

Schools Journeys

Outreach with children, young people and schools



Sheet A Getting ready

Planning your Outreach event for children and young people

Questions for planning include:

- What type of event do we want to run – what is it we want to do?
- Have we been invited to visit a school or asked to host a visit?
- How long will it last (how long do the school want it to last)?
- What format will it take?
- What ages is it aimed at (what ages are the pupils coming)? *Also see Sheet B*
- If it is our own outreach event have we planned it for a time when children and young people can come?
- How can we involve others in the meeting?
- Do the people we've asked to speak reflect the diversity of Friends in our meeting; have we asked young people from our meeting to talk about their Quaker experience?
- What publicity will we do?
- What about refreshments?

Publicity for a public event:

- Ask everyone in the meeting to let others know about the event, ask the children and young people in your meeting to invite two or three (or more) friends to come, invite people in your meeting to bring their children if they haven't been to meeting before. Personal invitations are most effective.
- Invite the regular users of your meeting house (particularly if this includes a playgroup or young people's group).
- Display posters around the community. Good places include local shops, libraries, surgeries, playgroups, schools, student unions and members' own front windows.
- Advertise – perhaps in local media.
- If your meeting has a website advertise the event there.

Advice from young Quakers on running an outreach event for children or young people:

- Involve young Quakers in talking about their Quaker beliefs – it's important to include people from across the age spectrum but concentrate on the younger end.
- Try to make Quaker beliefs and ideas relevant to their lives – show how people put these ideas into practice rather than just giving information.
- Make it interactive.
- Be positive and open – don't tell them that Quakerism is right or the only way.
- Do things, don't just make them sit and listen to people (but don't play parachute games).
- Be friendly and include introductions.
- Start from what people might know or don't about Quakers; most people will know very little or might be wildly inaccurate. *See Starting points section of Engage on page 1 of the main Schools Journeys for some helpful hints to give people about what Quakers they have actually heard of.*

Questions for preparing hearts and minds include:

- Is the room prepared?
- Do I and the other people leading the session feel supported and comfortable with our plans and ourselves? Have we been able to find a moment of quiet to hold the coming session in the light?
- Are there particular needs and situations I may need to be aware of in this session?
- Am I confident of the health and safety arrangements?

Schools Journeys

Outreach with children, young people and schools



Sheet B Getting ready

Making links with schools

You can use National Quaker Week as an opportunity to make links with the schools near to your meeting. You might want to write to them and offer to host a visit to the meeting house or offer for one or more members of your meeting to visit the school and talk about Quaker faith and beliefs, the Quaker testimonies and Quaker work in the world. It may help to focus your offer on a particular aspect of Quakerism, such as worship or the peace testimony or an example of Quaker work in the world.

What can Quaker meetings offer schools:

- As part of the RE syllabus pupils will visit local places of worship - a visit to the Quaker meeting can provide a different perspective which will enrich learning.
- A common topic on the RE syllabus asks pupils to consider how the design of a place of worship influences the worship that takes place there.
- Schools are required to provide a daily act of collective worship which should be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character” this includes Quaker meeting for worship. These acts of worship should be “times of ... exploring and sharing things of value”. Friends can give pupils a chance to experience and explore silence and stillness as a means to this.
- If you are visiting a school or hosting a school be clear that the object is to enable them to learn about Quakerism and not to tell them what to think, you are sharing your faith not aiming to convert them. Say that you are going to give everybody a chance to feel what Quaker worship in quiet and stillness is like.

Questions to ask the school:

- What is the purpose of the visit (RE lesson? Assembly? Citizenship?).
- How many are in the group and what age are they? What is their ability range – this is important as will affect the activities you do, the style and the language you use.
- Do they know anything about Quakers already? (e.g. they may have already looked at Quaker beliefs in RE).
- How long do you have? What is the structure of the lesson/assembly/visit that teachers have in mind? Say to the school that you might be doing worship or visits in slightly different ways from what they are used to.

Things to remember:

- Avoid jargon and be ready to explain Quaker words such as ‘elder’. Choose your language carefully to ensure that it is clear.
- There may be people in the group who speak English as a second language.
- Be ready for questions – it is a good idea to have several people to answer questions and give different perspectives.
- Be positive and clear about Quaker beliefs rather than just saying “Quakers do not...”
- Acknowledge the diversity of belief within Quakerism and explain why Quakers don’t have a creed of fixed set of beliefs.
- It is really important to stick to the time you have been given – don’t run over and don’t run too short as this will cause difficulties for teachers and the school.
- Think about safeguarding – some members of your meeting may already have current CRB disclosures but to follow good practice guidelines no adult should be alone, even with a group of children. Working in pairs is good practice and means that you are supported. If a school is visiting the meeting house make sure that they have appropriate numbers of teachers and teaching assistants, parents etc.

