

Sara's Choice - A collection of stories and poetry

# Inter-Agency *Peace* Education Programme

Skills for Constructive Living



**INEE**

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Peace Education Programme**

*Skills for Constructive Living*

**Sara's Choice – A Collection of Stories and Poetry**

The ideas and opinions expressed in this work are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect UNESCO's point of view.

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UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (<http://www.unesco.org>).

INEE, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, is an open network of UN agencies, NGOs, donors, practitioners, researchers and individuals from affected populations working together to ensure the right to education in emergencies and post-crisis reconstruction ([www.ineesite.org](http://www.ineesite.org)).

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## Foreword

In recent years there have been numerous conflicts across the globe, which have led to suffering and displacement of millions of children and young people, often under horrific circumstances. The world's poorest countries are most frequently those torn apart by internal conflict. Many countries face desperate poverty that aggravates internal division with the possible consequence of violence. Other desperately poor countries suffer the destabilizing effect of conflict in neighbouring states.

The programme that has been developed in these materials provides the life skills related to peace education and conflict minimisation and prevention to reach refugee and returnee children, youth and the wider community. These life skills will enable the participants to deal with related problems, including the social fragmentation problems of sexual harassment and exploitation, access to education (especially for girls), community caring as well as skills for constructive and non-violent living.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has collaborated with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to strengthen these constructive skills for living through the present "Inter-Agency Peace Education Technical Support Programme". This initiative has been made possible through the generous support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Section for Humanitarian Affairs, Global Affairs Department, through the Funds in Trust programme of UNESCO which partly financed it from January 2004 to June 2005. UNHCR, in particular, has initiated and supported this programme from its inception in 1997 and has generously contributed financially and to its implementation in the field, in partnership with UNOPS.

In its mandate, UNESCO is committed to education for peace, human rights and dialogue between different cultures and civilizations. The Dakar "Education For All" (EFA) Plan of Action includes these principles and emphasizes the need to improve all aspects of quality education. In this framework, UNESCO has been concentrating special efforts in the crucial area of teacher training, with particular emphasis in African countries: this is also in accordance with the Norwegian strategy in multi-lateral and bi-lateral cooperation of making effective use of the funds to maximize concrete changes in developing countries.

The programme has been built on the solid foundation of the earlier Peace Education Programme developed by UNHCR since 1997, and later on adopted by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). It was upgraded with the input of both refugees and the host community. It also incorporates lessons learned from the external evaluation undertaken of the UNHCR programme in 2002 and has further responded to stated needs of people in both emergency and development situations. Education planners, teachers, refugee and returnee communities, staff of the UN partners as well as government authorities will find these materials useful for their peace-building efforts, especially if they have been trained on how to use them.

The work has benefited from the contributions of many students, community members, teachers and facilitators as well as UN and NGO personnel, too numerous to mention individually. However, special appreciation should be expressed to colleagues in UNESCO, especially the Division for the Promotion of Quality Education, in UNHCR, the Division of Operational Support and in UNOPS, the United Nations Office for Project Services in Geneva. A special acknowledgement should be given to the Senior Technical Adviser, Pamela Baxter, for the work and energy devoted to the project. The support of Margaret Sinclair, who was the originator of this programme, Anna Obura, whose evaluation provided both evidence of positive impact and valuable lessons learned and Jessica Walker-Kelleher, Jean Anderson and Karen Ross, who took on the task of upgrading the primary section of the formal education component, are likewise acknowledged.

The value of these endeavours and contributions will be multiplied, to the extent that the skills for peace-building, incorporated in these materials, become a standard component in situations of emergency and crisis, and for conflict prevention and reconstruction.

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# Introduction

This manual is one of the components of the “Inter-Agency Peace Education Programme”. The programme is designed for education managers of ministries dealing with both formal and non-formal education and for agencies which implement education activities on behalf of the government.

The implementation structure is based on the experience acquired over the eight years the programme has been in use, from 1998 to 2005. The programme has been evaluated by external experts and the new revised materials (2005) incorporate both the suggestions made in the evaluation and the feedback from the specialists who implemented it in the field.

Historically this programme has been restricted to refugee communities. However, it has expanded and moved into both refugee and returnee situations. With the partnership between UNESCO and UNHCR, in the framework of the Funds-in -Trust “Inter-Agency Peace Education Technical Support Programme” financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway in 2004 -2005, the project has been further developed to respond to the needs in situations of emergency and reconstruction and also into development situations as well. The programme is currently being implemented in eleven countries in Africa<sup>1</sup> and has been integrated into complementary initiatives in Sri Lanka, Kosovo, and Pakistan.

The following is the table shows the list of materials and their uses which are the components of the Peace Education Programme. For a more complete presentation, see the booklet “Overview of the Programme”.

## The Materials<sup>2</sup>

Overview of the programme	A description of the components of the Peace Education Programme and the implementation structure of the programme;
<b>Teacher Activity Kit</b> Teacher Activity Book (TAB)	The teacher’s main resource. It has a lesson-by-lesson curriculum for formal schooling, structured according to the children’s cognitive and emotional development. Each teacher working in the programme needs his or her own copy of the kit.
Charts	Teaching resources (not teaching aids).
Story Book	More than thirty stories and songs which are referred to in the TAB. Each story reflects a particular aspect of Peace Education or responds to particular needs in the community (for example: HIV/AIDS, gender equality, girls’ access to school).
Proverb Cards	Local proverbs for use especially in the ‘analysis’ lessons in the middle primary.
<b>Community (Adult) Programme</b> Facilitator’s Manual for Community Workshops	A guide for facilitators conducting the Community Programme. Each facilitator should have a copy of this book.
Community Course Booklet	A handout booklet, which outlines the major concept areas covered in the community course.
<b>Training Manuals</b> Teacher Training Manual Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3	These manuals introduce teachers to the psychology of the course, curriculum theory, the rights-based approach and specifics of teaching the Peace Education Programme.
Facilitators Training Manual Level 1, Level 2, Level 3	In three parts, introducing the facilitators to the principles of adult learning, a rights-based approach and the psychology of learning as well as the specifics of the course.
Background Notes for both Teachers and Facilitators	A summary of the major points covered in the training sessions to be used as a reference.
Facilitators and Trainers Training Guide	A small booklet of training hints to ensure that the trainers have the basic skills and use interactive methodology.

1. In order of implementation: Kenya (1998), Uganda (1999), Liberia (1999), Guinea (2000), Sierra Leone (2000), Democratic Republic of Congo (2000), Ethiopia (2000), Eritrea (2001), Cote d’Ivoire (2001) – but currently not operating, Somalia (2004), South Sudan (2004), Ghana (2004).

2. The titles in bold and underlined are separate sections of the programme. Titles in bold are separate books.

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## Songs

<p><b>Let's Join Together</b></p> <p>We can make things better          We can put things right          If we try our best          To love, and not to fight.          Let's join together          You and me          Let's join together in harmony.</p>	<p><b>The Time to Be Happy is Now</b></p> <p>The time to be happy is now          The place to be happy is here          We need to make peace with each other          To have a good life while here.</p> <p>You and me, we're going to be partners          You and me, we're going to be friends.          You and me, we'll work together          'Till the fighting comes to an end.</p>
<p><b>We Are One</b></p> <p>We are one (repeat four times)          From the East to the West          We are one, one, one          From the North to the South          We are one, one, one          In the world we are one</p>	<p>This song requires the teacher to add in countries or groups represented by the children in the class: for example:          We are one (repeat four times)          From the East to the West          From Liberia, we are one          From Somalia, we are one.....</p>
<p><b>We Are Leaves of One Tree</b></p> <p><b>VERSE:</b>          We are leaves (x2) of one tree (x2)          We are waves (x2) of one sea (x2)</p> <p><b>VERSE:</b>          We are flowers (x2) in one desert (x2)          We are stars (x2) in one sky (x2)</p> <p><b>VERSE:</b>          We are letters (x2) in one alpha-bet (x2)          We are children (x2) in one world (x2)</p> <p><b>VERSE:</b>          All the world (x2) is one country (x2)          All people are one (x2) Can't you see? (x2)</p>	<p><b>CHORUS:</b>          Come and join us (x2)</p> <p>In our quest for unity          Its a way of life for you and me</p> <p><b>CHORUS:</b>          Come and join us (x2)</p> <p>In our quest for unity          Its a way of life for you and me</p> <p><b>CHORUS:</b>          Come and join us (x2)</p> <p>In our quest for unity          Its a way of life for you and me</p> <p><b>CHORUS:</b>          Come and join us (x2)</p> <p>In our quest for unity          Its a way of life for you and me</p>

## What are Rules?

Mr Mansaray was a good teacher but soft. This was what the big boys in the school said anyway. He never caned anybody nor did he make them stand in the sun or do any of the other punishments that other teachers did. People who were not in his class teased those that were, saying that they could do anything in class and not get punished. It meant that they must be soft as well.

Only the students in Mr Mansaray's class knew that he wasn't soft; he was, in fact, very strict and he taught them well. He just refused to hit people.

'How can I ask you to solve your problems using the gifts God gave you' he asked, 'If I hit you instead of solving problems constructively?'

Often the class did not quite know what he meant, nor did they realize why there were so few occasions when punishment was needed. When Mr Mansaray first came to the class, they had talked about what would make a good classroom. Nobody said much that day; normally the teachers did all the talking and so nobody wanted to be first to speak. But after a few questions people started to say what they wanted in a good classroom.

They wanted to be able to talk about things that were important to them. Mr Mansaray asked how they could do that and so the class decided that, if they could finish their set work, then they would have a chance to discuss other issues. They also decided that what was said in these discussions should never be repeated outside the classroom so that everybody could learn to trust each other.

They decided that only one person should speak at a time and that everybody should listen. This was because Mr Mansaray said that often what they said was more important than what he said. Several people in the class laughed when he said this and Mr Mansaray smiled but he said that it was very true and that learning was not just from the teacher to the student.

Some people in the class were very poor and could only afford the fees, and did not have pens or books. Mr Mansaray talked to them about how, underneath, we are much more similar than we are different and that, at some time, we could all be too poor for pens. The class decided that they would share what they had. All the pens would go into a pot on Mr Mansaray's table and everybody would just take one and put it back at the end of the day. People were surprised that the pens did not disappear; staying in the pot meant that they were not lost in the playground or left at home.

These things worked well in the class. Mr Mansaray did not need to punish people in the class, because they did not want to break their own rules. Breaking rules was only fun if you could fool the teacher and nobody bothered to fool Mr Mansaray because he just shrugged and said: 'They are your rules, not mine; if you want to break, them then everybody has to agree to that.' If somebody did break a rule, then it was not Mr Mansaray who spoke to the rule-breaker; it was always a neighbour in the class. The class enjoyed their discussions and they learned much more than what was in their textbooks. And they did well in the exams as well. Mr Mansaray was a very good teacher but he was not soft.

### **Comprehension questions**

1. Why did the big boys in school say that Mr Mansaray was soft?
2. Why did the class decide to have the rule that only person speaks at a time?
3. Why did the students not say much when Mr Mansaray first came into the class?
4. Why do you think that the class learned so much?
5. Do you think that this way of having rules in class would work in your class? Why?

## Sara's Choice

Sara and Lillian were best friends. They collected water together, went to school together and played together whenever they could. But they lived across the valley from each other. There had been many bandit attacks and the school had been closed and Lillian did not come to collect water. Sara was very worried about her friend, but her mother kept her close to home because she was afraid of the bandits.

Sara worked with her mother, helping with the baby and looking after her little brother, but all the time she thought of her friend Lillian. She talked to her mother but her mother said that she should not go to Lillian's house because it was too dangerous.

Early one morning Sara got up from her sleeping mat before the sun rose. All night she had been awake worrying about Lillian. She crept outside quietly and breathed the fresh cool air. She suddenly had an idea. She would go to Lillian and bring her back so that she could be safe. Sara looked back, her family was still sleeping, and if she went quickly she could be back before anybody woke up.

Sara pushed her shoes on and ran quietly down the hill and across the valley. She hid in the shadows of the trees and bushes watching all the time for bandits. Near the market she stopped and looked around carefully. Everything was quiet, the sun had not yet risen and there were no people. Sara ran on, the track was steep going up to Lillian's house and Sara had to go slowly so she did not fall. At last she reached Lillian's house. Everything was quiet; there was no sign of life. Suddenly Sara was very afraid. What if Lillian and her family were all sick, what if they had been taken by the bandits? Sara stopped. She knew her mother would be very angry because of her disobedience. Sara started to go back, then she stopped again. She couldn't leave Lillian here, even if it was dangerous, it would be much better if they both went to Sara's house. Sara knew that Lillian's parents had gone to visit her grandmother before the trouble started so that Lillian was all alone.

