

THE LOTUS SUTRA

Outline the story.

A rich man lives in a huge house, but it's old and rotting. Suddenly, the house catches on fire. The man realizes he can run out and escape quite easily, but his children are focused on playing and also don't even know what a fire is. To make the children run out, the man tries to order them to run out, but they don't listen. Instead, the man promises to give them a cool toy if they run out, so the children run out. The man is so thankful that he gives them the toy and even more toys.

Explain "skillful means"

Skillful means differs from deception in that you are not trying to trick people to do something bad. The man tricks the children, but only for them to save their own lives. Additionally, deception involves lying, and this man does not lie -- he promises the children that he will give them something if they run out, and he does (and gives them a lot more)

Identify the differences between "skillful means" and lying.

As I said before, you don't say something untrue to the other person while using skillful means. Therefore, it is not a lie and thereby acceptable.

Compare and contrast the main differences in values on nirvana and reaching it between Mahayana and Theravada.

In Theravada, attaining nirvana is the primary goal, whereas in Mahayana, the primary goal is helping other people attain Nirvana. Mahayana Buddhists believe that the best way to achieve Nirvana is to become a *bodhisattva*, or one similar to the Buddha, who helps other people reach enlightenment. On the other hand, Theravada Buddhism is more self-centered, preferring meditation and penance to reach enlightenment.