

INTRODUCTORY LESSON for the beginning of each new year

Objective: To introduce the five values and help the class to understand them and to feel comfortable with the five teaching components

Key Words: human values, truth, love, peace, righteousness (doing right), non-violence, universal.

This series of 26 lesson plans can be taught over a period of two or three years and can be given in any order. Any single lesson plan can be used more than once and can form a spiritual foundation leading to other topics or current news. This will allow the teacher to use the lesson in the most effective way as part of an integrated curriculum.

Introduction to the course

Explain that the course is about values which help everyone live more happily and in greater harmony with other people, and to know that they are each someone of value.

Setting the ground rules

An effective way to establish a climate of co-operation and mutual respect in the classroom is to require the pupils to think together about how they will treat each other. Ensure that the ground rules include some version of:

- only one person speaks at a time
- everyone listens respectfully to the current speaker
- no put-downs or name calling
- everyone has a right to silence

A useful starting point might be:

<i>So that everyone can be happy and learn in this class</i>	
<i>we will ...</i>	<i>we will not ...</i>

Later in the year remind the children of the original ground rules, ensuring that the finger of blame is not pointed at anyone seeming to have failed.

When working together in groups try to ensure that everyone:

- feels valued
- is encouraged to take an active part
- uses humour in ways which do not hurt others.

QUOTATION/THEME FOR THE WEEK

Five Values Poem

by Carole Alderman

There are five values that I cannot see
Five values that are you and me.
The first is *Truth*, which rings a bell inside,
The second *Love*, to give, not hide.
The third is *Peace*, we feel when mind is still.
The fourth is always *Doing Right*,
When out of view, as well as within sight.
Fifth, totalling the other four,
Is called *Non-violence*, which means being kind
In what we do, and say, and think in mind.

Discuss the five values and ask the class what they think each value means.

SILENT SITTING

In the lesson plans, the Silent Sitting exercise is near the beginning before the story, but it can be practised at any time during the lesson, as the teacher feels appropriate and taking the children's age and ability into consideration.

Explain that the course contains an exercise which is very valuable and enjoyable and will help them to learn better and become happier. It is about being very still and listening, particularly listening to the sounds and feelings inside.

Steps 1 (*The Silent Sitting exercise steps are on page 40*).

Step 5: *Play some music quietly for a minute or two. (Flute music, or music incorporating the sounds of nature e.g. the Song of the Whale, are suitable). Then phase the music out so that the children are sitting for a minute in silence.*
Step 6.

GROUP SINGING

PEACE, JOY, LOVE ON EARTH

Peace, peace, peace.

Peace on earth.

Peace, peace, peace,
In all the universe.

Joy, joy, joy ...

Love, love love ...

(This song can be sung as a round and also with actions)

STORY TELLING

THE THIRSTY CROW - *based on a traditional story*

Once upon a time there was a crow. It was a very hot day and the crow was very thirsty. He flew here and there in search of water, but he could not find anything to drink. His wings became tired and his throat was dry and he felt unhappy.

Suddenly he saw a jug lying on the ground. He swooped down and looked inside. There at the bottom of the jug he saw some water. But try as he might, he could not reach it. He decided to push the jug over, so that the water would run out and he could drink it. He flew at the jug and pushed it. It did not budge. Again he tried, and again he failed.

He flew up to a branch to think what to do. 'I will break it with a stone', he thought. With that, he flew down and picked up a stone in his beak. It was heavy, but the determined bird flew over the jug and aiming carefully, dropped the stone on the jug. The stone just glanced off the jug onto the hard ground. The bird tried again. This time the stone fell into the jug, but the jug was still unbroken.

The crow looked into the jug and what do you think he saw? The stone lay in the bottom of the water. And the water had risen a little. The crow was puzzled.

Then he tried an experiment. He got another stone and dropped it into the jug. Yes, the water had risen even more.

So the clever, determined crow continued to drop stones into the jug until the water reached the top. Then he perched on the rim of the jug and had a long, cool drink of water.

How happy he felt.



QUESTIONS:

1. What good values did the crow show?
2. Did the crow deserve to get the water?
3. Why?
4. How did you feel when you heard that story?
5. Did the story remind you of anything in your own life?

GROUP ACTIVITY

One thing we have in common ...

Clear an open space. Give the class five minutes for each pupil to meet two or three other children whom they do not know, find out their names and write down one thing they have in common. The common factor might be, for example, something they like doing or something they have which is the same: colour of eyes, a birthday in the same month, keeping the same kind of pet, or that they like swimming.

At the end of five minutes, ask a few volunteers to name whom they chose and to say what they have in common.

Together we can ...

Ask the class to form pairs, then each pair to join up with another pair they don't know well. Give each group a few minutes to create a mime of:

- a statue of a tree, or
- a representation of a moving aeroplane, or
- a photograph of a picnic.

(Ensure everyone is included and has a chance to act out the mime).

At the end of this first lesson, the teacher may like to explain to the class that future lessons will also include a story as well as the things they have done today i.e. a Theme for the Week, a Song, Silent Sitting and an Activity. If the teacher wishes they may get into a circle, or into pairs, and say one thing they are looking forward to in these lessons in the future.

Extension Exercise / Links to Other Subjects: Draw a picture to illustrate the poem.