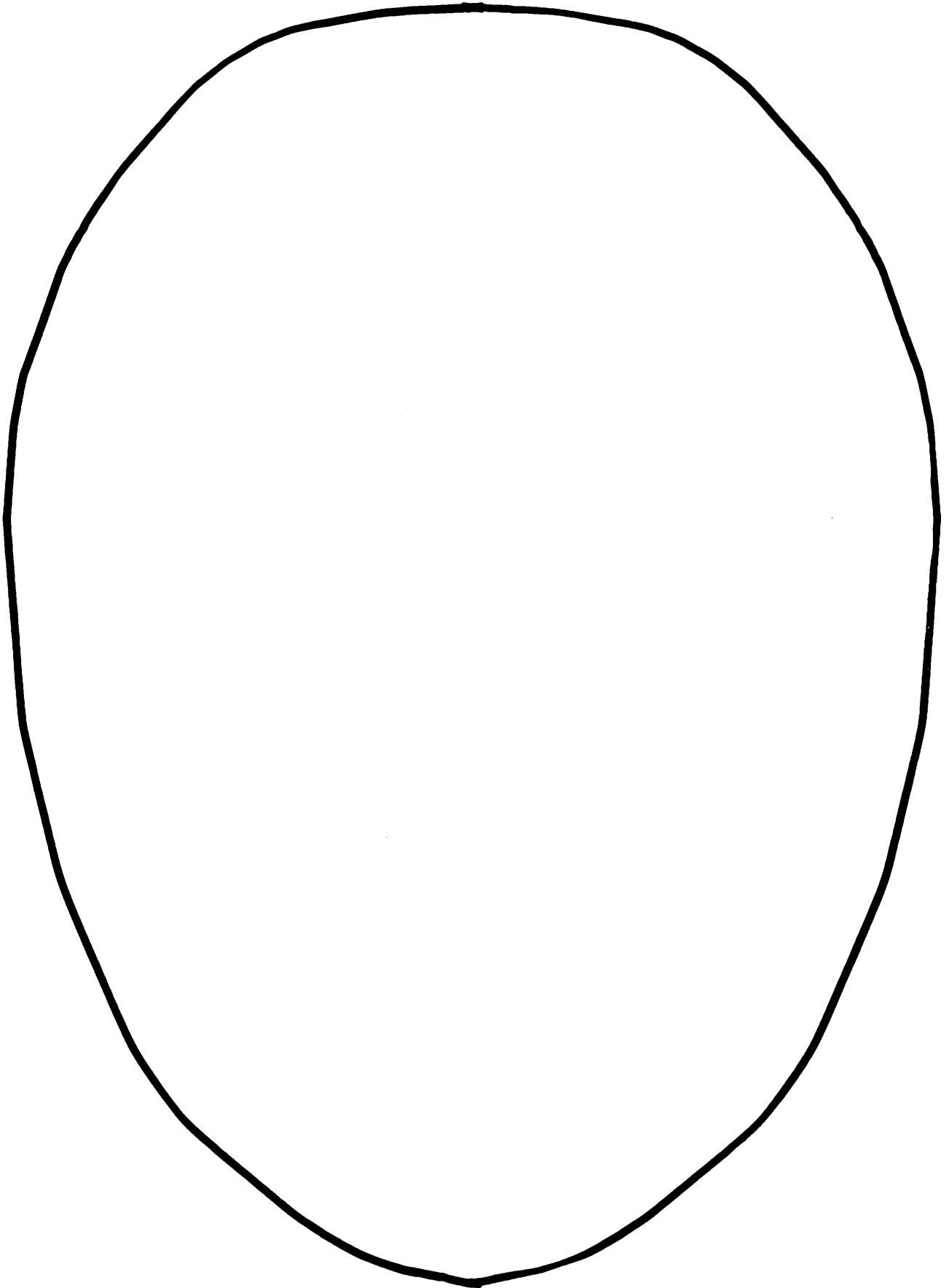
Give the introduction.

Discuss some of the daily guidances of our parents, i.e., health, safety. How wise they are; and Amida’s guidance is even greater.

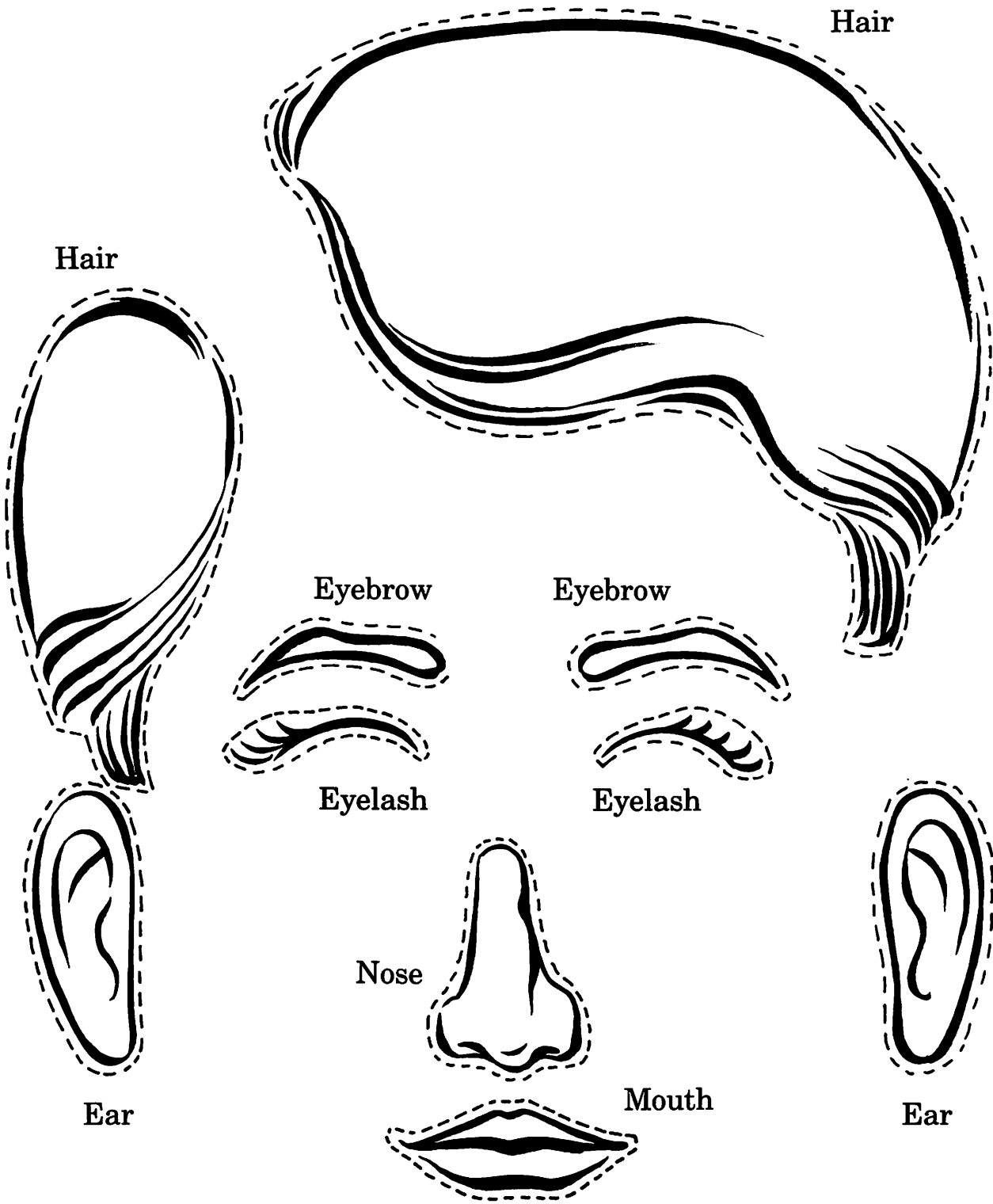
Do the Blindfold Game.

1. Have the children arrange the facial features on the face.
2. Blindfold them, and repeat. Compare the results.
3. Explain that Amida Buddha’s wisdom is so consistent and complete, Amida is never blindfolded and never makes the mistakes we did on the face.
4. Read story of “Blind Boys and an Elephant”. When telling story have children sit in a circle or around the shrine.
5. Make an elephant out of stiff paper.
6. Do a dot to dot elephant.
7. Discuss the discussion to Amida’s Wisdom.

Blindfold Game Face



Blindfold Game Face



Blind Boys And An Elephant

Eight blind boys were once put in charge of a governess. One day they were told a story of an elephant; but naturally, as they had never seen such an animal before, they did not know what an elephant was like. So they asked the governess to have an elephant brought before them so that they could “see” it by means of touch. The governess cordially accepted the boys’ request and ordered her assistant to fetch an elephant.

When the elephant was brought before the boys, she said, “Now, my dear boys, here is a big elephant before you. Feel it with your fingers and describe to me just what you think an elephant is like.” Thus saying, she led them to the elephant.

All the boys began to feel the huge animal most carefully. None of the boys, however, attempted to feel all around the elephant, but clung to that portion of the animal with which he first came in contact.

After a short time, the governess asked them what they thought an elephant was.

The first boy, who grasped the long trunk of the elephant, said, “Madam, now I see what an elephant is like. It is like a wooden pestle to pound the rice with.”

The second boy, who touched the tusk, answered, “No Madam, the elephant is not like a pestle. It is something like a trumpet.”

The third boy, who felt the head, said in answer, “Madam, the elephant is neither like a pestle nor like a trumpet. It is a hard thing like a small rock.”

The fourth boy, who held the ear, said protesting, “Madam, what my friends have said is all wrong. I caught it correctly. The elephant is a thing soft and flat. It is something like a nun’s hood.”

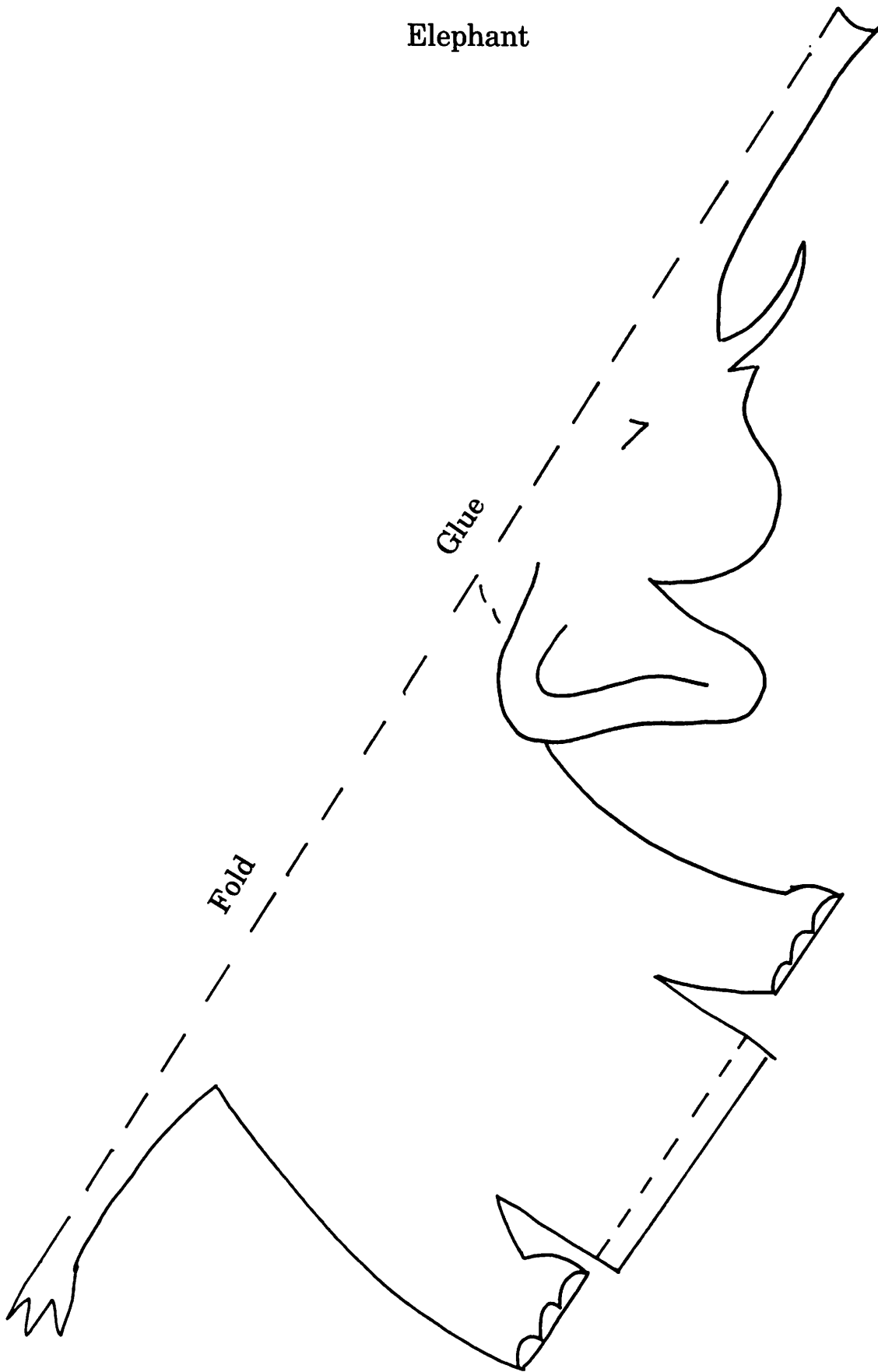
The fifth boy, who ran his fingers over the elephant’s back, said, “Madam, my friends didn’t get the proper idea of the elephant. It seems to me to be something like a small mound.”

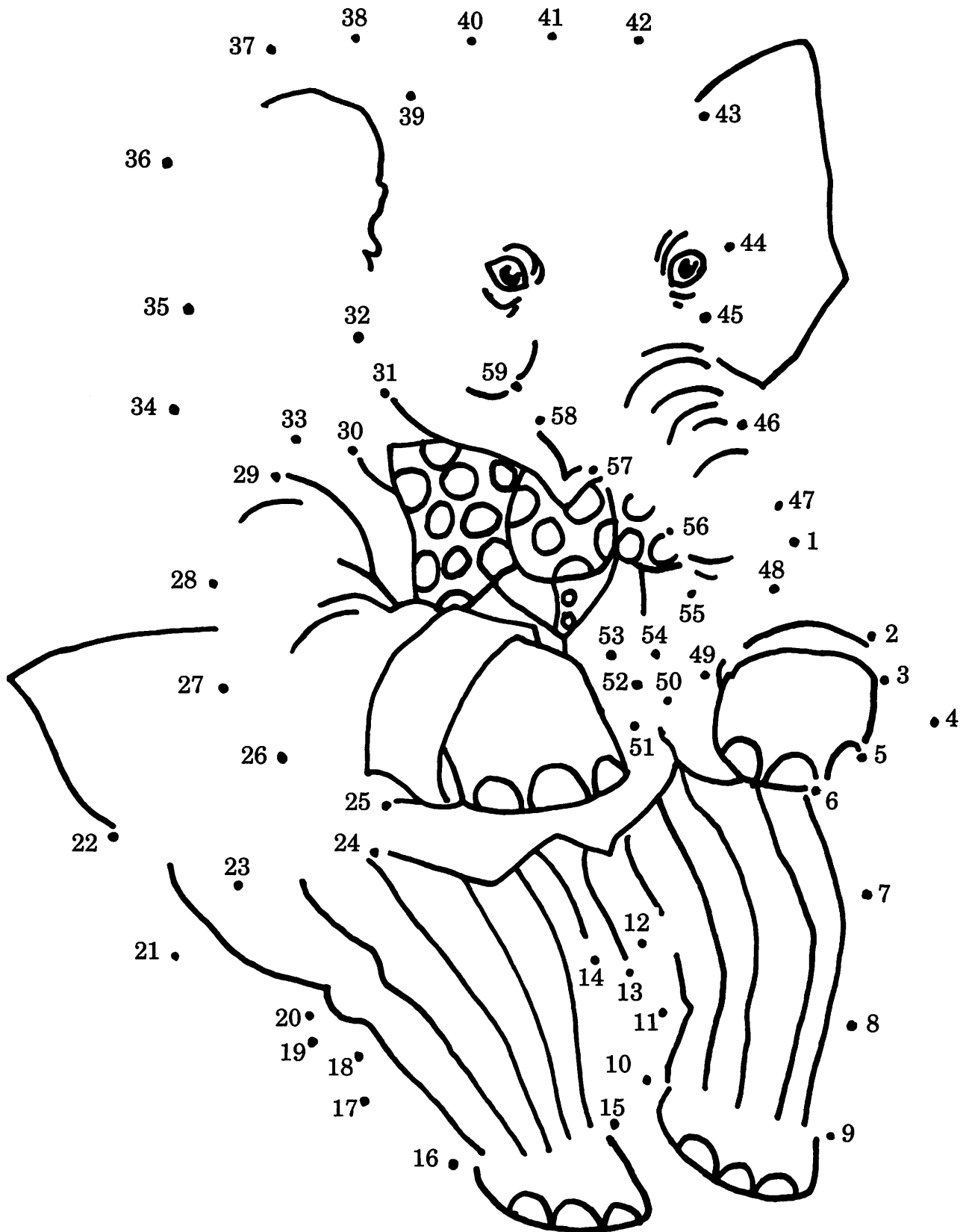
The sixth boy, who felt the stomach, contended and said, “Madam, how stupid are those answers. The elephant is not anything like what they have said. It looks like a big bag.”

