

KINDNESS & CONCERN FOR ALL LIVING THINGS

Objective: *To stimulate thinking and action about living with kindness and without violence*

Key Words: *achievement, pigeon, injured, squawk, kindness, trust, feeling*

QUOTATION/THEME FOR THE WEEK

NON-VIOLENCE IS LOVE



FOR ALL AND EVERYTHING

Brainstorm and discuss what this means and might entail.

SILENT SITTING

Step 1 *(See page 40 of the introduction)*

Steps 2, 4 *(optional)*

Step 5 : Think of a time when you stopped yourself doing a violent action ...

Feel the pleasure of the achievement ...

Imagine good spreading out from your action like ripples on a pond.

Think of a way of living without violence that you would like to see happening more

Imagine yourself doing something about it ...

See yourself doing it ...

Feel the pleasure of the achievement ...

Imagine good spreading out from your action like ripples on a pond.

Step 6.

STORY TELLING

THE PIGEON

by Trudy Rood

It was circle time. All the children were sitting on the carpet in the shape of a circle. A painted wooden egg was passed round. Whichever child was holding the egg could tell a story or share something with the group. Children who did not want to speak would simply say, 'pass' and give the egg to their neighbour.

It was a boy's turn. He told the class about playing his favourite sport of football with his friends. He then added that, the previous day, they had found a bird whilst playing on the field near their house. When they came closer, they saw that the bird, a pigeon, was still alive. The boy looked round at his friends in the class room, then he looked at his teacher.

“Miss! Tony, David and Spencer threw stones at the bird.”

“You did, too, Vincent!” called out his three friends.

The teacher asked Vincent to tell them what had happened. So Vincent told the following story.

... ..

They had found a bird and, following the teacher's instructions on how to treat a dead or injured bird, he had gone to his mother to ask for a plastic bag, with which to pick up the bird, and a box to put it in. His mother did not have a box and told him to leave the pigeon alone. He loved his mother very much and always tried to do as she said. But he also loved animals and birds very much. What should he do? He decided to follow his mother's instructions. On returning to his friends, he told them what his mother had said and asked them to carry on with the football game.

One of the boys, David, then threw a little stone at the pigeon to see if the bird could still move. It did. Vincent saw a strange twinkle in David's eye as he threw a second little stone at the bird. Then the other boys joined in and forgot about playing football, or Vincent's mother's advice to leave it alone, or their teacher's stories about kindness to animals. In the end, even Vincent took a little stone and threw it at the poor bird.

“Let's go and play football now,” said Tony, who had become bored with watching the bird twitch. “Come on.”

The others had agreed and they had gone back to the football pitch.

... ..

In the classroom the children listened quietly while Vincent was speaking. Nobody moved. Some children looked at the boys in disbelief. Some quietly stared in front of them. The teacher broke the silence. “Let me tell you another story,” she said.

... ..

Once upon a time there were five boys who loved to play five-a-side football. It was their favourite game. One day when they were playing after school, one of the friends left to go home for dinner, leaving the other four still playing. The ball was kicked offside and rolled on to a bare patch of land. When one of the boys ran to pick up the ball, he discovered a bird. He called his friends. Excited they came nearer.

The bird, a pigeon, although not dead, was injured. It couldn't fly away. The boy went home and asked his mother for a box to put the pigeon into. She told him to leave it. He loved his mother very much, so he obeyed her. Back with his friends,

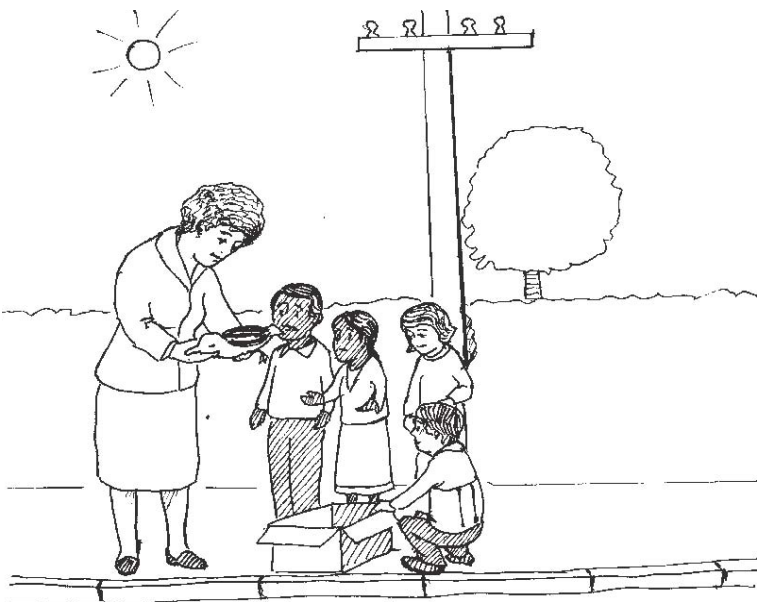
they felt very tempted to throw a little stone at the bird, just a little one, to see if it could still move. They could not resist the temptation and threw a stone. Then another ... and another. One boy threw only one stone, others threw more. After a while they decided to play football again and carried on with their game.

