

MY ALPHABET BOOK!

Holistic Education

A B C



by

G.K.Ananda Kumaraseri



Note to Parents and Teachers

For centuries the English alphabet has been taught by associating the letter A with apple and so on to millions of children who never even saw an apple, let alone an apple tree! To continue with the conventional, cognitive-based methodology in teaching the alphabet is to deny the child affective and psycho-motor modes of learning.

This novel alphabet book based on holistic education enables a child to master the alphabet and develop vocabulary in an interesting, enjoyable and fun-way of learning. Simultaneously, the child can learn human values and imbue noble life-ideals. In addition, the lessons enable the child to internalise knowledge through experiential learning. For example, the letter A is associated with altar. The significance of the altar is reinforced through the family's daily religious activities such as offering flowers and incense. Also, by observing virtuous practices daily as a family, human values get internalised. For instance, the child is encouraged to be as fragrant as the flowers and incense offered. The seed for the child to grow up as a respected, responsible human being is thus planted. Such underlying human values can be simulated in the classroom as well as at home.

Furthermore, direct parental involvement with the child's learning experience is greatly facilitated. With this objective in mind simple action-oriented sentences connected with individual letters are introduced. They serve as 'ques' or 'openers' for parents and teachers to internalise human values, morals, ethics and civic-mindedness in the child from a young age. Parents and teachers are able to inter-act with the child after initiating discussion on specific human values and life-ideals introduced.

Children love colours and pictures. Thus the child is introduced to the world of colours along with instructional illustrations which stimulate the imagination and encourage creativity.

The aim of the writing exercises incorporated into the lessons is to enable the child to develop fine motor skills from the outset. Guidance is therefore provided on the:

- i) correct way to hold the pencil;
- ii) correct sitting department for writing;
- iii) correct way to place the book or paper for writing; and
- iv) recognition of colours.

The alphabet book is designed for children from ages 3 to 7, depending on the learning curve of the individual child, and, the degree of 'home education' he or she receives from parents, elders, caregivers and teachers.

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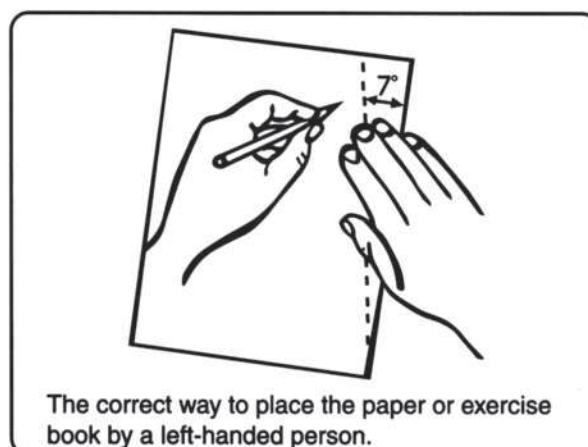
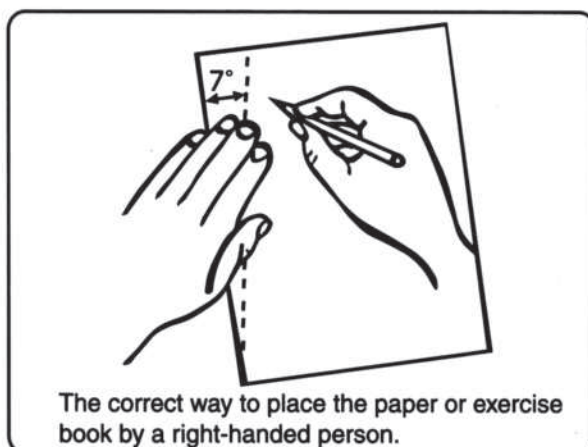
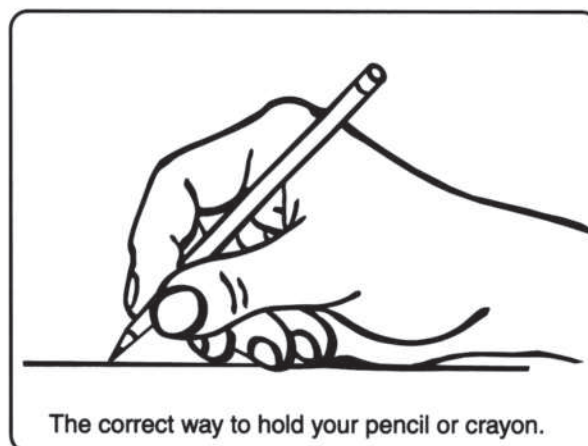
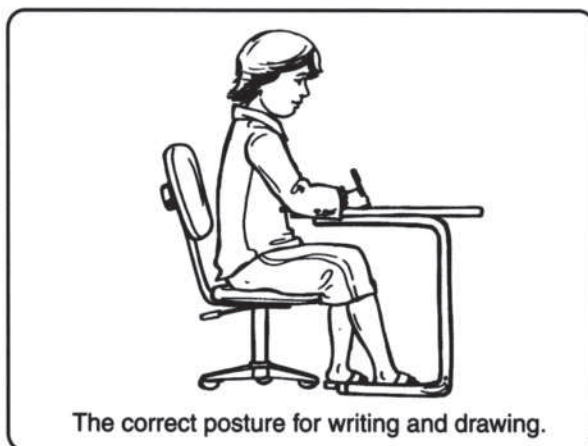
Instructional Guidelines on Correct Writing