The seventh boy, who groped a foot, spoke in answer, “Madam, all the answers given seem to me misleading. The elephant is something like the trunk of a big tree.

The last boy, who caught the tail, declared, “Madam, how foolish all my friends are! None of them seem to get the right knowledge of the elephant. It is just a long and slender thing, like a rope.”

Elephant





Amida's Compassion

Purpose:

To help children become aware of Amida's all embracing compassion.

Introduction:

Love is a simple word for compassion. Whether children are aware of it or not, parents, have a great love for their children. Observe how parents care for their young with love, gentleness and protective concern.

A parent's love is great for their children, but Amida Buddha's love is greater than this. Amida's love includes all living things, and his love reaches out to all of us at all times. We will speak of Amida's love as Compassion.

Materials:

1. Large construction paper
2. Magazines
3. Scissors and glue
4. Origami

Procedure:

Give Introduction

Show picture of Amida.

1. Cut out pictures of children, people, animals and nature from magazines. Glue to lower half of construction paper.

Place picture of Amida on upper left side of paper, showing his hands and rays extending down to the cut-out pictures.

2. In place of pictures from magazines, do origami or both.

Ask the children — What is the most important thing in the world.

Listen to all their answers. Discuss each answer and why it is important.

After all the children have had an opportunity to contribute, show the children the picture of the Amida and look at the statue and explain why it is the most important thing in the world.

Listening to the Buddha's Teachings

Purpose:

To teach children the importance of listening to teachings of Amida Buddha.

Materials:

1. Dirty glass cup
2. Cracked glass cup
3. Regular glass cup
4. Tray
5. Water pitcher
6. Story, **"The Three Cups"**

Presentation:

A. Preparation:

Display three glass cups (or any kind of vessel will do). Glass cups are the most suitable for the purpose as they are clear and can be seen through. Have them on display (on tray) before the story begins for the best effect.

The first cup is set upside down.

The second cup is set upright but is cracked.

The third cup is sitting properly and is not cracked but is extremely dirty on the inside.

B. Illustration:

With a water pitcher try filling the three glasses with water. The first cup will not take a drop of water as it is sitting up-side-down. The second cup is sitting upright but will not hold any water as it will leak out just as fast as water is poured in. The third cup is easily filled to the brim but because it is dirty, the water is not suitable for drinking.

C. The Story:

If possible, do not read the story word for word from the printed page. Use your own words wherever possible and substitute easier words for better understanding by children.

A Story Of Three Cups

Now that we have seen the illustration of the three cups, here is the story of the significance of the three cups.

Let us presume that there are three Dharma School children who always come to Dharma School every Sunday without fail. The first child is not listening to the teacher. He is not attentive, always chattering to the person beside him, and is constantly pinching or kicking others throughout the time the teacher is speaking. Although he has ears with which to listen, he has set an obstacle against his ears. He is like the first cup. The teacher's story just does not register with him at all. He is like a deaf person.

The second child, of course, is listening to the teacher's story with his ears wide open, but his thoughts have wandered off elsewhere. He is not listening carefully so whatever goes into his ears doesn't register with him. On afterthought, he cannot really remember a thing the teacher said. He is physically sitting properly and attentively but because his thoughts have wandered, everything that goes into his ears leaks out just as rapidly as it goes in.

The third child listens well. Each lesson goes into his ears and registers with him. However, because his thoughts and deeds are always evil, the stories of great persons, good deeds of others, or valuable teaching of the Buddha are not accepted in their true light. He ridicules each story as if to say, "What, that teacher's story again?" or "Oh, another Buddha's story, it's no fun," etc. In such a case, a good lesson has only been in vain and will prove of no value whatsoever to the child.

The first and the second cup will not hold water and the third cup, even though it will hold water, is of no value as the water is contaminated and is unfit for drinking. These three faults hold true even in the art of listening.

"Listening is of prime importance." We all must listen with attention and with sincerity of heart. The manner in which we listen is, therefore, extremely important.

Now, let us all reflect upon ourselves—are you ever like one of the cups mentioned in this story?

Activity:

On a large of paper write the following sentence,

We listen to sensei's story and learn to be Buddhist children.

Have the children make a drawing of a cup. Explain how their cups differ from "**The Three Cups.**" Discuss the ministers sermon for the Sunday.

Sutra Chanting

Purpose:

To explain what Sutra Chanting is, what it means and why we do it.

Presentation:

Many of you probably have wondered why the Sensei chants the sutras and why we do, too.

Sutras are the teachings of the Buddha. After Sakyamuni Buddha passed away, his followers recollected his teachings at their meetings. These teachings were compiled and called Sutras or “Okyo” to be read to the people who came to the temples to worship Buddha.

Although people felt lonesome because they could not see the Buddha, they returned home happily from the temples for they heard the Buddha’s teachings through the Sutras.

Go over the Sutras in the Gatha Book with the children to explain how the sutra which we chant during the service comes from the Chinese. Obtain a world map to trace how Buddhism spread from India, China, Korea, and Japan (Mahayana movement only). Show the children how Sakyamuni Buddha’s teachings were preserved in the form of the sutra by the Chinese. Explain to the children that since Chinese was the language of the scholars at that time, the sutras were not translated but chanted in their original form even by people of other countries. Religious people of Japan, for instance, chanted the sutras in the Chinese rather than in their own language. In this manner, the sutras have been handed down to us so that even in America we are still chanting the sutra in the ancient language of the Chinese. However, to make it easier for us to read, the Chinese pronunciation of each character has been written in English letters. Recently, the sutras have been translated into English so that we may understand the full meaning of the sutra.

Help instill in the minds of the children that when they chant the sutra, they are carrying on a great tradition handed down to them from ancient days.

Activities:

Invite minister to read a short sutra for the class or take children into the temple to hear the minister chant a sutra.

Explain to the children why the gong is struck. (The gong is struck to announce the beginning of the sutra and, later in the sutra, to punctuate it).

To cultivate an attitude of reverence in the children, the teacher may explain that many people hold the book containing the sacred words of the Buddha and bow in a gesture of gratitude.

Meditation

Purpose:

To learn why we meditate.

Presentation:

Start discussion by asking questions “Does anyone remember anything about the appearance of Amida Buddha’s eyes?”

Why are Amida’s eyes half open and half closed?

When we meditate, what do we do with our eyes? Why do you suppose we close our eyes?

We close our eyes so that we may focus our attention on the Buddha. It is sometimes hard to think about the Buddha when we have our eyes opened because we are able to see so many things. When our eyes are closed and our hands are together in gassho, we can meditate upon the Buddha and recite the Nembutsu.

Golden Chain

Purpose:

To teach children the meaning of the Golden Chain.

Materials:

The Golden Chain Card

Make booklet of Golden Chain

- a. Divide Golden Chain into four (4) lessons. Each paragraph representing one Sunday’s lesson.
- b. for each paragraph draw a picture representing same with the paragraph below the picture.

Colored crayons

Yellow paper to make chain (cut into strips)

Scissors

Paste

Presentation:

1. Explain the Golden Chain
2. Go over Golden Chain.
3. Go over meaning - e.g. use example of the spider web.
Draw a picture of spider web.
If one part of a spider web is broken, it affects other parts.
We all affect one another in one way or another.
4. Have children relate their experience on the way to Dharma School. Explain it in relation to the web.
5. Have the children write “Golden Chain” on yellow strips of paper and make a golden chain.

Gatha Singing

Purpose:

To show children that gatha singing in the temple is done for enjoyment and to show thanks to the Buddha. In this respect, children should come to understand that they should try to sing as well as possible.

Material:

Gatha Books for everyone.

Presentation:

Talk about gathas in general. Go over the words with the children. Repeat the music so children will be familiar with the sound.

Put the words to the music and repeat singing the Gatha several times. Select the gatha for a service several Sundays in a row. Enjoy singing the gatha.

Rules are necessary. At school, at home, or in society, there are certain rules that we must observe. At Dharma School, too, we must have some rules. Rules are not made to make us uncomfortable or to make children do things that adults want children to do. We must obey rules...not because they are rules, but because they are the proper thing to do. By such proper actions, we will be sharing in the safety and the welfare of all, including our own.

In the Temple

As a Buddhist,

I will put my hands together in Gassho when I enter or leave the temple.

I will try to keep my voice down to a whisper as soon as I enter the temple.

I will sit comfortably in my seat without crowding others.

If I cannot sit with my friends I will not be disappointed.

I will try to remember that I have come to learn about Amida Buddha.

I will try to cooperate the best I can during the services.

I will share the gatha book if necessary.

I will try not to talk to my neighbors because this disturbs other people.

I will listen carefully to the sermons.

In the Classroom

As a Buddhist,

I will try to be quiet as I can when I go to my classroom or leave the classroom because there may be other classes that are still working.

I will take care of our furniture and other things.

I will try to keep our classroom as neat as I can.

In the Yard and Outside the Classroom

As a Buddhist,

I will not cross the street or play in the street after I come to the temple grounds.

I will try my best to keep the yard as neat and clean as possible.

Lotus

Purpose:

To familiarize the students with the significance of the Lotus.

Materials:

Visual Aids:

Lotus used in the shrine

Picture of the Lotus

Picture of Buddha standing upon Lotus

Sectional drawing of how lotus grows in mud

Diorama of lotus growing in mud.

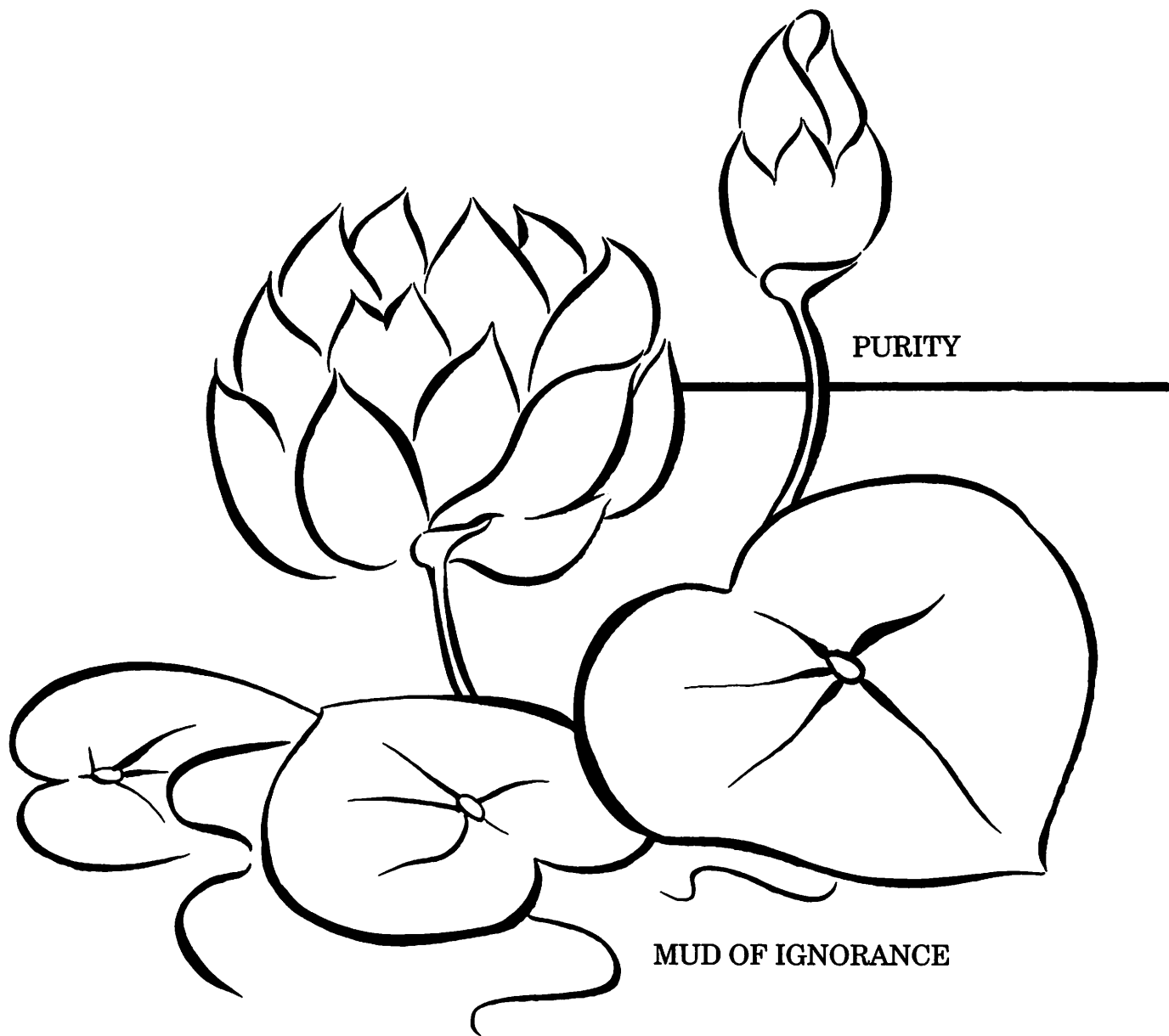
Presentation:

During the service did you notice the beautiful flowers in front of the obutsudan? We learned all about the flower offering didn't we? Let us not forget to offer fresh flowers all the time.

Did you know that to Buddhists the most precious flower is the Lotus? Look—here is a picture of Buddha standing upon a Lotus.

The lotus has its roots in the mud, comes up through the water, breaks through the surface of the water and makes a perfect blossom of beauty and purity to meet the first ray of sunshine. Now we, as Buddhists, should be just like the lotus and try to be as pure and beautiful in our hearts.

LOTUSBUDDHIST FLOWER



Symbols - Ojuzu

Purpose:

To instill in students the history, symbolic significance and care and use of the Ojuzu.