Schools Journeys

Outreach with children, young people and schools



Sheet C Engage Quaker Worship

Introducing Worship (children)

Read aloud slowly

"Anyone can wiggle and anyone can make a noise; even the smallest babies do, but it takes practice to learn to listen to God. Sometimes it helps to be in a place where you can take time to close your eyes and really listen for what God might be saying to you and this is what we do as Quakers in our Meeting for Worship.

Some of the most wonderful things in the world happen in stillness. Great storms of wind and rain and lightning make loud noises, but some of the wonderful things happen without a sound. Did you ever hear the sun rise in the morning or set at night? Did you ever hear a seed grow or a flower bud open? Have you heard your body growing or your mind? When we listen to God we are giving our inside selves a chance to grow, and to hear better what God wants to say to us.

We don't always recognise it when God does speak because we probably won't hear actual words. But sometimes as we sit quietly, watching the clouds or hoping to see an aeroplane and trying to let God's thoughts come in, something pops into our hearts or feelings. "I really *could* be nicer to Johnny or Sally if I tried, and the next time it is my turn to be helper, I'll choose her (him) to help me and see what happens." or, "Now I know why my mum was cross yesterday. She was very tired, and if I had only picked up my pyjamas without being reminded, it would have made her so happy."

So now I wonder if we could all listen like this for a few moments. First of all I want you to have a little wiggle, now sit right back in your chair, uncross your legs and put your hands on your knees. Now I want you to shrug your shoulders like this (raise and drop your shoulders), and again. Now I want you to take a deep breath, and let it out, and again. Now sitting quietly, alert and relaxed I want you to close your eyes and just listen (remember this is just for you, no-one is looking at you). First listen to the sounds right outside the meeting house, the birds singing, the cars on the road. Now listen to the sounds in the room, the clock ticking, the wind in the curtains. And now listen to the sounds inside you, listen very quietly, as you breathe normally. Think about yourself and how you feel. Now think about the people you know, like your family and friends. Now think about the people around you. Now open your eyes and find yourself back in the Meeting House."

Resources needed: Copies of 'What to do in the quiet' for children on Sheet E. Also see Silent thoughts and feelings in the Respond section on Page 3 of the main sheets for a connected activity.

Introducing Worship (young people)

Start by saying that you're going to have a short time of Quaker worship. Explain that it will end when the two elders shake hands (point out who this will be) and that usually everyone else shakes hands with the people near to them. Explain that sometimes in the silence people may feel moved to share what they have been thinking about and their reflections. Say that Quakers call this ministry say that when people want to speak they are giving other people a message that they have been given by God, for the group. Explain that anyone can minister as Quakers don't have priests and all people in the group are equal. Say that if they feel they want to speak they can.

You might want to start worship with a reading such as *Advices & Queries* 8 or the following quote William Penn (Quaker founder of Pennsylvania). "True silence is the rest of the mind; and is to the spirit, what sleep is to the body, nourishment and refreshment" *Quaker Faith & Practice* 20.11. What is your favourite Faith and Practice quote? Is it suitable for your session with your visitors?

Following the period of worship invite reflections and questions.

Resources needed: Copies of 'Ideas for things to do in meeting' for young people on Sheet E. These ideas could be given to each person or just read out if there is a big group

Schools Journeys

Outreach with children, young people and schools



Sheet D Engage Quaker Worship

Worship Stories (children)

The following stories are about Quaker Meetings for Worship.

Fierce Feathers

Say 'this is a true story of early Quakers in America'. Read the story of *Fierce Feathers*.

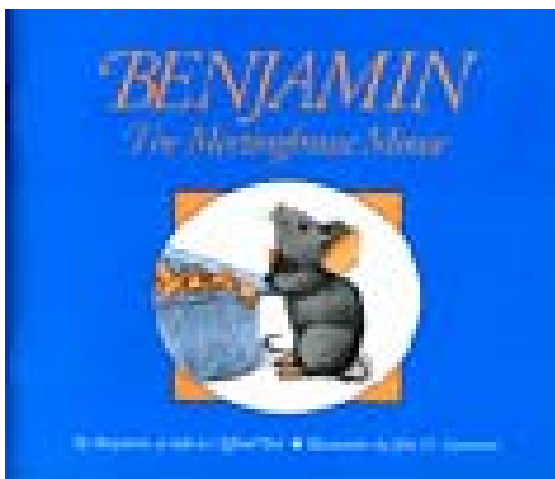


The *Fierce Feathers* story is available in 'Lighting Candles in the Dark, Stories of Love in Action' (from the Quaker bookshop) or for free at: www.tudo.co.uk/quakers_craw/shell/contents/quakers/fierce_feathers.html

