

BEING A GOOD EXAMPLE

Objective: *To consider what is setting a good example without being judgmental*

Key Words: *example, monastery, Italian, Assisi, monk, novices, engrossed, towns-people*

QUOTATION/THEME FOR THE WEEK

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS



Brainstorm and discuss the meaning.
Volunteers may like to give an example from their own experience.

SILENT SITTING

Step 1 *(See page 40)*

Steps 2, 3 *(optional)*

Step 5: As we sit peacefully, remember that we can only ask others to do things that we are happy to do ourselves ...

Think of a time when you set a good example ...

And another ...

Think of a time when you helped someone in some way ...

And another ...

Feel good that you helped in that way ...

Step 6.

STORY TELLING

A GOOD EXAMPLE

*by Carole Alderman
(adapted from a traditional story)*

There was once a monastery near the beautiful Italian town of Assisi, where a wise and gentle monk dwelt. As a young man, he had been quite well off, but he had chosen to live a simple life devoid of luxury, harming never, helping ever, and he was loved by everyone.

One day he called one of the young novices to him and said, "Let's take a walk into the town and talk to the people".

It was a beautiful morning and as they strolled into town the young novice was excitedly thinking how he might help the people there. So engrossed was he in his good feelings about himself that he barely noticed the wonderful countryside around him.



"You seem to be engrossed in your thoughts," said the old monk.

"I'm thinking about what I shall say to the townspeople," replied the novice.

“You are wasting time,” replied the old monk. “Enjoy the countryside - the fragrance of the air and beauty of the wayside flowers. Who knows whether we will ever reach the town? It’s not in our hands to know the future - enjoy every moment now. When we get to the town, who knows what will greet us and what will be needed by those we meet? Be awake to life now. There is no other time. The past is gone and what you have learnt, if your mind is calm, will be recalled when circumstances need it. The future is always uncertain. Only the present is real. Be alert to what is going on now.”

The young novice was surprised, but obeyed the old monk. As he walked he felt the warm earth under his feet. The sharp stones, which before had occasionally hurt his feet, were noticed in time to be avoided. The scent of the flowers drifted to his nostrils and their colours seemed brighter. It was as if the world had opened up and was smiling at him. As they walked through the town, they both nodded amiably to the people they met. After some time they arrived back at the monastery gates.

The novice stopped and said, “But Father, shouldn’t we have stopped to preach!”

Laying his hand on the young man’s shoulder, the old monk replied, “Son, our contented faces and peaceful bearing must have surely been observed. In this way we have been teaching by example, which is better than mere words.

“It is no use walking to teach, if we do not teach as we walk”.

QUESTIONS:

1. What name shall we give this story?
2. Why did the old monk say to the novice, “You are wasting time?”
3. What do you think the old monk wanted the young novice to realise?
4. Do you remember a time when your thoughts were so busy that you forgot what you had to do?
5. Can you think of another quotation with a similar meaning to ‘It is no use walking to teach, if we do not teach as we walk’?
6. How did you feel when you heard this story?

GROUP SINGING

ST. FRANCIS' PRAYER

Make me a channel of Your peace,
Where there is hatred,
Let me bring Your love
Where there is injury,
Your pardon, Lord
And where there's doubt,
True faith in You.

*Chorus: O Master, grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled
As to console,
To be understood,
As to understand,
To be loved, as to love,
With all my soul.*

Make me a channel of Your peace
Where there's despair in life,
Let me bring hope,
Where there is darkness,
Only light
And where there's sadness,
Ever joy.

*Chorus: O Master, grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled
As to console,
To be understood,
As to understand,
To be loved, as to love,
With all my soul.*

Make me a channel of Your peace
It is in pardoning that
We are pardoned.
In giving to all men
That we receive
And in dying that we're born
To eternal life.

GROUP ACTIVITY

1. Drama: Ask the children to get into pairs and then join up with another pair they have not worked with to role play a situation of 'Actions speak louder than words' (e.g. a child helping an elderly person; or a child helping another who has hurt him/herself.)
2. Give each child a copy of the picture of The Happy Clown on the next page.

Discuss with the children the values related to right conduct
(see the picture on page 25 and the list on page 29 of the introduction).

Ask the children to write a value related to right conduct in each balloon (e.g. being helpful, showing respect, not wasting anything, being good, showing courage, etc.)

Then colour in the picture.

Extension exercise/Links to Other Subjects:

PE Link: Using the song on CD2, invite the children to make suitable dance movements/ statue positions to represent each verse of the song.

Note: Playing the song over and over again whilst they practise will help them to instil the song and its values in their mind. Children are very used to dancing to fast music and dancing to medium-slow music may prove an interesting challenge.

THE HAPPY CLOWN