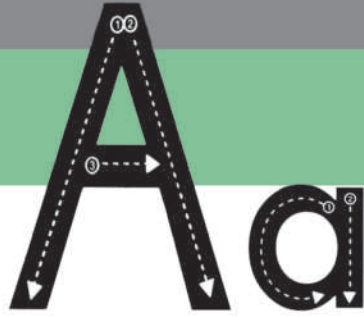
The handwriting exercise accompanying the introduction of individual letters helps the child to become familiar with correct hand movements for formal writing and drawing. It is important for the child to learn basic rules of correct posture and control of movement of the pencil. How so often do we see adults holding their pen in the most odd of ways when they write. Also, it is common to see teenagers and adults slump or stoop over their desk when they write or draw. Some have their eyes barely a few inches above the table. Such incorrect ways of writing and drawing are habits developed at young age which became so firmly set. Conversely, writing and drawing motor-skills once learnt correctly will remain for life. Thus it is important for a child to be taught the correct ways of writing and drawing from the outset of formal education.

The writing exercises in this alphabet book provide the child practice to develop correct motor-skills for writing and drawing. Parents and teachers are to coach their child, particularly on the correct way to hold a pencil, the right posture for writing and drawing and the way to place the paper or exercise book as illustrated below.

The hand movements for each letter is indicated by the arrowed white lines which are numbered according to the sequence indicated. By following the dotted lines in the proper sequence the child develops correct motor-skills irrespective of whether the lines involved are vertical, horizontal, slanted, straight, curved, wavering, undulating or circular.

In order to ensure that the child learns to write with ease and the handwriting is legible, parents and teachers should encourage him or her to follow closely the guiding steps provided for each letter. It is important to ensure that the child starts at the first dot of the dotted contour and draw over the broken lines in the direction of the arrow without lifting the pencil, until each dotted pattern is completed. Additional practice is provided after the dotted letters for the child to gain better control over the hand movements and thereby enhance self-confidence and mastery in writing. With guidance, constructive support and encouragement by parents and the teacher, the child would develop basic strokes required for correct handwriting and drawing.