See *Journeys in the Spirit Children's Issue 2* for a version of the story and an activity focusing on Meeting for Worship. To access the *Journeys in the Spirit* archive go to www.quaker.org.uk/cyp click on 'Resources' from the menu on the left hand side then select 'Journeys' Archive'.

Benjamin the Meeting House Mouse

Say, 'here is a story about a mouse that went to Meeting for Worship'. Read pages 1 – 3 from '*Benjamin the Meeting House Mouse*'.



Benjamin the Meeting House Mouse (1997) Clifford Pfeil. No ISBN but available from the Quaker Bookshop. This is a classic and may be in your meeting house library or it can be borrowed from the Quaker Life Resources Room.

See *Journeys in the Spirit Children's issue 18* for activities and ideas about Benjamin and a mouse template

Schools Journeys

Outreach with children, young people and schools



Sheet E Engage Quaker Worship

What can you do as you get used to the quiet and stillness? You could.....

★ Sit still - count to 10 slowly. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

★ Sit still and straight - listen - what can you hear? Cars? A bird? Someone breathing? The rain? The wind? Keep sitting still and count how many different sounds you can hear



★ Close your hand tightly - now open it slowly, bit by bit - think of a tall tree in the sun, a flower and its petals, giving a friend a present.



★ Think about a beautiful animal or bird or a place or a person that is special to you

★ Close your eyes - be as quiet and still as you can - think about God



★ Look at each person in the room - what do you notice about them? What do you think she or he is feeling?



Ideas for things to do in meeting

Relax. Working from your toes up, think for a moment about each part of your body and the cells that make them up. Concentrate for a moment, before thinking again.

Try not to think a lot about your day, your home or anything else. Concentrate on just one thought, think it through thoroughly and move on.

Think about people or places that are special to you.

Look round slowly at the other people in the room; stop to think about them if you know them. Imagine all the links that are between you and the other people in the room – good or bad.

Imagine yourself throwing all your troubled thoughts like a big stone into a pond. Watch the surface of the pond as the ripples spread out wider and wider and gradually disappear leaving the pond smooth and tranquil.

Now, just sit still. Close your eyes if you want to.

Schools Journeys

Outreach with children, young people and schools



Sheet F Engage Exploring the Quaker Testimonies

How we live in the world. An agree / disagree line up (*young people*)

- 1) Designate one side or end of the room as agree strongly, the other as disagree strongly and the middle a continuum between the two.
- 2) Then read each of the statements in turn, asking people to move to where they feel is right for them.
- 3) If appropriate, particularly if only one or two people are in an area, ask them to explain why they are where they are.
- 4) If anything surprises you, again, ask members of the group to explain their position to everyone else. Alternatively, ask them to talk to the nearest people about why they are there.
 - It is wrong to fight
 - I try to support those who get bullied at school
 - I am treated equally in my school
 - I treat other people as equals
 - I like to recycle as much rubbish or junk as I can
 - I like to have designer clothes
 - I tell the truth
 - If I had a car I would use it all the time
 - If I had a choice I would always take holidays that meant going on a plane

Add other statements as you see fit.

The Starfish Story A simple story about how everyone can help (*children*)

Adapted from The Star Thrower Loren Eiseley 1907 – 1977.

One day, as he was walking along the shore, he looked down the beach and saw a human figure moving like a dancer. He smiled to himself at the thought of someone who would dance to the day, and so, he walked faster to catch up.

As he got closer, he noticed that the figure was that of a child, and that what he was doing was not dancing at all. The child was reaching down to the shore, picking up small objects, and throwing them into the ocean.



He came closer still and called out "Good morning! May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

The young man paused, looked up, and replied "Throwing starfish into the ocean."

"I must ask, then, why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?" asked the somewhat startled wise man. To this, the child replied, "The sun is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them in, they'll die."

Upon hearing this, the wise man commented, "But do you not realise that there are miles and miles of beach and there are starfish all along every mile? You can't possibly make a difference!"

At this, the child bent down, picked up yet another starfish, and threw it into the ocean. As it met the water, he said, "It made a difference for that one."