Sara walked very quietly towards Lillian's house. There were no signs that the bandits had been here, but there was no sign of Lillian either. Carefully, Sara opened the door and went inside. It was dark and there seemed to be nobody there. Now Sara was very afraid, her heart was beating very loudly and she felt as if anybody who was there would be able to hear her heart. She called Lillian's name very softly. Suddenly there was a rustling noise near a pile of blankets. Sara stopped and tried to get to the door, but she was too frightened to move. Suddenly there was Lillian's head, poking out from under the pile of blankets. She looked so funny with just her head showing that Sara started to laugh.

'Shsh' said Lillian, 'I heard bandits just now; that is why I am hiding'.

'No, Lillian that was me. I came to find you and take you home' Sara laughed.

'I came this morning and I did not see any bandits but we should hurry before the sun rises too high because then there may be some bandits around here.' Sara spoke quietly as she helped her friend out from under the pile of blankets. Together the girls stood up and looked carefully outside. The girls smiled at each other and then slipped out of the house and started home to Sara's house.

They walked quickly but very quietly especially through the dangerous area near the market. Home seemed a long way away and now Sara was afraid of two things, the first was the bandits and the second was how angry her mother would be. She held Lillian's hand tightly. If they were safe from the bandits, she would not mind the punishment from her mother, because Lillian would be safe.

At last they could see Sara's house. Sara's mother was at the fire making tea for breakfast. The baby was playing near the door. Her mother looked up and saw the two girls. She waved at them and the girls walked slowly towards her.

Sara's mother was very angry with Sara. Sara hung her head and there were tears in her eyes. She was very sorry that she had made her mother worry. Then Sara's mother patted Sara and said

'I was so worried Sara, but I'm proud of you too. You are a true friend to Lillian. Lillian comes from a different country, but friendship does not depend on birth but on a good heart. You have a good heart to know the value of being a friend.' Sara lifted her head and smiled at her mother now she felt very happy.

'Come' said her mother 'Let us all have tea.'

### **Comprehension questions**

1. Who was Sara's friend?
2. Why had Sara not seen her friend?
3. Describe the way to Lillian's house.
4. Why was Sara afraid when she got to Lillian's house?
5. Why was Lillian hiding?
6. If you were Sara how would you feel?
7. How do you think Lillian felt when Sara came?
8. Why was Sara afraid on the way home?
9. Why do you think Sara's mother was angry?
10. Why was Sara's mother proud of her?
11. Do you think Sara was wise or silly? Why?
12. What would you do if you were in that position?

## All the Different Families

Aminta felt shy when she first went to the new school. She watched the children being brought to school and every person she saw had their mother with them, walking to the school gate. Aminta's mother had died three years before when her baby sister had been born. It was very hard work looking after a new baby, but her grandmother lived with them now so that Aminta could go to school. Her grandmother had walked her to school that morning, but Aminta felt ashamed, because her Grandmother was very old and couldn't walk fast, and everybody else had their mother.

It was hard to make friends at school and Aminta was sure that the others did not want to be friends with her because she did not have a mother. One day in class the teacher asked them to describe themselves and their families. They had to draw a picture showing themselves with their families.

Aminta couldn't draw her family. She didn't have a proper family, only her father, her baby sister and her grandmother. All her other family was far away and she didn't know them.

The teacher didn't say anything to Aminta about her work. Instead she hung up the pictures that the others had drawn. Aminta was very surprised at some of the pictures. Of course some pictures had ordinary families; mother, father, children. Some had grandparents as well or what looked like aunts and uncles. But some pictures looked as if they came from Aminta.

One picture showed a small boy and an old man. The boy described how his parents had died one year after another and now there was just him and his grandfather. Another picture showed two girls and two women and a baby. The girl who had drawn the picture described her and her sister; who were twins. Two children born at the same time! Aminta had never heard of such a thing. The girl explained how her sister was in a different class because the teachers could not tell which was which. That made everybody laugh and Aminta wondered if everybody else was thinking the same as her: what tricks you would be able to play on people if there was somebody just like you! The girl went on to describe the baby and then her two mothers. Aminta was amazed.

She looked carefully at the pictures; there were some that showed children with grandparents, children with just a father or just a mother (there were lots of those) and suddenly Aminta pulled the paper and pencils towards her. She drew her father: big and tall with lots of curly hair. She drew her baby brother being held by her grandmother and then she drew herself. She took the picture to the teacher to hang on the wall with all the others.

The teacher smiled at the class.

'What do all these pictures tell you about families?' she asked. Lots of people put up their hands to answer.

'Families are people you are related to' said one boy.

'That is very often true' said the teacher 'But is there anything else that makes a family?'

'People who live in the same house as you' said a very small girl at the front of the class.

Another girl waved her arm desperately.

'Please Sir, I have people living in my house, that are not related to me but they are still my family' she said anxiously.

'Can you explain then' said the teacher. The girl stood up.

'After the fighting, my mother found a small baby by the roadside. Even though she asked everybody, nobody claimed the baby, so now he is my brother, but he is not really related to me because another mother had him first.'

'So' said the teacher, 'all the answers that you have given are right, so if we put these things together: what makes a family?' Aminta put up her hand slowly. The teacher looked at her. Aminta stood up.

'Sometimes your family all live in the same house but sometimes not, my aunties live a long way away, but they are still my family. But families are people who love and care for each other and usually live together. But they don't have to be related; loving them as family is enough' she said quickly.

The teacher smiled.

'It is true that families should love and care for each other and generally they live together, at least the close family. Sometimes you will see in your books that families are one mother, one father and some children. But we know that families are all very different. Generally there are some adults or at least older children who look after younger ones, generally families are related or accept people as part of their family' he said with a special smile for the girl whose mother had adopted the baby by the road.

'But all families are a group of people who love and care for each other. Some families are very large and some are very small. Families can be very different to each other, but they are still families. Your families are lucky because they have you!'

Aminta felt much better. Now she understood that not every child in the school, or even in her class, had the sort of family she thought as being 'normal'. There were lots of types of families. She saw her grandmother waiting for her near the gate and she ran towards her and wrapped her arms tight around the old woman.

'I am so happy that you are part of our family' said Aminta. 'We are a good family aren't we?' Her grandmother nodded.

### **Comprehension questions**

1. Why was Aminta ashamed of her grandmother?
2. Who was in Aminta's family?
3. Why did Aminta not want to do the drawing in class?
4. How many different types of families are described in the story?
5. What makes a family?
6. Describe your family.
7. Why are some family types discriminated against?
8. Do you think that all families are more similar than they are different? Explain why.

## But He is Different!

Peter arrived in the refugee camp all alone. He was tired and hungry, and he did not know what had happened to his family. His brothers had all been taken away to fight and now he did not know where they were. His baby sister had died when they first started walking away from the fighting in their village, and now his parents had gone, lost in the long march.

People took care of Peter, they fed him, he was given a ration card and some neighbours helped him to build his school, but nobody was his friend. The carers in the camp took him to school and enrolled him but he couldn't read and he was put into a class where the children were much younger and smaller than him. Peter was very sad and lonely; he collected his water alone, the other children in the water line pointed and laughed, and he felt that they must be laughing at him.

One day, Peter saw a group of boys playing football. He went to watch. He stood at the side, he smiled at the boys but nobody took any notice of him. They were all too busy playing, shouting, running and kicking the ball. Peter had been good at football at home but here nobody invited him to play. Suddenly a boy kicked the ball very hard, up it went into the air, over the heads of the boys in the team and before Peter realized what he was doing he stopped the ball with his foot and then kicked it to another member of the team. Several of the boys stopped and looked at him.

'Who said you could play?' asked one boy angrily.

'Let him play' said another 'He is good.' A third boy pushed into the group.

'But he is different, he can't play with us.' The boys argued amongst themselves. Peter stood quietly but he listened hard. Finally the boys turned back to their game.

'Hey' called Peter, 'I am not different, I am a boy just like you, I come from a different place, I speak a different language and I am all alone, but I am a boy just like you; underneath I am the same, not different.'

All the boys stopped. Some were frowning but then one big boy laughed and said, 'He is right, he looks different, he sounds different, but underneath he is a boy just like us and anyway, I think he will be good at football, he is not so different, let him play.'

So Peter played football and from then on he had friends, people to talk to in the water line, friends at school, even though they were in a different class. And his new friends sometimes asked him to eat with them. Peter felt happy, his life was better than it had been for a long time.

### **Comprehension questions**

1. How did Peter feel when he first arrived in the camp?
2. What happened to Peter's parents?
3. Did Peter live with a family?
4. Do you think Peter like football?
5. Why did the other boys not want Peter to play?
6. Do you think Peter was good at playing football?
7. Why did the boys decide to let Peter play football?
8. Was Peter the same as the others or different?
9. What made him different?
10. What made him the same?

## The Class Bully

Nobody liked Susan. She was older than others in the class and she was a very big girl. She took people's pens and threatened to beat them after school if they told the teacher. She pushed people around in the playground and hit them if they would not let her join their games; but when she did join the game she would destroy the game, running away with the rope if they were skipping, or scuffing the ground for any of the games where things were drawn on the ground. Really, nobody like Susan.

One day a new girl came to the class. She was very small but seemed very clever because she could answer the teacher's questions every time. The rest of the class thought she was just proud and because she was new they didn't bother to make friends with her. She sat by herself at lunch time eating some food that had been wrapped in paper. Susan came rushing by and grabbed the food. Some she took but the rest spilled on the ground. Everybody watched to see if the new girl would cry.

Instead she stood up and went after Susan. 'If you were hungry, why didn't you ask to share the food, I would have given you some. Now most of it is spoiled and neither of us has had enough food.' Susan stared and then cramming the food in her mouth she laughed and said: 'I took your food because I am bigger than you and I can. I'm not so hungry that I need to ask for your food.'

The small girl shook her head 'It's true, you are much bigger than me, but that doesn't mean you can do whatever you like. What you did was wrong and no matter how big or strong you are, it doesn't make you right.' Susan was shocked; nobody ever spoke to her like this. Susan pushed the small girl so that she sprawled in the dirt. She stood up, brushed down her clothes and walked away. The other children watched quietly, but some were ashamed that they had not helped and even more ashamed that they had not said such things to Susan all the times she had bullied them.

Several of them came to the new girl. 'What's your name?' they asked. The new girl smiled and said 'My name's Anne, what's yours?' Soon the small group were talking and laughing together. 'Why do you let Susan bully everybody?' asked Anne. The others looked away. 'You see how big she is and she is much older than us; she can do anything she wants and nobody can stop her'. Anne nodded and thought hard. She knew what it was like to be disliked by everybody; after all, it had happened to her in this class. It made you hot and angry inside, and all you wanted to do was to hit people, to punish them for hurting you. Susan must feel bad too because she was much older and in a class of younger children so she was probably angry all the time. Anne thought it would be awful to be so angry all the time.

The next day she sat next to Susan and handed her a pen. 'In case you don't have one. You know at my other school we have already done this work, do you want me to help you?' asked Anne. Susan was even more shocked, nobody had offered to help her before. 'Why would you want to help me? Why do you think I need your help?' she grumbled. 'Oh, just because here you are only starting this work and at my other school we finished this before I came here. Later there will be there things that I don't know and then you can help me.' Susan looked at Anne and then leaned towards her. She showed the work she had done and whispered 'I don't know why this is so, it doesn't make sense to me. Anne explained quietly and drew little diagrams to show what she meant. Susan nodded and then, when the teacher asked a question, Susan put up her hand. Everybody was surprised, including the teacher as nobody had ever seen Susan with her hand up before. But Susan could answer the question and as the lesson went on she could see how it made sense and she answered several other questions as well.

Over the next few weeks Susan and Anne worked together and slowly Susan seemed to understand more and more. In the playground, Anne insisted that Susan be invited to join the games but she said softly to Susan before the games 'Playing together means just that, you cannot destroy the game if we invite you in'. Susan wasn't very good at any of the games, but Anne frowned at those who wanted to laugh, instead Anne explained the games and how to practise.

After some time, people in the class noticed that Susan wasn't such a bully at school. There was no more stealing of pens and now she was part of a group playing, so there was no destruction of the games being played around her.

Some people asked Anne why Susan was not a bully any more. Anne asked what happened when people were excluded from a group. The others thought for a while. 'Well I suppose they try to fight back' said one boy. Anne nodded, 'Susan was fighting back the only way she could, by bullying. But once she is part of the group of this class, she has no need to bully anymore'. The others nodded thoughtfully. Anne went on 'Bullies are usually lonely people, sad and angry. All of you would be sad and angry if everybody ignored you and made fun of you in class when you don't know things'. Some of the group looked away and felt ashamed, but Anne continued 'It is how fights start, just by keeping people out and then laughing at them because they do not belong. It is not Susan's fault that she is behind in class; things have been very hard for her and her family, she told me. All she needed was a friend, somebody who would listen and help the way friends help each other. Now that she is one of us, she doesn't have to feel angry and so she doesn't bully any more.

