

READING

# Do you believe in karma?

**LEVEL**

Upper-Intermediate  
(B2)

**NUMBER**

EN\_B2\_1111R

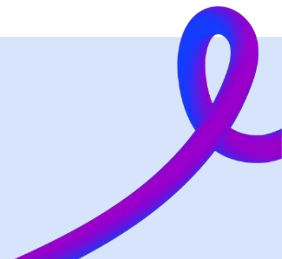
**LANGUAGE**

English



## Learning outcomes

- I can read a text about karma and understand its main ideas.
- I can discuss the topic of karma using appropriate vocabulary.





## Warm-up

**Have you heard of the  
concept of karma  
before?**

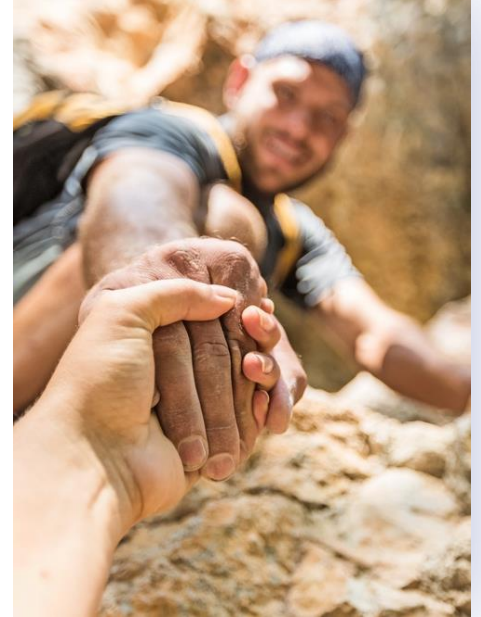


**What do you already  
know about it?**

# Do you believe in karma?

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

**Karma** is often understood as the general idea that **what goes around comes around**. This means that if you treat someone badly, or do something wrong, in time you will come to **suffer** as a result of these actions. The opposite also **applies**, if you do good things and **treat** people well you will be **rewarded** by having good things happen to you.



1. What is karma in simple terms?
2. Does karma only bring suffering or not?



# Do you believe in karma?

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

The **concept** of karma is quite well-recognised in western society but its **origins** lie in eastern religions such as Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism, Taoism and Jainism. The word karma **refers to** the action or **deed** that has been done, and also the **intent** with which this action was carried out. A good action causes good karma whilst a bad action brings bad karma.



3. Where did karma come from?
4. What causes good karma? What causes bad karma?



# Vocabulary

**Match** the vocabulary from the text with the correct definition.

1

*to suffer*

a

to give someone something because they have done something good

2

*to reward*

b

something that you intend or plan to do

3

*origins*

c

to experience something unpleasant, such as injury, loss or defeat

4

*a deed*

d

the point from which something starts; the cause of something

5

*intent*

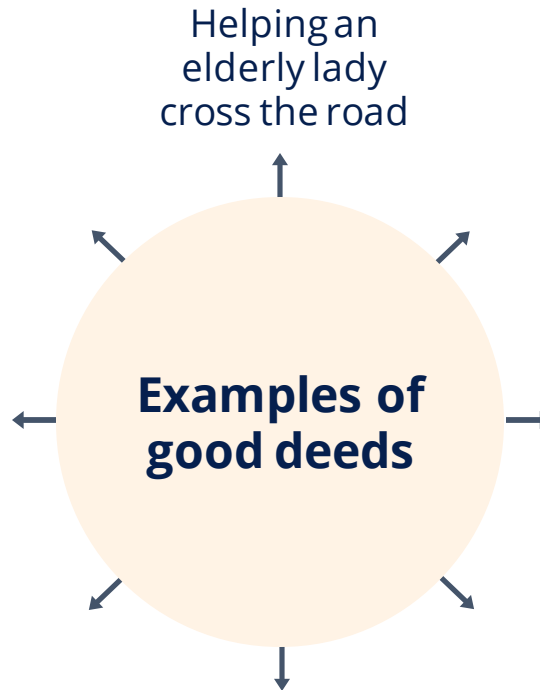
e

a thing that somebody does that is usually very good or very bad.



