*Saṃsāra*

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| Overview & Purpose In this lesson students should become familiar with the Buddhist concept of *saṃsāra*. | | | Education Standards Addressed | |
| **Activity** | **Aims** | **Time Given** | | **Other** |
| Start by mentioning that within Buddhism it is believed that there is a perpetual cycle of life, death and rebirth known as *saṃsāra*. Stress that all unenlightened beings exist within *saṃsāra*. Incorporate the three marks of existence into this. Students should write notes/copy down a paragraph about *saṃsāra*. | Students will learn that time is viewed cyclically within Buddhist thought. | 15 minutes | | *Saṃsāra* is sometimes presented as if it were a place. It should be treated as a type of existence. Likewise when one attains enlightenment they do not go to *nirvāṇa* but they **experience**it. |
| Show students a Tibetan Wheel of life. Explain that there are six different types of rebirth destination (*gati*).Ask the students to rank the six destinations in order of what they think is the best to what they think is the worst. Discuss the benefits and the disadvantages of each destination. Do any of them change their mind? | Students will be able to identify different rebirth destinations and should be able to link them to the results of *karma*. | 10 minutes | | Rebirth as a human is very rare and is considered to be the best chance to attain enlightenment. Students could be asked to consider this.  The six rebirth destinations can also be linked to states of mind. Each sentient being will experience all of them during a lifetime. |
| Divide the class into pairs. Give each class one of the rebirth destinations. Ask the students to create a poster advertising their destination. Make sure they include the main traits and how one would be reborn there. | Students should be aware of the quality of life in each destination. | 15 minutes | | If possible provide A3 paper and coloured pens. |
| Ask students whether they think that *saṃsāra* allows individuals less inclined to follow strict religious lifestyles. If they have lots of lifetimes to get good *karma* to be reborn in heavens or even to be born into a world where there is a Buddha would it make them less inclined to follow an ascetic lifestyle in this life. | Students should demonstrate critical thinking skills and draw on their understanding of this lesson to provide a coherent argument. | 10 minutes | |  |