... ..

Here the teacher stopped. She had noticed that the children had recognised the boys. The boys themselves had, too. “I want to tell you a second story,” she continued.

... ..

Once there were two girls who were best friends. One day, on the way home from school, they discovered a bird at the base of a telephone pole close to the school zebra crossing. One girl noticed that the bird was still alive. They decided to go back to school to ask their teacher for help. So one girl went and one stayed behind to look after the bird. Two boys, who had seen them with the bird and also wanted to help it, stayed as well. Very soon the girl came back with the teacher and together they decided what to do.



The teacher gave a box to one of the girls, then she took the bird and gently put it in the box. One eye was covered in blood and the frightened bird let out a feeble squawk. The kind teacher suggested that the girls take the box home and give the bird some water and bread soaked in diluted milk. One of the boys had some bird seed at home and promised to fetch it with his friend.

All the children looked after the bird so well that to their great surprise the bird flew away later that evening. They were all happy - the bird and the children.

... ..

The teacher looked round at the class. They had recognised the story as being one which had occurred some time ago. The class waited patiently and full of hope to see what would come next.

“Here is a third story,” continued the teacher.

... ..

Once upon a time there were four boys who loved to play football. One day, as they were playing football after school, the ball rolled into some bushes. One of the boys found the ball and a bird. The bird blinked its eye. It was frightened to see such a big person towering over her. The boy called his friends. Excited they came nearer to the bird. The bird was terrified at their loud voices and giant-like bodies. It didn't know what would happen to it. What would these great powerful boys do to it? The boy who found it decided to go home to ask his mother for a box. His mother told him to leave the bird. He told his friends he had better do as his mother said. What should they do?

... ..

The teacher looked at the children. They all felt for the bird, including the four boys. One of his friends suggested they ask his mother. She was not at home, but his father was. The boy's father took a box from the garage and went with him to see the bird. The little bird was no longer frightened. The three other boys had spoken gently to it saying, “Don't worry. We'll help you. Are you in pain?”

Although it had not understood their words, it was reassured by their voices. They had chased away another boy who had wanted to throw stones at it. The little bird's heart was filled with gratitude when the father of one of them gently lifted it into the box.

The boys looked after the bird very well. They gave it water and food to eat. Two days later it was strong again. Its wing was healed completely and it flew away when the boys opened the box.

First it circled round the boys' heads as if to say, ‘Thank you’. Then slowly the bird disappeared into the far distance.

The boys looked at each other and grinned. It felt as if there was a warm glow in the air. There did not seem any need to say anything at that moment.

QUESTIONS:

- 1 How did you feel when you heard these stories?
- 2 Which of the stories told by the teacher shows non-violent behaviour?
- 3 Why is concern for others and compassion better than throwing stones?
- 4 Why did the teacher tell three stories rather than one?
- 5 Which story do you like best?
- 6 Did any of the stories remind you of anything in your own life?
- 7 Can you see how non-violence relates to the other values?

When we forget the value of truth, the other values can easily get forgotten too!

When the boy forgot the pigeon was a living, feeling being like himself [truth] he stopped loving it [love]; acted wrongly [right conduct]; in an over excited non-peaceful way [peace]; and violent way [non-violence].
Thus all the values were lost.

GROUP SINGING

OUR FEELING WORLD

(music by Stuart Jones, lyrics by Sara John)

We are children of a feeling world,
Plant our feet right on the ground,
Give our planet all our loving
And then let it spread around.

Across the skies, we are shining,
Our planet's alive for all to see
Let's make it glow with special brightness
With pure love from you and me. *(Repeat)*

With pure love from you and me.

(Repeat x 3)

GROUP ACTIVITY

1. Divide the class into groups of 3 to 5 students.
Provide each group with a large sheet of paper and a pen, and allow 15 minutes to brainstorm in response to one of the following:

- 1 *Living with kindness towards myself means ...*
- 2 *Living with kindness towards my family means ...*
- 3 *Living with kindness towards the community means ...*
- 4 *Living with kindness towards the environment means ...*

Either, pin up the paper so that all can see it, and ask for comments; or get each group to pass their paper to the next group, so that they can add to it. Repeat until all groups have responded to all four statements.

2. GAME: THE TRUST CIRCLE

(This game could be played after silent sitting when the children are in a quiet state).

Form groups of five or six.

Make sure there is space between the groups.

Each group stands in a circle with one member of the group in the centre.

Each child's shoulders should be touching the shoulders of the child on either side to ensure the circle is small and very stable.

With eyes closed, the person in the centre allows his or her body to fall gently backwards.

The others provide support by holding their hands with flat palms outwards at chest level.

The person in the centre can then rock gently backwards and forwards, completely trusting the group to give support.

When children become more confident the person in the centre can be passed around the circle from one member to another.

Every member should have the opportunity to be the one supported in the centre.

Extension exercise/Links to Other Subjects:

Culture - Zoology/Botany Link: Using an enlarged version of the globe picture in lesson 2.23, children can label which animals/plants/insects come from different parts of the world. This in itself could be turned into a class project - looking at living things from around the world.