# Brainstorm

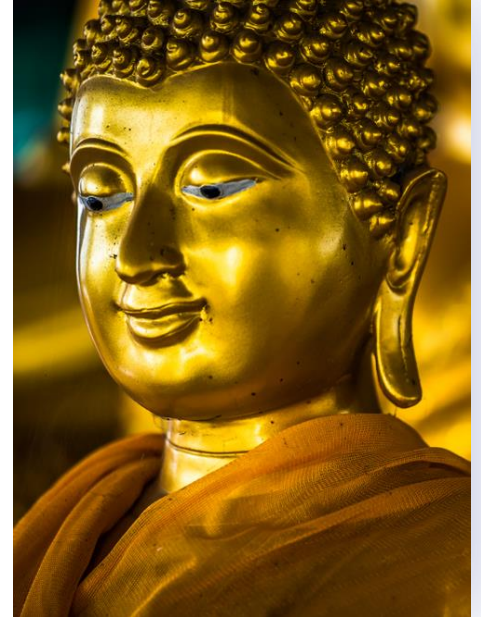
**Discuss** ideas of good deeds we could all do. Which do you do already?



# Do you believe in karma?

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

**Defining** karma **precisely** is a difficult task. However, what can be agreed is the general idea that karma is related to **cause and effect**. Behind the Buddhist philosophy of karma lies the idea that every action has an opposite and equal action. When it comes to karma and actions, the most important **element** is the **intention** with which actions are done.



1. What does Buddhism understand karma to mean?
2. For karma, what matters most: the action or the intention?

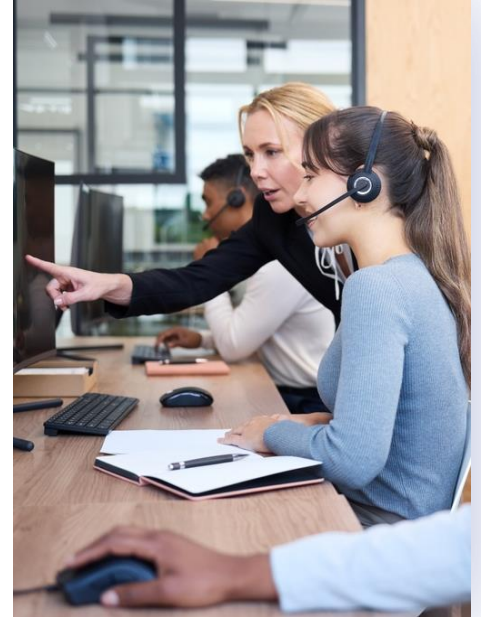




# Do you believe in karma?

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

Karma is also heavily related to **energy**. Take for example an action performed with a strong and negative **emotion** like hate. If you perform an action with hate, according to karma, this hateful energy does not disappear as soon as the action is performed. Instead the energy continues, though it may **take on** different forms.

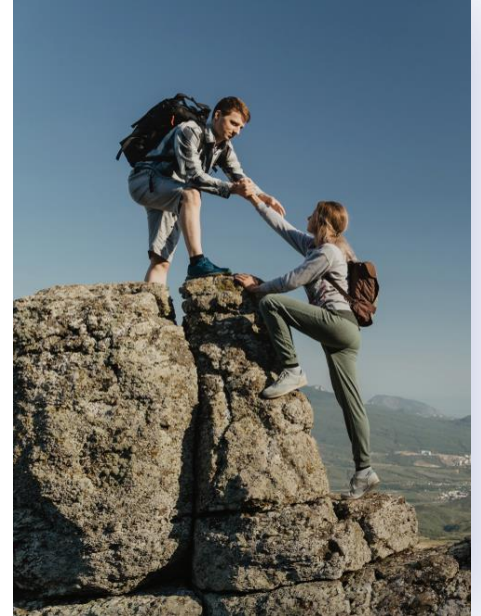


3. What does karma say does **not** happen to negative energy?
4. What happens to negative energy instead?

# Do you believe in karma?

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

However, eventually this energy will either return to you in another human's hateful action towards you, or it could be **transformed** into a physical **ailment** such as stress or an illness, or it may cause some other negative **consequences** or events in the world.



