INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

DIDACTIC REFERENCES – SECONDARY LEVEL I

OBJECTIVES

The students will be able to . . .
1. explain the terms "liberation" and "enlightenment" from a Buddhist perspective.
2. distinguish a self-centered level from a free level of action.
3. trace the developmental path to enlightenment from a Buddhist perspective.

INTRODUCTION

The goal of Buddhist practice is "enlightenment." This term is familiar to the students, but probably without a precise idea. A humorous graphic is used as a first approach to the topic.

The teacher projects **Material 1**, the students name their current idea of enlightenment in plenary.

NOTES

On the path to enlightenment, two levels are distinguished.

In Theravada, the emphasis is placed on the goal of liberation from one's own suffering.

In the Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions, compassion and wisdom and all enlightening qualities are developed to benefit all beings as much as possible. By thinking of everyone, beyond-personal wisdom emerges and experiences and abilities flow freely. Enlightenment is the highest functioning of the mind.

FURTHER INTRODUCTION

Students read on **Worksheet 1** how the path of the historical Buddha began. In group work, they encounter the question, what does it mean to strive for the goal of "enlightenment"? The tasks aim to make the search comprehensible. Prince Siddhartha understood impermanence and therefore gave up his previous life.
The exchange takes place in the plenary. See possible results on **Answers to WS1**.

EXERCISE 1

First, the level of how inner freedom can be achieved is worked out.

In the group work, the students can understand the limitations of a strongly ego-centered experience by means of pictures and tasks on **Worksheet 2**. They are asked to formulate a conclusion.
This should include the understanding: If you are entangled in your own disturbing feelings, you cannot act freely. The **Answers to WS 2** give possible suggestions.

Material 2 shows the level of liberation. The pupils describe in plenary how this free level feels and expresses itself.

EXERCIXSE 2

Now it is about the level of full enlightenment and unfoldment of all Buddha qualities, which are unshakable fearlessness, perfect joy and boundless compassion.

Buddha did not want this freedom only for himself, but he wanted to show the way to lasting happiness for all beings. The great attitude of thinking of all accomplishes great things. With this super-personal view, one acts out of compassion and wisdom and uses the enlightened qualities for the benefit of beings wherever they are open.

Students work individually to explore the experiential level of enlightenment using the tasks on **Worksheet 3**. Possible meanings of the Buddhist symbols lotus and diamond are associated. The **Answers to WS 3** provide possible replies.

SECURING KNOWLEDGE

Enlightenment is a state of unwavering fearlessness, complete joy, and boundless compassion. One experiences oneself as fully connected to everything and perceives the mind as a luminous conscious space that is, by its nature, insight, by its experience, supreme joy, and by its expression, energetic love.

The aspects of full enlightenment on **Material 3** are traced in class discussion. The students explain the Buddhist terminology by bringing in the understanding of a beyond-personal way of experiencing that they have worked out so far.