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# Introduction

If you have ever been asked to lead a whole school or class assembly or prepare a children's talk for a church service, or if you are looking for fresh ideas for lessons, this is the book for you! *10-Minute Assemblies for 4-11s* provides 50 ready-to-use, thought-provoking assemblies that will immediately grab the children's attention. The ideas are quick and easy to use and cover many general themes alongside Christian calendar events, national days and other annual or special events. (The general themes and special events are presented in alphabetical order, not in the order that you would necessarily use them through the year.)

All the assemblies have been tried and tested with children and the inclusion of an optional Bible section makes them suitable for use in any school. The assemblies are designed to be flexible and easy to use for teachers with little or no Christian background knowledge. All you will need is a Bible or a printout of the relevant verses from [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) in a modern translation such as the New International Version, the Good News Bible or the Contemporary English Version.

## **Age ranges**

The assemblies are written to be used in Key Stages 1 and 2 but could easily be adapted to suit slightly younger or older ages.

## **Group sizes**

All the assemblies are suitable for whole school usage but, with minimum effort, could be adapted for use as classroom assemblies or in any lessons or talks involving children. For larger groups, there may be occasions when it is necessary to duplicate some of the suggested pieces of equipment so that more children can be actively involved.

## **Organisation**

A number of the assemblies require the involvement of two or more people. On these occasions, pre-planning is particularly important so that each person is sure of the role they are playing.

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## Peace

**Aim:** To consider the meaning of the word 'peace'.

**You will need:** The word 'peace' on a screen or written on paper in large letters; a dictionary; a drum; a sun lounger or chair; gentle recorded music (if possible, the sound of waves or rippling water); a packet of jelly babies.

### Assembly outline

Invite a volunteer to hold up the word 'peace'. Ask the children what they think the word means. Invite another volunteer to look up the word 'peace' in the dictionary and read out the meanings. Explain that the word 'peace' can be used in many situations, and during this assembly you want to think about five of the different meanings.

Ask for a volunteer to come to the front, and give them a drum. Explain that when you lift your hand in the air, you want them to play the drum loudly; and when you lower your hand, you want them to stop. Lift your hand and encourage the child to play loudly for a few seconds before

stopping them. Explain that the first meaning of ‘peace’ is the absence of noise. If a class is being noisy, a teacher may say, ‘Please can we have a bit of peace.’ A parent may put the children to bed and say, ‘Now I can have a bit of peace!’

With the drummer child remaining at the front, ask for another volunteer. Ask this child to lie on the sun lounger or sit on the chair in a relaxed manner. Switch on the gentle music and invite all the children to listen to it for a minute with their eyes closed. Ask the children how they are feeling and how they think the person on the lounger feels. Can they imagine whereabouts the person on the sun lounger could be? (Examples could be at the beach, in the garden or beside a swimming pool.) Explain that, as well as the absence of noise, the word ‘peace’ means calmness and restfulness. If we are in a still, quiet and relaxing setting, we will often describe it as peaceful.

With the first two children remaining at the front, call for two further volunteers and ask them to stand facing each other in a way that suggests they have had a serious argument. Explain that when friends have arguments and fall out with each other, sometimes another person needs to step in and help them ‘make peace’ with each other. Ask the children what they think the term ‘make peace’ means. Explain that making peace means sorting out a dispute or problem between people so that they can become friends again.

Ask if they have heard the term ‘peacemakers’. What do they think it means? Explain that we all have a role to play as ‘peacemakers’. If we are peacemakers, we won’t wind other people up and try to get them frustrated or cross. We won’t try to annoy each other, and we won’t try to pick faults in each other and get people into trouble. Instead we

will try to help others, look for the good in others and help people stay friends with each other.

Explain that for the fourth meaning of 'peace' you need someone to come to the front to hold the bag of jelly babies. Explain that jelly babies were first produced in 1918, just after the end of World War I. At this time, they were called 'peace babies'. Explain that the fourth meaning of the word 'peace' is a time when there is no war.

Quickly recap each meaning of the word 'peace', then say that the final meaning you are going to think about is 'inner peace'. Ask the children what they think this term means. Explain that inner peace means feeling peaceful and content on the inside. Everyone has times when they feel worried, stressed, agitated and upset, but we shouldn't feel that way all the time. If we do constantly feel like this, it is a good idea to talk to a teacher and explain how we feel. Sometimes talking about things can make us feel much better.

Ask the children to think about their lives and the life of the school. Encourage them to think about what they can do to help the world be a more peaceful place.