Anne was only a small girl but she was very wise, and now she had the biggest girl in the class as one of her friends.

### **Comprehension questions**

1. What sort of things did Susan do when she was being a bully?
2. Why did Anne understand how Susan felt?
3. How did Anne make friends with Susan?
4. Why was Susan a bully?
5. Do you ever feel that nobody likes you?
6. How do you react?
7. Do you think that bullies are people who have been excluded?
8. What will you do in the future?

## Gossip

Once there was a man who told stories about everybody in the village. He told things he should not have told and things which were untrue. After some time every person in the village was very angry and wanted to fight him and make him leave the village. They demanded that he go to the wise man of the village to see what punishment he should have and to show him how wrong he was.

So the man went. The wise man did not live in the village, but in the forest. The man walked and walked and finally came to the wise man's hut. He explained what he had done and that the villagers were all very angry with him. 'But do you really understand what damage you have caused by telling untruths about people?' the wise man asked. The man shrugged 'They were just stories, but now I would like to take them back' he said.

The wise man nodded. 'Go back to the village he said and bring me a chicken. Kill it there but pluck it on the way back here. Run as fast as you can bringing the chicken back.' The man agreed, thinking that the cost of one chicken was not such a severe punishment.

He returned to the village, took a chicken, killed it and then he started to run back through the forest plucking the chicken as he ran. Feathers flew everywhere. Up into the trees, along the track and even caught in the man's hair. At last he arrived at the wise man's hut with the chicken in his hand. He handed the freshly plucked chicken to the wise man. 'Is this payment for my wrong-doing?' he asked. The wise man shook his head. 'Gossip is destructive and causes conflict. I don't think you understand this. Go now and collect all the feathers from this chicken.' The man shook his head. 'But it is not possible; the feathers are everywhere. I can never get them all.'

The wise man nodded. 'Yes the feathers are like gossip. You can never undo the harm you have done, just as you can never collect all the feathers.' The man was very sad. 'I am sorry about the gossip and the stories, now I understand. I will never tell stories like that again.' And he never did.

*[This story was told to Ms Baxter by Somalis and is a very old traditional story in many parts of Africa.]*

### Comprehension questions

1. Why were the people of the village unhappy with the man?
2. Where did the wise man live?
3. What did the wise man ask the man to do?
4. Do you think that giving a chicken to the wise man was the punishment? Why do you think so?
5. Why do you think that telling untrue stories about people is destructive?
6. What is the 'moral' of this story?

## Looking Forward to the Next Parting

We meet in the city's crowded streets.  
And it's all smiles and a hearty handshake  
For a minute

And if we used to be close,  
It might even be a hug,  
A self-conscious, furtive glances hug  
But a hug

Which may prolong for a moment, a minute of real feeling,  
Then the agony sets in

Then to break it we both rush into speech  
You look at me and think  
'Oh the years have been rather hard'  
And I, claim to higher thoughts, I think  
'Where did all the laughter go?  
And whence came this wall of silence

'How have you been?' you ask  
And I, victim to the same inanities  
Ask 'How is life?'

And so we go on in this vein.

With nothing of ourselves learned or exchanged  
And we both welcome the parting  
For its treasures are greater than the meeting.

Abdikadir Mohamed Ahmed  
Refugee, Kenya

### **Comprehension questions**

1. Why do you think these people are pleased to see each other?
2. Why do you think that the author says 'Then the agony sets in'?
3. What do you think has happened to these people that they look bad to each other?
4. Why do you think that the author has given this title to the poem?
5. What does this poem mean to you?
6. Abdikadir is a refugee. Does this explain the sadness in this poem? Why do you think so?

## Caring

Laraine came home from school to find a guest in the house.

‘This is your Auntie Mo, you haven’t seen her since you were just a baby’ said her mother.

‘She is sick and so has come to stay with us for some time’. Auntie Mo did not look sick but she did look very thin. Perhaps she was just sick from not enough food. Laraine knew what it was like to be hungry, so she made sure that Auntie Mo’s plate was piled high with food that evening.

It seemed, after some time, that Auntie Mo did nothing; she was not really sick all the time but she just got thinner and she was always tired and could not help around the house. Laraine was angry. She was angry at her aunt and also at her mother because there was extra work to do and it seemed that Laraine had to do it all. In fact her mother was doing less work than usual and Laraine was having difficulty doing her homework with all the extra chores she had.

One day, when she was especially tired, she asked her mother why Auntie Mo did not do anything to help. Her mother explained that Auntie Mo was HIV+ and had developed AIDS. Laraine was very frightened. She had used the same dishes for Auntie Mo’s food as her own, she had kissed her each evening before she went to bed – perhaps she too would get AIDS. Now she realized why Auntie Mo had left her own family – they were cursed and only if Auntie Mo left would the rest of the family escape the curse. She was angry and frightened. Didn’t her mother know all these things? Everybody knew these things! She told her mother everything she felt.

Her mother was very stern. ‘Where did you hear rubbish stories like these?’ she asked.

‘AIDS is a disease like malaria. It is not a curse that somebody can put on you.’ Laraine argued with her mother, everybody knew that when people were cursed that they just stopped eating and then got sick and died.

Laraine’s mother sat her down to talk to her.

‘Your father and I work hard to pay your school fees and you do not use the brain that God gave you. To believe that somebody can put on a curse on you is just superstition but if you believe it; it gives the superstition the strength of truth. Why would you give that sort of power to somebody else? The power to affect your life?’

Laraine thought about what her mother said. Perhaps it was true. Somebody said that her father had been cursed once but he just laughed and said that he didn’t believe in curses and nothing had happened to him. The crops were good and they had extra money because he got a good price in the market for the extra grain and vegetables.

‘But if Auntie Mo has a disease shouldn’t she be sent away? After all, we could get sick from the same disease.’ Laraine said to her mother. Once more her mother was very stern.

‘You cannot catch this disease from being with someone, not from holding them or bathing them or eating from the same plate. Your aunt has a disease that many people are afraid of because they listen to untrue stories just as you have. Your aunt is your aunt, she needs love and care and the respect due to your family and because she is another human being. If you were sick would I not look after you? If your father was sick would I not look after him? Are you telling me that if I were to get sick you would not look after me?’ Laraine

felt ashamed, but still unsure. Why were people so afraid of this sickness but not so afraid of malaria or tuberculosis?

When she asked her mother, her mother sighed and sat down.

'HIV/AIDS was not discovered as a disease for some time. People died but nobody knew why. That is where the idea of being cursed came from. But now we know. This is not easy to tell you my daughter, but if you are to know the real truth and not these silly stories.....' Laraine's mother sighed again and looked into the fire.

'The HIV virus is spread through the loving that grown-ups do. You know, that makes babies.' Laraine giggled into her hand.

'Pssh' said her mother 'You are not such a child as that. Nobody really knows how it started, but if somebody who is infected does that loving with somebody else, they can pass the disease on. The more that this happens, the stronger the chance of getting the disease. It is the same as when you play 'stones'; if you play long enough, more and more stones will fall inside the circle; not so?' Laraine nodded.

'So once you have the virus, you can pass it on to other people only this way or by sharing blood. That is why when we took your brother to the clinic we paid for a new needle, just in case.' Laraine nodded again.

Her mother continued talking:

'Because in our culture we do not talk about this loving, having sex, it becomes very difficult to talk about HIV/AIDS. People think that those who have the disease are unclean; that they have been unfaithful to their husbands or wives. But it may have happened many, many years before. Perhaps, before they were married. Some men think that they have a right to have sex with whoever they want, especially if they are away from their wives.' Laraine looked at her mother

'Do some women feel the same way, if their husbands are away?' she asked.

'Yes, some women, too. But in the end it doesn't matter how somebody contracted the disease, whether through loving or having sex with somebody who is infected; or through blood from an infected person in an open cut; some babies are even born being HIV+: the important thing is that they are sick and need help. The Holy Book tells us to look after those who cannot look after themselves; it does not ask us to make judgments about them, just to love and care for them. How would you feel if you were sick, not necessarily HIV/AIDS, but just sick, and your father and I told you to leave the house and the village?'

Laraine shook her head.

'But that is an awful thing to do' she said. 'People cannot help getting sick, last season I had malaria but it was not my fault'. Her mother smiled.

'Think about how it would feel though. Could you do that to somebody else? Could you make the pain of being sick worse, by turning people away, by not loving them anymore?' Laraine shook her head. Now it was clear. If she truly believed in the teaching of the Holy Book then she was asked to care for others. Not to care for some others, who were sick in an ordinary way, but to care for anybody who was sick. Auntie Mo might be sick but she told good stories when she wasn't too tired, and she did look after the baby when there was cooking to be done.

Laraine was determined not to listen to the stories of curses and witchcraft any more. She knew that mosquitoes caused malaria and that you could not catch it from another person, somehow this was the same. She could not catch AIDS from her aunt or anybody

unless..... Laraine wanted to ask her mother one more thing but she felt shy. Her mother looked at her and smiled gently

‘You are not too young to ask but I will help’ she said.

‘You want to know what will happen when you have a boyfriend or when you are betrothed, don’t you?’ Laraine looked away but nodded shyly. Her mother smiled again.

‘This is why your father is so protective of you. When you are young, your emotions run high and you may think you are in love with your whole heart and body. But then next week you will feel the same about another person entirely. Never forget you are precious, not just to your family but to yourself: you are worth more than the price of a drink or a meal and you can say ‘no’ to a boy even if you think he is the one and only person who will ever love.’

‘But why would I want to say ‘no’ if I really love him?’ asked Laraine.

‘It takes years to really love somebody; you may feel strong emotion towards somebody after days, sometimes after just hours, but real love is much more than that, so it is better to wait.’ Her mother paused and then took a deep breath

‘If you do decide to have sex with a boy; always, always use a condom. Even if he really loves you; you don’t know what other partners he has had or what partners they have had. It is better to be safe. If he does not want to use a condom then he cares only about himself and not about you at all.’ Her mother patted her arm

‘Caring for Auntie Mo is only one part of caring, care for me and your father, but most of all care for yourself.’

Laraine looked hard at her mother, and then nodded and smiled. She would take care. She would care for Auntie Mo because she was sick, she would care for her brother just because he was her brother, she would care for her mother and father because they took care of her, but most of all she would care for herself.

### **Comprehension questions**

1. Who was the guest in Laraine’s house?
2. Do you think that Auntie Mo did nothing to help? Explain why you think so.
3. Why did Laraine’s mother say that Laraine was telling rubbish stories?
4. Why did Laraine decide not to believe in these stories any more?
5. Why do people reject those who are sick with AIDS?
6. Why is Laraine’s father protective of her?
7. Why did Laraine’s mother say that it was all right to say ‘no’ to a boy?
8. Why do you think Laraine’s mother said that if a boy refused to wear a condom that he would not care for Laraine?
9. Why is it important to care for those around you?
10. Why is it important to care for yourself most of all?

## Homeless

Today I am called homeless  
They speak in cheeky ways to me  
Counting food that goes into my stomach  
Just because I am not in my shelter  
They say I don't have the right to crow  
But it's not my desire to leave my shelter.

Oh did God create me for such?  
To be comical here!  
Oh, no, no, no, no.  
Live under a sun turning like a ball  
Today it is me but tomorrow it is somebody else  
Today you confront the shell-less snail  
And he will confront you tomorrow

Oh I am not like the white-ant  
I will return home  
When God answers my crying  
And all the beauty will sway with  
The sound of drums when there is no war.  
No pain after a heavy harvest.

Onam Joseph Elisco  
Refugee Kenya

### Comprehension questions

1. Why do you think that Onam refers to himself as 'the shell-less snail'?
2. Why do you think he is treated badly?
3. Why do you think that Onam says that [the shell-less snail] 'will confront you tomorrow'?
4. Do you think that Onam will treat others as he has been treated? Explain why you think so?
5. Onam is a refugee. He is explaining how he thinks refugees are treated badly. Do you think that what he is saying is true? Why do you think people behave this way?
6. Will this lead to peace? Why do you think so?

# The Blind Men and the Elephant

*This is a very old traditional story.*

Once there were some old very wise men, who discussed the ways of the world and advised their people of good ways to live.

Unfortunately they were so old that they were all almost blind. They gathered one day to discuss the ways of the world and came across an elephant.