altar



A A A A A A A A A A

A A A A A A A A A A

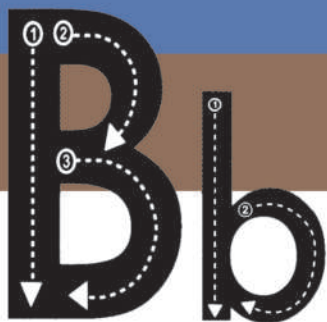
A

a a a a a a a a a a a a a a

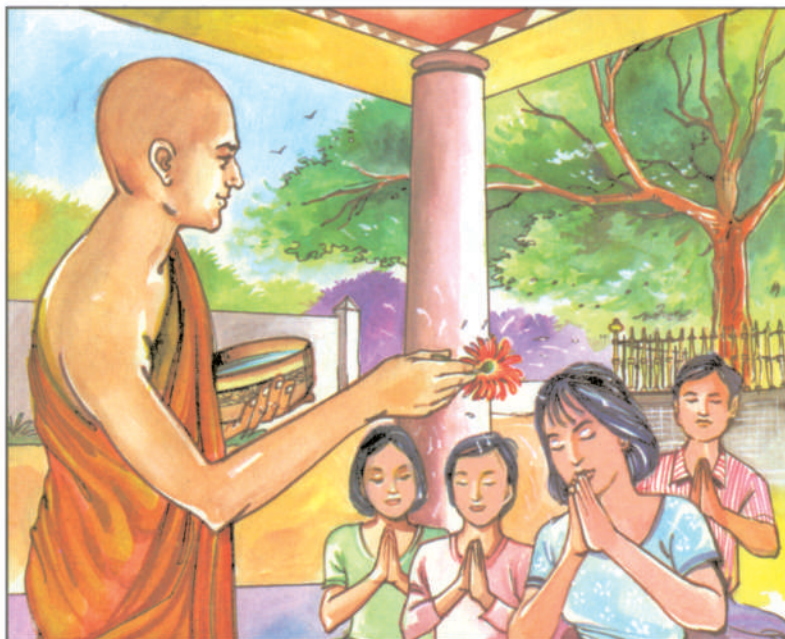
a a a a a a a a a a a a a a

a

We offer flowers at the altar everyday.



blessing



B B B B B B B B B B B

B B B B B B B B B B B

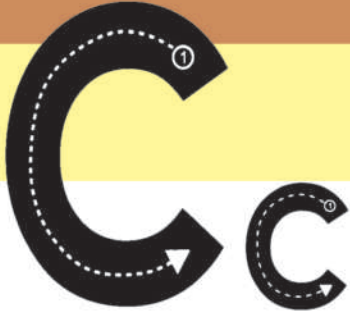
B

b b b b b b b b b b b b b

b b b b b b b b b b b b b

b

The monk blessed the family for protection.



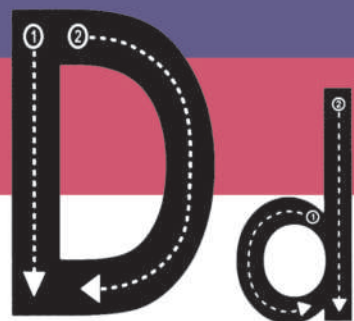
caring



We should all care for our elders.

dark violet

deep pink



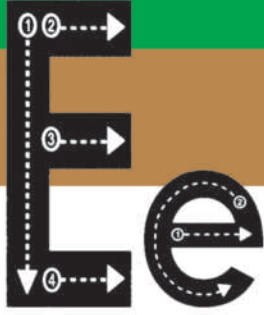
dana



The family offered dana to the monks in the vihara (temple).

emerald

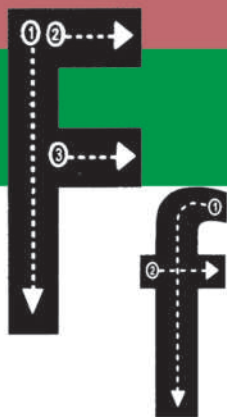
earth brown



elephant



The elephant is leading the procession.



flag



The flag is fluttering in the wind.