Materials:

Ojuzu
Picture of Ojuzu
Flannel Board
Story - Ojuzu

Procedures:

1. Give a simple explanation of the following:

Ojuzu (Buddhist Meditation Beads)

- a. **History:** It is said that the original Buddhist meditation beads contained 108 beads reminding us of the 108 basic passions that we have. When the beads are used during meditation, it reminds us that in front of the Buddha we are but a bundle of passions and through Buddha's Light and Love we become One with the Buddha. The number of beads have been reduced so that the full 108 beads are not used at the present time by lay people. The single strand contains 54 beads.
 - b. **Symbolic Significance:**
 1. The large bead represents the Buddha.
 2. The two smaller right and left central beads represent the Dharma and the Sangha.
 3. The Tassel represents the spreading of the dharma.
 4. The strand running through all the beads signifies Oneness of all things.
 - c. **Care of the Ojuzu:** The ojuzu should be treated with the utmost respect at all times.
 1. At home it should be kept in a special place, such as in a drawer near the family shrine.
 2. At other times, The Buddhist should carry the ojuzu in a purse or in a coat pocket so that it will always be available. An ojuzu bag would be the ideal thing to have.
 3. During the service, the ojuzu should be held in the left hand.
2. Color the drawing of the Ojuzu.
 3. Make an Ojuzu out of glass beads, wooden beads, macaroni, seeds and aluminum embossing.
 4. Make Ojuzu bag.

Ojuzu

Purpose:

To teach the symbolic significance of the ojuzu and its care.

Presentation:

Introduce the lesson by asking this riddle:

I go to Dharma School every Sunday
I am held in your left hand when not use in gassho
I help you when you say Namu Amida Butsu
What am I?

Today, we will learn about the ojuzu. Does everyone have his ojuzu? I'm happy to see so many of us remembered to bring our ojuzu.

When we place the ojuzu on our hands and recite the Nembutsu, we are making a promise to live happily with everyone. It helps us to think better by keeping our minds upon the service.

Just like the beads of the ojuzu strung together, we are the brothers and sisters with the heart of Amida Buddha running through us. Look at your ojuzu. Do you see the large bead in the middle? This bead represents Amida Buddha. The others are we, Buddha's children.

You can see the two beads among us that are different in color. They represent our parents.

The tassel is the teaching of Amida Buddha spreading out to everyone.

Today we will make an ojuzu, but before we make our ojuzu we have to know how to take care of it. The ojuzu should be treated with the utmost respect at all times.

1. At home it should be kept in a place, such as in a drawer near the family shrine.
2. At other times, the Buddhist should carry the ojuzu in a purse or in a coat pocket so that it would always be available. An ojuzu bag will be the ideal thing to have.
3. During the service, the ojuzu should be held in the left hand.

Pass out materials for the project to each student.

Ojuzu

Project: (Ojuzu)

Materials:

46 beads of one color
3 beads of contrasting color
(Wooden beads are available
at most Hobby Stores)
yarn
Blunt needle

Procedure

Double Yarn and thread the needle
String the beads. The 11th, 38th and 49th beads will be of contrasting color
Form tassel

Helpful Hints:

For individual ojuzus to be made by the students, assemble materials required for each student beforehand and put them in a sandwich bag. Have needle already threaded.
In this way precious class time be saved.

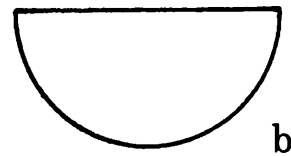
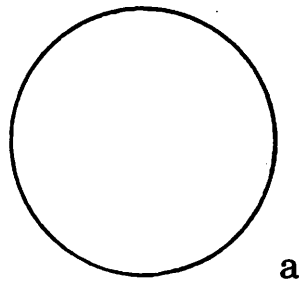


A Project for Children

Making an Ojuzu Bukuro (Bag)

Materials:

- a. felt piece - 3" diameter
- b. felt piece - half a circle

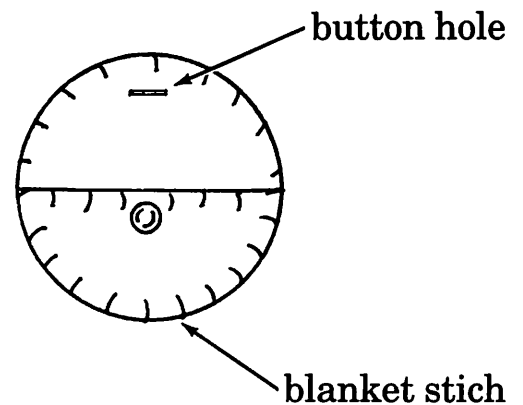
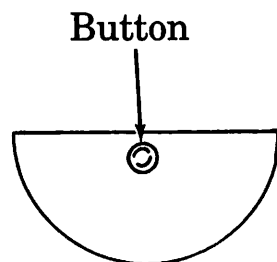


- c. yarn
- d. Blunt needle
- e. scissors
- f. button
- g. needle and thread

Students this age can cut felt by themselves.

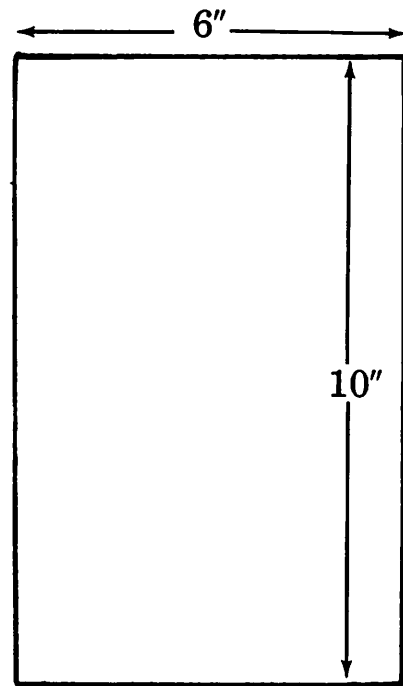
Procedure:

- a. Sew button on felt piece "b"
- b. Place piece "b" on piece "a"
- c. Stitch two pieces together using a blanket stitch
- d. Cut slit for button hole

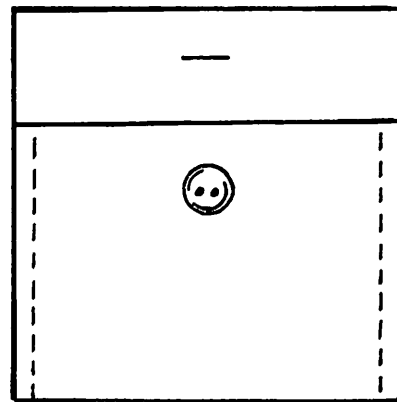


Felt Ojuzu Bag

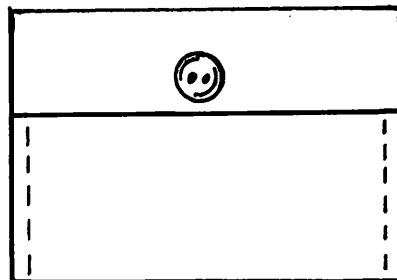
1. Cut 6" x 10" piece of felt with pinking shears.



2. Fold to make envelope with flap.
3. Stitch along dotted lines.
4. Sew button on.
5. Cut slit for button on flap.



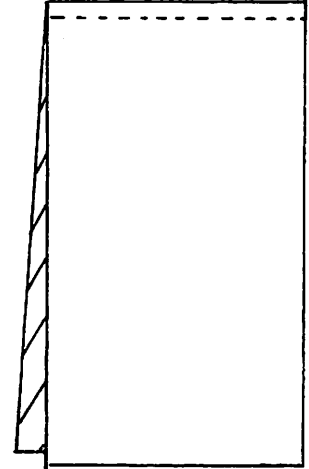
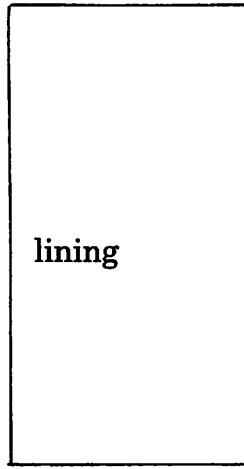
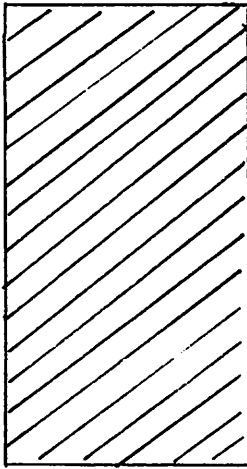
6. Closed



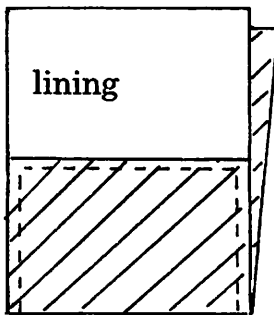
Children may sew the ends by hand with embroidery thread.

Costs about 90¢ per dozen

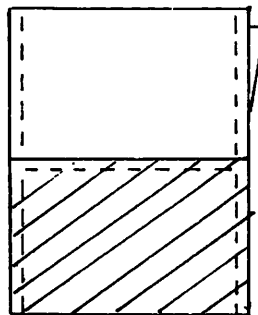
Envelope Style Of Ojuzu Bag



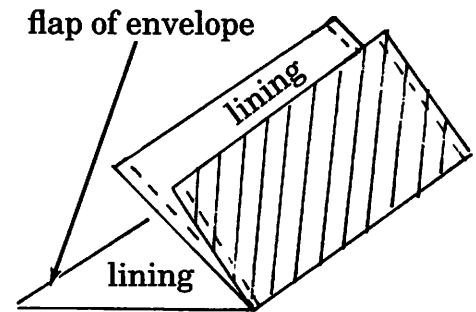
1. Cut 2 pieces of fabric 10" x 6".
2. Sew the front and lining together with wrong sides together on one end.
3. Make seam at least 1/4" to 3/8" wide.



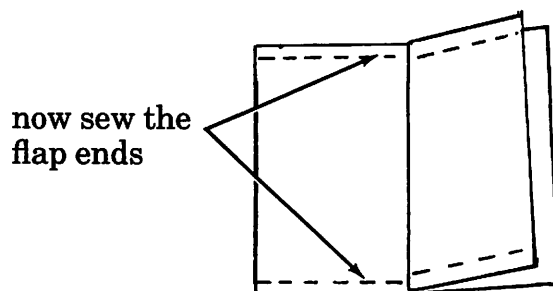
Fold



Fold



4. Fold outside material right sides together 3 1/2" including seam.
5. Sew both ends 1/2" seams.
6. Fold lining 3 1/2" including seam.



7. Turn inside out fitting lining properly.

The Red Ojuzu And The White Ojuzu

There were two ojuzus lying side by side on the counter in the department store. One was red and the other white.

The red ojuzu said to the white ojuzu, "Staying in this store is nice, but I would like to be bought by a nice little girl and go to the temple."

The white ojuzu replied, "I, too, would like to be bought. I think I would like to be owned by a little boy."

One day a lady came into the store. With her were two young children, a boy named Billy and a girl named Sally.

The lady said, "Next Sunday is the beginning of the fall term for Dharma School and you two children will need an ojuzu. There are some here at the store. Which one would you like?"

Sally said, "Mother, will you buy me the red one?"

Billy said, "Auntie, please get me the white one."

So the red ojuzu and the white ojuzu were bought and the new owners carried them proudly home. They were put away in a drawer beneath the family obutsudan until Dharma School time. The two ojuzu were really enjoying this new life.

About a half year later, Billy had to move away. Billy and Sally did not see each other until the following year. When the two children attended Dharma School together, they brought their ojuzu with them. Sally's ojuzu looked very nice just as it did when it was bought. But Billy's white ojuzu was in a very poor condition.

The red ojuzu said to the white, "Oh dear, what happened to you? When we parted last year you were a beautiful white ojuzu. But now you look so old, tired and tattered. Your tassels on one side are gone.'

The white ojuzu replied, "My owner has been quite careless with me. When I am not being used properly, he has been twirling me around and around. He sometimes puts me in his mouth. At other times he has been pulling my tassels so hard that finally one side came out. I have been dropped so many, many times that I can't even count how many times I've fallen. When I'm taken home, I'm not put away in a proper place. Sometimes Billy forgets where he puts me and I miss Dharma School. I feel so sad then."

The red ojuzu felt so sorry as it listened quietly.

Finally, the white ojuzu cheered up a little as it said, "But I'm so glad Billy remembered where he put me today. Otherwise I would have missed you. I think Billy will take better care of me after he sees how Sally took such good care of you."

Discussion: Questions To The Ojuzu Story

What did you think about the story?

How did you feel?

What does your ojuzu look like?

What would you feel like if you were the red one? The white one?

Are we not grateful for our own ojuzu to care for?

What did you learn from the story?

Gassho

Purpose:

To learn the significance of gassho. To teach children to understand that gassho may be done freely on their own at any time.

However, children need to be taught that in the temple, according to custom, there are set times when people ordinarily put their hands together in gassho. Children should know this temple etiquette so they feel confident and at ease during the service.

Gassho and Oshoko

Purpose

To teach the students proper method of Gassho and Oshoko.

Material:

Picture of “hands in gassho.”

Procedures:

Explain the following:

1. Gassho

Gassho means to put the hands together. The palms of both hands are placed together with the fingers and thumbs extended and with the ojuzu encircling both hands and held lightly between the thumb and the fingers. Both elbows should be fairly close to the body and the hands should be mid-chest level. To bow during gassho, the hands should be held steady, while the body is bent forward from the hips and then back to upright position.

Gassho is the natural expression of reverence and gratitude.

Children should be encouraged to bring ojuzu to Dharma School.

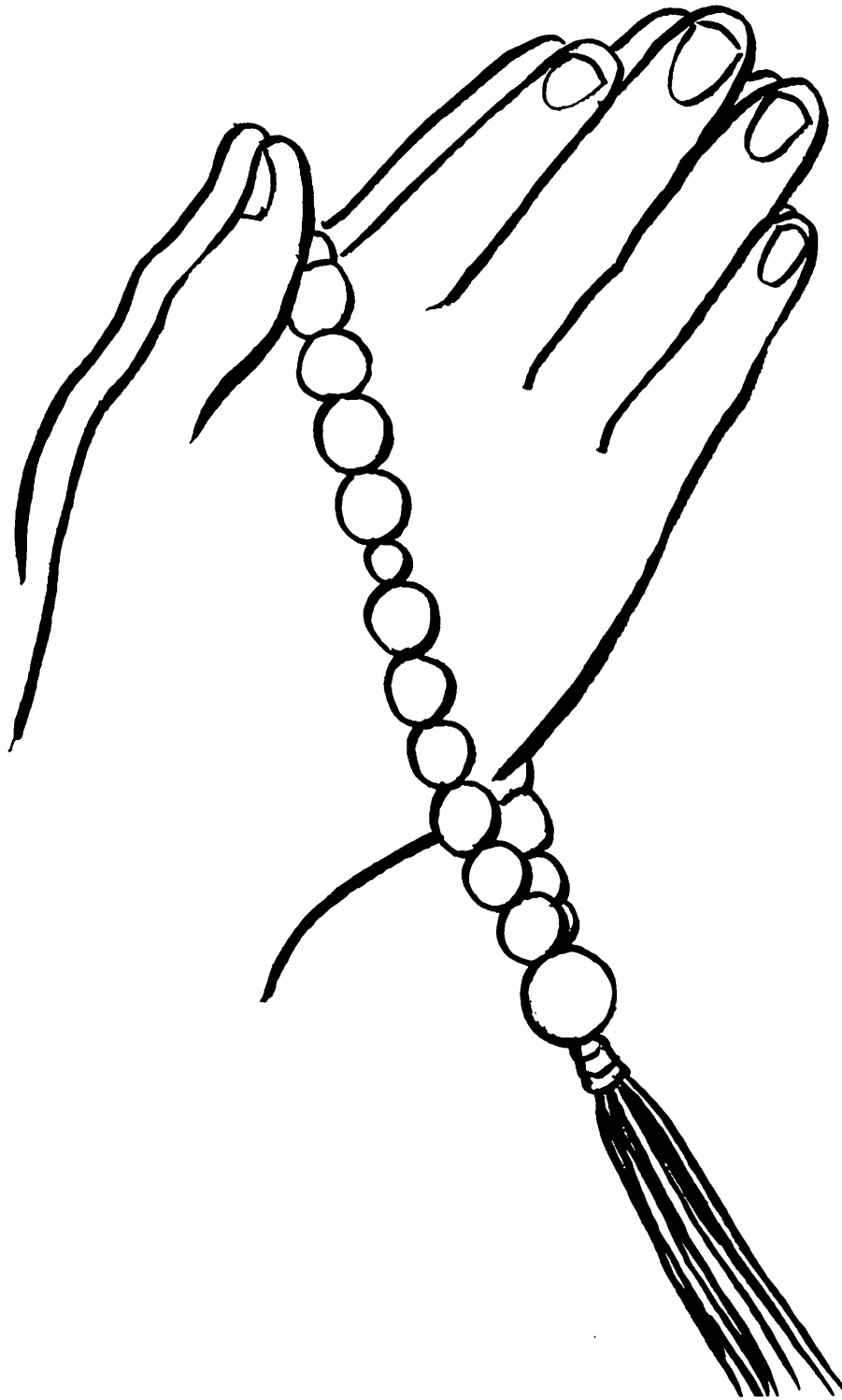
(illustration of hands in gassho)

2. Oshoko (Burning of Incense)

Oshoko is the acceptance of transiency and fulfillment in life.

