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| Lesson Topic | Shakyamuni Then and Now |
| Class/Grade | Middle School Communication Arts |
| Activity Type | Narrative Writing and Oral Presentation |
| Lesson Objectives | **The student will be able to:**   * Understand and identify the essential elements of legends * Connect his or her knowledge of legends to the legend of Shakyamuni * Show his or her understanding of the components of legends in recreating Shakyamuni’s story |
| Essential Questions | In which ways is the human experience defined by social and historical context?  How do story telling conventions compare across culture and time? |
| Standards/  Benchmarks | KSDE Social Studies: 3.3 The student will investigate and connect how societies are shaped by the identities, beliefs, and practices of individuals and groups with contemporary issues.  KSDE Literacy/Common Core: [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/6/3/) |
| Sources Used | * “Seated Buddha Shakyamuni” image: <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/4313/Seated_Buddha_Shakyamuni> * “The Story of the Life of Buddha Shakyamuni”: <http://www.sgi.org/about-us/buddhist-lineage/shakyamuni.html> * Brown, Waka Takahashi. “Introduction to Buddhism.” *Spice Digest* Fall 2007: n. pag. Web. 12 Nov. 2009. <http://spice.fsi.stanford.edu/docs/introduction_to_buddhism> * Prentice Hall *Literature*. Penguin Edition, Grade Seven. Pearson Education Inc.: 2007. |
| Required Materials | * Copied handouts of “The Legend of Shakyamuni” from the *Spice Digest*. * Prentice Hall *Literature* textbook: Grade 7 |
| Time Requirement | Four class periods of 45 minutes each |

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| Procedure |  |
| Pre-lesson Preparation | This unit is meant to follow units on world religions and cultures. |
| Lesson introduction | **Day One:**   1. Anticipatory set: Ask students to review the definition of legend on page 815 of their *Literature* books or whatever definition you prefer. Have groups of three or four brainstorm the American legends they are familiar with and can retell. 2. Discuss the oral tradition of storytelling: How do stories change over time? Does this fit with the definition of a legend? Can you have a religious legend? 3. Ask students to recall their knowledge of Buddhism. In cooperative groups, students should create a web of what they remember from their studies of world religions and cultures last year in Social Studies. Discuss the webs. 4. Read “The Legend of Shakyamuni”. The handout questions are homework.   **Day Two:**   1. Anticipatory set: Project the “Seated Buddha Shakyamuni” picture projected on the board. Discuss ways they think this represents Shakyamuni. Is it accurate? Does this statue, because it is in bronze, conflict with his thoughts on how to live? 2. What would Buddhism look like if it began in the twenty-first century? What would be different about Shakyamuni’s legend? 3. Assignment: Students are to rewrite “The Legend of Shakyamuni” setting it in the 21st century. What would the “Four Sights” be now? Who would Shakyamuni be? What background would he come from? What would he experience to form his worldview in today’s world? Tell students they will share their version orally with the class. Have students begin writing.   **Day Three:**   1. Students continue drafting, editing, and revising and semi-memorizing their legends. |
| Activity | Oral Storytelling: Students tell their modern versions of “The Legend of Shakyamuni” to their classmates. |
| Wrap-up |  |
| Extension/  Assessment | Students will complete the questions at the end of “The Legend of Shakyamuni”: to show an understanding of how his story fits in the context of a legend.  Their legends will be assessed on how well they indicate a true understanding of what experiences in Shakyamuni’s life contributed to his philosophy and his enlightenment. |