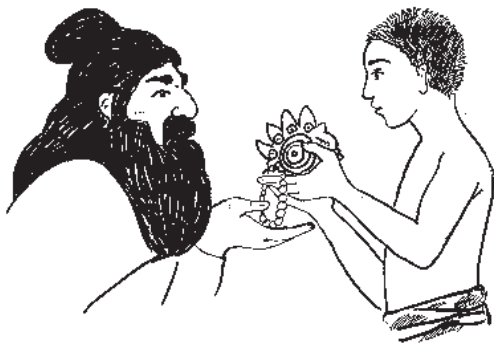


# Going Forth



## PUPIL INFORMATION SHEET

Siddhartha knew he had to leave home to seek the answers to his questions about life. That night he got up as quietly as he could and kissed his sleeping wife and baby son goodbye. He woke Chanda, his chariot driver. They crept past the sleeping guards. Silently, they rode away from the palace.



When they reached the river which marked the border of the kingdom, the pair dismounted. Taking his sword Siddhartha cut off his hair, and swapped his rich clothes for the mud-stained rags of a wanderer. He gave his rings and ornaments to Chanda to take back to King Sudhodana.

Chanda watched sadly as Siddhartha crossed the river and disappeared into the darkness of the jungle.

For seven years Siddhartha lived the life of a wandering holy man. He spent time with different teachers learning all they had to teach him. He was a good student and learned well, but in spite of this he realised that their teachings did not get to the root of the problem of suffering and sadness.

He tried living an ascetic life, subjecting his body to great hardship, hoping that this was the way to discover the truth of things. He would sit out under the midday sun, surrounded by blazing fires. He reduced his food to one grain of rice a day, growing so thin that if he put his hand on his stomach he could feel his backbone. Even though he had become famous for these ascetic practices and had five followers, he found that he was still no nearer the truth. Not afraid to admit that he had made a mistake, he decided to start eating again.

He now remembered how, as a young boy, whilst seated in the shade of a tree, he had become absorbed in meditation. He resolved this time to pursue the truth by practising meditation. He chose a tree in a peaceful spot by a river and sat down to meditate, vowing that he would not rise again until he had found the truth.