In the offering of incense:

- a. Walk up to the front of the shrine and bow at a distance of about two steps in front of the oshoko table.
- b. Step up to the table and with the right hand take a pinch of powdered incense and drop it into the burning incense bowl.
- c. Gassho.
- d. Take two or three steps backward, bow and return to your seat.
- e. Practice it.
- f. Draw hands in Gassho.



When we Gassho, we hold our hands this way.
Gassho means to fold our hands and think of
Amida Buddha.

It means to say thank you to Amida Buddha.
Amida Buddha loves everyone and everything.
You should Gassho everyday.

Everyday — Namu Amida Butsu

Morning and Evening Gassho

Purpose:

To encourage the students in the morning and evening gassho.

Material:

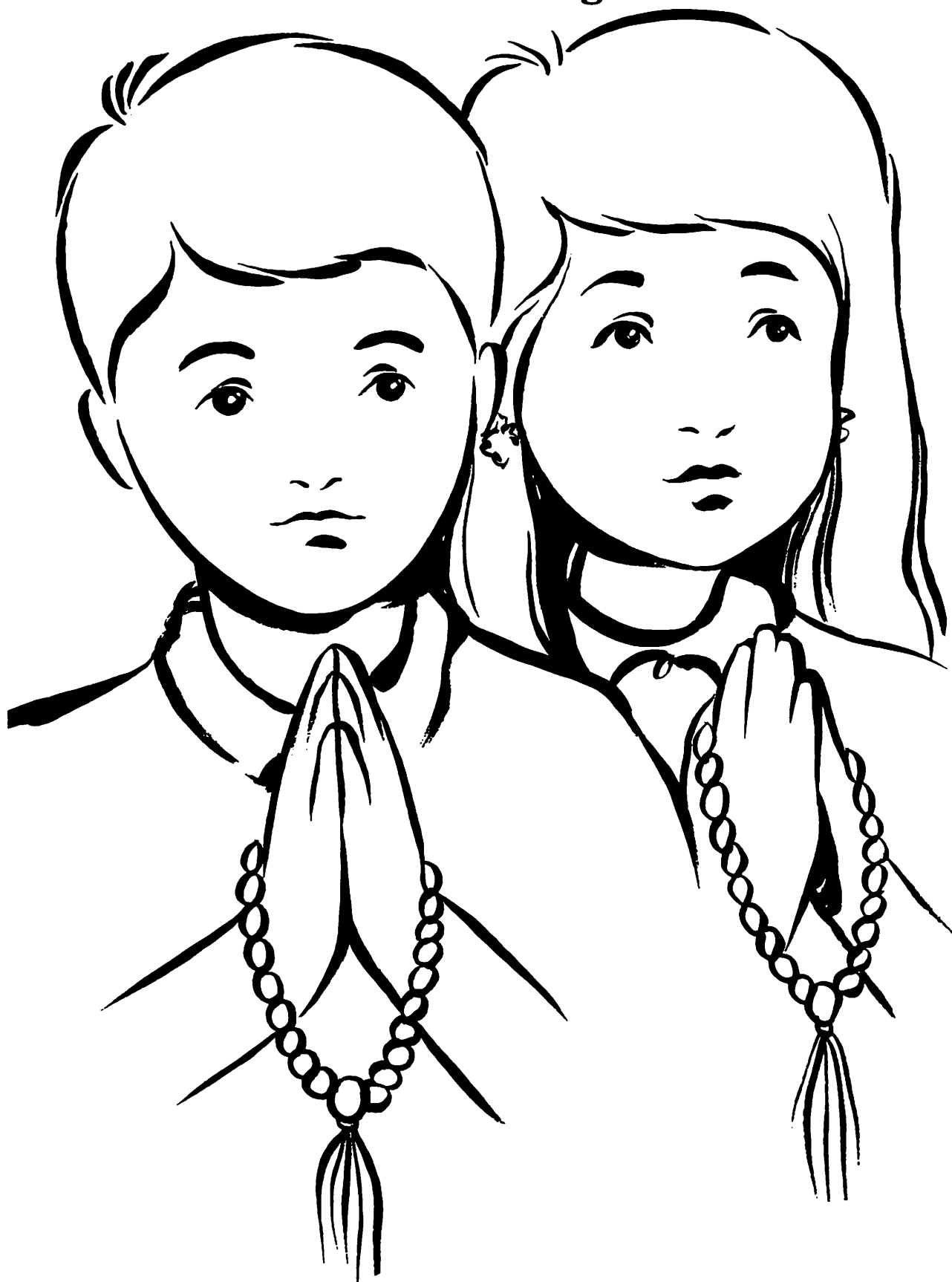
1. Picture of children in Gassho
2. Three Homages

Morning and evening services should be observed, however short or simple. This may take the form of gassho alone, or the recitation of some words of thanksgiving in gassho. The words one may choose to repeat before the shrine is of personal preference. They are usually determined by the guidance one receives from Dharma School teachers and parents. The important point is that the morning and evening 'orei'...the expressing of gratitude to the Buddha...becomes a regular and important part of one's daily life. Whenever a child finds that the home shrine is not accessible at bedtime, simply put your hands together and repeat Namu Amida Butsu many times.

Procedures:

1. Discussion of the above.
2. Discussion of Three Homages recited at Dharma School services.
3. Free hand drawing of Child in Gassho.

**We Are Buddha's Children
We Follow The Teaching Of Buddha**



Find the words in the puzzle below. The words can go across or backward, up or down, or diagonally. Good luck!

1. Namu Amida Butsu
2. Thank you
3. Amida Buddha
4. Gassho
5. Nembutsu

U	P	W	V	I	Q	F	D	T	R	W	J	Q	Z
S	S	W	D	P	O	I	Z	I	N	B	Z	A	O
T	Z	T	R	H	L	B	M	L	L	Q	N	J	D
U	H	H	U	P	A	N	J	Q	F	I	T	S	X
B	C	A	F	B	S	U	N	X	Z	C	O	B	W
M	D	N	Z	Y	A	F	V	R	T	C	X	I	M
E	R	K	A	H	D	D	U	B	A	D	I	M	A
N	V	Y	B	V	W	Q	I	X	J	O	Y	A	M
S	Q	O	T	V	M	A	G	M	K	Y	L	F	O
A	T	U	G	S	X	A	H	A	A	Z	K	E	P
Y	X	F	C	J	S	I	G	L	O	U	Q	W	S
W	K	T	A	S	U	B	R	V	X	B	M	S	I
O	E	L	H	E	M	D	I	M	A	P	V	A	G
W	H	O	K	Z	F	A	N	D	R	P	S	T	N

Amida Buddha

Purpose:

To learn about Amida Buddha.

To understand that Amida Buddha is always with you.

Materials:

A scarf, or piece of cloth that is **not** sheer.

A pencil, an ojuzu, a crumbled-up piece of paper.

Flannel board

Flannel board pieces: the sun
a cloud
Amida Buddha

Procedure:

1. Begin class with gassho.
2. **Motivation:** Before class begins, place the three objects underneath the scarf. Be sure that the children cannot see what is underneath the scarf. Disguise them well! Place in the middle of the table so all can see.
3. **Questions:** Do you think there is something hiding underneath my scarf? How can you tell? What do you suppose it is? Those are good guesses! Could there be more than one object? How many?
4. **Presentation:** You probably found that it was very hard to tell what was hiding underneath my scarf. Your guesses were all so good! You all knew that there was something or some things underneath my scarf. (Why?) Because you can see the shapes molded by the scarf. (There's a big hump here and something long over here in this corner.) If it wasn't for the scarf you could easily tell me what I have placed in the middle of this table. The scarf reminds me of the fog that is so thick you can't see your neighbor's house or the tree across the street. (Can you think of some things that are hard to see in the fog? Did you ever notice that the sun sometimes plays hide-and-seek behind the fog or a cloud? How do we know the sun is there if we can't see it? Are there any humps or bumps that show its shape? (No.) But we know the sun is there just like we know Amida Buddha is there and everywhere pouring its warm sunlight and love upon us. Like the scarf hiding (lift the scarf) this pencil, an ojuzu, and this paper, we cover ourselves up with bad thoughts and wrong deeds that make it so hard for us to see Amida Buddha. But remember, Amida Buddha is like the sun. (Place flannel board figure of the sun on flannel board.) And like the sun behind a dark cloud or on a foggy day the sun cannot be seen clearly. (Place cloud over the sun.) We must get rid of our bad thoughts and wrong deeds that act like the cloud so that we can clearly see Amida Buddha's love and compassion. (Remove the cloud to show the sun again.) We know Amida Buddha will always be here with us just like we know the sun will always be here. And like the sunlight that covers the earth and makes things grow, so does the light of Amida Buddha surround all living things with love.

Instructions To The Teacher: Be sure that the children understand that Buddha and "light" are the same. Both are eternal. Also remind the children that when we place our hands in gassho and recite NAMU AMIDA BUTSU we are saying Amida Buddha's name. We say NAMU AMIDA BUTSU when we are in Dharma School but we **can** say it when we are happy, sad, alone, at home, at play and everywhere and everyday.

Buddhist Observances

MONTH	BUDDHIST OBSERVANCE	DATE	TITLE	DESCRIPTION
September	B.C.A. Founding Day Higan	September 1 September 23	Higan E	B.C.A. Founding Day Autumnal Equinox
October				Halloween
November				Thanksgiving Eitaikyo Service
December	Bodhi Day Joya E	December 8 December 31	Jodo E Joya E	Enlightenment New Year's Eve
January	New Years Shinran Shonin Memorial	January 1 January 16	Shusho E Ho-on-ko	New Years' Day
February	Nirvana Day	February 15	Nehan E	Passing of Sakyamuni into Nirvana Presidents' Day
March	Higan	March 21	Higan E	Spring Equinox
April	Buddha Day	April 8	Hanamatsuri	Birth of Gautama Buddha
May	Shinran Shonin Day	May 21	Shuso-Gotan E	Placed his faith in Amida's power Mother's Day Memorial Day
June, July	Obon	June, July, August	Obon	Obon Festival Father's Day Independence Day

Autumn Higan

Purpose:

To learn about O-Higan

Material:

Need a picture of a peaceful scene

Procedure:

Begin class with gassho.

Motivation: What do you see in this picture? Can you tell me what you would be doing if you were in this picture? How would you feel in a place like this? This picture gives a very peaceful and relaxed feeling. It looks very calm and pleasing much like the weather is today — not too hot and not too cold. It is just right. If I gave you a book to read, where would you like to read it? At the North Pole where it is 50° below the freezing point? In the middle of a desert where it is 125°? Or under the shade of a tree where it is warm? Sure, you would like to read where it is just the right weather to be outdoors. You could read the book and not think about how cold or how hot you are. Then can really read and think about what you are reading.

Presentation: O-Higan is a service conducted during the spring equinox. At this time the weather is neither too warm nor too cold. It is just right. The days and the nights are the same in length. The number of hours we have daylight equals the number of hours we have no sunlight. Peace or harmony can be seen throughout the universe. We gather before the sacred shrine of Amida Buddha and think about or meditate on the peace we can see among all the things around us. Nature is at peace. We should then take advantage of this peaceful time to think about the peace and harmony in our inner lives — the peace we can make within us. Just like reading the book, you can best do your thinking when you are in a peaceful and comfortable place.

Note: Be sure that the children understand why we observe O-Higan.

Me Unit

My Photograph

My Many Feelings

I have many feelings.

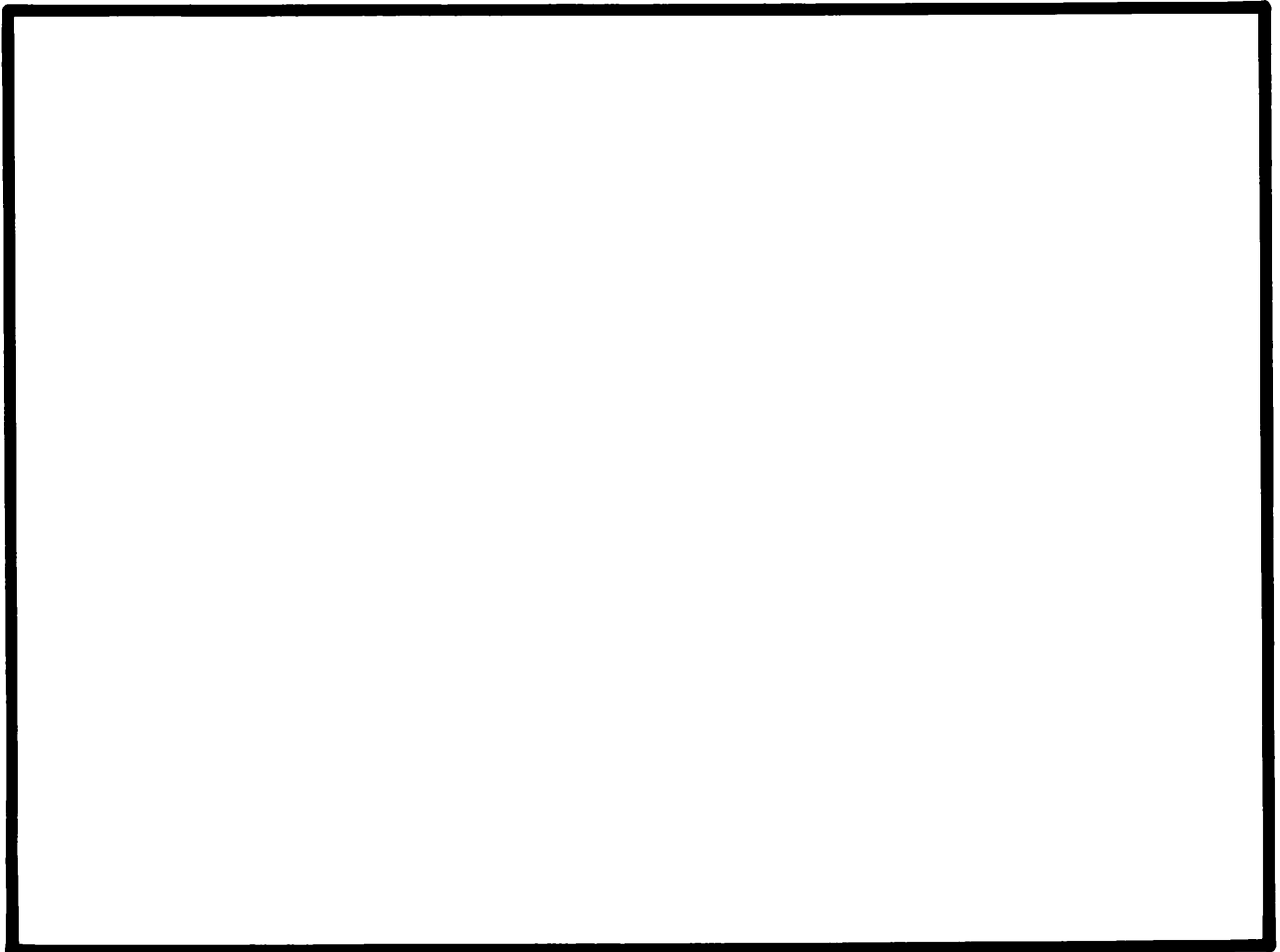
1. One time I felt very sad when_____

2. One time I felt very silly when_____

3. One time I felt very scared when_____

4. One time I felt very important when_____

Here is a picture of the time I felt very important...

