



Act out the Buddha's life

Interactive storytelling

Sit in a circle. The space in the middle is the playground.

Tell the story, and each time a new character or building or something which can be acted out comes into play, say the name of a child to get them to act it out. For example: Siddhartha's Mother (Silvia) dreams she is touched by a white elephant (Nico).... etc. You can make more children act out the walls of the palace, the people in the village, the other ascetics, and so on. You can also make Siddhartha be acted out by different children.

Tableau Vivant

Use the method of Tableau Vivant. This means 'living image.' The children act out a still image of what is happening. By using their bodies, facial expressions, and positioning in the room, they can show the image of the story. Make sure they are aware of where the photo is taken/where the audience is. You can start with some easy example pictures, such as a wedding, a beach... and then go into trying to act out the story together in different tableaux.



You can use the document in which the story of Buddha is divided into 13 steps.

Tableaux in smaller groups

Same as the 2-star method. However, you can let the children make their own tableau vivant in smaller groups. For example, divide your class into groups of 5 and make each one of them act out some steps. Together you can then tell the story in 13 images.



Buddha's life story in 13 Steps

1. Siddhartha was born 2500 years ago. His first steps on earth made lotus flowers bloom out of his footsteps.
2. A prediction said that Siddhartha would either become a great ruler, or a great sage.
3. He grew up in a noble family in Northern India, in a palace surrounded by luxury. His father wanted to keep him away from all unpleasant things. He was not allowed to leave the palace.
4. He was married to Princess Yashodara and they had a son.
5. Against the will of his father, Siddhartha left the palace one day to go into the town.
6. He saw old age.
7. He saw sickness.
8. He saw death.
9. And he also met a “seeker of truth,” a yogi.
11. In his mind he wondered why there is old age, sickness, and death. To find an answer, he left the palace for good and became a wandering “seeker of truth.”
12. For six years he lived as a wandering seeker of truth: he encountered many religious teachers, became an ascetic and still couldn't find answers to his questions.
12. When he sat down underneath a Bodhi tree, he started to meditate.
13. Finally he reached his goal; he found answers to all of his questions and reached enlightenment, he had become a Buddha.