One man could feel the elephant's trunk; fat, moving, searching. He called out a warning to his friends.

'Run for your lives it is an enormous snake, it will eat us all!'

Another man could feel the side of the elephant.

'Don't be silly my friend, we have come to a wall that is all, we'll have to walk around.'

A third man scoffed at his friends, because he could feel the ears of the elephant.

'We can now stay cool, we have a fine fan.'

The fourth man laughed at his friends. He could feel a length of rope, hairy rope which was coming unraveled at the end. He stood holding the tail of the elephant.

'You must all be getting old; it is just a piece of rope.'

Just then a small child came to lead the old men to their favourite spot in the village.

'Why are you all touching parts of the elephant?' The child asked.

The old men felt ashamed and walked with the child back to the village. They did not feel so wise any more.

## Broken Trust

James and Martin had been friends all through school. Since the day they walked to the village school for the first time, both a little scared, they had found each other and became friends. Now they were going to the secondary school in town and each day they caught the bus together.

One day Martin found that he had a hole in his pocket and he had lost the money for the bus. James had extra money to buy eggs for the family on the way home so he loaned Martin the money. He could always run to the market when Martin gave the money back at the end of the day.

On the way home he said that he would go with Martin to his house so that he could get the money. Martin looked at him in surprise.

‘What are you talking about? What money do you want from my family?’ he asked. James was shocked. He reminded Martin of the money he had loaned him for the bus just that morning. Martin laughed and said it was such a small amount of money surely it didn’t matter. He couldn’t bother his parents for a small amount like that. James did not know what to do. He needed the money to buy the eggs, he couldn’t go home without them, his little sister had been sick and she needed the eggs.

He wanted to hit Martin, to fight him for being a cheat. He clenched his fists hard but Martin laughed again and ran into his house. James turned away feeling sick and walked home slowly. He didn’t know what to tell his parents. Should he tell the truth? But that would mean that he would never be friends with Martin again, because his parents would be very angry. They didn’t have very much money and James felt that sometimes they were a little jealous of Martin’s family who had so much more.

Finally he reached home and had to tell his mother. But he said that he had lost the money at school; that he was very sorry and would work harder to earn more. His mother was angry but, sometimes these things just happen. She took a few coins from her secret place and James ran all the way to the market before the stall-keepers packed up for the night.

All night James worried about Martin and what he could do to make him see that he was wrong. He trusted Martin, they had been friends for years and now that trust was broken. He didn’t want to hate Martin, he wanted everything to be right again. He decided he would have to talk to him tomorrow.

James was ready for the bus extra early in the morning and he watched Martin walking towards him. What should he say to make Martin understand?

‘Martin, are you my friend?’ asked James quietly. Martin looked at him in surprise.

‘Of course I am, we have been friends since we were little kids.’ James shook his head.

‘That’s what I thought’ he said, ‘But what would you do if somebody you trust, breaks that trust. How do you heal something like that?’ Martin was puzzled.

‘What do you mean by trust?’ he asked. ‘I trust you, you are a good friend’ he added.

James took a deep breath:

‘But Martin, you have not been a good friend to me. You know you took the money yesterday and you know my family is much poorer than your family. As little as it is, we need that money. But it is not only the money, I trusted you to give it back and you just laughed. Now I feel that the trust is broken. I still need the money and I would like to be your friend but...’

Martin looked shocked. 'Is this about the bit of money from yesterday?' He asked. James nodded silently. 'But James, come on, it was so little, what difference does it make?' James just shook his head.

'If you don't understand, then we haven't been friends for all these years' he said

'I thought you would understand about trust; it is not just the money; it is the fact that I trusted you to return it and now you just push it aside as if the money and my trust in you are nothing.' Martin was very shocked. James had always been there, always been his friend; it wasn't that they just went to school together, they played football together, they ate at each other's house, they swam in the creek together in the hot season. He couldn't believe that James was saying this and all about a few coins that meant nothing.

But then he stopped to think. When he ate at James' house, there was plenty of food for him but when he thought about it, James' mother ate very little, what if she had given him some of her food because there wasn't enough? James hardly ever had anything new and his school uniform was carefully patched. Martin didn't care, James was a good friend and they had been friends for years. He had extra money today anyway; he was going to buy sweets for them after school. Then he realized that James never bought sweets and would only ever take one sweet. Martin had never realized this before. James had no extra money ever and he wouldn't take too much from Martin, not food or sweets or even games. He had been a very good friend and now.....

'James, I'm sorry, I didn't realize. Look I have the money, here take it. I didn't mean to break trust with you I ...I just didn't think'. He pulled the money from his pocket and gave it to James quickly.

James thanked him but stayed quiet on the bus. He felt better, so much better, Martin had apologised and returned the money. He could give it to his mother as soon as he got home. But when he thought about trust, he realized that even though Martin was still his friend, it would take a long time before James trusted him again. He would wait and if Martin really had thought about it and changed his ways, then perhaps he would start to trust him again. He sighed. Trust broken was like a water pot that had been broken; even though it could be glued together again, it was never quite as good and you always had to be a bit more careful. Well, from now on he would have to be a bit more careful too. Friends yes, but not with quite the same trust as before. It would take time to rebuild the trust that was broken.

### **Comprehension questions**

1. How long had James and Martin been friends?
2. Why did James loan money to Martin?
3. Why did James have the extra money?
4. Which family was poorer?
5. Why did James want to hit Martin?
6. Why do you think that he did not hit Martin?
7. How did James manage to buy the eggs?
8. Why was James hurt by Martin's actions and laughter?
9. Why is trust like a water pot?
10. Do you think that James will trust Martin the same way as before? Why do you think this way?

## **What Should Debra do??**

Debra and her family lived in a village near a large town. Many relatives of people who lived in the village came to stay when they had business in the town, so the village was always busy and often noisy.

Debra was a good student and her family was very proud of her, especially as she was one of the few girls in her class. Debra's father felt it was important for his daughter and his sons to go to school. He believed it was only through education that their country could improve. So Debra worked very hard to show her father respect by doing well in school.

Some days Debra was very tired and was late for school, and sometimes even fell asleep in classes. She felt ashamed and stayed up later and later at night working with her books to learn the things she had missed. But often she found it hard to concentrate when she was working as the visitors would have a party with their relatives and the music and loud talking would go on far into the night.

Often she was woken in the night by people coming back to the village from town and calling to each other as they went to their relatives' homes. Debra and her brothers were finding it harder and harder to be successful at school.

The elders of the village who thought that Debra should not be at school argued with her father, telling him that she was sleeping because she was a lazy girl and that school was wasted on her. Debra did not know what to do. If she complained about the noisy neighbours, she would not be showing courtesy to the guests in the village; if she did not, she would fail and make her father ashamed, and perhaps she would have to leave school.

**What should Debra do??**

## Saying No

Cornelius and Joseph had just finished their exams. Both boys were excited, happy and very relieved. The exams had been very hard, but both boys had worked very hard and felt that they would do well.

They ran from the school yard, whooping and yelling and jumping into the air. Neither of the boys wanted this day to end. They walked together through the village towards home.

'Let's go to the video parlour tonight to celebrate that we have finished' said Joseph. The boys checked their money. Yes! Enough money for a video and a little left over. The boys agreed to meet that evening and then went their separate ways to their homes.

Joseph came into the house and told his mother all about the exams. She was cooking dinner, but she listened to Joseph happily. The family had made big sacrifices to send the children to school and Joseph, because he was the eldest would be a good example for his brothers and sisters. When Joseph's father came home the family sat down to eat. Joseph asked his parents if he could go to the video parlour with his friends from school.

Joseph's father shook his head.

'You are still a boy, Joseph. There will be enough time for videos when you are a man and have finished school.'

Joseph talked to his father about the exams and how this was the last day and now he was finished. He begged his father for this reward now that he had finished his exams. Finally Joseph's father agreed. Joseph finished eating quickly and after washing he walked to the video parlour.

Cornelius was waiting for him.

'I thought you weren't coming. What did your father say?'

Joseph shrugged his shoulders.

'I'm here, he said I could come' said Joseph

'What did your father say?' Cornelius made a face.

'He didn't want me to come, he said there would plenty of time for that later.'

Joseph laughed and slapped his friend on the back.

'Just the same as my father. Perhaps they are all alike!' he was still laughing when they paid their money and went inside.

The video parlour was hot and stuffy. It was full of smoke and the movie was really bad. They could hardly hear over the noise of the other people, and they could hardly see the screen.

Cornelius nudged Joseph.

'This is really bad let's go outside for a drink and some fresh air.' Joseph was disappointed that the movie that he had worked so hard to go and see was not worth watching. He stood up and the two boys made their way outside.

Cornelius took a deep breath of fresh air. He looked at Joseph.

'What a waste, huh? All that effort to be allowed out and it was not even worth it.'

Joseph nodded and started to walk home.

'Hey' called Cornelius,

'We don't have to go home. Let's go for that drink.' Joseph turned back. After all he did deserve to have some fun after all that work.

The two boys walked towards the market where they met some other friends of Cornelius.

'Come and have a drink with us' said one of the boys. He was older than Joseph and Cornelius. He took the boys to a nearby bar.

'Give the boys a beer' he said to the man serving.

'They've just finished the exams and deserve a reward.' Joseph shook his head.

'Not for me thanks, I'll just have a soda.' The others laughed.

'Oh so you're just a little boy in school are you? Can't have a beer?'

Joseph shook his head and smiled.

'I don't drink beer, thanks just a soda for me'. Now even Cornelius was laughing. He had a beer in his hand and looked proud to be considered more than a little school boy.

'Come on Joseph, we're all friends here, you can have a real drink now. The exams are finished.' Joseph just shook his head again and picked up his soda bottle.

'Are you afraid Joseph?' one of the other boys asked.

'Just try it, its really good, cool and refreshing. Nobody here knows you, nobody will tell your father.' All the boys laughed and laughed. Joseph felt nervous and a little angry. If only he could say that it didn't matter if anybody knew or not. He would know and that was enough. He wasn't afraid, he just didn't want a beer.

Cornelius had drunk all of his beer already and asked for another one. His other friends laughed and quickly bought him one. Cornelius drank it down all at once. He staggered a little as he walked over to Joseph and threw his arm around Joseph's shoulder.

'Just have one Joseph, one won't hurt you. You want to be a man don't you? Are you afraid?' Cornelius asked.

Joseph pushed Cornelius' arm away from his shoulders.

'No I'm not afraid, I don't think that drinking beer makes you a man, it just makes you drunk. I hope you enjoy your drink. I just want to enjoy mine. I'm not asking you to drink soda, so you don't have to ask me to drink beer.' Joseph drank his soda quietly and talked to some of the other boys.

Cornelius went outside quickly. His head was spinning and he felt very sick. He stood leaning against the building wondering why he should feel so bad when he was supposed to be celebrating. Joseph came out to see him.

'Are you all right?' he asked Cornelius.

The next day the boys met in the market. Cornelius was still sick but Joseph was happy and relieved that school was over.

'You know Joseph I think maybe you were right last night' said Cornelius. Joseph looked at his friend.

'Why?' he asked.

'Today I don't feel like a man, I just feel sick. You were right to say no. Perhaps next time I will try to be as strong as you.' Joseph smiled.

'See Cornelius, maybe being a man is doing what you want and not being influenced by other people who call you names and laugh at you. You don't have to be rude or nasty to people, but you don't have to give in either.'

### **Comprehension questions**

1. Why were Joseph and Cornelius so happy?
2. What did they want to do to celebrate the fact that they had finished their exams?
3. How do you think Joseph's mother felt?
4. Why do you think that both Joseph's and Cornelius' fathers did not want them to go to the video parlour?
5. Why did the boys leave the video parlour?
6. How did Cornelius and his friends try to persuade Joseph to drink a beer?
7. How do you think Joseph felt when his friends were laughing at him?
8. If you were Joseph, what would you do if your friends laughed at you?
9. How would you feel inside?
10. Do you think Cornelius felt he was a man when he was drinking the beer?
11. Do you think he felt like a man when he was sick outside?
12. What other ways could this story have ended?

## True Love

Thomas and Consolata were very much in love. They had been going out for more than six months and they talked about marrying but Consolata was still at school and Thomas had no money and no job and his parents were not wealthy enough to help him.

Consolata did not know if she was ready to get married. Thomas was good-looking and she was proud to walk with him and feel the envy of the other girls. But marriage was very different. Still, she felt that she loved Thomas.

Thomas often talked about them loving together. He said they had been going out for so long, and everybody loved and had sex. But he did not force her or threaten her so sometimes Consolata felt that he truly loved her, but sometimes she felt that perhaps Thomas did not really love her, perhaps he had another girl friend; one he was having sex with.

