

Harmony

This year the Mini Vinnies theme is Harmony. This term is dedicated to learning about the people in your school. In Australia we refer to our country as being multi-cultural, but do we know about the different cultures that exist here? One way that we can ensure harmony within our own community is by being curious and willing to learn about other people's culture and values.

Map out your year!

1. Survey your school or get help from a teacher to find out what different cultures and religions are present within your school.
2. When you have identified the main cultures within your school learn about days that may be important to them and think about how it could be acknowledged or celebrated within your school – by doing this, people within your school are more likely to feel accepted and included.
3. Make a poster for your Mini Vinnies group (or school) listing all the important days so you can remember them. You may want to make one poster with all the days or break it into school terms or by culture.

Harmony Word Search

E	P	E	A	C	E	A	F	R
A	I	D	I	N	H	O	U	L
C	E	K	B	V	G	O	H	U
C	S	L	C	N	B	W	G	N
E	O	X	O	H	F	O	J	I
P	Z	R	G	A	O	R	L	T
T	T	I	R	I	K	L	U	Y
S	E	V	O	L	Q	D	K	L
N	H	A	R	M	O	N	Y	E

Accept

Neighbour

Love

Unity

Harmony

Strong

Peace

World

Finding Safety

Primary

To ensure this activity is a challenge we recommend you give students as little context as possible before the scenario.

Instructions

1. Each student is to get a blank piece of paper and a pen / pencil.
2. Ask students to list 7 things that are most important to them at the moment (example: friends, phone, education, football, etc.)
3. Present students with the following scenario:

Australia has been invaded! Your family has decided that to be safe they need to leave Australia. Your family heard that there is a place on the coast where you can get a boat to another country. It is too risky to use a car, so your family walks. You each have only a backpack and the clothes you are wearing now. After a few days you reach the coast and pay to get on the boat and go to another country. You have no idea which country you will arrive in.

4. Ask students what they would have packed in their backpack.
5. Get students to cross anything off the list of 7 important items that they would no longer have (or have access to) according to the scenario. Ask what would have been the hardest thing to lose.
6. Have students get into small groups to debrief on the activity.
 - What may have been challenging?
 - What emotions would they experience?
 - How long do you think it would take to walk to the coast? Note: From Canberra to Batehaven it is 33 hours.

Finding Safety

Secondary

To ensure this activity is a challenge we recommend you give students as little context as possible before the scenario.

Instructions

1. Each student is to get a blank piece of paper and a pen / pencil.
2. Ask students to list 7 things that are most important to them at the moment (example: friends, phone, education, football, etc.)
3. Present students with the following scenario:

Australia has been invaded with its capital cities the main target. Australia is being quickly overrun with its people being forced out of education and into labor, anyone who refused is executed on sight. Families are being separated, your family decides to try and escape. You and your family travel on foot during the night to try to stay more hidden and have one backpack each. After a few days you reach the coast and buy one-way tickets for an illegal boat. You have no idea which country you will land in.

4. Ask students what they would have packed in their backpack.
5. Get students to cross anything off the list of 7 important items that they would no longer have (or have access to) according to the scenario. Ask what would have been the hardest thing to lose.
6. Have students get into small groups to debrief on the activity so far.
 - What may have been challenging?
 - What emotions would they experience?
7. Present students with the following scenario

Your boat lands in New Caledonia. You are met by some people from UNHCR (who support refugees such as yourself). They help your family to get a flight to a country accepting refugees. Your family is very lucky as there are limited amounts of people that can be given third country resettlement and only a small percentage of Australia's will be able to seek support (legally). With over 110 million forcibly displaced people, (over 36-million of them being refugees), only an average of 101,000 resettle a year.

8. Assign students with a country that will resettle them
 - Quebec, Canada (language: French)
 - Gothenburg, Sweden (language: Swedish)
 - Kristiansund, Norway (language: Norwegian)
 - Ittersbach, Germany (language: German)
 - Helsinki, Finland (language: Finnish)

9. In small groups get students to discuss the following
 - What are your thoughts on the fact that there are over 110-million people forcefully displaced (this does not include those who would be displaced due to this scenario) and that only 101,000 people are resettled each year
 - Considering the scenario: Australia has a population of 25.69-million. With the current wars, conflicts and natural disasters occurring in the world, how could other countries help displaced Australian's? Would it be possible? Do some people deserve asylum over other people (for example: children, people who are ill, politicians)?, politicians)?
 - What would you need in your new country?
 - How would you want to be treated in your new country?
 - Do you know the language? If not, how would you learn it?

