

## Lesson 1

### How can people live together?

#### How can education help to develop tolerance and understanding?<sup>13</sup>

<b>Learning objectives</b>	The students are able: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– to consider issues which arise when communities with different values and beliefs try to live together in peace;</li><li>– to consider the role of education in developing understanding between people of different cultures;</li><li>– to consider whether individuals on their own can influence society.</li></ul>
<b>Student tasks</b>	Students discuss issues raised by a story. Students engage in critical thinking. They share ideas. Students role-play to explore an issue.
<b>Resources</b>	Copies of student handout 3.1.
<b>Methods</b>	Discussion. Critical thinking. Hypothesising. Role play.

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13. Based on a lesson developed by the Citizenship Foundation, London.

## The lesson

The teacher introduces the aims of the lesson and reads the story “The school on the edge of the forest” (student handout 3.1) to the class.

The teacher seats the students in a circle and asks them to say what they found surprising or interesting about the story and why. Give them two minutes in “buzz groups” (pairs) to talk to a partner before sharing their views with the whole group.

The teacher reminds the class that in an “enquiry-based” discussion the aim is to share ideas and to elaborate them together. There are no right or wrong answers.

The teacher then asks: “Let us all think of as many people as we can who might have wanted to burn down the school (examples might be: some of the children, some of the parents, a member of the community such as a priest). What motives might they have had? Who stands to gain and who stands to lose if the school is not re-built? (For example, if students don’t have to go to school, is this a gain or a loss for them?)”

This could be done in the form of a table as below:

Name of the party	Gains	Losses
Students		
Parents		
Priest		
Whole community		
Other?		

The teacher now guides the students to focus on the teacher’s role in the story. At first, a general question – “What is your view of the teacher?” – prompts the students to contribute their ideas. Further follow-up questions could be:

- Was he a fool, an idealist, or was he courageous?
- Do you admire or despise him for what he tried to do?
- What do you think his motives were?
- Where do you think he got his social values from?
- What should he do now and why? (Try again or give up?)
- If you were a student at this school, what would you want the teacher to do?

Then the teacher helps the students to link the issues in the story to their own community. Possible questions include:

- Think about where you live.
- Do you think people like the teacher exist?
- Is it possible for individuals to make a difference to society on their own? Think of examples.

Other important issues raised by the story include:

- How far do you think peace between the two peoples could really be achieved through educating the children together?
- What are the problems facing schools and teachers when children with different values and of different religions are educated together? How can these be solved?

– The lesson can be rounded off with a role play. Imagine that before the school burned down, some parents of the plains children had come to the teacher with a complaint. They said:

*“There are more plains children than forest children in this school, so we think you should not teach our children about the religion of the forest people. It might turn them against their own people.”*

The teacher is unhappy about this. In pairs, make up a conversation between a parent and the teacher. Perform it to the rest of the class.