grey
green

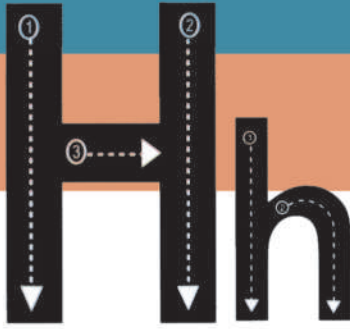


gift

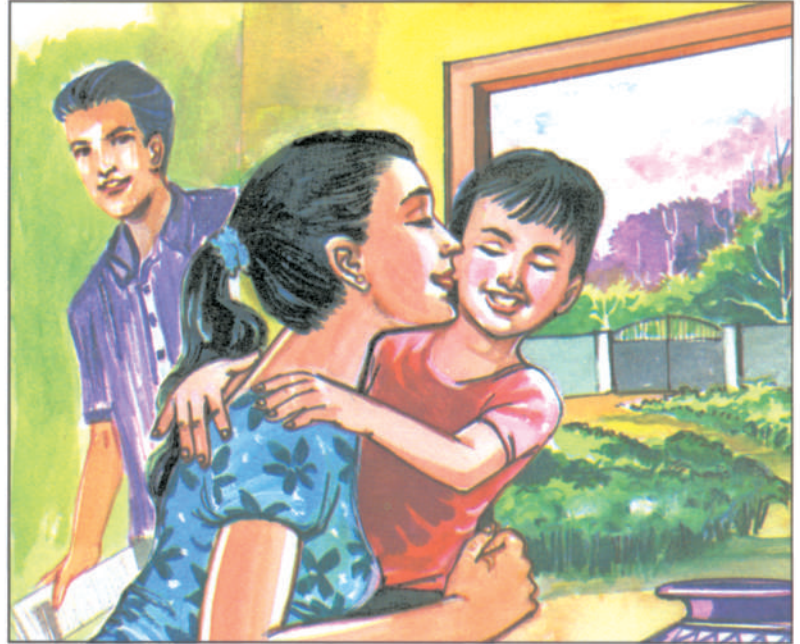


My mother gave me a wonderful gift for being helpful.

honey blue
honey cream



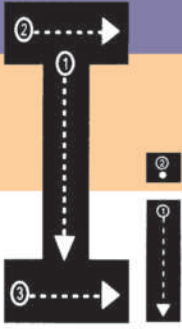
hug



I feel so happy when my mother hugs me.

indigo

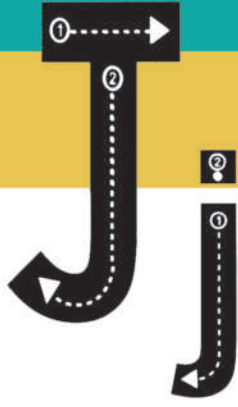
ivory



incense



We must be fragrant like the incense by having good thoughts and doing good deeds.

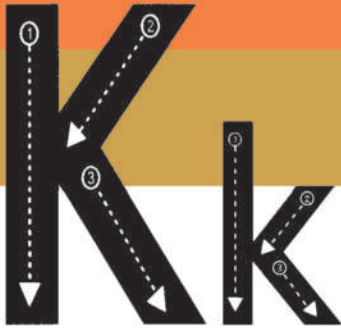


joy



There was full of joy at my birthday party.

Ketchup red
Kangaroo brown



kind



We must always be kind to animals.

lemon
lavender



lanterns

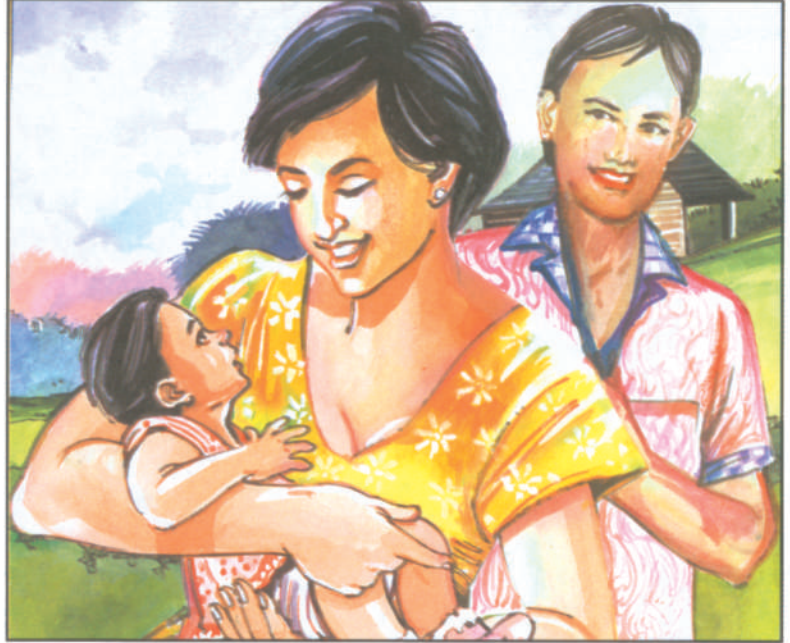


We carried beautiful lanterns in the Wesak Procession.

maroon
mandarin



mother



Mother is the best friend anyone can have!

navy blue

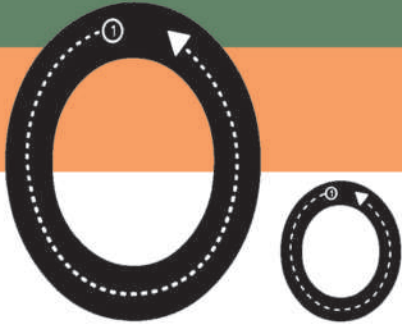
natural peach



nursing



It is our duty to nurse our parents when they are sick or old.