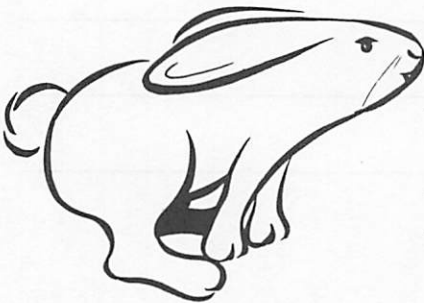
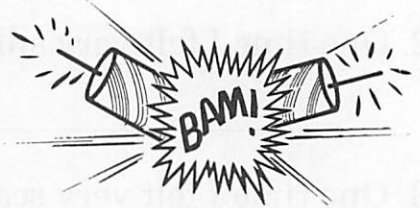


The Real Me

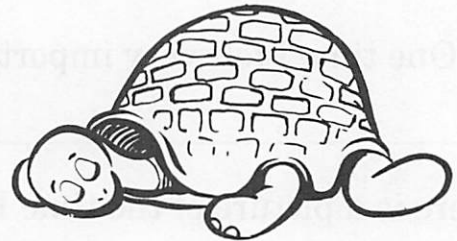
I think I am ... (✓ the best answers)



- ___ quiet as a mouse
- or
- ___ noisy as a firecracker
- ___ a little of both



- ___ fast as a rabbit
- or
- ___ slow as a turtle
- ___ a little of both



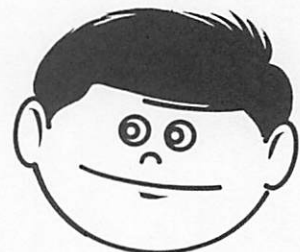
- ___ super neat
- ___ super messy
- ___ a little of both



- ___ an indoor kid
- or
- ___ an outdoor kid
- ___ a little of both

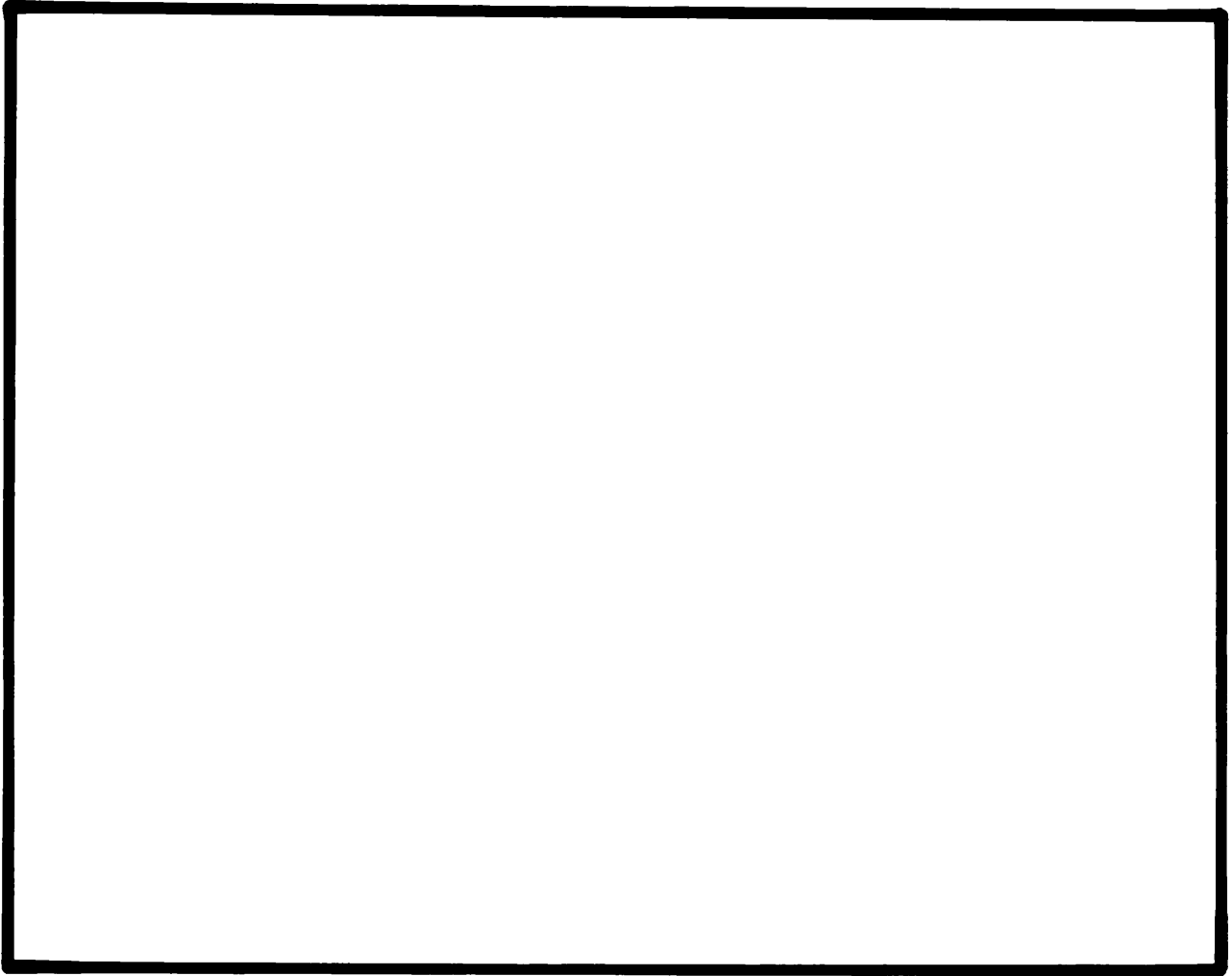


- ___ a talker
- or
- ___ a listener
- ___ a little of both



A Picture of Me

This is how I look at the end of the Dharma school year.



I don't look like I did at the beginning of year. This is the way I have changed.

___ I am taller.

___ I am thinner.

___ I am not as thin.

___ I have a tooth missing.

___ My hair is longer.

___ My hair is shorter.

___ I have new glasses.

___ I smile more.

My favorite Foods

If I could eat whatever I wanted, I would have

_____ for breakfast

_____ for lunch

_____ for dinner

These are my favorites...

meat_____

fruit_____

vegetable_____

cereal_____

soup_____

ice cream_____

candy_____

cookie_____

sandwich_____

drink_____

I can cook these foods by myself:

My Favorite Toys

Purpose:

To provide an opportunity for students to focus on what is important to them.

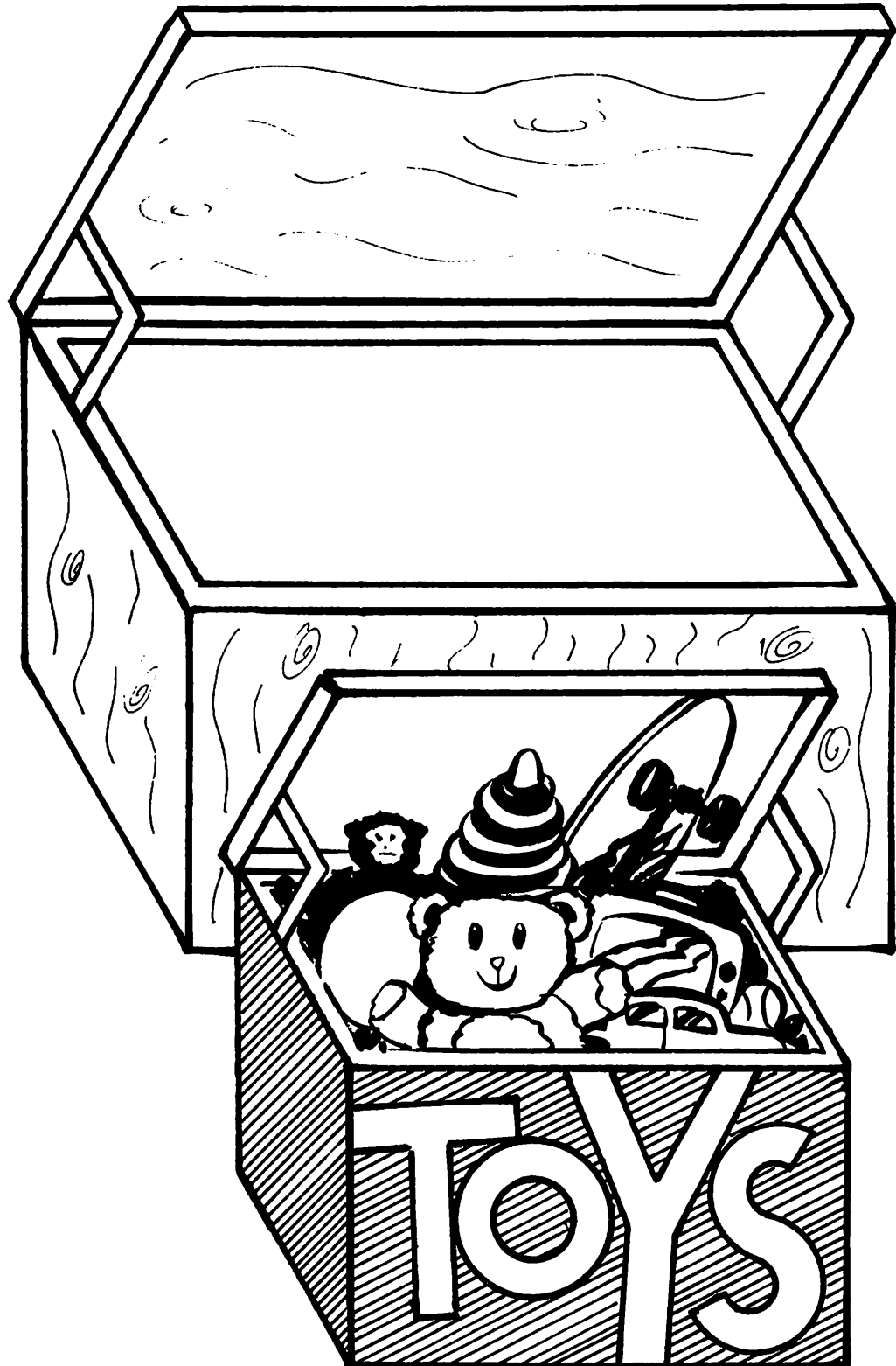
Directions:

Ask students to bring their favorite toy to class. Allow students the opportunity to share why that particular toy is their favorite. How old were they when they received the toy? How long do they think the toy will be their favorite? What will be the next favorite toy?

Additional Activities:

1. Bring a collection of toys or allow the students to bring some toys to class. Pick a toy and ask your students to brainstorm and think of all the possible ways they could change and improve the toy.
2. Suggest to the students that they choose a toy and exchange places with it. How would you feel? What would you think? How would you want to be treated? After thinking about these questions, each student should write a story pretending he is experiencing life as the toy he chose.

MY FAVORITE TOY IS...



A Special Secret Place

Purpose:

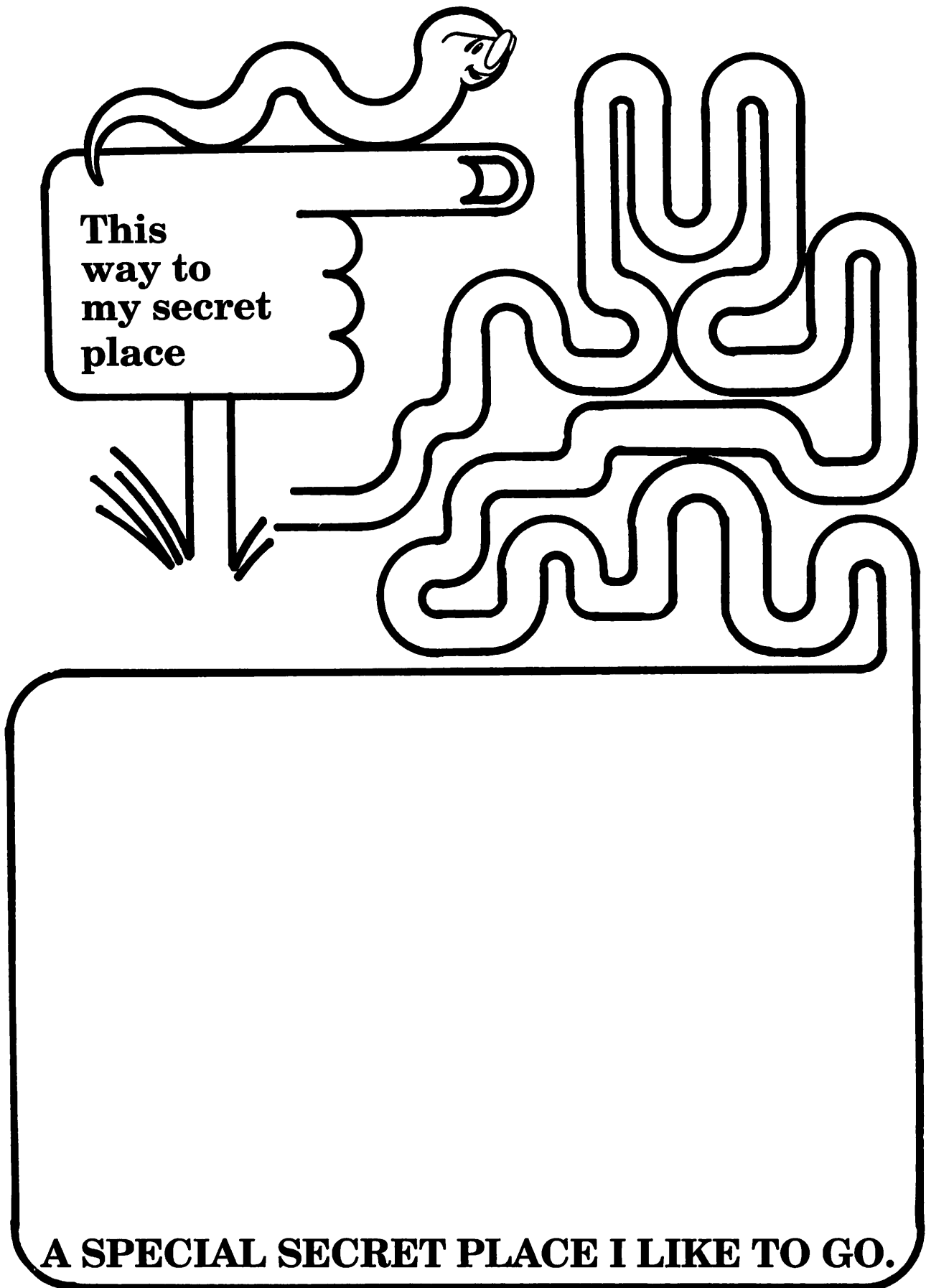
For students to have an opportunity to share a part of their special selves through an illustration or written description.

Directions:

For students may draw a picture of the place they call a special place, or they may write a paragraph describing this place. Some students may not want to share this page. Make sure their feelings are respected.

Additional Activities:

1. Have students collect pictures, words, colors, symbols, etc. that represent themselves. They should be made into a collage. Each student should display his collage without signing it. See if other class members can guess which collage belongs to which student.
2. Next allow those students who wish to explain why they chose various colors, symbols, pictures, etc., to be a part of his collage.
3. Have a class discussion on secret places. What is there in a secret place? What feelings does a person have in their secret place?
4. Does the secret place include Amida's teachings?



A Letter I Wrote To Myself— Describing My Dharma School.

Purpose:

This is a creative opportunity for students to design and write a letter to themselves.