5. Give two ways for your bad energy to come back to you.
6. Does your bad energy only come back to you or can it affect others?



## Discuss

**What are some other examples of negative emotions?**



**Do you believe in karma's ideas about negative energy?**

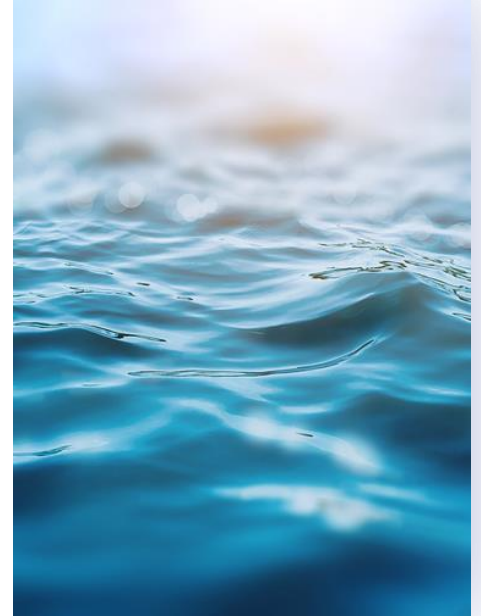


# Do you believe in karma?

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

The effects of karma are not always **immediate**. A good way to illustrate this idea is to think of an **expanse of water**, such as a pool or lake.

If a ship or object **disturbs** the clear and still surface of the water waves will **ripple** out, away from the site of the **disturbance**.



1. Will we notice karma instantly or not?
2. Why does the author mention a ship?

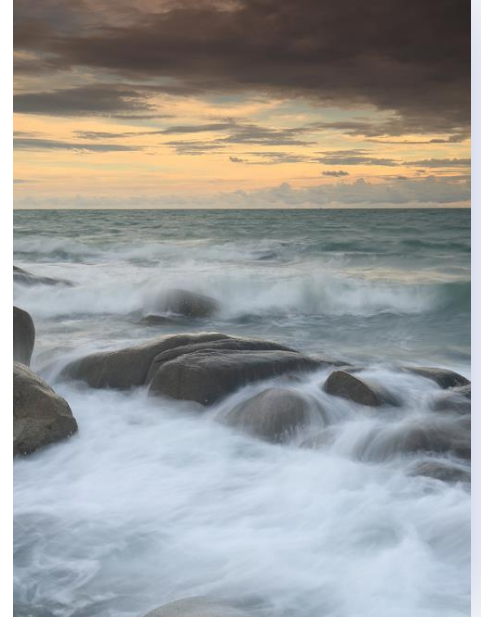


# Do you believe in karma?

**Read** the text. **Answer** the question below.

However, after some time the waves will **rebound** and return to the centre. So it is the same with karma, though it may take some time, eventually energy will **return** towards the **source**.

That is why it is so important that we try to perform our actions with good **intent**.



3. What does karma teach us about the nature of our actions?





# Vocabulary check

**Give** a synonym for the words in bold below.

The effects of karma are not always **immediate**.

A good way to illustrate this idea is to think of an **expanse** of water.

The waves will **rebound** and return to the centre.

Eventually energy will return towards the **source**.





# How do our actions affect our lives?

**Use** the topic cards below to guide your discussion.

1 Health

2 Friendships

3 Family

4 Career



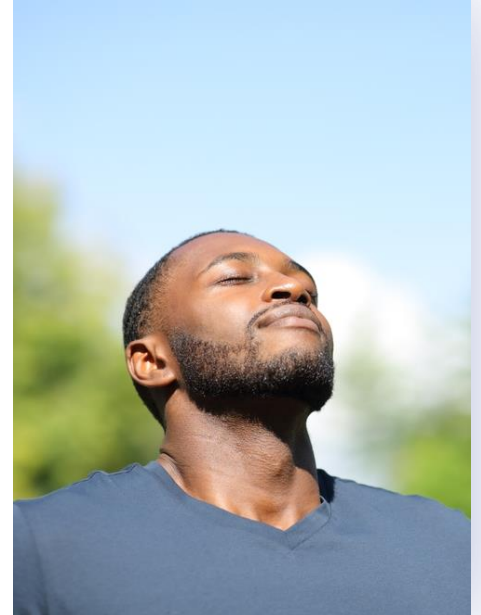


# Do you believe in karma?

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

Karma also teaches us about our **response** to actions. Even if someone performs a hateful action we should try to return this action with positive energy, for example with love or peace.