All the girls talked about their boyfriends and how much they wanted sex. Somehow when she listened to the others Consolata wondered if Thomas was right. At other times she felt he could not be a real man because he did not try to force her.

Consolata felt too shy to ask the other girls if they had sex with their boyfriends or if the boys just wanted sex all the time.

At school the teacher talked about sex but only to say that nobody should do it until they had finished school. There was no time for discussion and anyway Consolata would never have asked a question about such a thing in school. She thought about asking at church but that was worse. It was a sin and there was no point in talking about it.

Sometimes Consolata felt that the world she and her friends lived in was a totally different one to the one her parents, teachers and priest lived in. Nothing seemed the same. If she listened to them, nobody had sex except inside marriage, everybody was obedient to their families, to their traditions, everybody worked hard at school and nobody cared about music and dancing and having fun.

If she listened to her friends, then everybody knew school was a place to meet friends, everybody was having sex, everybody laughed at how old fashioned their parents were. Was Thomas living in the world of her friends or her parents? When she stopped to think about it, she wondered if she was living in the world of her friends or her parents.

Consolata felt too shy to talk about such things with Thomas, she felt very lonely and confused.

A few days later Thomas came to Consolata's house. He asked her if she would go for a walk with him. Consolata finished her chores quickly and drying her hands she was soon ready. She wasn't sure how she felt about Thomas, but she did want to be the same as all her friends.

Thomas seemed very quiet and they walked for some time before he said anything at all. Then he asked her if she was happy and if she wanted to be with him. Consolata could feel her face growing hot. She did not know what to say. Did she want to be with him?

Thomas stopped near the shelter of some bushes and pulled Consolata down onto the grass. He asked her again if she was happy. Consolata looked away at the hills which were drawn like blue lines against the sky. Finally in a very soft voice she asked Thomas why he wanted sex with her when the teachers, and parents and the priest all said it was wrong.

Thomas lay back on the grass and put an arm over his eyes. Then he told Consolata that he loved her and that when two people were in love then it was natural to have sex together.

Consolata thought about this. She thought how often people 'fell in love' sometimes as often as once a week! She laughed a little as she told this to Thomas, but he said that they had been together for six months and that they would marry if only he could get a job and the dowry. Consolata thought about marrying. 'What about school?' she wondered. If she married she could not finish school, and she would never be able to find a good job. Thomas laughed at her. He told her he would look after her and she would not have to work, so finishing secondary school did not matter. Consolata thought about it. Thomas had no job now, and her mother worked all the time - but not work that she received wages for. But she grew vegetables, sold them in the market, she cleaned the house and the compound, fetched water and fuelwood, looked after the babies, endless work. Consolata knew because she worked alongside her mother.

She tried to explain to Thomas that she did not want to marry yet, that she wanted to finish school, that she was too young, that she didn't want to get pregnant, that she was scared of AIDS. Thomas started to get angry. He told her he had been faithful to her and she should not accuse him of having AIDS. Consolata tried to explain. But Thomas was very angry and hurt. He told Consolata that he really loved her and he had been very patient but now it was time for her to prove if she loved him or not.

### **Ending 1**

Consolata bent her head. She didn't know what to say to Thomas. He must really love her or he would not be so angry. She felt she should just trust him. He didn't have AIDS and surely she couldn't get pregnant doing it just once. She didn't want him to be angry with her. Everything would be all right.

### **Ending 2**

Consolata bent her head. She could feel the tears start. But then she thought about all the questions that had not been answered. How could he look after her? He could not even look after himself. She hadn't accused him of having AIDS but he hadn't answered any of her questions and anyway having sex didn't prove anything. Suddenly she felt angry too. She jumped to her feet and began to scream at Thomas. She told him he was stupid and useless because he could not afford the bride price. She told him it was his fault that they hadn't had sex together before as he was not a real man and now she didn't want him. She cried and screamed and told him she didn't love him and didn't want to see him any more.

### **Ending 3**

Consolata bent her head. She could feel the tears start. But then she thought about all the questions that had not been answered. How could he look after her? He could not even look after himself. She hadn't accused him of having AIDS but he hadn't answered any of her questions and anyway having sex didn't prove anything. She took a deep breath and looked up at Thomas.

'I feel hurt when you won't listen to me' she said. 'I am not accusing you but I feel frightened and confused, everybody gives different advice. I don't even know if I want to have sex with you or if I just want to be the same as everybody else. And then what would happen if I got pregnant? I don't want to leave school before I finish my education. It is not a criticism of you; it is what is best for me. Can't you try to understand?'

Thomas sat up and put his arms around Consolata.

'You have never talked to me like that before. Never talked to me properly, just one person to another. I did not know you felt confused. We are young and it's so easy to want

sex especially when we are alone and I can touch you. But I do love you and I will wait for you.' Then he laughed. 'It will be a test like the old days of initiation. If you cannot prove that you are strong enough to go without - whatever it is - then you can never be a real man'. He patted Consolata and then said shyly, 'Don't listen too much to the sex talk, most of it is talk, there is much more talking than doing!' Consolata laughed too, at least one of her questions was answered, and if she and Thomas really loved each other with this new adult love she was sure that the other questions would also be answered.

**Choose the ending you think is best and decide why you prefer this ending. In the ending you have chosen was Consolata aggressive, submissive or assertive?**

### **Comprehension questions**

1. How long had Thomas and Consolata been going out?
2. Do you think that Consolata loved Thomas? Why?
3. Do you think Consolata knew if she loved Thomas? Why?
4. Why couldn't Thomas and Consolata get married?
5. Why was Consolata not sure about getting married?
6. Why didn't Consolata ask her friends the questions?
7. What things made Consolata feel that her parents, her teacher and her priest lived in a totally different world to the one she and her friends lived in?
8. What things made Consolata think that her friends lived in a totally different world?
9. Why do you think that Consolata wondered which world she lived in?
10. If you were Consolata what would you do?
11. If you were Thomas what would you do?

## Working Together

The boys played football on the stretch of waste ground near the river. In the dry season this was a good place to play, but in the wet season it was covered in water and they had nowhere else to play.

One day, when the clouds were heavy and the air crackled with the heat, the boys decided that this season they would play, but somehow they had to make sure that the playing field would not flood.

'We could ask the council if they can build a wall for us' one suggested. Although this was a good idea (because a wall would stop the water flooding over the field), some of the boys did not want to go to the council.

'They will not listen to us, we're just kids.' Others nodded. The council men were old and there was so much to do in the village that building a wall to keep the water from waste ground was not something that they would take seriously.

'We could do it ourselves' said one boy.

'Don't be silly', said another 'You need big rocks, there are plenty around but you are not big enough to move them. The first boy laughed.

'I'll show you something' he said 'Lie down here'. The boy laughed but then he lay down on the grass.

'Okay everybody, come here and put your first two fingers on each hand out like this. He showed them what he meant.

'We are going to lift him up just be using four fingers each. Everybody laughed and cried out that it could not be done.

'Let's just try it'. It was just a game so the boys gathered around and put their fingers (just the first and second finger of each hand) under the boy lying on the ground.

'Ready? Okay now lift!'

It was amazing; using just four fingers each, the boys could lift up the one lying on the ground and he wasn't heavy on their fingers at all.

'It comes from working together, none of us could have done that alone, but if we work together...'

'Right, if we can do this, we can move those rocks and build the wall ourselves and then we can play football all year round.'

And that is just what they did.

### **Comprehension questions**

1. Where did the boys play football?
2. Why couldn't they play there all year?
3. Why did some boys not want to go to the council?
4. Why did the boys think that they could not build the wall themselves?
5. When the boys played the game with one lying on the ground, what did this game show them?
6. How did they build the wall?
7. Do you think that they could then play football all year?

## The Storm Tribe

The two boys were always together, they played football together, went to school together and collected water together. There was just one problem; they came from different tribes and their families were unhappy about their friendship.

There were many arguments and both boys became very unhappy. But still they went to school together, and still they played football. Their parents and other members of their families said things about the other tribe and each boy tried to argue but the grievance between the tribes was very old and the boys did not know what to do about it.

Then, a new subject was introduced at school. It was called Peace Education and during these lessons the boys learned about discrimination and stereotypes. They learned that people were more similar than they were different and that fear made people hate and so prejudice occurred. They talked about these lessons and realized that the things they were learning about were things that were happening to them. Each family talked about the other, but they did not know each other. They had never spoken to each other, but they demanded that the two boys should not be friends and each family could say only bad things about the other.

The two boys wondered how they could overcome their problem. One day there was a big storm in the camp. Many houses were destroyed, not just with the rain; there was wind and hail as well. Crops were destroyed and animals scattered in fear and were lost. The elders gathered to talk about how to rebuild the houses and how to find the lost animals. The two boys listened to the talk for many hours. Everybody had suffered but the two tribes would not work together to repair the damage. They listened to the insults both tribes' representatives said about the other and they decided that the stereotypes were fixed firmly in the minds of the elders. They left the meeting and looked for their football friends. Outside they met other boys, boys they did not know, but with all the confusion it did not seem to matter. They called to the boys and suggested a plan.

'We are now a new tribe - the storm tribe' said one boy. 'Anybody can become a member of this tribe; the only rule is you cannot speak badly about any other tribe, not unless you know the bad thing for a fact. No listening to gossip!' The boys agreed and because they could not play football, they laughed and said they would all join the new tribe, after all there was nothing else to do. The tribe got bigger during the day, soon most of the boys in the camp had joined and lots of girls wanted to be part of the tribe as well.

The storm tribe gathered all the grass that had been blown off the roofs of the houses. They spread it to dry and then they divided themselves into teams and had a competition to go looking for the lost animals. That night the teams returned. They were tired and dirty but they drove many animals before them. They laughed because the animals were all mixed up.

'The animals are smarter than people, they don't have tribes and they can't talk about each other so they stay together for safety'

The elders came out to see what all the noise was about. They were shocked to see the boys from different tribes all laughing and talking together and with the animals herded before them!

'What is all this?' Asked one elder.

'We don't want to sleep wet and miserable and we wanted to find our animals. The only way to do it was to all get together. No more tribes; just one tribe; the storm tribe!' said the boy.

The elder frowned and looked at the other elders. Then he smiled and nodded.

‘You are right, you are only boys yet you are wise enough to see the truth. We will all be cold and hungry, because we are all human, no matter what tribe we belong to. We are the same much more than we are different. Perhaps if we all belonged to the storm tribe we wouldn’t have these problems!’

One of the other elders laughed, ‘We belong to a better tribe than one that comes out of disaster, we all belong to the same human family!’

The group nodded together. For the first time since the storm there were smiles around the group.

‘It took a group of boys to show us the right path. We do belong together and we must work at living together as one family.’

### **Comprehension questions**

1. What things did the two boys do together?
2. Why was there a problem?
3. What was the new subject in school?
4. What happened when the storm came?
5. Why did the boys leave the meeting of the elders?
6. What were the rules of the storm tribe?
7. What things did the storm tribe do?
8. Why do you think the boys thought the cattle were smarter than people?
9. Why do you think the elders listened to the boys?
10. Do you think that everybody belongs to one tribe?
11. Why do feel this way?
12. Why do you think people have trouble living together as one human family?

## Three hundred cows

Houda was in Grade 6 at school. There were not many girls in her class, but Houda did not mind. She studied hard and always did well in her exams. Her mother had never been to school and could not read or write but she was a wise woman who knew how important education was for all her children. Houda was the eldest but she had two younger brothers who were also in school. Houda's mother made sure that all the children helped to collect the water and look after the house and compound so that nobody had to miss school.

Houda would dream about being a teacher when she finished school. She wanted to share the things she learned with other children and make sure that people could read and write so that they could not be cheated and would be able to get good jobs.

One day Houda's father called his daughter to him.

'Houda, my beautiful child, I have received an offer of marriage for you.'

Houda was shocked. 'But Father, I am still at school, how can I get married?' Houda's father frowned, 'School!' he said. 'School is good but this man is very rich. He has offered me 300 cattle for you. I will be a rich man.' Houda knelt quietly at her father's feet.

'Please Father, let me finish school first. If I finish and become a teacher, we will have money; I will earn money and buy cattle for you.' Houda's father grew angry.

'You will do as I say. Your brothers can go to school but it is time you were married.'

Houda cried quietly into her hands. She did not want to marry, she wanted to finish school but she couldn't argue with her father.

Later Houda was helping her mother prepare the food for dinner. Her mother asked her why she was crying.

'Oh Mother, Father wants to me to marry and I cannot finish school and I need to finish so that I can become a teacher' sobbed Houda. Her mother sighed and patted Houda's hand.

