

Lesson 2 – Language of Peace

‘Far More Unites Us Than Divides Us’

Age group: 11 – 13yrs

Aim:

To understand the language used to describe peace by examining diverse sources of inspiration; extracts from religious texts and quotes from spiritual leaders

Learning Objectives:

- To critically analyse texts on peace used/practiced by faith communities and identify similarities
- To better understand what inspires us and sustains us as peacebuilders
- For students to start to be more visual literate (i.e. the use of language, communication and interaction) in order to exchange ideas and navigate our highly visual digital world.
- To understand the connection of religious meanings to peacebuilding practice.

Background:

A prerequisite before starting the lesson would be to establish and maintain a safe space and trust within the group. When exploring different terminology and understanding different perspectives, there is the need to establish clear ground rules regarding dialogue, and to be sensitive to different backgrounds. Sharing information and perspectives on comparative themes within different religions offers students opportunities to move into more complex or controversial areas.

This lesson looks at conflict and the importance of coexistence and interfaith dialogue. It emphasises promoting the common principles present in a number of major religions and the stance taken on promoting peace.

A definition of peace as stated by the Peace Education Network is 'all the values, attitudes and forms of behaviour that reflect respect for life, for human dignity and for all human rights, the rejection of violence in all its forms and commitment to the principles of freedom, justice, solidarity, tolerance and understanding between people'.

Students will be reinforcing skills of communication, critical and creative thinking, cooperative problem-solving, and the ability to see issues from multiple perspectives by learning from the selected quotes and develop an understanding, one step towards exploring interfaith dialogue.

Activity	Method	Time	Resources
Icebreaker	<p>Clip from 'Inside Out' – about Conflict Show Clip https://youtu.be/34vVGVrGGBU After viewing discuss the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which, if any, of the character's emotions do you recognise? • In yourself? • In a close friend or family-member? • What do you notice about the influence of different emotions in this scene? • What is this clip about, what one word would you use? (CONFLICT) • What is the opposite of this word? (PEACE) 	10 mins	Laptop Data projector with sound
Definitions	<p>Examine what we mean by the words Peace and Reconciliation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm in groups the word Peace and think of examples relating to the word/phrase selected • In whole class feedback with examples – Groups give two responses at a time until list is exhausted • Then again in groups brainstorm word Reconciliation, again think of some examples; local, national or international • Census of opinion on the definition of the two words • Which word was easier to define and why? • Do we need peace and reconciliation? If so why? 	20 mins	Flip chart paper Felts Definition of Peace and Reconciliation (see teachers notes)
Scriptural quotes on peace	<p>Gallery Walk: Post the quotes where everyone can see them. Give the group (three or four students) time to walk around the room and read the texts on peace from the different religions Students to note down:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What the message is about the text? • Any terminology/words that you would like to explore further in the main group • Do you notice any similarities and differences? What are they? 	20 mins	Selection of texts and quotes (see teachers notes)
Plenary	<p>In a large Group Discussion ask the group to reflect on the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you learn from this exercise? • What strength can be found in the similarities? If the group found some differences, are they all religious differences, or do some reflect culture or other factors? • What was the most interesting part of this exercise? Why? • What was the most challenging part of this exercise? Why? 	10 mins	Capture discussion on flip chart

Teacher Notes: Quotes focusing on reconciliation have been taken from the Charter for Forgiveness

<http://www.charterforforgiveness.org/C4FR2017DecBrochure.pdf>

Enlarge the following quotes onto A3 paper, you can use all the quotes or select a few depending on the ability of the class

"The positive proof that the aspirant is centred in God is that he ceases to hate any person or object, and that good qualities such as love, forgiveness, patience, forbearance go on increasing in him". Sri Anandamayi Ma (1896 - 1982)

"Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong". Mahatma Gandhi". (1896 - 1948)

"As I walked out the door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew if I didn't leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I'd still be in prison". Nelson Mandela (1918 - 2013)

"There is no future without forgiveness". (Desmond Tutu (born 1931)

"It is forbidden for a person to be cruel and not grant pardon. One should rather easily forgive and not grow angry, and when the offender requests forgiveness he should forgive with a full heart and generous spirit. Even if he caused him distress and committed many offences against him, he shall not exact revenge or bear a grudge. This is the way of the Israelite people and their principled heart." (Hilkot Teshuva 2:10, Maimonides)

"God, You are always forgiving, and always merciful." (Guru Arjan Dev Ji, Guru Granth Sahib Ji, eternal Guru of the Sikhs, ang.713)

"But if you pardon and exonerate and forgive, Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Qur'an, 64:14)

"Where there are lies and deceit there is sin; Where there is greed there is famine, death and destruction; Where there is forgiveness, there is God himself." (Bhagat Kabir Ji, Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Eternal Guru of the Sikhs, Salok 155, ang.1372)

"And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive your sins." (Mark, 11:25, New Testament)

Quotes from Religious Texts or Leaders – enlarge onto A3

PEACE QUOTES

Peace. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

"Do you know what is better than charity and fasting and prayer? It is peace and good relations between people, as quarrels and bad feelings destroy mankind" (Muslim and Bukhari)

The Dalai Lama:

"My religion is very simple. My religion is kindness".

Nelson Mandela

"As we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite"

Mother Teresa

"If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other. Not all of us can do great things but we can do small things with great love. Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing"

Buddha

"To enjoy good health, to bring true happiness to one's family, to bring peace to all, one must first discipline and control one's own mind. If a man can control his mind he can find the way to Enlightenment, and all wisdom and virtue will naturally come to him"

Mahatma Gandhi

“An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind”

Luke:2.4

“Glory to god in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

The Talmud

“For the sake of peace, one may lie, but peace itself should never be a lie”

Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji

“The giver of peace is eternally blissful”

Bhagavad Gita

“He knows peace who has forgotten desire”