## What the Bible says

In **Matthew 8:23–27** and **Mark 4:35–41** we read about Jesus calming a storm. While the disciples were sailing across the Sea of Galilee, Jesus fell asleep in the back of the boat. Suddenly a great storm arose and the disciples were terrified that they were going to drown. Eventually one of them woke Jesus. Jesus stood and said to the waves, 'Be

still.’ Immediately the storm stopped and everything was calm and peaceful.

The Bible also encourages us to be peacemakers. **Romans 12:18** tells us, ‘If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.’

## Pause for thought

Do you feel peaceful in your own life? Are you worried or anxious about anything? If you are, why not decide to talk to a teacher today? Are you living at peace with other people or do you need to ‘make peace’ with anyone? If you do, then try to sort it out and make friends quickly.

### PRAYER

*Dear God, sometimes we feel sad and worried. When we feel this way, please help us to have the courage to talk to someone about it. Please also help us to make every effort to live at peace with other people. Please be close to people today who live in areas where wars are being fought. Bring them peace. Amen*



# 29

## When things go wrong

**Aim:** To consider that almost everything we do affects another person in some way. Our actions can either add to their difficulties or can help them.

**You will need:** Two Jenga games or sets of blocks that can be built into two towers.

Giant Jenga blocks are effective but care must be taken to ensure safety.

### Assembly outline

With the children watching, set up two towers of blocks on separate table tops. Ask the children what would happen if you knocked one of the tables as you walked past. Demonstrate by nudging the table and causing the tower to topple.

Explain that sometimes things happen to people that make them feel as if their whole world has come tumbling down around them, just like the tower has done. Often, these are big events in people's lives, and those around

them see that they are upset and treat them in a special way. For example, if a child comes into school crying one morning, a teacher will try to find out what is the matter and may explain to the other children that they need to be especially kind to that child. Because everyone knows that the child is upset for a special reason, everyone will try to be thoughtful and look after them.

However, sometimes the build-up of lots of things can make us feel very sad and can eventually make us feel as if we can't cope anymore.

Give a few examples of situations that could make the children feel sad or let down, and, as you explain each one, carefully remove some bricks from the second tower. For example, someone might not let another child play with them in the playground and it can make that child feel sad. (Carefully remove one of the blocks.) Someone may have been shouted at by their mum before they came to school and they could be feeling unhappy. (Remove another block.) Someone might have had an argument with their friend... someone might have a sick pet... someone might have heard that people were talking about them behind their backs and so on. Ask the children to give their own examples and, as they suggest things that could make them feel down in the dumps, remove another block (or ask the children to do so).

Point out that, just as we can remove all these blocks and the tower will stay standing, all the little things that have made us feel a bit sad, worried or hurt can add up, but we can still look as if we are OK on the outside. This means that no one knows how unhappy we are feeling.

Give a couple more examples, making sure that the tower now collapses. Explain that eventually it can be some-

thing little that suddenly makes us feel we can't cope any more. When this happens, we might get very angry or very sad or we just want to move away from everybody because we are scared that they will hurt us again.

It may seem to be a very small thing that 'pushes us over the edge' but really it is the build-up of lots and lots of little problems.

Explain to the children that, because we can't see what others are feeling on the inside and often have no idea what problems they are facing, it is very important to try to be sensitive to people all of the time. It is important to stop and think before we speak and before we take certain actions.

Challenge the children to think about the way they behave towards others. Encourage them always to think before they speak. Point out that the way a person is feeling affects the way they behave at the time. If a person is feeling happy when someone says they can't join in a particular game, they may happily go off and join in with others. However, if that same child is already feeling sad when they are told that they cannot join in, they may be very upset.

Encourage children who are feeling as if things are getting on top of them to talk to a member of staff today.

## **What the Bible says**

Sometimes we feel badly let down and hurt by the people around us. Sometimes we feel unable to cope with the situations in which we find ourselves. When this happens, we can feel very sad and alone. Sometimes we let other people down ourselves, and this can also make us sad

and lonely. The Bible tells us that whatever we have done and however sad and lonely we feel, God is always there. **Joshua 1:9** says, ‘God will be with you wherever you go.’

## Pause for thought

Think for a moment about the people seated around you. Some of them will be good friends of yours, but some of them you will hardly know at all. Take a moment to realise that any of these people could be feeling sad or could be facing problems at school or at home, or could be particularly tired and down in the dumps today. Even if each of them is feeling wonderfully happy, the way you treat them will make a huge difference to their day.

Do you feel sad, lonely or frightened today? If you do, maybe you should talk to a member of staff about it, because they may be able to help you.

### PRAYER

*Dear God, thank you for each person in this school. Thank you that even though we may not know what is happening in each person’s life, you do know and you care. Please help us to think about others today. Help us to be thoughtful and sensitive to those around us. Amen*