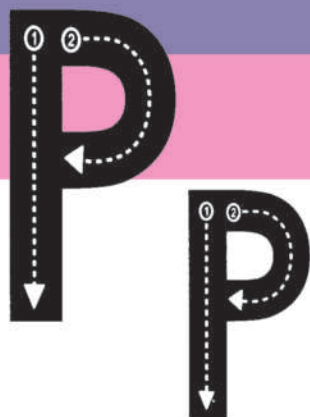


old age



Our grandmother needs help because she is very old.

purple
pink



pray



P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P

P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P

P

p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p

p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p

p

We prayed in the temple.

queen apple
quarry



quiet



When I keep quiet and listen I can learn better.

red
rose

Rr

respects



R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R

R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R

R

r r r r r r r r r r r r r r r r

r r r r r r r r r r r r r r r r

r

We pay our respects to our parents before going to sleep.

silver
salmon

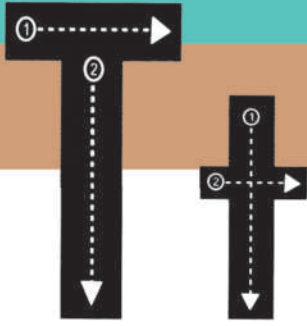


smile

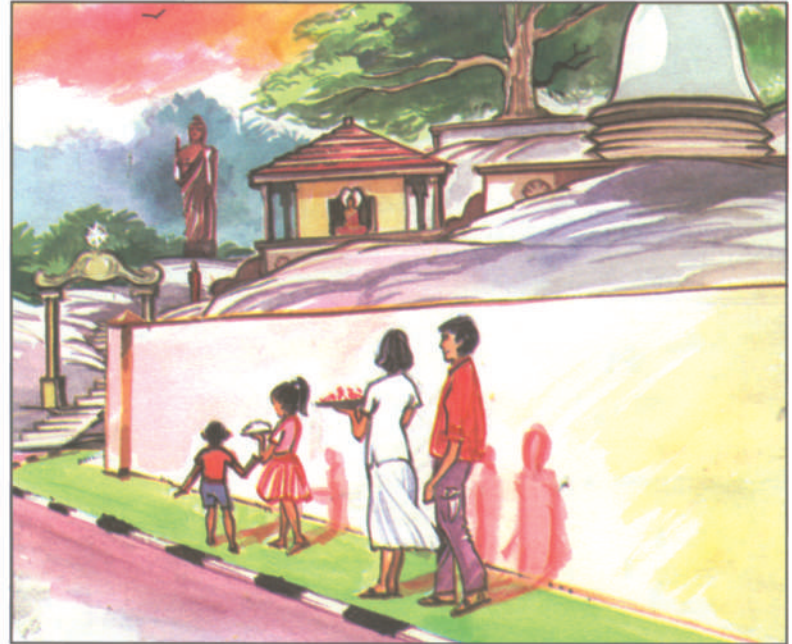


A smiling face is always pleasant and beautiful.

turquoise tan



temple



I attend Dhamma School at the temple every Sunday morning.

ultramarine

ultrared

U u

umbrella



U U U U U U U U U U

U U U U U U U U U U

U

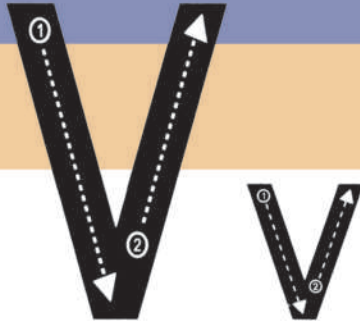
u u u u u u u u u u

u u u u u u u u u u

u

We use an umbrella when it is very hot or raining.

violet
vanilla

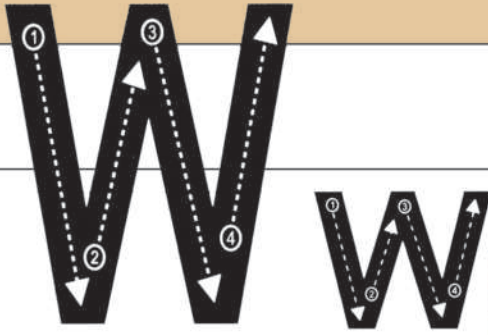


vases



We placed vases of flowers at the altar.