'My daughter, it is our tradition to marry early, and your father is your father, you cannot defy him.' Houda nodded sadly, her heart was very heavy, but she owed her father respect and she could not defy him.

The next day Houda talked to her teacher. He was a wise man and came from the same region as her father. He listened carefully to Houda's story and nodded.

'Your mother is right, you should not defy your father, but times are changing, the world is very different now and if we are to find our place in this new world, we must educate all our children. Don't be sad Houda, concentrate now on your school work and let me think of a solution.'

After school that day the teacher went to the committee of elders. He talked to them of many things but mostly of how quickly the world was changing and how they would cope as a community. The elders agreed and one said

'But you my friend, you are a teacher; the future is in your hands because our children are in your hands.'

The teacher nodded 'Yes that is true, all our children need education, perhaps the girls even more than the boys.' The elders looked at him.

'Why would you say such a thing?' one asked.

‘Because when you educate a boy you will have an educated man, but when you educate a girl you educate a family and thereby a nation’ the teacher replied. The elders thought about this for a long time, finally the leader said quietly, ‘This is against all our traditions.’

‘Yes’ the teacher said sadly, ‘but our traditions change all the time, if we don’t change this one, we will never be equal with the rest of the world. Once we did not wear clothes like these, it was not our tradition, but we changed. Once we did not have schools at all, it was not our tradition, but we changed. Once we could live at home, that was our tradition and our heritage, but we had to leave and we changed.’ The elders thought for a long time and finally nodded. ‘You are right, but you are not just talking, you are talking about somebody in particular aren’t you?’ The teacher smiled and nodded.

‘Yes, I am talking about Houda. She is a good student, she does well in her exams and she wants to become a teacher, but her father has received an offer of marriage for her.’ The elders nodded, they knew Houda, knew that she was a good student and a respectful daughter. The leader said ‘I will talk to Houda’s father myself, times are changing and if we are to educate our girls it will be good to have women teachers especially good girls like Houda.’

That evening Houda’s father had a guest. The elder sat and drank tea with Houda’s father and talked to him for a long time. He talked about the changing world, he talked about education being the key to this new and different world and at last he talked about Houda.

‘My friend, keep your daughter at school. If she marries now, you will have 300 cows but nothing more. If she can finish school, you will have a daughter who will be professional, you will have somebody that very many men will want to marry and when she does, your grandchildren will be well educated, good, professional people.’ Houda’s father slowly nodded.

‘Perhaps you are right, she is a good girl, she studies hard but still she respects her mother and me.’ He nodded,

‘All right she can stay at school and become a teacher,’ but then his face grew sad; ‘But oh, I would love to have had 300 cows!’

### **Comprehension questions**

1. What grade was Houda in at school?
2. Why did her father want to talk to her?
3. What did Houda think about getting married?
4. Why did Houda not run away?
5. What did Houda's mother say?
6. Who did the teacher go to see?
7. Why do you think the teacher went there rather than going to see Houda's father?
8. Why did the teacher think it was more important to educate girls?
9. Do you agree with the teacher's reasons? Why or why not?
10. List the things that the teacher thought had changed traditions.
11. Why was Houda's father convinced to let Houda stay at school?
12. Do you think girls have the same rights to an education that boys have? Why or why not?

# The Beautiful Girl and the Moneylender

*(adapted from Edward De Bono)*

A beautiful young girl had a father who had got himself heavily into debt. The moneylender wanted to throw him into prison (where he would surely die) but when he saw the beautiful daughter he said that he would let the father go free if the daughter agreed to marry him.

The daughter refused (because he was old and wicked and ugly) but her father begged her because otherwise he would be thrown into prison where he would surely die. The daughter was a good and dutiful daughter and she wanted to save her father but the moneylender was truly horrible; so she was trapped.

The moneylender was walking with the daughter in the garden along a gravel path made of black and white stones. The money lender said 'Look, I have an idea. I will put a black stone and a white stone into a bag. You pull out one stone. If it is the white stone your father will go free and you will not have to marry me; if it is the black stone your father will go free but in return you must marry me.'

As he said this he bent down and picked up two stones from the path and put them into a small bag. But the daughter saw him pick up two black stones. She cannot accuse him of cheating because her father's life is in his hands.

**What does she do?**

## Angela's Surprise

Angela came home from school with her two brothers. There was nobody at home. The neighbour said her mother had gone to collect firewood.

'But there is no wood anywhere around here anymore' said Angela.

'She will be gone all day and all tomorrow, and it's dangerous and there could be bandits or anything.' Angela wanted to cry but she could not let her small brothers or the neighbour see. The neighbour just nodded and said: 'Yes, but if there is no wood how are you going to eat? It is not food you can eat without cooking. Your mother is doing the best she can'.

Angela thought and then nodded. There was a little food, but with nothing to cook it with, they could not eat.

Angela collected the water and then went for a walk around the camp. There must be some way to cook the food without having to walk for miles and miles to get firewood. They could not afford kerosene, nobody in the camp could except for a few shopkeepers but even they only had it for lanterns, not for cooking.

Angela walked and walked. It was so hot she had to stop to rest in the shade of one small tree. She noticed other tiny trees surrounded by thorn bush sticks to keep the goats away and she wished they were big enough now to give her shade. She wondered who had planted them and why. They were too small to be of any use and somebody had to bring water to them, she could see the damp soil at the base of the plants.

While she rested she saw a small boy carrying a plastic dish of dirty water coming towards her. She wondered if he was going to throw it at her because she was a stranger to this part of the camp. But the boy tipped the water carefully on three small trees that were still dry.

'Hey' called Angela, 'Why are you doing that? Does your mother collect water for you to throw on plants?' The boy laughed. 'It was dirty water from washing, the plants don't care they can drink the water dirty or clean and it's better than just throwing it on the dirt.'

Angela was curious. 'Why is it better? The water settles the dust and its only rubbish water anyway'. The small boy looked at her and sighed. 'It is not rubbish water to the plants. One day these trees are going to be big and they will provide fodder for the goats and shade from the sun and they will keep the ground cool so that other things can grow, like vegetables.'

Angela laughed at him. 'When you are an old man maybe, but you are wasting your time now, this is a refugee camp; you won't be here when these trees are big enough to do all you want.' The small boy shook his head, 'You are just a girl, you would not understand, these trees grow very fast, after two rainy seasons they will be taller than you and anyway it helps.'

'What do you mean it helps?' asked Angela 'What does it help?' The small boy straightened his back and looked at her proudly. 'We have a solar cooker at my house.' Angela just looked at him; she did not even know what he was talking about.

'You have a what?' she asked. The small boy sat down in the shade. 'My mother planted these trees and then when they began to grow she received a solar cooker. It means she can cook our food without any firewood.' Angela laughed and laughed. 'Is your mother a witch then, that she can cook without fire?'

The small boy shook his head and jumped up, 'If you say things like that about my mother, I'll punch you.' Angela stopped laughing 'I'm sorry, I did not mean it, it was a joke, but how can anybody cook without fire?' The small boy laughed, 'Isn't the sun hot enough to cook you today?' he asked. Angela smiled and nodded, 'But you can't really cook anything just with the sun' she said. Again the small boy laughed. 'Come with me to my mother's house and I will show you' he jumped up and ran away to some houses nearby.

Angela really wanted to know about how to cook without firewood because her mother walked further and further each day and was so tired when she came home she could not move. Angela was hungry too; without wood there was no cooked food. So she followed the small boy. He was waiting at his house. He took Angela around the back of the house and pointed to a large shiny thing lying on the ground in the sun. In the middle of it was a pot and Angela could feel the water rushing into her mouth because she could smell the beans cooking inside. But how? There was no fire just the pot in a plastic bag in the middle of a thing which made shiny walls around the pot. Angela could not believe it. 'How does it work?' she asked. Just then the boy's mother came outside to check the food. She heard Angela's question and started to explain. 'I was like you, I could not believe it when I first saw it. But it does work. First I soak the beans all night. That helps them get softer and they don't need to cook for so long'.

Angela shook her head. 'My father says the beans taste bad if they are soaked first.'

The woman laughed, 'If he did not see it I'm sure he would never know the difference. It saves a lot of wood and costs nothing, you need to plan ahead, but everybody knows that they are going to eat tomorrow. Then I change the water in the morning and the dirty water goes onto my baby trees. Then I just put the pot in the bag and onto this shield. The walls reflect the sun into the middle and because they are shiny all the heat bounces off them and onto my pot. The beans cook just with the help of the sun.'

Angela nodded. She put her hand near the pot, it was very hot, all that heat, just from the sun she thought. She needed one of these for her mother. 'How did you get this?' she asked. The woman smiled. 'My trees' she said. 'You see, if you plant a lot of trees and look after them then you can earn a solar cooker. The trees give shelter and protect the soil so there is not as much dust, and they are special trees that will grow very fast. I have planted others for fruit, but they are much slower to grow. I use my waste water to keep them happy and I have earned this cooker so that now I need very little fuelwood. I have saved time and money and now I can do other things like learning to read and sew.'

Angela was very excited. She really wanted one of these for her mother. She talked more to the woman and then went to visit the place where the solar cookers were. It was late and the people had gone home but now she knew where to come. Angela thanked the woman and the small boy and ran home.

The next day when her mother came back with the fuelwood Angela explained everything she had seen and heard. Her mother shook her head. 'Angela, these modern things are not for us. They are for well educated people, modern people, we are just ordinary.' Angela shook her head. 'No Mama, that is not true, the woman that I was talking to cannot read, she is very ordinary. The boy is just a small boy not even as big as me, but he knew all about these things. They are ordinary people, but now she has time for other things.' Angela's mother just sighed, 'It is not our way Angela; we have always cooked this way. There is no other way.'

That night Angela ate her food quietly and all the time she was thinking hard. Somehow she had to convince her mother. But her mother was too tired to listen to Angela's pleas.

'Don't bother me girl, I'm too tired to listen to your chatter about cooking with no wood' she had said. So Angela ate quietly and went to bed early.

The next day after school she ran to the place where the shiny cookers were. This time there were lots of women there all talking excitedly about what they had been cooking. She asked if she could join the group. The women laughed. 'You are just a girl, why are you not helping your mother in the house?' one asked. Angela sighed but said politely, 'I want to help my mother and if I can save her from having to walk and walk for fuelwood that would be the best help of all. The women nodded and patted Angela on the arm. 'Girl, you're right, come to the leader, she will tell you what you have to do.'

That afternoon, Angela came home with six tiny trees. Her mother sighed and asked about her homework but Angela said she would do it later; this was a surprise for her mother.

Every day Angela saved all the dirty water, from washing the dishes and the clothes as well as the water the family washed themselves in. She watered the tiny trees every morning and every evening. She was often tired but determined to surprise her mother.

The weeks went by and the tiny trees grew and grew. The leader of the group with the cookers came to see how Angela's trees were growing. She was very pleased as she had thought that Angela would get tired and forget them.

One day the leader called to see Angela and brought with her a shiny new solar cooker. Angela's mother was away, looking for fuelwood and she had been gone for almost two days.

Angela soaked the beans and put the solar cooker together. It was very hot and she was very tired. But she thought how tired her mother would be when she returned. Angela was sitting doing her homework when her mother returned. Her mother was tired and sad. Two of her friends had been attacked by bandits and so Angela's mother had shared the wood she had collected with these friends. The bundle was now very small. 'I don't know what to do Angela' she said. 'It is dangerous to go so far from the camp, but we must have fire for cooking. I cannot buy the wood, there is no money, but I am afraid of the bandits and I do not want my family to starve.'

Angela jumped up, 'Stay here Mother, I'll get you some water to drink.' Angela returned in a few minutes with water in one hand and a plate of food in the other hand. Angela's mother was angry at first. 'You did not beg this food from the neighbours did you? Such shame, how can I feel proud if you are begging?' But Angela shook her head. 'This is our own food Mother. You know about my little trees, well now we have a solar cooker, because my trees have grown so well and dinner is ready!'

Angela's mother was surprised and happy and very, very proud of her clever daughter. She soon learned how to use the solar cooker and went to the solar cooker group to learn more about cooking. She brought home tiny trees of her own and all the water in the family was saved to water the trees.

Angela was happy because her mother did not go away any more searching for fuelwood and she could now concentrate on her school work. Now Angela's mother is also going to a special school with some other women to learn to read.

