

Topic: CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Objective: *To understand the delights of nature and wildlife and looking after other people's property and the environment*

Words used in story: *allotment, chrysanthemums, damsons, fertile, flourish, greenhouse, harvesting, nurture, prune, re-glazing, replenish, topping, trample, twitter, vandalism, wigwam*

Materials needed: The Manual or copy of lesson plan
Silent sitting exercises from the Manual
CD player
CD with music for silent sitting and the song

QUOTATION/THEME FOR THE WEEK

WHEN I LAST TOOK TIME TO LOOK INTO THE HEART OF A FLOWER,
IT OPENED UP A WHOLE NEW WORLD
AS IF A WINDOW HAD BEEN OPENED TO LET IN THE SUN

*Princess Grace of Monaco
1929-1982*

Brainstorm and discuss.

SILENT SITTING

Step 1: “Firstly, sit in a comfortable position on your chairs, or cross legged on the floor. Make sure your back is straight and head is upright. Take a deep breath and relax as you breathe out. Close the eyes, or if you are uncomfortable with that, look down at the floor. Take another deep breath ... and another ...”

Step 2: “Now relax any tensions in the body. Stretch your toes, then relax them. Tighten and tense the calf muscles, then relax them. Tense the muscles in your upper legs and thighs, and relax them. Pull in your stomach muscles, then relax them. Pull the shoulders back, then relax them. Shrug the shoulders up and down. Look left, look forward, look right, look forward. Now screw up the face muscles and relax them. Feel your whole body relaxed - all tensions have gone. You feel good.”

Step 5: Imagine your world expanding to cover all the earth ...

Be aware of your own gentle breath ...

Feel the gentle life force throughout the planet ...

In all people, animals, trees and plants ...

Be aware of your love for all things ...

Be aware of your wish for peace and happiness for all and everything ...

Step 6: “Now bring your attention back to the classroom, open your eyes and stretch, as the exercise has finished. Smile at the person next to you and tell them the date and time.”

NARRATIVE

THE ALLOTMENT

A true story by Sheila Wardle

The four boys thought it great fun to play on the old man’s allotment, running down the rows of vegetables, jumping over fruit bushes, breaking down walls, playing football among the flowers, picking the fruit before it was ready to eat and spitting it out, wasting it.

Early one evening the old man returned to his garden with a heavy heart, another wall broken, more raspberries trampled. He would have to work hard to tidy up and repair the damage. The allotment had given him much joy and a sense of usefulness as well as providing fruit and vegetables for his family and flowers for his wife to place in the Church. He found great satisfaction in growing good, tasty, fresh vegetables in neat rows. He took pleasure in the beans growing up wigwam poles and his potato patch which made him think of mashed or roast potatoes, chips or a topping for a pie.

He remembered the various fruit the family had enjoyed - the steaming apple pies and the raspberries, blackberries and strawberries they had eaten with ice cream. The rest of the fruit had been made into jam, along with the plums and damsons.

The soil on the allotment was rich and fertile for much loving care had been given to the earth, to replenish its goodness each season. Two large greenhouses stood in the shelter of the dry stone walls, one filled with tomatoes, the other with chrysanthemums which the old man sold to his neighbours to provide the money to buy new seeds and plants for the next year.

Wild birds came to the garden to share some of its fruit. Field mice also came to share the food. A small pond filled with frogs each year and always there were a couple of big fat brown toads. A family of round red robins always nested in the potting shed, swallows nested in a barn of a nearby farm and always a small army of sparrows twittered around.

As the old gardener drew nearer to his allotment he could hear young voices shouting to each other and the sounds of breaking glass. He was afraid of what he would find again. Then he thought, come on, let me sort out this vandalism, so he stood tall and strong, marched onto his allotment to face whoever was there.

The boys were totally surprised to see the man and just stopped their games. He knew each of the boys and their families. He knew their parents

would be upset and angry at their sons' behaviour, as they all enjoyed the good produce when they could. He took all the boys home and told their parents what had been happening. They asked him what should be done about the boys. The old man thought and asked for help to repair all the damage, so the boys and their mums and dads all went to the allotment to put everything back in order once more.

Everyone worked together, tying up and pruning where needed, replacing the broken panes of glass in the greenhouses, rebuilding the dry stone walls, until all was neat and tidy again. The old man talked to the boys as the work was being done, explaining about the allotment and all that happened on it - the nurturing of the soil, the planting of the seeds and caring for the trees, the wild life and all the satisfaction of seeing everything flourish.

When all was done, the boys promised never to go there again to destroy the crops and pick the produce. They all said how sorry they were. However, one of the boys, Ian, asked the old man if he could help him as he was interested in learning more. The gardener offered to teach all of them his skills, but only Ian was interested to learn. He spent many happy hours working on the allotment, planting, harvesting, rebuilding, re-glazing and doing all the tasks to keep the garden beautiful.

Ian grew up and moved to different places to live and go to school. He went to college and then into industry. Many years later, I went to work in a large office of a factory and who should be my manager, but Ian! He had never forgotten the old man, the allotment and all his skills. In fact, he now takes working holidays with the National Trust, repairing and rebuilding dry stone walls and re-glazing greenhouses. How do I know all this? The old man was my granddad who also taught me all my gardening knowledge and skills.

QUESTIONS: *Support answers to questions 1 to 6 with evidence from the text.*

1. Why did the old man return with such a heavy heart to his garden?
2. What did the allotment give him?
3. Why was the soil on the allotment so rich?
4. What creatures enjoyed the garden?
5. How did he decide to solve his vandalism problem?
6. What did the boys do to make it up?
7. How did you feel when you heard the story?
8. Did it remind you of anything in your own 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

Discuss:

- a) issues which follow an uncaring attitude towards others;
- b) issues which follow a caring attitude towards others;
- c) issues which follow an uncaring attitude towards the planet, such as global warming, pollution, deforestation, killing animals for food, medicine, clothing and pleasure.
- d) issues which follow a caring attitude towards the planet, such as recycling paper, bottles, cartridges, etc.

Extension exercise:

As a class write to Local Agenda 21 Officer offering help.

Links to Other Subjects: Chemistry

Look at chemical pollution which upsets the delicate ecological balance on the planet. Examples for study might be:

- a) the spread of algae in rivers and its effects on the amount of oxygen found in the water;
- b) the destruction of a particular species such as fish, or the favouring of another;
- c) the effects of acid rain on trees, etc.