wheat
white

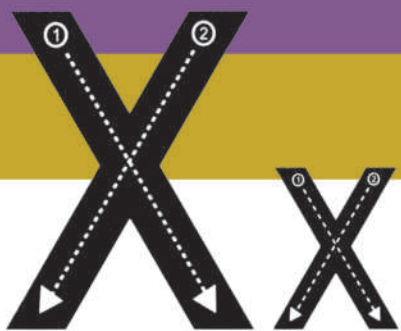


wesak

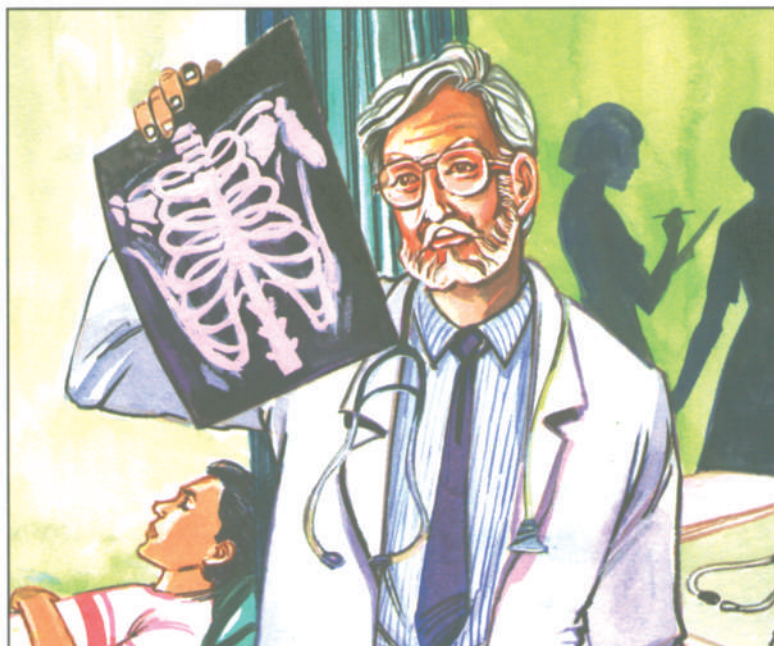


On Wesak day we decorate our vihara.

extra purple
extra gold

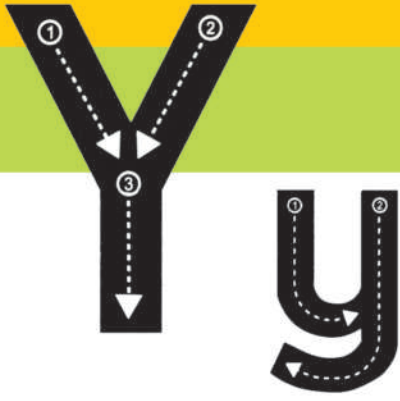


x-ray

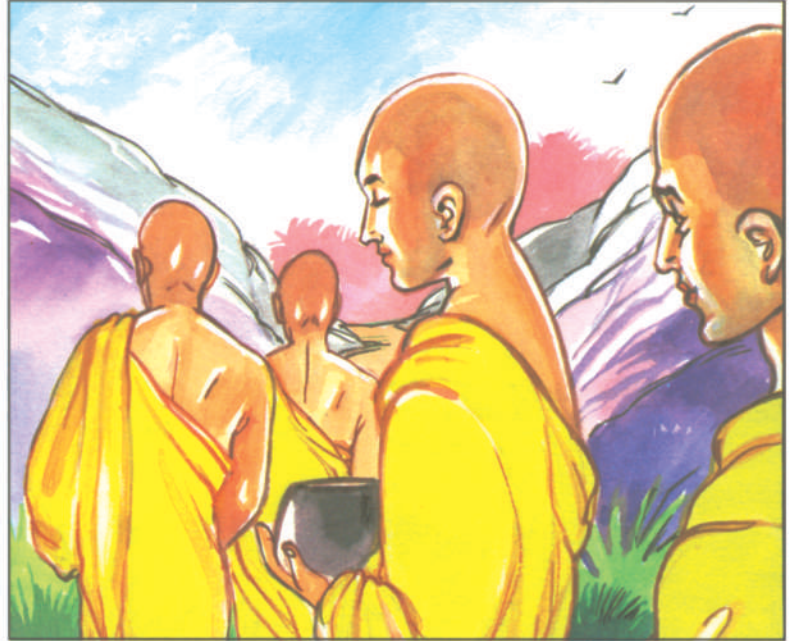


The doctor studied my X-ray to find out my sickness.

