

**Topic: FORGIVENESS**

**Objective:** To encourage an understanding that resentment will poison us, but forgiveness will bring strength and well-being.

The importance of family life and good diet.

Recognising when others need help.

Ability to see the world through the eyes of others and to see issues from their point of view.

Managing resentment. Resisting pressure to do wrong.

Willingness to develop a positive approach to life.

Developing a mature sense of self-worth and value.

Ability to suggest meanings of religious texts.

**Curriculum Links:** Citizenship, Drama, English, Geography, Music, PSHE, RE, Science

**Key words:** artichoke, asparagus, spurting, 'tante'

**Materials needed:**

- The Manual or copy of lesson plan
- Page 36 of the Introduction Manual
- CD player
- CD with music for silent sitting
- CD with music for the song
- Pages of the drama for 12 pupils

**QUOTATION/THEME FOR THE WEEK**



**FORGIVENESS IS THE FRAGRANCE THE VIOLET SHEDS  
ON THE HEEL THAT HAS CRUSHED IT**

*Mark Twain*

What do you think this means?

Why might forgiving someone be important?

What might be the result if we do not forgive?

Give examples of both.

**SILENT SITTING**

Step 1 (*See page 36 of the Introduction Manual*).

Steps 2, 4 (*Optional*).

Step 5: Think of a particular person who has been unpleasant to you in some way.

Imagine any uncomfortable feelings you had about them ...

Think of those feelings dissolving ...

Think of something likeable or worthwhile about this person ...

Think of yourself forgiving that person ...

Imagine yourself asking this person to do something for you which will help you get on with them better ...

Step 6.

## DRAMA

### THE ARTICHOKEs

by Tessa Hillman

*The scene is set in and around Paris, France*

*Characters:*

- Narrator*
- Boy*
- Father*
- Mother*
- Brother 1*
- Brother 2*
- Sister*
- Cousin Giles*
- Tante Marie*
- Uncle Georges*
- Madame le Brun*
- Monsieur Pierre le Brun*

*Boy:* We live in Paris. My family, like so many French people think that good healthy food and some nice red wine makes life very pleasant and enjoyable. We take long lunch breaks, especially at the weekend. On a Sunday the whole family gathers and sits round the table enjoying the food and conversation.

*Brother 1:* Yes, every Frenchman thinks he is an expert on wine and many children have been bored to tears by such lengthy discussions involving the exact angle of the sun on the grapes to ripen them in September and so on.

*Boy:* We have an aunt who is a really great cook. She is our father's sister and has no children of her own. Once a fortnight, we all go and have Sunday lunch with Tante Marie.

*Sister:* She and Uncle Georges live in a large house about three miles away. It is a special occasion every time we visit them.

*Father:* We take out the antique trap and the pony which I hire out for weddings. We all squeeze in and off we go. The children enjoy it and sing and laugh.

*Brother 2:* We look forward to the delicious meal Tante Marie always prepares for us.

*Boy:* We discuss the possible menu on the way to whet our appetites. Will it be asparagus, or perhaps wild mushrooms in garlic?

*Sister:* We love to try to guess at the puddings too. She had such a repertoire that it is difficult to guess correctly.

*Boy:* I always want it to be strawberries and cream.

*Mother:* Yes, but you don't quite understand the seasonality of foods. Your aunt always uses fresh food and, of course, everything has its season. Fruits ripen in the summer, fresh leafy vegetables for salads in May and on until October.

*Father:* Few other people are vegetarian, unless it is for health reasons.

*Mother:* In the winter I cook rich stews of pulses, potatoes and root vegetables. In the summer we have delicious salads and artichokes.

*Sister:* Yes, the artichokes are like monster thistle plants. You eat the flower head which is bigger than a man's hand. If you pick them before they open, they are delicious with melted butter.

*Boy:* The first time I had an artichoke, I watched fascinated as my aunt showed me how to pull the leaves off one by one and scrape off the flesh with my teeth. When all the leaves have gone, there is a bit like a shaving brush in the middle which you scrape away. Then came the most delicious part of all, the heart! It's the part that the fluffy flower bit grows from. My aunt spread my artichoke heart thickly with butter and told me to chop it up and eat it. What an experience! My little brothers didn't like the hearts, so I ate theirs as well. I had no room for pudding, but I didn't care. I had discovered something wonderful.

*Cousin Giles:* One day when I had been staying with Tante Marie and Uncle George, I went home with my cousins to be their guest for a while. My mother was very ill and my father couldn't manage to care for me as well as mother. I was thirteen at the time.

*Mother:* Yes, Giles was 'a wild boy' at that time. I remember that day only too well.

*Boy:* You may think Giles wild, Mama, but I am looking forward to seeing what he's like. I have met him a couple of times before, and he seemed okay to me, if a little noisy.

*Narrator:* On the way home father stopped the trap and everyone got out to stretch their legs. The little ones scampered about and the two older boys went for a little walk.

*Boy:* Look through this gap in the bushes. There's a little cultivated plot. Wow! Artichokes! So that's what they look like growing. They are huge. I was just talking to you about them. *(The boys look at each other)*

*Cousin Giles:* I can see a gap in the hedge a few metres up the lane. Let's go in and have a closer look at them.

*Boy:* I suppose it won't do any harm to look at them, even if it is someone's back garden.

*Narrator:* So in they went.

*Boy:* There are only four plants, but they are beautiful. The artichokes look perfect for picking.

*Cousin Giles:* Yes, and a day or so more and they'll be past their best. I bet the owner doesn't even know they're ready. Let's take some.

*Boy:* No. No. He's probably saving them for tomorrow. Look there are only half-a-dozen flowers. We shouldn't take them.

