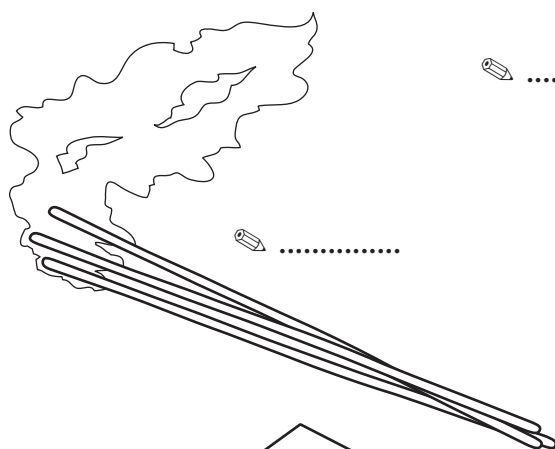
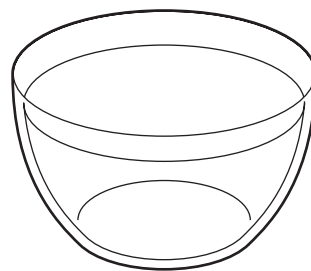


# Looking at offerings



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**Buddhists use offerings to remind them of the Buddha's teachings and to concentrate on the meaning of the Buddha's teachings. Above are some drawings of offerings. Under each drawing, write the letter of the sentence that best shows what the offering reminds Buddhists of.**

- A.** We should always try to stay calm and to think clearly.
- B.** Our good thoughts and good behaviour can rise up to affect others.
- C.** Learning and knowledge is important; dark things can happen when people are ignorant.
- D.** Everyone can rise up to be a good person; it does not matter what they have done or where they come from.
- E.** Appreciate what you have now; because it may be gone someday, don't worry about what you do not have.
- F.** The Buddha's teachings are important.

## Activity objectives

- ▶ To learn about the meanings associated with some Buddhist offerings.
- ▶ To practise associating meanings with objects.

## Preparation and resources

Student book, photos of different offerings in temples around the world.

## Introducing the activity

Before you start the activity you may like to go over the meanings of different offerings with the children. You might also like to ask the children to give examples of things they have that could be used to remind them of particular lessons or of how to behave. For example, they might have something at home that a parent or friend gave them and when they look at that object it reminds them of the person who gave it to them. Or, when they look at an alarm clock, it could remind them of the saying 'the early bird gets the worm'. Tell the children that the offerings in a temple remind Buddhists of important lessons.

## Teaching notes

*The purpose of this activity is to give the children a chance to work out for themselves the meaning of different offerings.*

*Answers the students give may vary, and you may like to ask them to explain why they answered as they have. There is not necessarily one correct answer for each question, but some appropriate answers are as follows. For the bowl of water: (A) Try to stay calm and think clearly (like still water). For the incense: (B) Our good thoughts and behaviour can rise up to affect others (the way incense smoke rises), or (D) Everyone can rise up to be a good person. For the fruit and flowers: (E) Appreciate what you have now, because it may be gone someday (the same way fruit and flowers wither and die).*

*For the candle: (C) Learning and knowledge are important; dark things can happen when people are ignorant. For the lotus: (D) Everyone can rise up to be a good person. For the book: (F) The Buddha's teachings are important.*

*Buddhist offerings do not have to mean the same thing to the same people, so some of the children's answers may vary. You may want to do this as a class exercise, or break the students into groups and ask them to discuss which meaning goes with each drawing. They could then present their answers to the class.*

## Concluding the activity

The children could compare their answers and try to think up meanings that are not written on the list. They could also try to determine the meanings for offerings not pictured, such as food or tea.

## Activity outcomes

- ▶ The children understand that each offering has a meaning.
- ▶ The children can describe the meaning of some Buddhist offerings.

## Complementary work

The children could investigate meanings of different offerings.

## Resources

Secondary sources about other types of offerings in Buddhist temples. See [www.worldreligions.co.uk/buddhism.htm](http://www.worldreligions.co.uk/buddhism.htm) for photos of offerings being made. Or see, <http://buddhism.kalachakranet.org>