yellow
yellow lemon

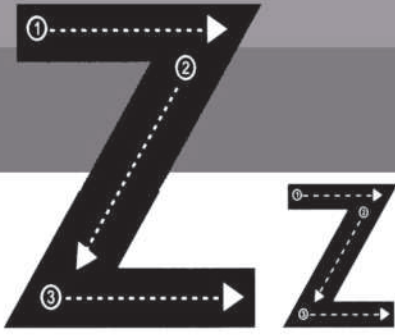


yellow
robe

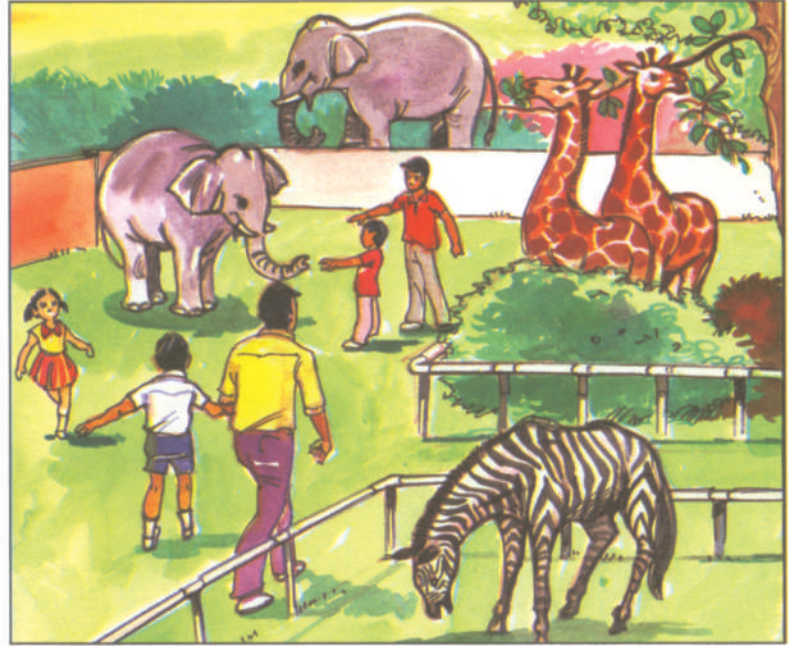


Monks and nuns wear yellow robes.

zinc
deep zinc



ZOO



Our family had an enjoyable day in the zoo.



MATA-PITA VANDANA (HONOURING PARENTS)

MATA VANDANA (HONOURING MOTHER)

Dasa Mase Uraeykatva. Poseti Uddikaranang.
Ayu Dighan Wassasatan. Matu Padam Nama Maham.

For keeping me in your womb for ten months (lunar months) and for protecting and nurturing me so well, I wish you a blissful life of a hundred years! I worship you (at your feet) dearest mother.

I have no words to recount the hardships dearest mother you underwent, on my behalf, from the day I was born. I dearly worship you, loving mother.

When I cried you lulled me to sleep, with deep love and affection. You washed me and cleansed me so caringly. Oh dearest mother, may you attain NIBBANA!

PITA VANDANA (HONOURING FATHER)

Vuddhikaro Alingitva. Chumbitva Piya Puttakam.
Raja Majjham Supatitam. Pitu Padam Nama Maham.

I worship the feet of my father who kisses and caresses me and places me amongst kings when it comes to my welfare. I worship you (at your feet) dearest father

I have no words to recount the sacrifices dearest father you made for my welfare and wellbeing, since my childhood. I deeply worship you noble father.