*Cousin Giles:* Don't be so daft. They're going to go to waste if we don't pick them.

*Boy:* You don't know that. *(aside)* I'm beginning to feel very uncomfortable. He is much bigger than me and he's starting to sound angry.

*Cousin Giles:* Look, just hold this stem for me and I'll cut it here. *(Grabs Boy's hand and places it on the stem. At the same time he draws a very sharp looking knife from his pocket).*

*Boy:* No, I'm not going to do it.

*Cousin Giles:* Go on, you softie. Look, I need two hands to saw with the knife.

*Narrator:* At that moment there was a shout from the other end of the garden. The boys had been seen. Giles' hand slipped and he brought the knife down hard on his cousin's wrist.

*Narrator:* Blood began suddenly pouring from his arm. Giles disappeared through the gap in the hedge leaving his panic stricken cousin with his arm spurting blood.

*Madame le Brun:* *(quickly bustling up, carrying a tea-towel in one hand and trying to hold up her skirts above the cabbages and beans with the other hand)* My goodness! Look what has happened.

*Boy (aside):* Now I'm in trouble. she will be so angry with me for being in her garden and trying to steal the artichokes. *(He sits down on the ground clasping his arm)* I feel so faint.

*Madame le Brun :* Good heavens, boy! What has happened to you?

*Boy:* I hardly felt anything, but I remember watching her strong arms as she ripped the tea-towel up into bandages and wrapping my wrist tightly shouted to Pierre, whoever he was. The next thing I knew was that I was bumping along the road in a car, my father beside me, with a stranger driving. *(groggily)* Who's that? Where are all the others?

*Father:* Madame Le Brun, whose artichokes you nearly stole, is giving them a drink and some cake while her husband, Pierre, and I take you to see the doctor.

*Boy (aside):* I haven't the energy to explain what has happened. After all, I did go into someone else's garden - but only to look at the beautiful artichokes. Madame Le Brun must be a kind person to be looking after my mother and all the children, after what we had nearly done to her artichokes. And her husband too, driving me to the doctor's!

*Father:* Just rest. We won't be long.

*Boy:* What about Giles? Is he having cake too?

*Father:* Yes. She gave him the biggest piece. But not before she had told him off severely for cutting you with the knife and for trying to steal her artichokes. They are for her son's birthday tomorrow.

*Boy:* Oh, no!

*Father:* Don't worry. All's well that ends well. She's a nurse and she cleaned you up beautifully. It's not as serious as it might have been. We're just going to get the doctor to check it, in case. Giles did tell us that you didn't want to steal the artichokes. He's very sorry, he says.

*Boy:* Oh, all right. But Papa, you will take that knife away from him while he stays with us, won't you?

*Narrator:* Papa gave him a wink.

**QUESTIONS:** *Support answers to questions 2 and 3 with evidence from the text.*

1. Which part of the artichoke do people eat?
2. Why did the boy join Giles in Madame Le Brun's garden?
3. Why did Madame Le Brun give the family and in particular Giles, cake and tea?
4. What values are depicted in this drama?
5. How did you feel when you heard the story?
6. Did it remind you of anything in your own life?

**Key words:** Look up any of the words in the dictionary that you have not understood and make sure you understand them and can spell them.

# GROUP ACTIVITY

## 1. MANAGING RESENTMENT - FORGIVENESS

### Discuss:

To forgive is an act of magnanimity. People who forgive others are those who are fully aware of their own, as well as others', limitations. They are actually acknowledging that nothing is perfect in this world, and that all imperfections are only circumstantial and highly temporary.

Forgiveness becomes extremely difficult if we have traces of harmful negative emotions or 'inner dragons' such as resentment, blame, revenge, judgement, hatred, etc. Why do people suffer? It is because of the inability to forgive truly from the bottom of their hearts.

The test of forgiveness is that when we forgive someone, we do not blame them any more and the relationship is back to normal. This can improve teamwork and effectiveness in our activities.

### Exercise:

*It will be beneficial to start this exercise with a few minutes' silent sitting. Ask the class members to choose a partner they would like to work with. Remind them of trustworthiness and confidentiality when they work together.*

*Lead them through the following exercise:*

1. Recall a resentment you have towards another person or friend, teacher, parent, etc. *(Give them two minutes to think about it)*
2. What was it that you expected from them that you did not get? *(Give them another two minutes to think about it)*

*Now ask them to:*

*Share with a partner your experience (5 minutes each)*

*Now ask them to:*

3. Try to see that person.  
Can you understand where they were coming from?  
Let go of the expectations you had of that person.
4. Make an act of forgiveness, saying  
"I forgive you for what you have done to me".
5. See yourself with that person now - does it feel different?  
Share with a partner. *(5 minutes each)*

**Citizenship Link:** Unit 13 Citizenship & RE: How do we deal with conflict?  
Programme of study 1g: the importance of resolving conflict fairly

**English Link:** Spelling 7: Spelling key words; Vocabulary 15: use a dictionary;  
Stylistic conventions 13b: Recount, which maintains the use of past tense, clear chronology and temporal connectives;  
Drama 15: develop drama techniques.

**Geography Link:** 3C page 23: describe and explain the physical and human features that give rise to the distinctive character of places

**PSHE Link:**

2d basic facts and laws.

2g recognise when pressure from others threatens personal safety and well-being, and to develop effective ways of resisting pressures, including knowing when and where to get help.

3e changing nature of, and pressure on, relationships with friends and family, and when and how to seek help.

**RE Link:** Share experiences of having been forgiven and forgiving and what was learnt from these experiences.

**Science Link:** Health and Safety.