### **Comprehension questions**

1. Where had Angela's mother gone?
2. Why do you think that Angela went for a walk?
3. What was the small boy carrying?
4. Why did Angela think he was going to throw the water on her?
5. What water was the boy using on the plants?
6. Why did Angela think the boy was wasting his time?
7. Why did Angela call the boy's mother a witch?
8. Describe the solar cooker.
9. How do you use a solar cooker?
10. Why was Angela excited?
11. Why did Angela's mother think that the solar cooker was not suitable for her?
12. Why do you think Angela's mother think that there was only one way to cook?
13. What did Angela do to get the solar cooker?
14. Why was Angela's mother sad when she came home from gathering the firewood?
15. Why did Angela's mother think Angela had been begging?
16. What did Angela's mother do after they had the solar cooker?

## Trouble with Friends

Samuel and John were close friends. They lived close to each other and played together often after school and on their holidays. School was some distance away, so they always walked together and sang songs to pass the time on the long walk.

One day Samuel's family all slept late. There was a birthday celebration for Samuel's grandfather the night before and everyone had worked hard to prepare and then had stayed up late singing and talking. Samuel was the first to get up, but it took a long time to get ready and have breakfast. Samuel was late getting to the corner where he usually met John to go to school. John was not there so Samuel waited for a few minutes and then hurried to school.

But that morning, John was early. He waited at the corner for a long time but Samuel did not come. Finally John was tired of waiting and ran off by himself to go to school.

At school, Samuel was punished for being late and had to stay in class during the break. He had no chance to talk to John.

After school Samuel looked for John so that they could walk home together, but John was a long way down the road and walking very fast. Samuel had to run hard to catch up.

"Wait for me," called Samuel as he ran to meet John. John turned and frowned at Samuel "Why?" he asked. "You weren't there to walk with me this morning. Why should I walk with you now?" and John looked away.

Samuel could feel that John was angry. Samuel felt uncomfortable but he asked John "Are you upset with me? We are usually good friends, can we talk about this?"

John said, "Yes, I am upset and I don't know what there is to talk about. I waited for you and you didn't come, so I had to walk to school by myself."

Samuel felt angry; it wasn't his fault he was late that morning. But he took a deep breath. "Okay, let's take turns to tell what happened," he said.

"Well" said John, "I waited at the corner for a long time and you just didn't come. Then I had to run to school so I wouldn't be late."

"I was late because last night we had a party for Grandfather. It was his birthday. But this morning everyone was tired and slept late" explained Samuel.

"Oh" said John "how did you feel?" Samuel shrugged his shoulders; "Well, I was worried. I knew that I was late and I didn't want to miss going to school with you and I certainly didn't want to be late for school. Look what happened! I was punished for being late and it wasn't even my fault! Because I had to stay in the classroom, I couldn't even tell you what happened. Then after school I couldn't find you. I thought you must be really angry with me."

John gave a funny little smile and kicked at a stone on the road. "Well, its true, I was really angry for a bit. Today I came early so I waited for a really long time. Then I didn't know what had happened to you. You could have had an accident or something. So then I was worried and then scared that I would be late for school."

"What can we do, so that this doesn't happen again?" asked Samuel. "If something like this happens again we need not to be angry with each other."

"I would like to know where you are, so that I do not have to wait so long and so that I need not worry that something bad has happened" said John,

The two friends decided to brainstorm to see how many solutions they could find. They knew not to interrupt or make fun of the other's suggestion even if they couldn't see how it could work. Some of the solutions weren't very realistic, like having one person walk to the other person's house to see why the other one was late. In the morning there was just not enough time. Using the telephone was a good solution but not realistic as neither Samuel nor John had a phone at their house.

But they were able to agree on two ideas. First, they both agreed that two minutes was long enough to wait and that one person would not be angry with the other if one of them went ahead to school after two minutes. Second, they agreed that if one student were late, that they would give each other a special sign to show, silently, that everything was all right and that there was no anger.

"Both of these solutions are possible and they will solve our problem," said Samuel. "Thanks for working that out with me." John laughed and threw his arm around Samuel's shoulder. "I feel better, too. We may have other problems, but we can work them out if we just agree to talk about them without getting angry."

### **Comprehension Questions**

1. How did the students know each other?
2. What did they often do together?
3. What happened to make Samuel late?
4. Were the students angry at each other?
5. What did they do instead of getting angry?

## New Clothes

At last some new clothes! John felt proud in his new white shirt and brown trousers. Both the shirt and trousers fitted well and as he had grown so much recently it was good to have clothes that really fitted and that looked good. He dressed carefully and then thought that perhaps a walk down to the market would be good to show off the clothes to his friends.

It had been raining for almost a week but now the sky was clear and the rain had stopped. John felt happy as he walked carefully around the puddles of muddy water on the road. Some people called out; joking with him about his new clothes and he walked a little straighter, feeling proud. Hardly anybody in the village ever had new clothes. John admired himself as he walked and wondered what his friends would say and if they would be jealous. There was that very pretty girl too, John wondered what she would think of him now. He saw his friends up ahead near the coffee shop. And the pretty girl was with them as well. John waved and walked more quickly with his chest pushed out to show off the fit of his shirt.

Just then, a boy riding a bike came very fast around the corner. He called out but came straight on; right through a big muddy puddle. John was showered in dirty water. He couldn't believe it. Brand new clothes, no longer crisp and clean they were now all wet and muddy. The boy wobbled on his bicycle but kept riding.

'Hey you, come back here. Look what you have done!' shouted John. Then he called to his friends:

'Hey stop that boy, look what he has done to my clothes'. His friends laughed but stopped the boy who got off his bike and stood looking scared as John ran up to him. John was so angry, he wanted to hit the boy. Hit him hard: to make him sorry that he had ever ridden his bike through the market like that.

Before he could open his mouth to yell at the fool with the bike, the boy spoke first:

'Why didn't you move when I called out to you, do you think you are the king of the road?' asked the boy. John could see that he was now looking both scared and angry. John stopped with his mouth open: why was the boy yelling at him? He was the one who had nearly been knocked down and who was now all wet and muddy. He was the one justified in being angry not the fool with the bike. But the boy was still talking loudly and insulting John with every word:

'You walk along so proud, not caring for anybody but yourself. Too proud to even look where you are going'. John's friends were laughing now, even the pretty girl was smiling behind her hand.

'Wait a minute' spluttered John, 'I was walking along minding my own business, you were the one riding dangerously, not me and now look what you have done' he pointed at his clothes. It was silly but he could feel his face go hot and tears start behind his eyes. He certainly would not cry in front of all these people. And that made him angrier.

His friend Steve stepped between John and the boy with the bike. 'Wait a minute' he said. 'Are either of you hurt?' Both boys shook their heads but slowly.

'Right' said Steve, 'It seems that the only hurt is some dirty water and some damaged pride. Is this really worth a fight?'

'But he insulted me, calling proud and bighead' said John. The boy with the bike suddenly hung his head.

'I didn't mean to call you names, but you looked so angry and I was scared. You are much bigger than me and these are all your friends, I thought you would beat me up or take my bike or something'. John felt cold inside. This was even worse than being wet and muddy. This boy, this small boy, really thought that John was a bully. Suddenly John felt ashamed. If Steve hadn't stepped in, perhaps he would have bullied the boy. He noticed now that the boy was much smaller than him and that the bike was really too big for him to control properly. John felt sorry; sorry that he had got so angry, deep in his heart he knew that somehow the boy was right. He had been proud, he wanted to be the king of the road in front of his friends and the pretty girl. But Steve was right, the clothes would be fine after being washed and his friends could still see that they were nice clothes and anyway it wasn't good to be so proud.

He put his hand out to the boy 'What is your name anyway?' he asked. The boy looked at him shyly. 'My name is Martin and I am really sorry about the mud and water...' he waved one hand at John's clothes while shaking John's hand.

'You see, it is not really my bike, it is my uncle's and it is too big for me but I really wanted to ride it and then I couldn't find the brakes and ..... and, well, I wanted to prove that I was big enough to be a friend of yours. I've seen you before and ... well I'm sorry.'

John was surprised and glad. The boy had wanted to show off to him! He laughed and put his arm on the boy's shoulder and whispered to him quietly:

'Perhaps we were both showing off a bit and look at us now: both muddy and wet and nearly in a fight. I wanted to show off my clothes and you wanted to show off the bike. My father always says 'Pride comes before a fall' but I never knew what that meant until now.'

The smaller boy laughed as well 'My grandmother says the same thing.'

'Come and have a soda' said Steve, 'soon it will be raining again and while there will be more mud at least you can hang your clothes in the rain and get them clean!'

The friends all laughed and walked together into the coffee shop.

### **Comprehension questions**

1. Why did John need new clothes?
2. What new clothes did he have?
3. Why was John proud to go out in these new clothes?
4. Do you think that John was especially angry when he was splashed because his friends saw it happen? Why do you think so?
5. How would you feel if you were John? What would you do?
6. Why did the small boy ride so badly on the bicycle?
7. Why did the small boy start insulting John?
8. Why did Steve step between the two boys?
9. Why did the boys decide to become friends?
10. Explain the proverb: 'Pride comes before a fall'.

## How Can We Decide?

Sharon and Jane were sisters; Sharon was 12 and Jane was 13. There were three other children in the family, all younger than Sharon and Jane, so the two girls had many responsibilities. There were four chores that had to be done each night: wash all the dinner dishes, bathe their youngest sister, be sure the fuel can was full for the next day and carry the garbage outside. There was very little time, because the girls also had homework to do.

In many ways the girls were the same. They both liked playing a bit after school, just to have some fun in their busy day, and they both loved their family very much. They were both strong and healthy, though Jane was older, taller and much stronger than Sharon.

There were also some differences in their personalities. Sharon was very good at school work; she loved being in school and always got excellent grades. She wanted to read all the time; so much that she often forgot to do her share of the chores at home. Mother had to remind Sharon that it was important that everybody shared the responsibilities of the family. Jane didn't like school very much; the homework was difficult and it seemed like a waste of time to her. She would much rather be playing with her brothers and youngest sister. Jane often put off doing her homework and sometimes didn't get it done at all. That was causing trouble with her mother because Jane's mother wanted all her children to finish school.

The girls usually shared the chores by doing them together, but it was getting more and more difficult to do that. Sharon wanted to do her school work as soon as they had played a bit and the chores felt that the chores could be done later, but often she just kept reading and writing and Jane had to say, "Sharon, I need help now! If we wait any longer we will be in trouble. We need to wash the dishes together and take out the garbage together." But then Jane would play and play with the little ones and leave her homework even though she really needed Sharon's help, then Sharon was tired and just wanted to go to sleep.

They also argued over who would fill the fuel can and who would bathe their younger sister. Jane wanted to bathe her younger sister because she loved playing with the baby very much and would have spent all night doing that. But that left filling the fuel can to Sharon and the can was heavy and it was hard for Sharon to lift.

The girls started to argue more and more about doing the chores until their mother finally said that she had heard enough! If the girls couldn't work out a plan for getting their homework and chores done without arguing, the girls would not be able to play after school at all and Mother would decide who would do each chore and when they would be done.

### Comprehension Questions

1. Do you think that the girls' personalities made it difficult for them to share the chores?
2. Should Sharon help Jane with her homework as part of her chores?
3. Is it really a chore if you like doing something, the way that Jane liked bathing the baby?
4. If doing well at school is important to the mother, should homework be part of the chores?
5. How do you think the girls should divide the chores?

## Who Can Help?

Raisa and Jane has been friends all their lives. They lived next door to each other and went to the same school and were in the same class.

But one day they had an argument. Later neither one could really tell what the argument was about, but both girls were so angry that they could not talk to each other and they started saying bad things about each other to others at school. Both parents were concerned, the girls had never had a fight like this in all of their lives.

‘Why don’t you talk to Raisa about it?’ asked Jane’s mother. Jane pressed her lips together.

‘Why should I talk to her?’ she asked. ‘It is all her fault and now she has been talking about me to others at school and saying bad things about me.’ Jane’s mother was shocked.

‘Have you done this, talking about Raisa to others and saying bad things?’ she asked.

‘A bit’ admitted Jane. ‘But she started it.’ Jane’s mother shook her head, she felt sure that the fault was on both sides but there was nothing she could say.

Everybody in the school it seemed knew that Raisa and Jane were no longer friends and that there had been a big fight. At their school there was a peer mediation group and students took it in turns to be part of the group to help solve problems in the school. This was not the usual sort of problem but one of the senior students went to Raisa and asked if she would like a mediator to help solve the problem between her and Jane. Raisa shook her head,

‘It was her fault, she started it. If she wants to solve the problem, go and talk to her.’ The mediator sighed but went to see Jane.

‘I have just talked to Raisa’ she said. ‘If you would like some help to solve the problem I am willing to help.’ Jane looked at his older girl whom she did not know very well, although others in school seemed to respect her.

‘Does Raisa want you to help?’ she asked.

‘Only if you do’ said the mediator smiling.