Whenever I was upset or hurt, you comforted me so tenderly. You cared for me and helped me in every way possible. Oh loving father, may you attain NIBBANA (NIRVANA)





About the Author



Ambassador Dato' Dr. G.K. Ananda Kumarasiri has had a distinguished diplomatic career (1966-1995), with the rare distinction of setting up and heading the Centre for International Relations and Strategic Studies. The assignment stimulated his interest in education, human resource development and professional training. In 1984, he was appointed High Commissioner to Nigeria. He retired in 1995 as Director-General ASEAN.

Apart from being an Adjunct Professor at University Utara Malaysia, he is an active Dhamma Speaker in Malaysia and abroad and has authored several landmark books:

- Professional Diplomacy and Foreign Affairs Management: An Ambassador's Insight
- My First Word Book: Holistic Education
- A Compendium of Buddhist Personal Names: Heritage and Significance of Adoption
- The Way Forward
- Advancing from **Knowing to Being**
- The Terrifying Drug Menace
- Welcoming the Birth of a Child
- Angulimala: Transforming Life
- Matu-Posaka: Joy of Honouring Parents
- Mothercare and Parenting: Key to Social Structuring
- SIDDHARTHA: Prince of Peace
- Way of Siddhartha: Victorious Noble Prince

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee
Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj
Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo
Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee
Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk
Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp
Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz





“**W**herever the Buddha’s teachings have flourished,
either in cities or countrysides,
people would gain inconceivable benefits.
The land and people would be enveloped in peace.
The sun and moon will shine clear and bright.
Wind and rain would appear accordingly,
and there will be no disasters.
Nations would be prosperous
and there would be no use for soldiers or weapons.
People would abide by morality and accord with laws.
They would be courteous and humble,
and everyone would be content without injustices.
There would be no thefts or violence.
The strong would not dominate the weak
and everyone would get their fair share.”

※ THE BUDDHA SPEAKS OF
THE INFINITE LIFE SUTRA OF
ADORNMENT, PURITY, EQUALITY
AND ENLIGHTENMENT OF
THE MAHAYANA SCHOOL ※



Taking Refuge with Bodhichitta

**I go for refuge, until I am enlightened,
to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.
Through the merit I create by practicing giving and the
other perfections,
may I quickly attain the state of Buddhahood for the benefit
of all sentient beings.**

The Prayers of the Bodhisattva

**With the wish to free all beings,
I will always go for refuge
to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha
till I reach full enlightenment.
Enthused by the compassion and wisdom,
Today, in Buddha's presence,
I generate the Mind of Enlightenment,
for the sake of all sentient beings.
For as long as space remains,
and as long as sentient being remain,
until then, may I too remain
to dispel the sufferings of all beings.**



TAKING REFUGE IN THE TRIPLE JEWELS

To the Buddha I return and rely,
returning from delusions and
relying upon Awareness and Understanding.

To the Dharma I return and rely,
returning from erroneous views and
relying upon Proper Views and Understanding.

To the Sangha I return and rely,
returning from pollutions and disharmony and
relying upon Purity of Mind and
the Six Principles of Living in Harmony.



Be mindful of Amitabha!
Namo Amitabha!
Homage to Amita Buddha!

May every living being, drowning and adrift,
Soon return to the Pure Land of Limitless Light!



With bad advisors forever left behind,
From paths of evil he departs for eternity,
Soon to see the Buddha of Limitless Light
And perfect Samantabhadra's Supreme Vows.

The supreme and endless blessings
of Samantabhadra's deeds,
I now universally transfer.
May every living being, drowning and adrift,
Soon return to the Pure Land of Limitless Light!

*** The Vows of Samantabhadra ***

I vow that when my life approaches its end,
All obstructions will be swept away;
I will see Amitabha Buddha,
And be born in His Western Pure Land of
Ultimate Bliss and Peace.

When reborn in the Western Pure Land,
I will perfect and completely fulfill
Without exception these Great Vows,
To delight and benefit all beings.

*** The Vows of Samantabhadra Avatamsaka Sutra ***

DEDICATION OF MERIT

May the merit and virtue
accrued from this work
adorn Amitabha Buddha's Pure Land,
repay the four great kindnesses above,
and relieve the suffering of
those on the three paths below.

May those who see or hear of these efforts
generate Bodhi-mind,
spend their lives devoted to the Buddha Dharma,
and finally be reborn together in
the Land of Ultimate Bliss.
Homage to Amita Buddha!

NAMO AMITABHA

南無阿彌陀佛

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