

UOW College Hong Kong / Community College of City University
Student English Enhancement Unit (SEE U)
Daily English Practice

Week 5

#172 Five messages of love and peace: *the Heart Sutra*

Skills/ Objectives: Reading, Listening and Writing Skills

PART 1: Before you read...

Preparatory questions

Qt 1: "Form is emptiness; emptiness is form." If this quote sounds familiar to you, can you recall where it comes from?

Qt 2: Today's highlight is the literary classic *the Heart Sutra*. There are indeed many such "sutras." What exactly is a sutra?

Qt 3: In the 21st century, fewer people than before can be seen reading the traditional, paper-based books. Do you still see value in the preservation of the print media?

Vocabulary

- insight (noun): a clear, deep, and sometimes sudden understanding of a complicated problem or situation.
- immortalize (verb): to make someone or something so famous that that person or thing is remembered for a very long time.
- conviction (noun): a strong opinion or belief.

PART 2: Article for Reading

Like the *Upanishads* and written in Sanskrit, *The Heart Sutra* has a profound influence on Buddhism. Its full title, *Prajna Paramita Hrdaya Sutra* ("The Sutra of the Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom") explains that this sutra contains the essence of the Buddha's teaching, the core of perfect enlightenment.

Well loved by the Chinese, the *Heart Sutra* is popularly known as *Xin Jing*:

Buddhism's Shortest Scripture: The Heart Sutra

<https://pages.ucsd.edu/~dkjordan/chin/chtxts/ShinJinge.html>

PART 3: Listening Comprehension

Listen to the *Heart Sutra* recited to you:

The Maha Prajna Paramita Heart Sutra with lyrics
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=107pWCUYIYI>

PART 4: Writing Practice

Did you notice a verse in the *Heart Sutra*, translated from Sanskrit into English as this:

*O Śāriputra, everything is that way:
Neither begun nor ended, neither impure nor pure, neither increasing nor decreasing.*

Can you name at least one thing of “everything” that, according to the *Heart Sutra*, has no beginning and never comes to an end? Something that is not “impure” or “pure”? Not “increasing” or “decreasing”?

Send your ideas to: see.u@cccu.edu.hk. Remember! Our **SEE U** teachers are always ready to give you feedback.