ANSWERS TO WS 1

HOW BUDDHISM CAME TO THE WEST

EXERCISES

Read the text and note down relevant factors with your partner.

1. How was it possible for Buddhism to gain a foothold in the modern West? Include political, social, and personal reasons.

   - Buddhist teachers of different traditions taught in the West.
   - Famous Buddhist personalities such as the Dalai Lama received general social recognition (Nobel Prize).
   - Through the expulsion of Tibetan lamas, Tibetan Buddhism came to India (Sikkim).
   - Westerners seeking meaning could meet Buddhist teachers in Nepal and India.
   - An exchange developed.
   - Social upheavals in the 1960s created openness to new things.
   - Many people were in search of new ways and contents of life.
   - Many people were on a quest for inner development and finding meaning.

2. Discuss why Buddhist teachings became attractive to people in modern society.

   - One no longer found meaning in pure materialism and consumption.
   - The interest in inner development grew, among other things also stimulated by drug experiences.
   - Buddhism offers a clear logic to people with good education and abstract thinking.
   - Lay people can integrate meditation and viewpoint into life with work and family.
   - Meditation offers people not only stress relief and peace of mind, but also the opportunity to experience more surplus and happiness.