



Activity 3: Buddhism and Noh

Student Name _____ Date _____

Once you have read the Noh play *Atsumori* and the essay [Shinto and Buddhism: Wellsprings of Japanese Spirituality](#), available from the EDSITEment-reviewed website AskAsia, answer the following questions.

1. Begin by looking at the cast of characters for the play. Do any of the characters in *Atsumori* seem to be directly connected to Buddhism?

2. Do any of the characters make references to Buddhism or to Buddhist beliefs in their exchanges? Be sure to cite examples from the text of the play.

3. In the essay on Shinto and Buddhism in Japan the writer states that in Buddhism there was “an optimism about human nature, for it was committed to the belief that all human beings had the potential to attain the wisdom that brings an end to suffering, and an ultimate optimism about the world itself, since it taught that once human attachments are discarded, the world takes on a new and positive significance.” Can you find any examples of this optimism in the Noh play *Atsumori*? Be sure to use examples and to explain your answer.

4. What role do you think Buddhism plays in the structure of *Atsumori*'s storyline? Explain your answer.
