

AS CLEAR AS THE EDGE OF A CLOUD

A long time ago in Japan, Chen, a Buddhist student, had been studying to reach enlightenment, which is a Buddhist word for 'understanding' – something Buddhists try to reach through meditation. He had been trying to reach enlight- enment for many years now, yet he still didn't feel that he had come anywhere near finding it. So, he travelled a great distance to see a renowned Buddhist teacher and he asked him, 'O Wise One, where will I find enlightenment?' The teacher replied, 'You will find enlightenment where you find the edge of a cloud'. 'Thank you, O Wise One, thank you, thank you,' said Chen, more than grateful. He was so pleased to finally have an answer to his question. He stepped outside and looked up and said to himself, 'I have finally found the way to enlightenment, all I have to do now is find the edge of a cloud.'

Task Question 1: Where is the edge of a cloud?

(There are two distinct enquiries here, so try to answer Task Question 1 before attempting to answer Task Question 2.)

Nested Questions:

- ✓ What is a cloud made of?
- ✓ How would you find the edge?
- ✓ How would you know when you have found the edge of a cloud?
- ✓ When a cloud of steam comes out of a kettle where is the edge of the cloud of steam? (IMPORTANT: be very careful around steam from a kettle!)
- ✓ Does a cloud have an edge?
- ✔ When a cloud rains where does the cloud end and the rain begin?
- ✓ Is water the same thing as a cloud?

EXTENSION DISCUSSION IDEA

Task Question 2: What do you think the Buddhist teacher meant by the answer he gave to Chen?

Nested Questions:

- ✓ What has the edge of a cloud got to do with enlightenment, or understanding?
- ✓ What is enlightenment? What does it mean?
- ✓ Why did the wise man give the answer he did?
- ✓ Is the answer he gave clear or vague?
- ✓ Does it mean anything?