

Session Two: Communicating and Listening as Peacemakers

Today's lesson will continue to explore what peace is and use our senses to discover the ways we communicate and listen.

Materials

What Does Peace Feel Like? By V. Radunsky

Songs Handout

Hidden items

Things to smell

Sock

Collage materials

Fruit (strawberry, grapefruit, apple)

Construction paper or paper

Crayons

Coming Together (5 minutes)

Gather together in a welcoming circle. Ask children to think of different ways that they have been welcomed- with a hug, a handshake, a smile, a kiss on the cheek, etc. Describe how greetings vary in different cultures.

See the Songs Handout (pages 32-38) for supplemental materials! Plus, check out these links to learn the ways people around the world greet one another:

<http://mashable.com/2015/03/15/greetings-around-the-world/#SRBRiK8swOqB>

<https://youtu.be/quWZ7kXad4M>

Introduction (5 minutes)

Briefly review Session One activities. Have the drawings they created displayed around the room. In Session Two, we're going to think more about peace and begin to consider what it might be like in our schools, neighborhoods, families, churches, synagogues, temples, and world.

Read a Story- What Does Peace Feel Like? By V. Radunsky (15 minutes)

This story asks children from around the world to imagine and explain what peace smells, looks, sounds, tastes, and feels like. Read the book one question at a time, breaking to ask the children what they might add to each list- record the different ideas that the children come up with.

Play It Out (25 minutes)

Go on an explorer's hike. This activity will take some time to prepare- know where you might walk and have items ready for each of the illustrations. Depending on where you are having your class, this hike can be inside or outside. It can be a short hike (even a foot-long hike, if outdoors) or a long hike (around the block or through all the different rooms of the building). An explorer's hike is a very slow hike in which the teacher guides the group to recognize different things. For this hike, try to point out

Each of these books can be found at your local library or through an Interlibrary Loan- make sure to request them at least a week in advance! Contact On Earth Peace if you need assistance.

something that you can recognize using each of your senses and stopping along the way to point things out. Below are some examples:

LOOKS- Lead kids in looking with their eyes at all the things around them. What do they see? What colors? If this is a familiar place, do they notice anything new when they look really hard? (If this activity is done inside, it might help to have some random items hidden in the room and see if the children can find them.)

SMELLS- Have the children sniff (dramatically) a few times. Lead them to places with distinct smells- flowers, the grass, a kitchen. Ask the kids to share what they notice when they are paying careful attention to their nose. How is smelling a different way of discovering the world?

SOUNDS- Stop from walking and ask everyone to be very quiet for a few minutes (maybe only one minute depending on the energy of the group) and to close their eyes. Tell them that they are to listen very closely to all the sounds around them. After they have listened without making any sounds, ask them to share what they heard. (It might be fun to listen to a smile during this time. While the children are still very quiet, explain that if we listen very closely we can even hear a smile. Tell all the children that on the count of three, while remaining very quiet, we are all going to smile at once. Repeat a couple of times so that the kids have a chance to really hear the group smile.)

FEELS- Invite the children to touch something and describe how it feels. You may have everyone touch the same thing and describe with one word how it feels, or everyone might touch something different. (If inside, you might put something in a sock and ask each person to touch without seeing the object and try to guess what they are feeling.)

TASTES- have a piece of fruit available to share with the children. Remind the children that they are still on an explorer's hike and instead of just eating the piece of fruit quickly, they should take their time and try to describe how the fruit tastes. It might be helpful to have a couple of different kinds of fruit available with distinctly different tastes- a sweet strawberry, a bitter grapefruit, and sour apple. **(Be sure to check for allergies first!)**

If you have only one hour for this session, adjust times and break here.

Begin the next session by reviewing the question, "What does peace feel (taste, smell, look, sound) like?" and remembering some of the images from this session.

When you gather again, please be sure to add some "coming together" activity to the activities below.

Design Time (15 minutes)

For this session's "Design Time," invite the children to draw some of the things they thought of while reading and discussing the book, "What Does Peace Feel Like?" and while on their hike. Ask them to pick one of their senses to focus on and draw what peace feels, tastes, looks, smells, or sounds like. Help the children write one sentence to describe their picture (e.g. Peace smells like freshly cut grass.) If possible, provide materials for children to create collages with items that appeal to their senses. Give each of the children a chance to share their designs with the larger group. Again, collect the drawings and save them for the mural design process.

Communicating (10 minutes)

One way that we show that we love is by listening; this is also a very important thing in building peace! We've already spent time noticing the many ways we can listen with each of our senses. Now, let's think of some of the things that keep us from listening well, and then we'll make some guidelines for listening and loving.

It might be a good idea to post these four simple rules for good listening somewhere in your meeting room. These will be important to remember when you are leading the children through the design of the mural.

Here is a list of good skills for listening. Invite children to try them out (as well as try out the opposite of good listening).

- Pay attention. We've spent this entire session exploring the different ways that we can pay attention with each of our senses and discovered lots of things that we easily miss when we don't pay attention.
- Don't interrupt. One thing that often gets in the way of our listening is that we are eager to share our own ideas and we interrupt.
- Slow down. Remember how slow our explorer's hike was. It is important to not rush through a conversation when you are listening. Take time to understand what the person is trying to say.
- Ask questions. Say, "I asked you a lot of questions today and you asked me a lot of questions." This is a good way to make sure that we understand what someone is saying, but we have to remember the other listening ideas we just shared.

Ask the children if they would be willing to try these out as they meet the next couple of weeks/sessions.

Closing (5 minutes)

We did a lot of things today. We began to imagine what peace feels like with all of our senses by hearing what other children have thought, by exploring, and by learning how to listen. We talked about how we should love others with ALL of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Good work!

When we gathered today, we each shared different ways that we are welcomed in a group. What are some ways that we say goodbye to our friends? Choose one and do it as a group -or- have everyone say goodbye in their own way at the count of three.

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