Directions:

Ask students to consider the purpose of their letter. Is it a letter about something exciting that will happen in Dharma school? Suggest students write a rough draft of their letter before they use this activity page.

**HERE IS A STATIONERY I DESIGNED
AND A LETTER I WROTE TO MYSELF.**

Dear _____

Sincerely,

Special Feelings

1. On the first day of Dharma, school, this is how I felt:

2. When someone says something nice about me, this is how I feel:

3. When I listen to the minister's story, this is how I feel.

4. When I attend Dharma School, this is how I feel:

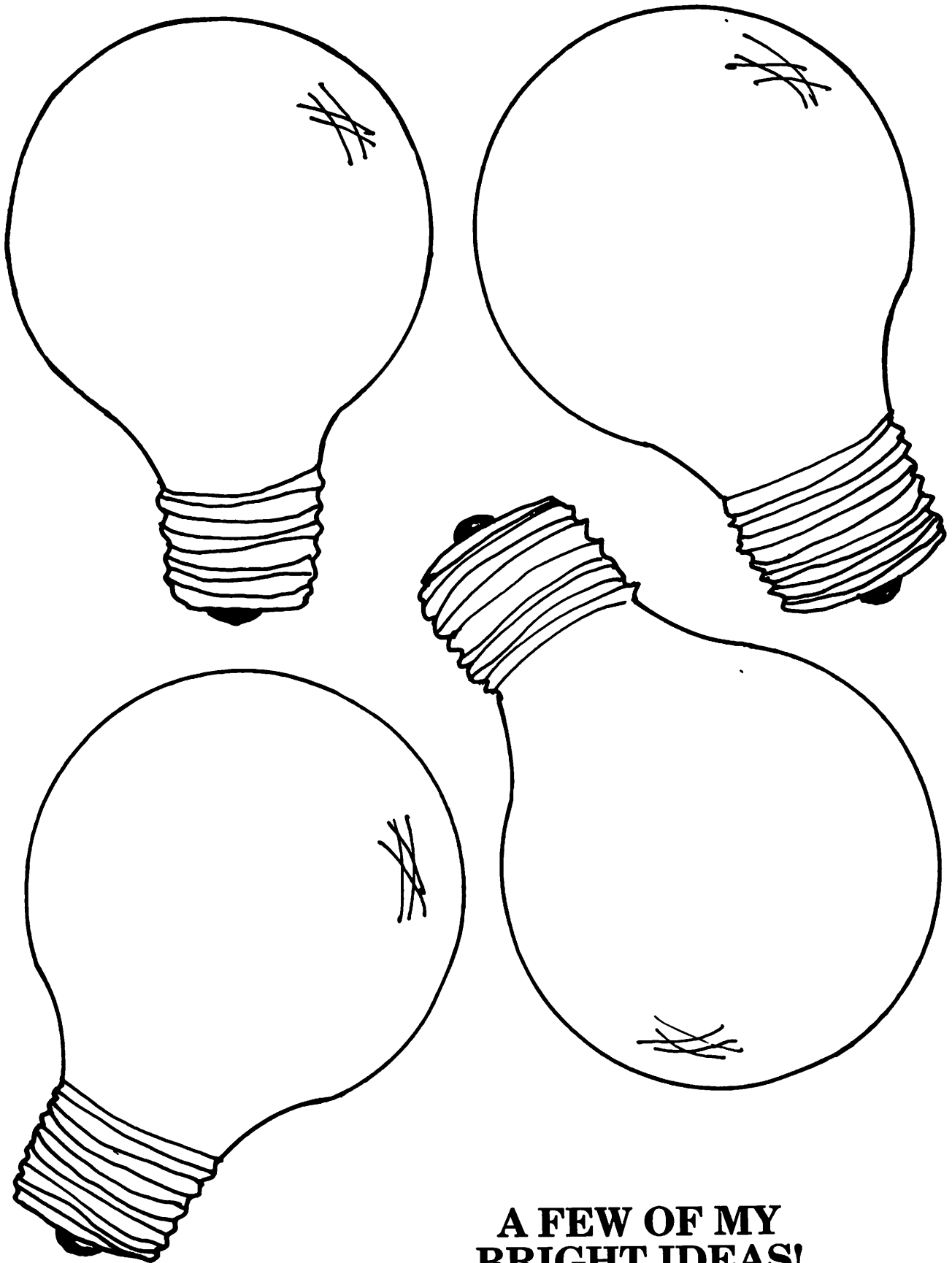
A Few Of My Bright Ideas — Group Activity

Purpose:

To involve students in creative thinking through discussion.

Directions:

The students are given an opportunity to plan four Dharma School lessons. Any ideas should be recorded. Students should be encouraged to list as many ideas as they possibly can. After they have developed their list, have them select the ideas they want to record on the activity page.



**A FEW OF MY
BRIGHT IDEAS!**

Something I'd Like To Invent

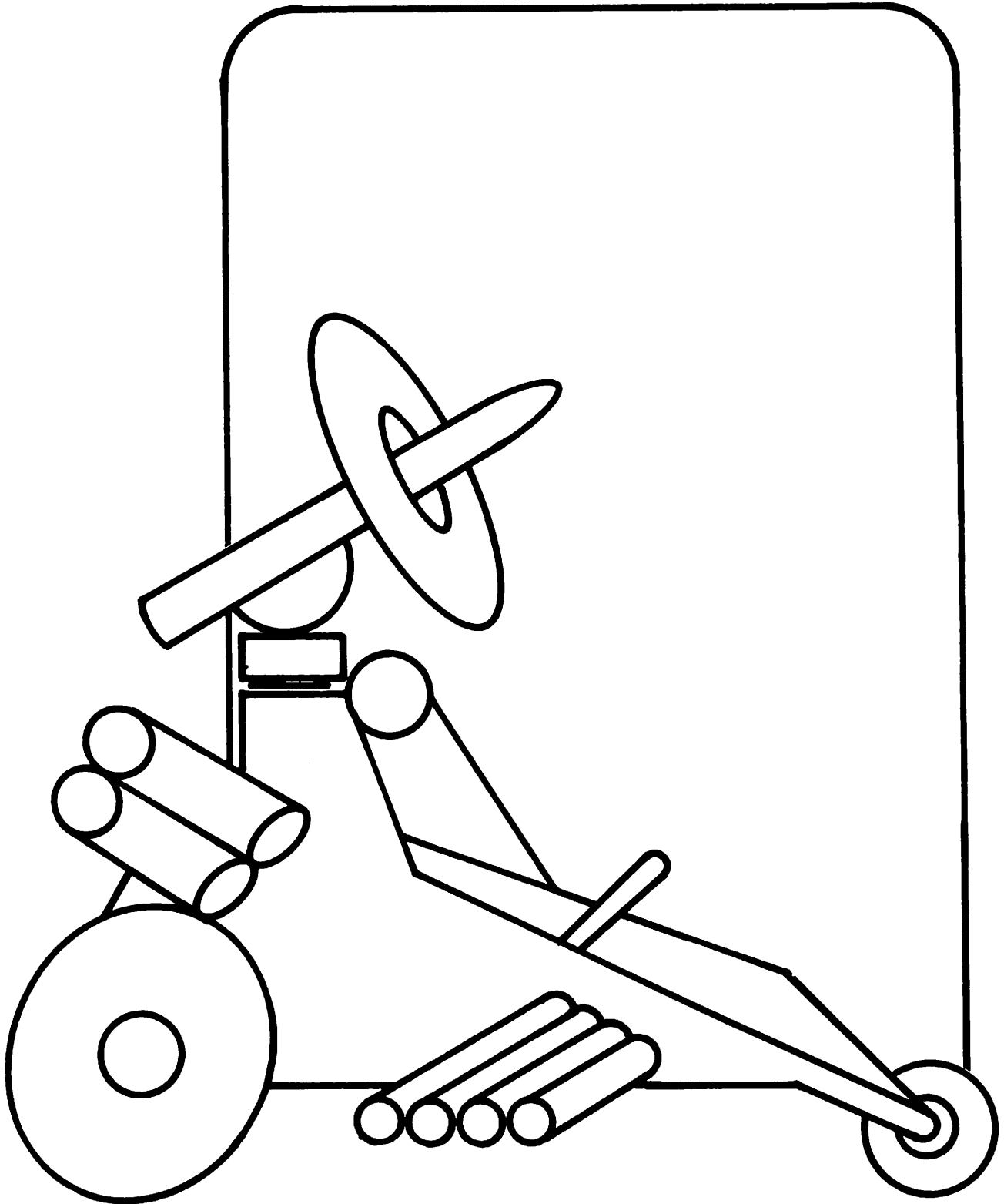
Purpose:

This is an opportunity for students to do some creative thinking about something they would like to invent.

Directions:

The invention could be just something extra that would make people's lives a little nicer. To motivate them, ask your students to think about the purpose of their invention. What is it made of? How much does it cost? The invention can be described, illustrated, or both.

**A PICTURE OF
SOMETHING I'D
LIKE TO INVENT**



My Favorite Things

Purpose:

To give the students a chance to focus on some positive aspects of their values.

Directions:

Suggest to your students that sometimes they can share themselves through their likes and dislikes in certain categories. Students should list several possibilities in each category and then place their final choices on this page. Small pictures of favorite things can be glued on this activity page or students can simply write their responses.

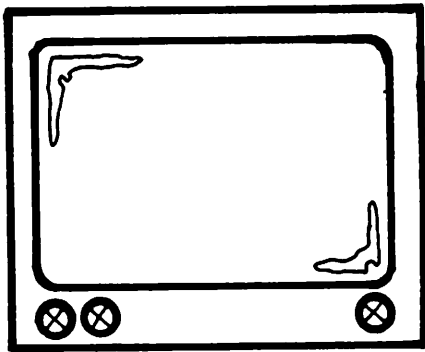
Activities:

1. Give each student a paper bag. Have him put objects that he values (pictures, symbols, or actual object) inside. These objects should reflect what he likes. Ask each student to place his sack of goodies in the front of the room or on a table. Students can try to guess which sack belongs to which student.
2. Each student could be allowed 3 to 5 minutes to explain why they chose particular items to place in his sack.

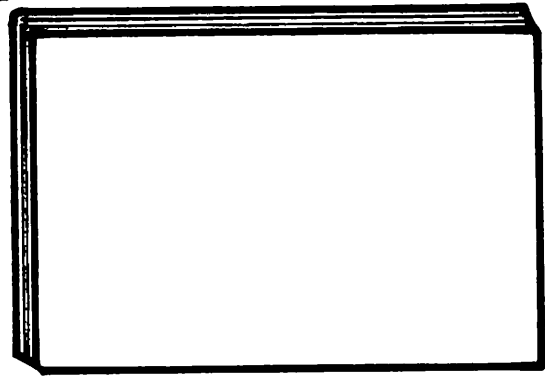
My Super Favorites

1. My favorite color is_____
2. My favorite place is_____
3. My favorite animal is_____
4. My favorite sound is_____
5. My favorite smell is_____
6. Here are pictures of my favorite:

TV Show



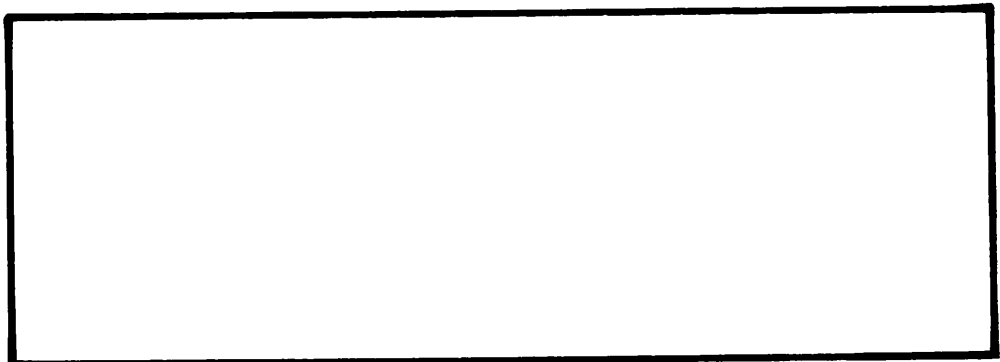
Book



Name_____

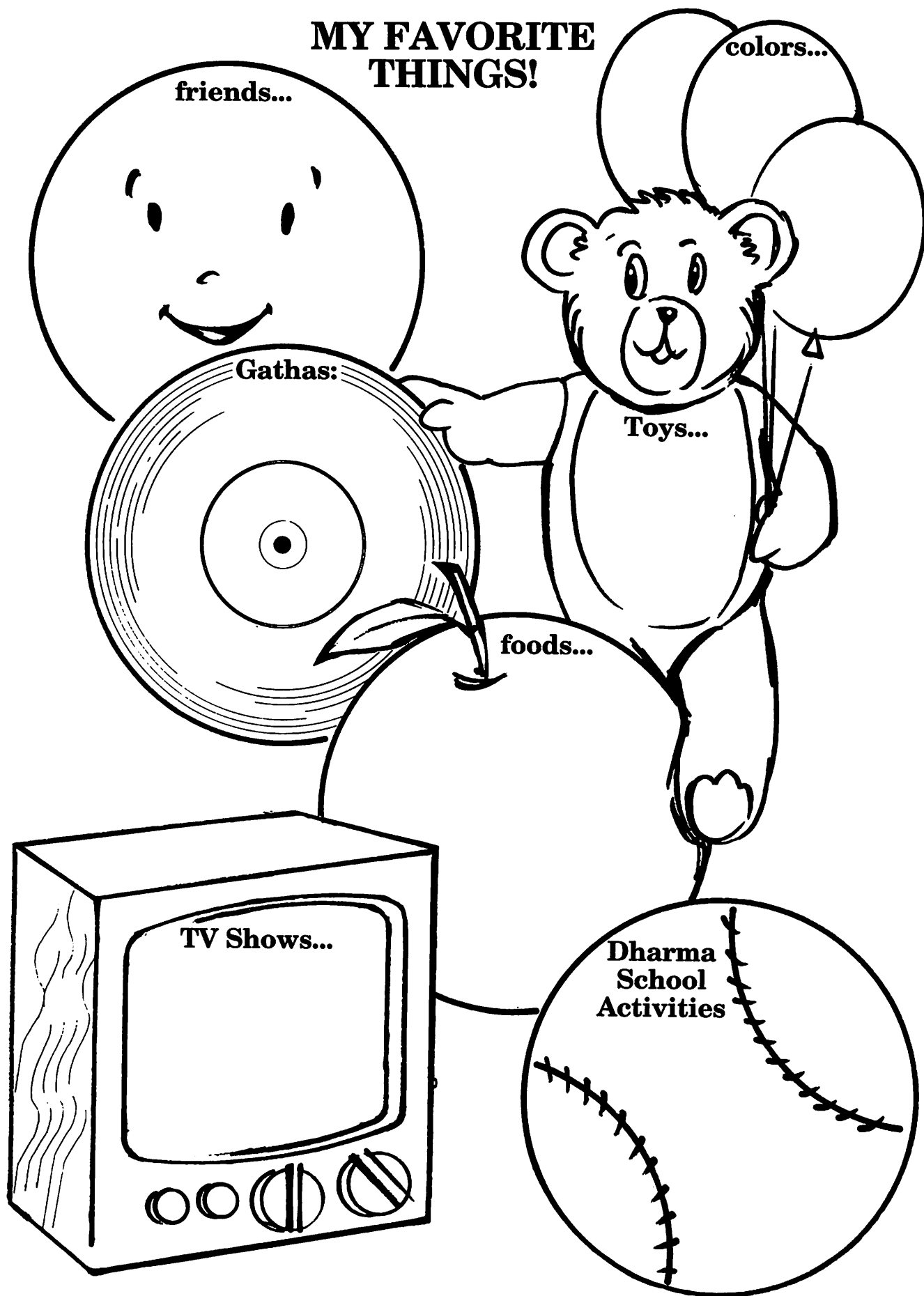
Title_____

Movie



Title_____

MY FAVORITE THINGS!

