

## INTRODUCTORY LESSON for the beginning of each new year

**Objective:** To introduce the five values and help the class to understand them, as well as to feel comfortable with the five teaching components.  
Benefits of rules and boundaries.

**Curriculum Links:** Citizenship, IT, Music, PSHE, RE

*This series of 26 lesson plans can be taught in any order. The length of time taken over a whole lesson plan may be more than 50 minutes. The teacher can choose which activities to use and carry over to another session. It is recommended to always include a silent sitting exercise. At the end of each lesson are suitable links to other curriculum subjects helping to make the values part of an integrated curriculum.*

**Materials needed:**

- The Manual or copy of lesson plan
- Pages 36 and 37 of the Introduction Manual
- Coloured pens
- Adhesive tape / drawing pins / Blu-Tack re-usable adhesive
- Large sheets of paper
- CD/Tape player
- CD/Tape with music for silent sitting

**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.

### QUOTATION/THEME FOR THE WEEK

Discuss the five values and ask the class what they think each of the following five quotations mean.

There is a **truth** bigger than 'me'.

**Love** is a verb.

In a state of **peace** I find forgiveness.

Through **right conduct** I know when to say yes and when to say no.

Through **non-violence** we are unified.

# GROUP ACTIVITY

## 1. Interpersonal Skills

Teachers can devise a working brief as a starting point to help pupils focus on particular values, or on aspects of inter-relationships which they, as a class, find difficult. Useful starting points might be

*To make this class a good place in which to live and learn and to discuss personal feelings and issues:*

*I have a right to ...*

*I have a responsibility to ...*

*(Link: 'Our World, Our Rights' - Amnesty International, pp28/29 Rights and Responsibilities in the Classroom, Activity 3.)*

Explain that the group activities will provide many opportunities to practise interpersonal skills and review their progress.

Explain that to bring out the five values in their own lives they need certain interpersonal skills. The effectiveness of the programme is increased when they use strategies such as:

- active listening
- “I” statements
- assertiveness
- affirming self and others
- giving and receiving feedback
- reaching agreement by consensus
- negotiating win/win solutions
- conflict resolution
- personal target setting.

A few minutes at the end of an activity can be used to enable each working group to respond to incomplete statements such as:

*One useful contribution you (person on left) have made to our work today is ...*

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

## 2. Working in small groups, discuss:

*How can we ensure that everyone in the class:*

- *feels valued*
- *is encouraged to take an active part*
- *uses humour in ways that do not denigrate anyone?*

3. Agree approaches to bullying and racial and sexual harassment. Establish a clear policy about responding to victimisation of any kind. Adopt approaches to dealing with racism which do not blame or condemn, but do expect change in behaviour.

#### 4. 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. Teachers can and do set ground rules, but older pupils often use them more willingly, responsibly and effectively when they have created their own.

At the beginning of the programme or each school year, small groups can brainstorm the behaviour and strategies most likely to lead to harmony and productive learning. The class can then agree a small number of priorities, which everyone is prepared to observe. The final list should be prominently displayed, or even signed by each individual as a contract. This could make an attractive poster (*see 5 below*).

Teachers should insist that agreement is reached by consensus, not majority vote, and that everyone must be happy with the decisions, so that no one “wins” or “loses”. They should also 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, or to say “pass”
- confidentiality.

Class to discuss what rules they want in the class in the light of the former discussion.

5. Using your ICT skills, make an attractive poster of the rules and display this on the wall.

**Citizenship Link:** Unit 1 - Introductory Unit: Understand the benefits of having rules and boundaries and how they support creating a good learning environment which in adult life will enable them to participate and take responsibility for creating a democratic and fair society.

Programme of study: 1a Rights and responsibilities

3a use imagination to consider other people’s experiences

**IT Link:**

**RE Link:** Drawing up principles for living and comparing them.

**PSHE Link:** 1 Developing responsibility.

2 Developing a safer lifestyle - effective ways of resisting pressures.

3 Developing good relationships and respecting differences between people.

## 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 young people's age and ability into consideration.*

*As an alternative, the silent sitting exercise on Universal Light on page 37 of the Introduction Manual may be practised during every lesson, in addition to, or instead of, Step 5. It is often beneficial to practise the same exercise, as it then becomes familiar.*

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.

Step 1 *(The Silent Sitting exercise steps are on page 36 of the Introduction Manual).*

Steps 2, 4 *(Optional)*

Step 5: *Play some music quietly for a minute or two. (Flute music, music incorporating the sounds of nature e.g. sounds of water, bird song or the tape provided are suitable). Then phase the music out so that the pupils are sitting for a minute or two in silence.*

Step 6.

## GROUP SINGING

### WHERE?

*(music and lyrics by Carole Alderman)*

Where is truth, truth so true?  
In God, and the universe, and you.

Where is peace, peace so true?  
In God, and the universe, and you.

Where is love, love so true?  
In God, and the universe, and you.

*(Repeat x 2)*

At the end of this first lesson, the teacher may like to explain to the class that future lessons will also include some narrative for discussion, as well as the things they have done today.

If the teacher wishes they may get into pairs, and say one thing they are looking forward to in these lessons in the future.