Everybody could be invited to draw and colour a starfish and write or draw onto it one way they could help the countryside, sea or air be safer or cleaner for animals, birds, flowers, trees or fish.

See *Journeys in the Spirit Children's Issue 3* for a Starfish template.

Schools Journeys



Outreach with children, young people and schools

Sheet G Respond

Quaker Meeting House and Worship

History Game (*young people and children*)

Develop a history trail in the Meeting House and burial ground linking places to questions. For example: is your Meeting House particularly old or significant in Quaker history? Does it have a burial ground or interesting architectural features. Did George Fox or another famous Quaker from the past visit? 'Can you find a gravestone recording the death of someone before 1800? What was her or his name?' 'Are there graves of children?' 'What is strange about the dates on the gravestones (if they have first day, second month, etc.)' 'When was the Meeting House built, can you find the date above the door'. This is an activity that people can do in groups. Have simple sheets for your visitors to use – allow room on the sheets for drawing and writing

Meeting House trail (*young people and children*)

Label with numbered labels different parts of the Meeting House and objects within it e.g. the library, children's room, copy of *Quaker Faith & Practice* on the table. Give people a sheet with questions 'What is this? Does it have a name? What do you think it might be used for?'

Silent thoughts and feelings (*children*)

After worship pause for a few moments. Now ask some questions: I wonder what that was like for you? I wonder which part of sitting still you liked the best? I wonder which part of sitting still you liked the least? I wonder which part of sitting still you think is the most important? I wonder where God is when you sit still and quiet? People can share what they think if they want to but they don't have to.

Give each person a sheet of paper or card. Put out lots of coloured pens, crayons and pencils. Invite everybody to draw, write or doodle something about what they thought or felt in the stillness and quiet. If any work is incomplete it can be taken to be finished. Don't hurry. The work that is done is personal and not for display.

Quaker Beliefs

Living Quaker Library (*young people and children*)

Once people have had the opportunity to reflect on the Quaker beliefs that they have heard about they may have questions or want to find out more. Give some time for questions in the whole group, or have a 'Living Quaker Library'. Ask several Friends who are willing to answer people's questions. Split the group into small groups and allocate one or two Friends to each group. Working in small groups may encourage people to ask questions that they might be reluctant to voice in the whole group. Alternatively designate one person who will particularly answer questions about the testimonies, another to answer questions about worship, another to answer questions about Quaker beliefs. Make signs to indicate their speciality and encourage people to walk round and ask questions. At the same time: have a range of Quaker Leaflets available for people to browse through and put out several copies of *Quaker Faith & Practice*, *Advices & Queries*, *Whispers of Faith* and *Who do we think we are?* for people to look at. See the sidebar on Page 4 for how to obtain these.

Personal Beliefs (*young people*)

To follow on from them thinking about Quaker beliefs, ask people to get into pairs or groups and talk about the following questions:

- Do you go to church (mosque, synagogue, temple)? What do you believe? What do you think God might be like?
- Is some of what you believe the same as Quaker beliefs? What is different?
- Quakers talk about God being in each of us – does anybody know what that is like? What do you think it might be like?

Schools Journeys



Outreach with children, young people and schools

Sheet H Respond Exploring the Quaker Testimonies Ways to think about living

Ten Principles for Life

- Buy things because they are useful rather than for fashion or status.
1 2 3 4 5
- Try not to use anything that you can get addicted to or depend on.
1 2 3 4 5
- Get the habit of giving things away that you no longer need.
1 2 3 4 5
- Don't be tempted by gadgets.
1 2 3 4 5
- Learn to enjoy things without owning them.
1 2 3 4 5
- Develop a deeper appreciation of creation.
1 2 3 4 5
- Avoid buying on credit.
1 2 3 4 5
- Be plain and honest in what you say – be truthful.
1 2 3 4 5
- Reject anything that harms others.
1 2 3 4 5
- Share what you have.
1 2 3 4 5



Schools Journeys



Outreach with children, young people and schools

Sheet I Respond Exploring the Quaker Testimonies

Quaker peacemaking story (children)

See *Journeys in the Spirit Children's Issue 8 Sheet 8.B* for a William Penn and a wampum picture. See 'the side bar on Page 3 for how to access the *Journeys in the Spirit* archive.

Once upon a time, there was an English man called William Penn, who wanted to make a new place for people to live. In this place, people could be free to do what they wanted and everyone would be valued for who they were, however different they might be from each other.

Now, the king of England owed William some money. Instead of asking for the money, William asked for land and the king agreed. He gave William a big piece of land in America.