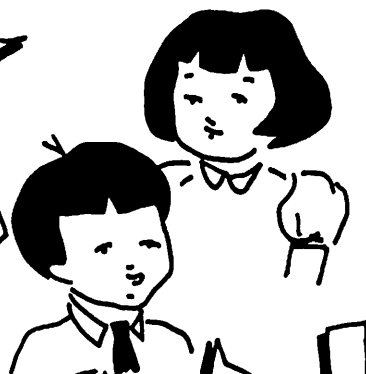


自信
教人
信

Jishin
kyo

Ninshin

PARENT
EDUCATION

A simple line drawing of a young boy and a young girl. The boy is in the foreground, wearing a collared shirt and a tie. The girl is behind him, also wearing a collared shirt. They are both looking towards the right.

Understanding Jodo Shinshu

by

Rev. Dr. Taitetsu Unno
Smith College

The goal of the Buddhist path in general is the realization of freedom, beyond the bondages experienced in the world of birth-and-death (samsara). In technical language a person seeks to transcend all kinds of “form” which limits and restricts our freedom and to realize “formless” reality. But this must not be misunderstood as abandoning this world and escaping into a beyond Reality which is “formless” permeates everything in the world of form. Hence, in order to realize true freedom one must enter ever more deeply into the samsaric world. If such freedom is realized, a person devotes the newly found power towards liberating all beings from the bondage of birth-and-death.

True freedom, Buddhism maintains, is realized by living in accord with the working of dharma. Dharma has several connotations, but in Buddhism it has two basic meanings. First, dharma refers to each reality, including the self, in its dynamic, fluid manifestation (as in the expression dharma-as-it-is); and second, dharma denotes the teaching which reveals this reality through words and concepts (as in Buddha dharma).

In early Buddhism the working of dharma appears as impermanence, change, and flux—the basic rhythm of life making up our world in which there is no permanence of any kind. No objective thing, no entity called soul, and no absolute being stands outside of this process. To recognize the impermanence of reality is liberation; it constitutes wisdom which is inseparable from compassion, as illustrated by the life of Kisa Gotami in the parable of the mustard seed. Not to see this means clinging to a fixed self and denying change. Hence, it leads to suffering.

In Mahayana Buddhism, the working of dharma is manifested in dependent co-origination, the world-forming activity in which all beings and all things are interrelating, interpenetrating, and mutually dependent for their origination and cessation. However, this dynamic universe, empty of any abiding essence and open to infinite possibilities, is not a given. It can be realized only through rigorous austerity and discipline. That is the goal of Zen practice. If and when this universe of dependent co-origination is perfectly realized, the person who achieves such a realization becomes a fully awakened one, a Buddha or Tathagata. By means of the acquired wisdom and compassion, such a person works for the salvation of all beings.

In Shin Buddhism, the most developed form of Pure Land Buddhism, the working of dharma appears in the form of the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Immeasurable Light (wisdom) and Immeasurable Life (compassion). The very establishment of the Primal Vow that vows the salvation of all beings is said to simultaneously bring about the enlightenment of all beings. In other words, our eventual awakening or enlightenment is already contained in the activity of the Primal Vow. This is what enables us to entrust ourselves to the working of dharma, thus freeing us from self-fixation. This entrusting is called shinjin, the process of enlightenment open to all beings. Shinjin has special relevance for those who cannot successfully follow elaborate forms of religious practices to the final end of absolute freedom. The saying of nembutsu, “Namu-amida-butsu”, attests to true entrusting as an accomplished fact.

Shinran (1173-1262) clarified the working of dharma as the activity of the Primal Vow. Together with his teacher Honen, he changed the course of Japanese Buddhism by opening the path of enlightenment to all whom the religious authorities had hitherto excluded: peasants, hunters, fishermen, merchants, clerics who had violated the pre-

cepts, and all women whatsoever. Shinran produced many writings, some of the most important being written in his eighties. An enduring legacy of his thought is contained in the Tannisho, compiled several decades after his death, by a disciple named Yui-en. Yui-en recorded what he had heard from his teacher in response to divergent and sometimes distorted views that were current among the people. The historical circumstances in which the Tannisho was born make it suspect in part, and yet the literary power of the work has led to its acceptance as an inspired document coming from the heart of true compassion itself.

The Focus of True Compassion

The focus of the Primal Vow, which is true compassion directed to a particular being, is the foolish person of self-power. “Foolish” here is to be understood in the religious sense. In Shinran’s usage, it refers to a person “who cannot become freed from the bondage of birth-and-death through any religious practice, due to the abundance of blind passions”.

Foolish, then, refers to the inability to carry any religious practice to its final goal of absolute freedom. The core of foolishness which obstructs religious practice is blind passion (bonno) that informs our conventional, fixed self and makes us reject the working of dharma. In the words of Shinran,

The working of blind passion also causes us not to want to go to the Pure Land and makes us feel uneasy worrying about death when we become even slightly ill. Impossible it seems to leave this old house of agitation where we have wandered aimlessly since the beginning of time, and we cannot long for the Pure Land of peace which we have yet to know. This is due to blind passion, so truly powerful and overwhelming. But no matter how reluctant we maybe, when our life in this world comes to an end, beyond our control, then for the first time we go to the land of Fulfillment. Those who do not want to go immediately are the special concern of true compassion.”

Some people reject religion as meaningless, while others use it for their own selfish needs. Both are due to blind passion. Everyone willfully attaches to life—even a slight indisposition, for example, causes anxiety and fear about dying. We do not sufficiently rejoice at the joys of others and suffer with the sorrows of others. Yet this blind passion, inherent in the very life of human beings, cannot withstand the ceaseless working of the Primal Vow.

The major characteristic of a foolish person, driven by blind passion, is to rely on self-power. Self-power is the illusion of a person who is always “conscious of doing good”, whether that “good” is a moral act or spiritual attainment. Attachment to it enslaves the self ever more deeply to the samsaric life of persistent dissatisfaction. It is also responsible for the calculation or contrivance (hakarai) which aims at fulfilling insatiable self-centered needs even in the most noble act, moral or religious. A person who takes pride in his self-power is obviously incapable of entrusting himself to Other Power. But without this capacity to entrust oneself, one can never become free of self-fixation. Since this capacity of true entrusting comes from Other Power, it becomes necessary to open oneself up to its working. The only way in which beings of blind passion can do so is through a single-hearted attention to the teaching which flows from the realm of dharma-as-it-is.

Listening to the Buddha dharma is the central practice of Shin Buddhism; there are no other requirements, whether meditative practice, ethical precepts, or intellectual understanding. But there are various degrees of listening, from half-hearted to total identification. Ultimately the power of what is heard overcomes blind passion, and a new being, incarnating the working of dharma, is born. Such a radical form of listening has

broken through the subject-object dichotomy, and an experience of non-dichotomous reality takes place. The closest analogy to it would be the pristine hearing of music, as expressed in T.S. Eliot's "The Dry Salvages":

Music heard so deeply
It is not heard at all
And you are the music
While the music lasts

The Buddha dharma is not an object to be studied, analyzed, or utilized. It is to be comprehended with one's whole being, and when it is truly heard no separation exists between the hearer and what is heard. Saichi, the myokonin or exemplary Shin devotee, puts it this way:

It is not I who heard it,
It is not I who heard it;
Namu-amida-butsu strikes into my heart.
Now I am hit and taken by you.

To sum up, the focus of true compassion is always and forever the foolish being unable to become free from the tyranny of blind passion. Shinran proclaims on behalf of each of us, "When I ponder on the compassionate vow of Amida, established through five kalpas of profound thought, it was for myself, Shinran, alone. Because I am a being burdened so heavily with karma, I feel even more deeply grateful to the Primal Vow which is decisively made to save me."

Birth In The Pure Land

For Shinran, enlightenment meant the capacity to manifest the features or marks of a great being, as did the historical Buddha, and to bring comfort and peace to all people by simply expounding the dharma. Anything less than that, whether claimed as enlightenment or satori, would be self-delusion, especially for a foolish being like ourselves. And yet his great discovery was the path whereby even the most foolish could attain supreme enlightenment. In fact, only because of one's foolish nature, Shinran asserts, is the attainment of Buddhahood an absolute certainty. This paradox stands at the heart of the revolutionary reinterpretation of Pure Land Buddhism.

Inheriting the traditional view that enlightenment is impossible in this life but could be attained in an ideal environment in the next life, Shinran gave a radical reinterpretation to the meaning of "birth in the Pure Land"...First, in contrast to the traditional view that one progressed on the path to enlightenment in the Pure Land in the next life, Shinran affirmed that one leaves all karmic limitations at the moment of death to be born in the Pure Land and there immediately attains Buddhahood. One then begins the return journey into samsara to save all beings. Both the going and returning are accomplished as the working of dharma. Second, in the very act of true entrusting (shinjin), inevitably and necessarily leading to Buddhahood, one already realizes the stage of non-retrogression. That is, in the here and now, while remaining a person of blind passion, one attains "birth in the Pure Land." Shinran makes this point succinctly:

Then they attain birth means that when a person realizes shinjin, he is born immediately. To be born immediately means to dwell in the stage of non-retrogression. To dwell in the stage of non-retrogression is to become established in the stage of the truly settled. This is also called the attainment of the stage equal to enlightenment. Such is the meaning of then they attain birth. Then means immediately; immediately means without any passage of time, without any passage of days.

Shinjin has been translated as “faith”, but it may be misleading since this word has several connotations. In general Buddhism, faith is basically a trust in the Buddha’s teachings as the first step on the path to enlightenment. In some other religions, faith is a belief in God, heaven or hell. In all such cases faith is considered from the standpoint of man, self-enclosed and unconsciously affirming some kind of fixation. But in Shin Buddhism the term shinjin refers, first of all, to the mind and heart of Amida Buddha. When this enters our own minds and hearts, it enables us to entrust ourselves to Other Power, freeing us from ourselves. It is the final goal on the path, an awakening to the nature of self and Buddha, the equivalent of satori.

Thus, for our purposes shinjin is rendered as “true entrusting” in an attempt to bring out its dual connotation. That is, “true” denotes the mind and heart of the Buddha; and “entrusting” refers to the mind of the Buddha working in the mind of a foolish being. Thus, shinjin makes possible the complete entrusting to the Buddha as the ultimate liberation from attachment to a fixed self. The act of true entrusting is none other than the freedom realized in “birth in the Pure Land”; it is a birth attained immediately—“immediately means without any passage of time, without any passage of days.”

Such an understanding is based on the reality of Pure Land itself. Shinran describes it as the land of Immeasurable Light, the realm of Amida Buddha, who is also known as the Buddha of Unhindered Light or Inconceivable Light. Light is the radiance of unexcelled wisdom which is beyond the comprehension of ordinary thinking; hence, it is described as immeasurable or inconceivable. And nothing can hinder or obstruct the rays of wisdom which penetrate through the darkest ignorance of karmic beings, melting and transforming all into the content of enlightenment. Since this Pure Land was realized as the fulfillment of Amida’s vows, it is also called the land of True Fulfillment.

Other Power

Amida Buddha is called the Other Power, but this other is not an “other” in contrast to “self.” Saichi said it precisely:

There is no self-power
No other power
All is Other Power

In ordinary thinking we are bound by the subject-object dichotomy. We see the world from a self-enclosed viewpoint and cannot appreciate the “other” as it truly is, due to the gap existing between self and other. When seen from this limited standpoint, Other Power is regarded as an object, abstracted and made meaningless. But when this relative viewpoint is shattered, Other Power becomes dynamic life in which all dharmas, human and otherwise, are made to realize their fullest potentials. Here the totality of each reality is completely Other Power itself in which no room exists for self-power. Shinran makes this point, underscoring the non-existence of willfulness or egocentricity:

When I do not contrive, it is called “made to become so by itself.” This is none other than Other Power.

The original Japanese for “made to become so by itself” is jinen, a term difficult to translate into a single English word. Ji means “self,” not only the human self but the self of the tree, flower, bird, fish, mountain, etc., and nen means “made to become so.” In other words, each reality, human or otherwise, is made to become itself, fulfilling its potential and becoming truly real, by the working of dharma. Such working of dharma, effectuating “made to become so by itself” without discrimination of young or old, man or woman, good or evil, is Other Power. Shinran emphasizes this when he writes, “Other Power means to be free of any form of calculation.”

Other Power, thus, is not an absolute being, not a force separate from oneself, not a miracle worker. Perhaps the following quotation from an eminent Japanese potter, Shoji Hamada, expresses the meaning of Other Power in a manner which anyone can understand and appreciate:

If a kiln is small, I might be able to control it completely, that is to say, my own self can become a controller, a master of the kiln. But man's own self is but a small thing after all. When I work at the larger kiln, the power of my own self becomes so feeble that it cannot control it adequately. It means that for the larger kiln, the power that is beyond me is necessary. Without the mercy of such an inviolable power I cannot get good pieces. One of the reasons why I wanted to have a large kiln is because I want to be a potter, if I may, who works more in grace than in his own power. You know nearly all the best old pots were done in huge kilns.

Other Power as jinen converts evil into good, the lowest into the highest, which is supreme compassion (mahakaruna) at work, focused on the foolish being. Thus Shinran states: “To be made to become so means that without the practitioner's calculating in any way whatsoever, all his past, present, and future evil karma is transformed into the highest good. To be transformed means that evil karma, without being nullified or eradicated, is made into the highest good, just as all waters upon entering the great ocean immediately become ocean water. Since there is no contriving in any way to gain such virtues, it is called jinen.”

The transformation effected in this way occurs repeatedly throughout one's life. Inevitably and necessarily, it culminates in the attainment of Buddhahood. The person of nembutsu who cannot complete any religious practice will even so attain perfect freedom by the power of the Primal Vow. Ultimately, one attains Buddhahood, “made to become so by itself.”

Although we have been stressing the dual aspects of wisdom and compassion as central to the Buddhist tradition, such a distinction is made from the standpoint of human, dichotomous thinking. No such division is found in transcendent Buddhahood; this is the reason that Shinran also describes the formless, supreme Buddha as jinen:

Jinen means that from the very beginning one is made to become so....This Vow is the Vow to make us all attain the supreme Buddhahood. The supreme Buddha is formless, and because of being formless is called jinen.

But, from Shinran's point of view, we foolish beings awaken to the formless Buddha only through Amida, the Buddha who appears to us in the form of the Name, *Namu-amida-butsu*.

True Entrusting

The union of a foolish being (ki) and Other Power (ho), known technically as ki-ho ittai, is realized in true entrusting. That this is not established on a dichotomous relationship has been clarified, but the inner dynamics of entrusting, suggested in the transforming power of jinen, needs to be more fully explored.

Supreme enlightenment means that the highest wisdom and compassion reaches down to the lowliest, affirms it, and uplifts it to the selfsame awakening. That which rejects the lowliest, whether called foolish, evil, or sinful, cannot be the highest being or the truly compassionate. This is the reason that in the basic structure of Mahayana Buddhism enlightenment contains delusion, although the former is not subject to the latter, and delusion is a necessary component of enlightenment, although it is devoid of power. This relationship is expressed by Shinran as follows:

Evil hindrance becomes the substance of virtue,
As in the case of ice and water.
The more the ice, the more the water;
The more the hindrance, the more the virtue.
Having realized the entrusting majestic and expansive
By virtue of Unhindered Light,
The ice of blind passion melts without fail
To instantly become the water of enlightenment.

The crucial point, as seen in the working of jinen, is that evil hindrance or blind passion, “without being nullified or eradicated, is made into the highest good.” Since such a transformation exceeds our rational understanding, it is frequently described as being inconceivable and inexpressible, but this is the heart of Shin religious experience.

The potter Hamada once said, “I would much rather make an excellent pot from a poor clay, than make bad pots from exquisite clay.” Metaphorically, we may say that the Primal Vow of Amida makes “excellent pot from a poor clay” by the process of jinen, whereas some other religions of high intellectual and ethical persuasions may be said to produce “bad pots from exquisite clay.”