Notes: Forcibly displaced includes people who have had to leave their home due to war, natural disasters, human rights violations and the impacts of climate change

Global Figures Resource: <https://www.nrc.no/shorthand/fr/a-few-countries-take-responsibility-for-most-of-the-worlds-refugees/index.html>

UNHCR Resource: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>

Global Conflicts

Secondary

The 2024 Justice Network has decided to focus on the war in Gaza in Term 1.

Below are some topics that could be explored by your Social Justice Group. Research one or more of the following conflicts. Discuss what individuals or the school can do to support people affected by these conflicts. Your group may also want to consider inviting a guest speaker to your meeting to further discuss the conflicts.

Conflicts in 2024

1. Conflicts between China and Taiwan,
2. The war in Ukraine,
3. The war in Gaza (P Stares, 2024).

Conflicts between China and Taiwan

Optional resources

Explained: The China-Taiwan dispute POLITICO (December 2022)

This video explores the military threat of People's Republic of China (PRC) towards Taiwan.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sv4nbLGY8hk>

Gravitas Plus: The China-Taiwan Conflict (August 2022)

This video follows the history of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZKBarSP1gY>

Why China is losing the microchip war (February 2023)

This video gives more context as to one of the reasons the People's Republic of China wants to enforce "One China" and why the United States of America is supporting Taiwan to resist this. The video also gives insight into the tension between the United States of America and the People's Republic of China.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uh4QGey2zTk>

Discussion Points

- What are the differing perspectives towards this conflict?
 - People's Republic of China: government and citizens
 - Taiwan: government and citizens
 - United States of America: government
- Is this conflict solely based on microchips?
How has the history of PRC and Taiwan impacted the conflict today?
- We may not be in government power but what can we do to support people affected by this conflict?
 - How can we stay updated?
 - How do we contribute to harmony?

The War in Ukraine

Optional Resources

Putin's war on Ukraine, explained (March 2022)

This video gives insight into why Putin ordered the invasion of Ukraine and the complexities of NATO involvement.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVu8QbxafJE>

Russian Invasion of Ukraine: A visual timeline of the war ABC News (February 2023)

This video provides an overview of the war in Ukraine from February 2022 to February 2023.

Trigger warning: includes some graphic images of war

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BvOBW3FwbA>

The civilian victims of the war in Ukraine BBC News (January 2024)

This news story interviews the family of a young girl who was killed by a Russian rocket.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AsSraXYOWxE>

War in Ukraine (January 2024)

This website gives further background to the War in Ukraine

<https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-ukraine>

Discussion Points

- Why did Putin order the invasion of Ukraine?
- What might be the impacts of the war in affected areas?
 - What are some challenges that people living in Russian occupied areas might face?
 - For people still living in Ukraine, what would life be like for them? (power cuts, bombings, lack of food and shelter etc)
- What do people who have been displaced by war need?
- What actions can we take to support Ukrainians?

The War in Gaza

Optional resources

The Israel-Palestine conflict: a brief, simple history (January 2016)

This video is 8 years old but explains the complex history between Israel and Palestine that helps our understanding of the war today.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRYZjOuUnlU>

Israeli hostage Yarden Roman-Gat shares details of her captivity in Gaza 60 Minutes (December 2023)

This video follows the story of Yarden Roman-Gat, who was taken hostage during the current war in Gaza. Yarden discusses her experience of her capture, captivity, and release.

Trigger warnings: mentions of sexual harassment and brief mentions regarding the fear of potential sexual assault.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixynqr-88gE>

The origins of the Hamas-Israel war explained ABC News (October 2023)

This video gives a brief overview of why the war in Gaza began.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zsNj8DiJv-A>

Discussion Points

- What is the history of the war?
- In 2022, we accepted 17,325 refugees into Australia. How can we support refugees?
 - How can we be inclusive?
 - How can we support them (given that they often are not allowed to work or get government support for some time, in line with visa requirements)?