

LIVING VALUES

What are Living Values?

The Living Values Education Programme is a partnership amongst educators around the world, supported by UNESCO, and part of a global movement for a culture of peace and non-violence. Currently being implemented in 85 countries, the program helps teachers and parents facilitate children and youth exploring universal values that would be present in a better world - co-operation, freedom, happiness, honesty, humility, love, peace, respect, responsibility, simplicity, tolerance and unity. The Living Values Education Programme develops these 12 values to fulfil the potential of the individual and create harmonious, effective communities. There are activities for children of all ages. This Action Sheet shares some activities from the Living Values Education Programme, chosen for their environmental focus. If you would like to find out more, you can find contact details for the program at the end of the sheet.

What is simplicity?

Reflection Points

Simplicity is learning from the earth

Simplicity teaches us economy - how to use our resources wisely, keeping future generations in mind.

Activity

Simplicity Is Being Natural, Simplicity is Beautiful

Concept: Appreciating the beauty of nature and the Earth sometimes allows us to appreciate the natural beauty of the self more. The more we appreciate natural beauty, the less we are fooled into thinking we have to own certain things or look a certain way to feel good about ourselves or be accepted by others. In order to sell things, businesses hire advertising firms to create impressive advertisements so people will buy their products. Sometimes they imply that you will be more attractive if you use their product or feel better about yourself if you own what they are selling. These advertisements fool people into thinking that they need these things to be okay and for other people to consider them okay. When people hear many messages like this, they often forget about the importance of inner beauty. These messages do not encourage people to respect the Earth or the inner self. The self knows there is natural beauty inside. When we have that awareness in our own mind, we can be content about our own value, enjoy others for who they are, and give happiness. Simplicity is being natural. Simplicity is beautiful.

Activity: Share this concept with the students and ask them to brainstorm messages they get from the mass media (television, radio, newspapers, the Internet) and from advertisements. List those messages on the board. Choose one of the messages and ask them to discuss that. Then make another kind of message by asking them to create thoughts they think are closer to nature and natural beauty. Take another message as an example and repeat. Keep a list of their responses.

What is respect?

RESPECT MEANS CARING FOR OURSELVES, FOR EACH OTHER AND FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT

Activity: Garden Image Relaxation/Focusing Exercise

Say: Relaxation/Focusing exercises are one way to enjoy and strengthen the feeling of respect inside. The one we are going to do today uses the image of a garden. You could play some quiet relaxing music as you slowly read out the words below to a seated class.

Sit comfortably and let your body relax - As you breathe slowly, let your mind be still and calm - Starting at your feet, let yourself relax - Relax your legs - your stomach - your shoulders - your neck - your face - your nose - your eyes - and your forehead. - Your mind is serene and calm - Breathe deeply - Concentrate on stillness - In your mind, picture a flower - Imagine the smell - Enjoy its fragrance - Observe its shape and colour - Enjoy its beauty - Each person is like a flower - Each one of us is unique - yet we have many things in common - Picture a garden around you with many varieties of flowers - all of them beautiful - Each flower with its colour - each flower with its fragrance - giving the best of itself - Some are tall with pointed petals, some with rounded petals, some are big and others little. Some have many hues of colours. Some attract the eyes because of their simplicity - Each one of us is like a beautiful flower - Enjoy the beauty of each one - Each adds to the beauty of the garden - All are important. Together they form the garden - Each flower has respect for itself - When one respects oneself, it is then easy to respect others - Each one is valuable and unique - With respect, the qualities of the other are seen - Perceive what is good in each one - Each has a unique role - Each is important - Let this image fade in your mind, and turn your attention to this room again.



Discuss the Reflection Point: *Respect for the self is the seed that gives growth to confidence.*

What is responsibility?

Reflection Points

Responsibility is using our resources to generate a positive change

If we want a clean world, we have the responsibility to care for nature

Activity: Responsibility is Walking My Talk

Briefly ask the students the following questions:

- Do you believe in peace?
- What do you believe in? (Write peace and their other ideas on the board.)
- Do you believe in caring for the environment?
- Do you believe in loyalty?
- Do you believe in being a good friend?
- Do you believe in being a good student?

Say: Responsibility means that you try to do your best to do what you believe in. Lets look at some Reflection Points.

If we want peace, we have the responsibility to be peaceful.

If we want a clean world, we have the responsibility to care for nature.

With rights there are responsibilities.

Concept: One responsibility we sometimes overlook is doing what we say. If we believe in certain principles or values, then what we do or how we act should support our beliefs and values. For instance, if I believe in caring for the environment, but I throw the candy wrapper on the ground, then I am not walking my talk.

Say: Lets consider one of these. Make a separate heading for Caring for the Environment on the board. Ask: If you believe in this, what type of behaviour would you have? What would you do?

Good answers. Lets consider another one. (Consider other beliefs and what actions would show them in practice.)

Ask students to make an **I believe in** booklet. At the top of each page, write one sentence starting with: I believe in . . .

Down a few lines, write: I want the right to . . .

Down a few lines, write: My responsibilities are . . .

Each student is to complete each sentence.

Say: Each of us can create our own life. We can claim many rights, but with those rights come responsibilities. Ask students to share some of their **I believe in...** statements.

What is unity?

Activity: Learning from Nature

Tell or read stories about animals that demonstrate unity, such as dolphins and elephants. There are many stories about dolphins saving humans. In one, a man was in a shipwreck, and was left floating alone on a tiny raft far out to sea. He was found by a group of dolphins, who swam with him for many miles, pushing his raft along. They were united in their goal of saving the man. When some of the dolphins were tired, others would take over. They kept swimming together, and when the ones who were pushing got tired, the ones who were more rested would push again. They rotated the work like this for many, many miles, pushing the raft until it was close to a little village by the sea, where the man could swim safely by himself to the shore.

Elephants have many similarities to humans. They live for seventy to eighty years. They love their children very much. When the elephants are threatened by a lion, the large elephants form a circle around the baby and young elephants. The parent elephants face outwards in the circle so they can guard their children and keep them safe. The parent elephants face outward in the circle so they can guard their children and keep them safe. The elephants are united; they act together with a shared goal.

You may know many other stories about animal behaviour that demonstrate unity and cooperation.

Divide the class into several groups. Ask each group to study an animal known for support of its kind, and discuss the following reflection points in regard to the animal studied.

Unity creates a sense of belonging and increases well-being for all.
The greatness of unity is that everyone is respected.

After their study, groups can discuss what lessons their animal has for humankind. Groups can prepare their advice in artistic format (poster, picture, drama, skit) when presenting their findings to the rest of the class.

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CONTACT

Living Values Education
Email: lve@livingvalues.net
Website: www.livingvalues.net