William went to America on a ship and gave his new land a name: Pennsylvania, which means William Penn's forestland.

But some people already lived on the land that the king had given William. The people on William's new land were an ancient tribe, living by hunting animals and gathering food from the forest. They had been there much longer than he had.

What would William do? Usually, English people who went to America threw the ancient tribes off their land, killing and hurting them. William did not. He talked with them and they came to an agreement: William gave the native Americans many things that they needed, like leather and metal, and they welcomed him.

William wrote the agreement down and signed it with his name. The Native Americans didn't write things down like that. Instead, they gave William Penn a special belt made from shells called wampum. It showed two people holding hands – the white man from England and the ancient tribesman from America. By giving William the *wampum* belt, the tribe showed their agreement with William, and their friendship with him. And so the Quaker William Penn and the ancient tribe made peace together.

Many people from Europe moved to Pennsylvania – English people, Dutch people, German people and many others. They moved there because they knew they could feel free, and many prospered. For many years, they lived in harmony with the ancient tribes.

This didn't last forever; after William Penn left Pennsylvania, there was trouble between the people of Pennsylvania and the tribes, but they had lived in peace for much longer than other places in America.

Some questions to open an exploration of thinking and feeling about the story:

- I wonder which part of this story you liked the most?
- I wonder which part of the story you liked the least?
- I wonder if there is part of the story that you could leave out and still have all the story that you need?
- I wonder if there is part of this story that is in you or that you are in?

Other questions that could be explored, separately from the above questions, are:

- What did William Penn do when he found that people already lived on the land that the king of England had given him?
- William Penn and the Native Americans made peace by talking and listening and coming to an agreement. There are many other ways of making peace in the world, can you think of some?

A picture of peace

Following on from the story ask people to think about what peace means to them, encourage appreciation of the safe environment we are living in and that other children don't have. What does peace look like? After a conversation – have a range of art materials available for people to draw or create a picture of peace.

*Journeys in the Spirit Children's Issues 9 to 19 explores peace work done by Quakers today. For a modern example of Quaker peacemaking read *The Story of the Trident Three*. For the story and a related activity see *Journeys in the Spirit Children's Issue 10 Sheet 10.C**

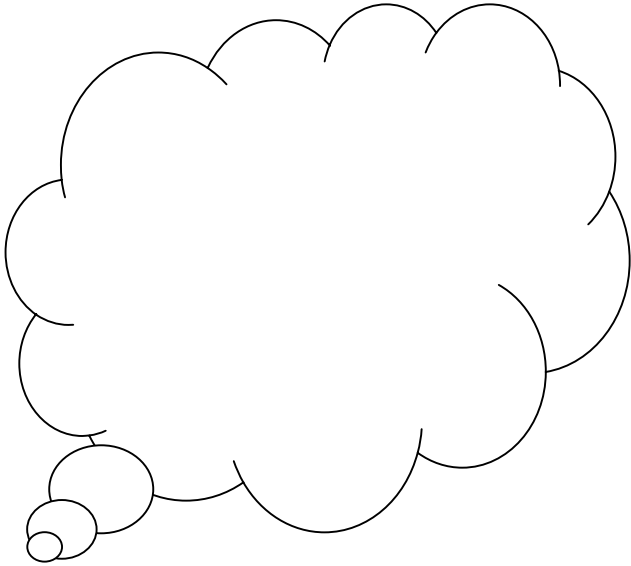
Schools Journeys

Outreach with children, young people and schools

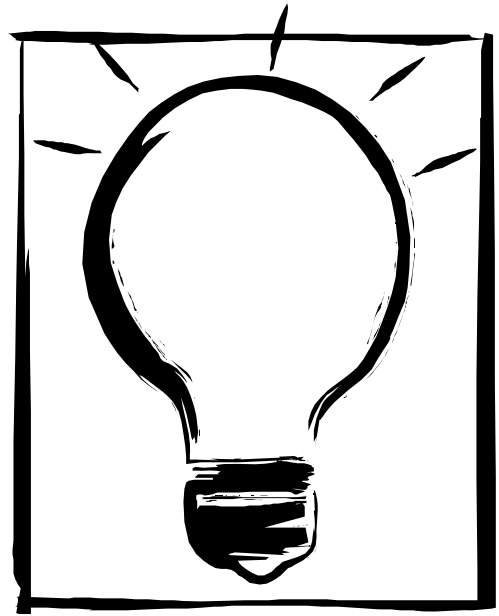


Sheet J Reflect

I will remember....



I realised...



I am taking away....



Three things I would tell someone about Quakers....

