

## DISCERNMENT - CHOOSING THE BEST

**Objective:** To stimulate thought concerning choices

**Key Words:** discernment, sow, reap, Cornwall, Langarrow, sheltered, valley, neighbours, moors, consternation, inhabitants, copper, tin, excavation, abundance, merchants, prosperous, hawkers, tricksters, brawlers, fatal

### QUOTATION/THEME FOR THE WEEK

#### ALWAYS LISTEN TO THE CONTROL TOWER

Charles Schultz (Snoopy)



#### AS YOU SOW SO YOU REAP

Jesus

Discuss what the first quotation means.  
Do we hear the little voice of our inner conscience warning us?  
How does the first quotation relate to the second one?

### SILENT SITTING

Step 1 (See page 40 of the introduction)

Step 3 (optional)

Step 5: How can we choose between what is good and what is better?  
What about being good, isn't that valuable?  
See what a good person you are inside ...  
Other people are good too ...  
Think good thoughts about others and yourself ...  
What is a good thought about somebody?  
Speak good things when you speak ...  
What is a nice thing to say about somebody?  
Hear good in what other people say ...  
People don't usually mean to hurt you when they speak ...  
Do good things to other people and be kind to yourself too....  
Then you will be choosing the best ...  
What can you do today that is good?

Step 6.

## STORY TELLING

### WHAT IS TRUE WEALTH? THE STORY OF LANGARROW

*(A Cornish Legend recounted by Ken Davenport)*

Many hundreds of years ago, on the north coast of Cornwall, there was a little town called Langarrow. It lay in a privileged position in a sheltered valley with its own little harbour and wide sandy beach. The soil was good and the climate gentle. It was a place of peace and great beauty, and the people rose early each day and lived good and healthy lives. Before the time when the dawn sun shot its first red and golden rays across the sky, families were up, washed and dressed and had said their morning prayers together. They were then ready for the day's work in the fields, garden, house or school.

They sometimes visited neighbours in the villages high up on the moors or in narrow rock coves, taking fruit and vegetables from their abundant crops. Most of the villagers were grateful for their thoughtfulness, but some were envious of the happy townsfolk whose gardens were so green.

One day, strangers came to Langarrow and, to the consternation of the inhabitants, they announced that beneath their rich soil lay rocks that were full of an even greater wealth in the form of copper and tin. At first no one believed them, some even mocked them, but soon a few curious souls were starting to dig - just in case the strangers were right! Word of this got round and before long, half of the town had joined them in the hopes of discovering treasure beneath the soil. The thought of easily gained wealth burrowed like a worm into the hearts of some of the people. They began to abandon their fields and allotments and instead of growing food or tending their gardens as they had always done before, they started to turn the land over to excavation. The soil was removed and taken away in carts without any care for plants and animals living there.



Sure enough, they soon saw for themselves that there was tin and copper in great abundance. They learned to extract these from the rock and sell them to

merchants and used the money to buy food and much else. The town grew ever more prosperous and soon the poor folk from the other villages began to flock in to claim their share of the new-found wealth.



Before long the people of Langarrow began to realise that these villagers were prepared to work the mines for a wage, while they, the landowners, could take the greater part of the profit for themselves. Fine houses were built for them, and having little left to do, they spent more and more of their time in idle amusements with their friends. Few people now lived the healthy lives, in tune with nature, of their former days.

The fame of Langarrow continued to grow and fortune seekers began to arrive from up-country, together with beggars and tinkers, gamblers, drunkards and thieves from every part of England. Soon the streets were full of hawkers and tricksters, brawlers and purse snatchers.

The peace of the old town had gone. The few wise people who remained in Langarrow fled in despair and took to the hills where they continued their peaceful lives in tune with nature enjoying the sweet water from the hillside springs and growing enough fruit and vegetables in their cottage gardens to live on. Life was harder than it had been in former days at Langarrow, but they were healthy in mind and body and lived to a good old age.

Meanwhile the old church in the town remained abandoned and overgrown with thorns, while the inns and taverns were full to bursting night after night and most of the day. Then, one terrible night, while the people were totally engrossed in their drunken parties, there came a great wind from the sea such as had never been known before. The wind blew all night long and brought with it the sands of all the shores for many miles around.

Soon the streets were full of the sand to the height of a man's waist and yet the wind went on blowing. By morning the storm had brought sand to the height of the topmost windows and the people awoke to find themselves imprisoned. And still the wind went on blowing ... and blowing ... and blowing ...

All day and all the next night it blew. On the third day the wind stopped and visitors arrived at the top of the valley on their way to Langarrow. But all they could see as they peered into the valley below them was a vast dune of fine sand far deeper than any house. And from that day to this no trace has been found of the old town of Langarrow or of the people who were there on that fateful night.

#### QUESTIONS:

- 1 Can you describe the life of the people in the little town of Langarrow before thoughts of copper and tin filled their minds?
- 2 What happened to the people when they discovered copper and tin beneath their rich soil?
- 3 What changes were there to the town and its environment?
- 4 Which people were attracted by the fame of the town?
- 5 Is it important to have a lot of money to feel wealthy?
- 6 Are there forms of wealth other than money?
- 7 What does 'As you sow, so you reap' mean?
- 8 What did you feel when you heard this story?
- 9 Does it remind you of anything in your own life?
- 10 What do you value in your life?

#### GROUP SINGING

##### THERE IS BEAUTY

*(music by Stuart Jones lyrics by Nicky Gilbert)*

In every flower and tree that grows,  
In every gust of wind that blows,  
In every star that brightly glows.  
There's beauty everywhere.

And with each loving word we say  
Within us each and every day  
Awareness, love and joy all play,  
Creating beauty everywhere.

*Chorus: There is beauty to be found,  
If you see it, if you know it.  
There is beauty to be found,  
If you feel it, if you show it. (Repeat chorus)*

*(Repeat all)  
Beauty to be found (Repeat x 6)*

## GROUP ACTIVITY

Form four groups to role play an interview saying what life had been like in Langarrow, why they had acted in the way they had, and how they felt now, with a survivor of the storm who:

- a) had fled the town to farm in the hills at the beginning of the mining;
- b) had become a rich miner who was away at the time of the storm, but who had now lost everything;
- c) had come from a nearby village to work in the mines in Langarrow;
- d) had remained farming around Langarrow, but had been subject to pressure to sell, or mine, his land.

At the end pupils might like to reflect on how they worked together:

*We worked together well today when we ...*

### **Extension exercise/Links to Other Subjects:**

Using the material gained from the interviews, invite the children to either

- a) draw and compile a still-frame film strip of the events that led to the downfall of Langarrow
- b) work in small groups and produce a media report of the event. Each group can use a different method of presentation e.g. radio, TV, newspaper article. The class can then discuss how different media forms present the same information.

The children can also use other mediums of research (library, CD ROM, etc.) to find out whether a similar situation had occurred elsewhere in history.