That the poor clay is turned into an excellent pot by virtue of true compassion requires that one actually becomes a poor clay, not merely in thought but in reality. This is the difference between philosophy as cerebral activity and religion as involving the whole person, a difference marked by what Shinran calls the “sidewise leap” (ochō).

It should be noted, however, that true entrusting is not merely an existential act but has a noetic content. That is, the person of Shin awakening is “granted Amida’s true wisdom” (XVI), and this is the reason that, while remaining a foolish being, one is able to manifest a kind of wisdom full of extraordinary common sense. Such a wisdom granted or endowed to a person is expressed by Eikichi Ikeyama, a noted lay teacher of Shin, in the following poem:

The Pure I, which is not I,
Being in me,
Reveals to me
This defiled I.

The awareness of a defiled I (ki) made possible by virtue of the Pure I (ho) is a thoroughgoing knowledge of self that no psychological analysis, bound by dichotomous thinking, can ever attain. Self-knowledge in this radical sense is the core of true wisdom that is brought to realization in true entrusting. It is the knowledge of a karma-bound self illuminated by true compassion that enfolds it.

Good and Evil

One of the major topics in the Tannisho is the problem of good and evil. This problem may be understood on three levels: legal, moral and religious. On the legal plane, good and evil, right and wrong, are decided on the basis of an objective law which is applied, more or less, to all people in all circumstances. On the moral plane, while subject to scrutiny by others, they depend to a great extent on the conscience and integrity of an individual. On the religious plane, good and evil are seen from the standpoint of a higher order; in the case of Buddhism they are seen in relation to the process of attaining-Buddhahood.

From the standpoint of Buddhahood a more fundamental evil than moral good or moral evil exists, hindering a person from successfully pursuing religious practice, achieving freedom, and becoming a Buddha. This karmic evil, rooted in blind passion, poisons both relative good and evil; it taints even the highest good with selfish motivations. But this realization does not come from mere self-reflection, conducted in the mode of subject-object thinking. Rather, it is brought to one's awareness through the teaching and by the working of the Primal Vow which makes karmic evil its primary concern. In this awareness what we consider "good" or "evil" lose its potency, whether positive or negative, for enlightenment. This religious view of good and evil is found in the opening section of Tannisho:

Amida's Primal Vow does not discriminate between the young and old, good and evil; true entrusting alone is essential. The reason is that the Vow is directed to the being burdened with the weight of karmic evil and burning with the flames of blind passion. Thus, in entrusting ourselves to the Primal Vow, no other form of good is necessary, for there is no good that surpasses the nembutsu. And evil need not be feared, for there is no evil which can obstruct the working of Amida's Primal Vow.

When we remain on the moral plane and seek the path of enlightenment, we believe that by being "good" we advance towards our goal and that by being "evil" we falter and regress. This is not the proper understanding of the path and shows ignorance of the fact that relative good and evil both are manifestations of blind self-concern which stem from fundamental evil.

It should be noted immediately that this is not a negation of moral good and evil. In fact, human beings should naturally be moral, and there should be no special significance to performing good and shunning evil. But the problem for us is that sometimes we not only fail to do good but choose to do evil. We want to help our loved ones in distress, but sometimes there is nothing we can do, the problem being beyond our control. Faced with critical choices of doing good or evil, we choose that which will fulfill our own self-centered needs, even subconsciously. When we are confronted with a dilemma, we come face to face with our existential selves and see the subtle movements of fundamental evil which is enfolded in true compassion. This fact led Shinran to make the pronouncement:

Even a good person attains birth in the Pure Land, how much more so the evil person.

The realization of karmic evil (ki) and Primal Vow (ho) is simultaneous and inseparable. When the two are pursued independently of each other, irreparable distortions occur. The one-sided focus on evil can easily become obsessive and destructive, even leading to the justification of evil. Shinran's admonition, "Do not take poison, just because there is an antidote," is directed to just such a tendency in human beings. In con-

trast, an exclusive concern with Other Power, lacking any awareness of one's karmic evil, leads to a delusory reliance on an external agency to solve every human ill. It undermines the quest for enlightenment and coddles the lazy. Both are forms of subliminal attachments to a false, fixed self. In true entrusting a creative tension between ki and ho, karmic evil and Primal Vow, is always operative. Saichi says:

When evil is not realized, the Buddha is not realized.

When evil is realized, the Buddha is realized.

Evil and Buddha are one.

That is Namu-amida-butsu in six syllables.

How wretched, how wretched!

How grateful, how grateful!

"Wretched" refers to the existential reality of human beings. No matter what one does, it only deepens one's entanglement in samsaric life. The problems that disrupt our equilibrium in life are of our own making; the source is not outside of ourselves but deep within our karmic natures. "Grateful" means a profound thankfulness to the working of true compassion that is specifically designed for this self of karmic evil, giving itself totally to its liberation and freedom. This simultaneous realization is contained in the saying of nembutsu.

Nembutsu

In the Tannisho the term "nembutsu" is used in three ways: as a synonym for the Name (myogo), the fundamental reality; as the saying of the Name, Namu-amida-butsu; and as true entrusting, the working of the Name appearing in one's life.

The Name as fundamental reality does not exist apart from its involvement in bringing a person into awareness. This is evident in the content of Namu-amida-butsu which is the unit of ki and ho. That is, "namu" is the person who is made to entrust himself or herself to "amida-butsu", Amida Buddha, through the working of the Primal Vow. Or, we can say that "amida-butsu" enters into the life of "namu" and enables one to entrust oneself to Light and Life that is Amida. Each person, whether aware or unaware, is essential to the completeness of the Name. This is the reason that the central object of worship in Shin Buddhism is not Amida Buddha but the name, Namu-amida-butsu. It is also the reason that the preferred image is not the statue or painting of Amida Buddha but the scroll with the sacred Name written on it.

When the full significance of the Name is realized as the totality of supreme wisdom and compassion granted to a person, it is affirmed in the saying of nembutsu. This saying, however, is not simply a matter of verbal recitation; it is the welling up of that which is true and real experienced in the depth of self. In the saying or uttering of Namu-amida-butsu, then, are found the mind and heart of Amida which has awakened a person, transforming even the body which becomes one of gentleness, tenderness, and suppleness. Thus, saying the nembutsu is none other than living the nembutsu.

Finally, nembutsu is used to denote true entrusting, the unity of ki and ho, namu plus amida butsu. The entrusting is releasement from all fixations; the absolute freedom that is the goal of Buddhism. Thus, Shinran states, "In the person of nembutsu opens up the great path of unobstructed freedom" (VII). This freedom is expressed variously in Shinran's writings: it is called going beyond birth-and-death, entering the ocean of Amida's Vow, being grasped never to be abandoned, joining the company of the truly settled, attaining the stage of non-retrogression, and realizing the true entrusting of diamond-like firmness.

The Tannisho is a guide which will help us explore some of the critical, fundamental questions of life: How can I become truly free? How can I know true entrusting? How can I become settled in mind and heart? How can I attain Buddhahood? The answer will be forthcoming, according to Shinran, in that very moment when the timeless breaks through time:

When the thought of saying the nembutsu emerges decisively from within, having entrusted ourselves to the inconceivable power of Amida's Vow which saves us, enabling us to be born in the Pure land, in that very moment we receive the ultimate benefit of being grasped never to be abandoned. (I)

Glossary

Amida Buddha: The Buddha of Immeasurable Life (compassion) and Immeasurable Light (wisdom); also called the Buddha of Unhindered Light or Inconceivable Light. Light is the radiance of true wisdom (prajna) which is of a different order from ordinary, conventional knowledge and knows no limitations which is suggested by such terms as immeasurable, unhindered, and inconceivable.

Attesting Passage: Statements of Shinran and other teachers which attest to the truth of a given view or interpretation.

Birth [ojo]: The central religious experience in Shin Buddhism understood by Shinran in a twofold sense: instantaneous birth, here and now, in the realization of shinjin or true entrusting; and attaining Buddhahood, having shed all karmic limitations and achieving birth in the Pure Land. The original term, ojo means "going to be born" in the Pure Land; "going" here is said to be a "non-going," based on emptiness (un[sunyata]).

Blind Passion [bonno]: Self-centeredness, profound and ineradicable, which cause mental, emotional, and physical afflictions.

Borderland [henji]: The temporary realm where people attached to self-power are born before they eventually go to the Pure Land, the land of True Fulfillment. Synonymous with castle of doubt, palace of womb, and realm of indolence, all suggesting limited, self-enclosed existence.

Dharma: In Buddhism dharma has two basic meanings: things, including the self, as they truly are (as in drama-as-it-is); and teaching or doctrine (as in Buddha dharma).

Dharmakaya-as-compassion [hoben-hosshin]: The body of reality dharmakaya which relates directly to karmic evil and blind passion in man in the form of Amida Buddha.

Distant Capitol: Kyoto where Shinran lived in his later years. His followers from the Kanto district, north of present-day Tokyo, travelled to Kyoto to listen to the finer points of the teaching from him, some of which are contained in the Tannisho.

Effortless Practice: In contrast to difficult practice which requires discipline, study, meditative techniques, etc., none of these things are considered essential for enlightenment in Shin Buddhism. The only requirement is true entrusting made possible by the working of the Primal Vow. Since nothing is demanded of individuals except the willingness to give up the fictive self in the saying of nembutsu, this is called effortless practice.

Five Transgressions: Killing father, mother, monk, injuring the Buddha, and creating disharmony in the Sangha (in Hinayana Buddhism), or vandalizing temple, statues, and scriptures, slandering the teaching, obstructing religious practices, violating the five precepts, and committing the ten evils (in Mahayana Buddhism).

Foolish Being [bonbu]: The radical ignorance avidva of humanity, rooted in blind self-centeredness and karmic evil, which makes impossible true freedom and joy in living.

Four Blissful Practices: The observance of proper behavior in body, mind, and speech and the vow to lead all beings to freedom, essential components of bodhisattva practice.

Four Modes of Birth: Life produced from the womb, from egg, from micro-organism, and from metamorphosis.

Grasped never to be abandoned [sesshu-fusha]: The ultimate expression of true compassion constantly pursuing man. True compassion actively moves toward us, becomes one with us in nondiscriminating love, and releases us from self-fixation, thus begins the process of attaining Buddhahood.

Honen [1133-1212]: A revolutionary figure who founded the Jodo or Pure Land school in Japan and was the teacher of Shinran.

Inconceivable [fushigi, fukashigi]: That which is beyond intellectual or conceptual understanding but can be brought to fullest realization in a foolish being through the working of the Primal Vow.

Karmic Evil [zaigo, zaiaku]: The fathomless ignorance in us which regulates our life according to the law of cause and effect.

land of Fulfillment or True Fulfillment [hodo]: The realm of enlightenment or Pure Land, established by Amida Buddha as the result of the fulfillment of the forty-eight vows which is also the fulfillment of our deepest aspirations. Also called the land of Immeasurable Light, light being the manifestation of true wisdom (prajna).

Lotus Sutra: One of the most important scriptures of Mahayana Buddhism containing the innumerable techniques used by the Eternal Buddha to save all beings.

Made to become so by itself [jinen]: A term used by Shinran to indicate (1) the transformation of evil into good by the working of true compassion, (2) the inevitable process of a person of true entrusting achieving Buddhahood, and (3) the ultimate formless Buddha.

Mt. Hiei: Among the erstwhile centers of Japanese Buddhism, the headquarters of the Tendai school, which produced Honen, Shinran, Dogen, Nichiren and other eminent teachers of 13th-century Japan.

Myokonin: Shin practitioner who is likened to a lotus that grows in muddy water; a rare, spiritual person who lives the religious life simply and selflessly.

Name [myogo]: Namu-amida-butsu, the fundamental spiritual reality that is the source of the enlightenment of all beings. Also called the Name in six characters or six syllables, referring to Na-mu-a-mi-da-butsu.

Nara: Ancient capitol of Japan (A.D. 710-784) where the centers of the six major schools of early Japanese Buddhism flourished.

Nembutsu: Various connotations are found in this term: (1) Namu-amida-butsu, as the ultimate reality or Name myogo for man, (2) the saying or uttering of the Name as the expression of that reality in man, and (3) the sole cause of enlightenment for a foolish being. In general Buddhism nembutsu means the contemplation on the Buddha.

One thought-moment [ichinen]: The instant when one awakens to the working of the Primal Vow, having been grasped never to be abandoned. That instant or thought-moment is when the timeless breaks through time. Also refers to the uttering of nembutsu as in the one thought-moment of practice.

One Vehicle: A term identified with the scheme of salvation which is taught in the Lotus Sutra, transcending the distinctions between Hinayana and Mahayana. Shinran called his teaching the Primal Vow of One Vehicle as the path for all people.

Other Power: The working of Amida's Primal Vow beyond the conventional self-other categories. Other Power expresses the working of sunyata; it is compassion actively involved in the welfare of all beings.

Path of Pure Land: The tradition of nembutsu, open to all people, as distinguished from the Path of Sages, which originates in India with the three Pure Land Sutras: Larger Sukhavativyuha (Daimuryojukyo), Smaller Sukhavativyuha (Amidakyo), and Ami-tayurdhyana (Kanmuryojukyo).

Practicer [gyoja]: One who undertakes the Buddhist disciplines in daily life. In Shin Buddhism this means saying the nembutsu and entrusting oneself to the Primal Vow, becoming free of self-fixation, plus willingly meeting the demands and responsibilities of everyday life. The arena of daily life is the dojo, training place, for Shin Buddhist life.

Primal Vow [hongan]: The transcendental wish and prayer of Amida Buddha that we may realize our deepest aspirations, including the power to bring them about in the midst of samsaric life.

Saichi: An unlettered Shin devotee who lived from 1851-1933 in Shimane Prefecture, Japan, and wrote simple religious poems jotted down into notebooks numbering close to a hundred.

Self-Power: A term of illusion, since one's calculative, self-enclosed mind cannot solve the deep questions of life.

Selfworking [gi]: Calculative thinking attached to one's personal designs, hindering the realization of "made to become so by itself" as the result of the working of Primal Vow.

Shan-tao [618-681]: One of the seven patriarchs of Shin Buddhism whose influence on Honen was decisive.

Shingon Esoterism: The most pervasive form of Buddhism during the rise of the nembutsu movement led by Honen.

Six Realms of Existence: The realms of hellish existence, hungry ghosts, beasts, fighting demons, human beings, and heavenly beings.

Tathagata: Synonym for Buddha. Shinran frequently uses the expression Amida Tathagata or Amida Nyorai, signifying the dynamic nature of true compassion which appears from the world of truth and reaches down to man.

Ten Evils: Killing, stealing, adultery, lying, harsh words, slandering, idle talk, greed, anger, and wrong views.

Thirty-two Features and Eighty Characteristics: In India superior beings, such as a Buddha or world-conqueror, were thought to possess auspicious marks on their bodies which distinguished them from ordinary mortals.

Three Esoteric Practices: The Shingon training in body, mind, and speech that correspond with the Buddha's body, mind and speech. Called esoteric because it is a secret transmission, handed down orally from master to disciple.

The Essentials of Faith Alone [Yuishin-sho]: A text written by Seikaku (1167-1235), a revered disciple of Honen held in high regard by Shinran. English translation found in Notes on 'Essentials of Faith Alone', ed. Y. Ueda, Hongwanji International Center, Kyoto, pp. 55-76.

True Entrusting [shinjin]: A foolish being cannot entrust himself to anyone or anything, but through the working of true compassion, one is made to entrust oneself to Amida. True entrusting originates not with a person but with Amida Primal Vow. Thus, it is also called diamond-like, referring to the indestructible nature of true entrusting.

Wisdom of Non-origination [mushonin]: Wisdom that realizes emptiness as the creative force in life. Being empty of permanent characteristics or attributes, from a higher perspective things of the world are characterized by non-origination and non-destruction.

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