According to karma, by doing this, we **balance** the energy, and this is the only way to stop the negative energy returning again and again.



1. According to karma, what should we do if someone behaves badly towards us?
2. Why should we react this way?



# Do you believe in karma?

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions below.

One thing that often **confuses** people about karma is that bad things still happen to good people. However, it has to be remembered that the effect of bad actions can take a long time to return to the **source**.

What's more, the concept of **reincarnation** is central to many religions that believe in karma. So, when something bad happens to you, this can also be the **consequence** of an action from a previous life.



3. Why do good people still suffer according to karma?
4. Does bad karma die with us or not?



# Do you believe in karma?

**Read** the text. **Answer** the question below.

The only way to truly stop bad karma is to reach a stage of calm and **enlightenment**. To see and understand things and to let them go, returning negativity with peace and goodwill. Only in this way can one truly achieve peace and **serenity** in life.



5. How can we put an end to bad karma?





## Discuss

**How does karma explain the idea of bad things happening to good people?**



**How convinced are you by this explanation?**



# Read this statement

Answer the questions in **breakout rooms** or **together as a class**.

“

**Even if you don't believe in karma,  
you can't deny the fact that the  
world would be a better place if we  
were all a bit kinder to each other!**

Do you agree with  
this statement or  
not?

How could we all be  
a bit kinder to each  
other?

Would you say you  
believe in karma or  
not?





# End of the lesson

Idiom

***to kill someone with kindness***

**Meaning:** to be so kind to someone that you cause discomfort

**Example:** My ex-boyfriend would always **kill me with kindness**. It only made things worse!



# Additional practice





# What exactly is karma?

**Explain** karma in your own words. **Use** the words below to help you.



Deeds  
Actions

Suffer  
Reward

Energy  
Intention

Consequences  
Effects



## Discuss



**How do you find peace and serenity in life?**



**How do you deal with negativity or bad energy?**





# What do you think?

“

**Life is purely about luck, or in other words, being at the right place at the right time.**

In your eyes, is life all about luck or not?

Do you think it's possible to create your own luck?

Can you think of a time in your life when you felt especially lucky?





# Answer key

- P. 4-5:**
1. Karma is the idea that 'what goes around comes around'.
  2. No, you can also be rewarded for good actions.
  3. Karma originates in eastern religions.
  4. Good actions cause good karma; bad actions cause bad karma.
- P. 6:**
1. c, 2. a, 3. d, 4. e, 5. b
- P. 8-10:**
1. That every actions has an opposite and equal action.
  2. The intention.
  3. Negative energy does not disappear.
  4. Negative energy continues and takes on (i.e. transforms into) different forms.
  5. Another human's hateful action towards you or a physical ailment or illness.
  6. No, your bad karma can also cause events in the world.
- P. 12-13:**
1. No, as the effects of karma aren't immediate.
  2. The author uses a ship to explain the concept of consequence: if a ship disturbs the calm of the water, we see the effects spread out into the water.
  3. Karma teaches us that the intent behind our actions is what defines the consequences of the action.



## Answer key

- P. 16-18:**
1. We should respond with positive energy (or actions).
  2. This balances out the negative energy from the other person.
  3. As bad actions can take a long time to return to the source.
  4. No, karma can return to us from previous lives.
  5. By reaching a stage of calm or enlightenment; returning negativity with peace and goodwill.





# Summary

## Do you believe in karma?

- *to suffer; to reward; origins; a deed; intent; cause and effect; intention; energy; emotion*
- *to take on; to transform; ailment; source; to rebound; expanse; to balance; reincarnation; serenity*
- *What can be agreed on is the general idea that karma is related to **cause and effect**.*



# Vocabulary

to suffer

to reward

origins

deed

cause and effect

intention

energy

emotion

to take on

to transform

ailment

source

to rebound

expanse

to balance

reincarnation

serenity