Both girls told the mediator their story. The mediator listened quietly and then asked the girls if they would tell their story in front of the other. Now that they had been honest telling their story, and having it listened to without interruption, each girl could see clearly what she had done to add to the quarrel as well as what the other had done. Jane was the first to agree but said quickly that only if Raisa would listen and not interrupt. The older girl smiled and went to see Raisa.

‘Jane is willing to try to solve the problem between you. Are you willing to try as well?’ she asked gently. Raisa nodded but then said

‘But Jane must listen to me when I tell her what is wrong, no interrupting and telling her own story.’ Again the mediator smiled and nodded.

‘Each of you will say what the problem is from your own point of view, each must listen without interruption – but really listen with an open heart and mind, and be willing to accept that the other person may be right in some ways.’ Jane nodded. She was not so angry now and telling the problem to the mediator had made her see that perhaps she had been a bit wrong as well.

The three girls sat together in a small circle. The mediator asked Raisa to speak first. Raisa told the problem and Jane could feel herself getting angry again: some parts were just so untrue and even the parts that were true were told so differently to how she saw them in her head. But she listened and did not say a word. Then it was her turn to speak. The mediator told her not to try to respond to what she thought that Raisa had said wrong, but just to tell the story as she saw it.

As Jane spoke she could see the similarities between her understanding and Raisa's understanding of the problem and her own. She struggled to be fair and honest but underneath she was still angry at how Raisa had twisted the story to suit herself. When she had finished the mediator talked about perceptions and how perceptions were not necessarily the truth although they could feel like the truth. Then she took the parts of the two stories that were the same and asked both girls if they agreed with these parts. Both Jane and Raisa nodded. Then the mediator took the parts that were different and asked each girl why they had felt this way. Slowly both Raisa and Jane came to understand that the parts that were different were either a misunderstanding or just a perception of what the other felt and what was the motive for acting as she had.

After an hour or so of talking, both Raisa and Jane could see clearly where each of them had been wrong. The mediator asked them how they felt about the problem. Raisa looked down and said quietly that she had been wrong to judge so quickly and not to ask Jane when the first misunderstanding occurred. Jane looked at her friend with tears in her eyes.

'I was wrong too, I should have listened and I should have asked you when I didn't understand. Instead I got angry and didn't want to talk to you at all.' Raisa nodded

'Me too, I should not have said those things; they were said in anger, I didn't mean them you know. But I was hurt because you are my oldest friend...'

The mediator took each girl by the hand.

'Can you see how this problem occurred?' she asked. 'By not talking together, by not asking when something went wrong. Most people don't try to solve problems. They simply blame the other and then they seem to enjoy the anger and hate.' Both Raisa and Jane nodded, they could see this very clearly now

'But it is hard to ask when the other person makes you so angry and so hurt' said Raisa. 'All you want to do is to hurt them in return.'

'That's true' said the mediator 'That's why if you are truly going to try to be peaceful you need to be very brave and be able to be strong enough to be emotionally honest and to understand that even when your feelings are hurt, or when your pride is hurt, you still need to stay honest and fair. This is not easy to do. If it were easy everybody could do it, but they cannot and that is why we have wars and fighting. If you can learn to do it now, while you are young, you will grow to be very wise and a true peacemaker.'

The girls nodded and then laughed. They hugged each other and then hugged the mediator too. Thanking her for her help, they walked away arm in arm, friends once more.

### **Comprehension questions**

1. What advice did Jane's mother give to Jane?
2. Why would Jane not take the advice?
3. How did the girls make the argument worse?
4. How did the mediator get the girls to talk to her?
5. How did she get them to talk to each other?
6. What are perceptions?
7. Explain the process of negotiation that the mediator went through with the girls.
8. How did the problem between the girls start?
9. Describe the skills the mediator used?
10. What sort of person do you need to be, so that you can be peaceful?

## What is the Problem?

Kris and Terry saw each other at the market in town once each month. Although they knew each other's names they had never really played together because they were at the market to help their parents.

Kris' mother sold vegetables that their whole family helped to grow. Terry's mother made beautiful baskets to sell. Both mothers needed the money to buy things that their families needed.

Terry and Kris each helped their mothers to carry goods to the market and they also had to help carry things home after market, but during the morning their help was not needed. Lots of boys who helped their parents stayed at the market all day and sometimes chased each other or played other games. Kris was shy, but one day he asked Terry if he would like to play. Terry said, "Yes, but I don't know what we can play. I'd like to practice football, but we don't have a ball." Kris thought for a bit and then remembered that he had an uncle who lived close by and he had a proper leather ball that perhaps they could borrow.

Kris asked Uncle Andres if they could borrow the ball. Uncle Andres said, "It is the only ball and I have to take it to the game tonight. Will you bring it to me by evening?" Kris laughed with joy. "Oh, yes," he said, "That will not be a problem. I promise I will get it bring it to the field where you play before the game starts.

Kris and Terry asked some of the other boys if they wanted to play and the group played hard for an hour or so and had great fun. They were very tired, and threw themselves down in the shade of the biggest tree. Terry and Kris began to talk and soon became good friends.

Kris' mother did not have such a good day at the market. Nobody seemed interested in vegetables and Kris was called away from resting in the shade to carry the vegetables on a big tray around the market so that people might buy. It was getting later and the sun was low in the sky but still the vegetables weren't all sold.

Kris started to worry that it was time for Uncle Andres's football game to start and he hadn't had time to run to the football field. Terry offered to take the ball to the field as his mother was just buying the last of the food she needed. Kris was very relieved. "Thanks Terry that is a big help." He told Terry how to get to the football field.

Terry took the ball and ran off but he couldn't find the field. He asked everybody he met but all the directions were very different and he became very confused. It was no good, it was starting to get very late and the sun was setting but still Terry could not find the field. Finally he ran as hard as he could back to the market to find Kris and get the directions again, but Kris had gone. Everybody had gone except for Terry's mother who was very angry that she had to wait and worry.

Next market day, Uncle Andres came to the stall where Kris' mother was selling her vegetables. He was very upset and took Kris aside. He said that he was humiliated at the soccer game because he didn't have the ball. The team had to play with a poor quality plastic ball and lost the game. Everyone blamed Andres, and Andres blamed Kris for being lazy and careless with a promise.

Kris' mother overheard the conversation and was shocked that Kris had broken a promise. This would cause trouble in the family and that would be very bad for everybody. She apologised to Uncle Andres and told Kris never to leave her side again while they were at the market.

Terry came with some of the other boys to the vegetable stall, to see if Kris could play. But Kris bunched his fists hard and yelled at Terry, "Why did you steal my uncle's football? I trusted you and you turned out to be a thief!"

"I'm not a thief!" screamed Terry. "You are the rotten one. You gave me bad directions and then when I came back you had gone! I was late getting back to the market and my mother was furious! I spent ages, running all over this town looking for your uncle."

Terry and Kris scowled at each other and Terry turned away feeling angry that Kris would think badly of him when he had tried so hard. Kris was angry because his uncle and his mother were both angry with him. The two boys turned away from each other upset and distrustful, thinking the worst of each other.

One of the other boys stepped between them. "Wait you two, why don't you talk about this? It seems there was just a misunderstanding."

Kris turned back "What is there to talk about? I thought he would do what he said and he didn't and now there are big problems in my family."

## **Part 2**

The new boy turned to Kris' mother "Please Mama, can Kris come and have a soda with us so we can try to fix this?" Kris' mother nodded and smiled. The boy turned back to Kris "Come on Kris, let's have a soda and talk about this properly."

Kris was still looking angry but he nodded and the three boys went off together. When they were sitting in the shade with a soda each, the new boy said, "Okay, there was obviously a problem last market day, do you want to talk about it and try to see what happened?" Kris and Terry both nodded silently. Then Terry said, "I think you should stay and help us to talk this through." The boy smiled, "What do you think Kris?" Kris nodded.

"Kris, can you tell us what happened?" asked the boy quietly. Kris took a deep breath and told the whole story including how angry his uncle had been that morning. Terry opened his mouth to interrupt but the boy put his hand on Terry's arm and said: "In a minute Terry, you can tell what happened from your side."

Terry then told how he had tried to find the field and how he had run all the way back to the market looking for Kris and how angry his mother had been. The boy nodded and said "It seems that both of you had your family angry at you even though you were trying to do the right thing". Both boys nodded. "How do you feel now?" asked the boy. Both boys mumbled that they were not so angry anymore as they could see what had happened. "So, now what do we need to do to fix this?"

Kris looked up, "My uncle, we need to make sure he gets his ball back and then, I suppose we should explain what happened and tell him that we are sorry" he said. Terry nodded. "I brought the ball with me, because I couldn't leave it with anyone. But I want him to know that it wasn't my fault. I really tried to give it back." Kris nodded, "I want him to know that it wasn't my fault either, I didn't break my promise but I had to obey my mother. None of this would have happened if we knew this town better, or if my mother had sold all her vegetables early."

The boy nodded at both Kris and Terry. "So, first we need to return the ball, then we need to explain to your uncle how you both tried. Is there anything else we need to do to fix things?" Terry kicked his feet in the dust. "I don't want to be called a thief and in front of everyone in the market. It is an insult." Kris looked up angrily, but closed his mouth hard and waited. The boy smiled at him and said: "Well Kris what else do you think should happen?" Kris shrugged and said "I don't want to be insulted either, but, but, well, I was really angry because both my mother and my uncle were angry with me and now it is my

fault that there are problems in the family. But I guess I should not have called you a thief, although you did take the ball.” Terry jumped to his feet “Only because there was nothing else I could do! I was in trouble too you know” he shouted. “I think we should go back and tell everyone in the market what happened, so they don’t think that I am a thief.” The boy patted the seat beside him, “Sit down Terry let’s talk this through. It seems that you want people to know the truth about what happened so that they don’t think you are a thief. Kris needs to make sure that his uncle and mother need to know the story so that they know that he didn’t break his promise and the ball must be returned. Is there anything else?” Kris nodded “I want him to apologise for calling me rotten.” He looked over at Terry.

Terry said slowly “I think it would be fair if we both take the ball back and we both explain not just to your mother and uncle but also to my mother who was really angry with me, so she knows I was not just running the streets. Then we should apologise to each other for the name calling.” He looked at Kris “If you apologise for calling me a liar, I apologise for calling you rotten” he said. “Is that fair?”

### **Comprehension Questions**

1. When did the plan to return the football, start to go wrong?
2. What feelings did Terry and Kris have then?
3. What words triggered the anger? What feelings did each person have then?
4. How did each person respond to the angry words?
5. Were any other people involved or affected by the angry words?
6. How did the presence of other people affect the growing argument?
7. What happened to Terry as a result of this upset?
8. What happened to Kris?
9. How was their relationship affected?
10. What will their days at the market be like now?

## Friends or Football?

Joshua and Peter had always been friends. They were in school together; but most importantly they played football together. Both were very good players and they had always played in positions where they could support each other; passing the ball so that they could score a goal. For four years they had been playing together on the winning team.

At school this year there was a new teacher for sports. The teacher wanted to build the skills of all the players not just the ones who were already good. He decided that one way of doing this was to choose the players for each team by random lot each time they played. That way, the skills of poorer players could be built and the teams would learn to build on the strengths of many different people. As well, nobody would always be in the poor team or be sure that they would always be on the winning team.

The first time that the teacher did this, Joshua and Peter were on opposite teams. Neither of them was happy about that! It was a much harder game than usual and the score was even with only a few minutes to go. Joshua took the ball and, without thinking, passed it directly to Peter as he had been doing for years.

Peter kicked the ball hard and straight: a goal!! The winning goal.

Joshua had forgotten that Peter was playing on the opposite team. Then the whistle blew. The boys on Joshua's team were angry with him, without that goal it would have been a tie but now they had lost.

Joshua was embarrassed and angry. But he was not sure just who he was angry with; himself or Peter. There was nothing he could say to explain to his team-mates so as soon as the bell went Joshua ran out of the school yard, not waiting for Peter.

Peter walked home alone that day but that evening he went to Joshua's house. He couldn't believe it when Joshua's father said that Peter should not come in because Joshua was sick and couldn't talk to him.

The next day was not much better. Peter walked to school alone and then he heard some other boys talking about the game. They told him that Joshua had said what a bad friend Peter had been to have taken advantage of a simple mistake like that.

Peter was shocked. But it was a game; what did Joshua expect? That was what you did in football. Peter started to get angry with Joshua for being such a baby about this whole incident. Did such a good friendship have to end over this?

### Comprehension questions

1. Why was Joshua angry?
2. If you were Peter, would you have kicked the goal?
3. Do you think Joshua acted like a baby?
4. What would you do if you were Peter?
5. What would you do if you were Joshua?