

“Magkapitbahay”

Peace Concept: INITIATING COMMUNICATION

I. OBJECTIVES

1. To be able to define communication;
2. To be able to explain the importance of initiating communication in resolving conflict.

II. SUMMARY OF EPISODE

Mr. Jun Ureta, a photojournalist, goes to Majid’s barrio to take candid photos of ordinary folk for his school’s foundation day. Some of his photos clear up the dispute between his father and their neighbor.

Majid and Baste are schoolmates and live side by side on a street where big trees shed leaves that almost cover the road. When Baste’s mother sweeps the leaves, she also cleans the front area of their neighbor, Majid’s house. She observes that when Majid’s father comes home, he does not even notice how clean their front area is. She does not know either that when they leave for the province, it is her neighbor who sweeps the road including the front part of their house. Just like him, she also does not notice that someone cleans their front area. One evening, she ties their dog outside their gate near their neighbor’s entrance. She does not know that her neighbor dislikes dogs; so when Majid’s father comes home and sees a dog near his house he throws a pail of water to drive it away. Baste’s mother is very offended by this gesture and the misunderstanding between them grows worse.

On the school’s foundation day, Majid’s father is shocked to see a photo of his neighbor sweeping the leaves in front of his house. Likewise, Baste’s mother sees a photo of her neighbor sweeping the front of her house. They realize that they were wrong about each other. Majid later on realizes that the dispute would have been resolved if someone took the initiative to talk and clarify things.

III. SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

A. Pre-viewing

To introduce this episode, an activity to help children understand the value communication can be done.

Birthday List

Ask them to arrange themselves according to their birthdays without verbally communicating with each other. They can only use gestures and cannot utter any sound. The youngest will be in front of the line and the oldest at the back. Younger children can just arrange themselves according to their ages.

After the activity, ask them how they felt during the activity. How long did it take to finish? How did they do it? Why was it difficult? Conclude the activity by stressing how important it was to be able to communicate. For instance, we can easily ask questions and also instruct others about what they need to do.

Introduce the episode by saying that today we will watch two neighbors who had a hard time resolving their disputes because of lack of communication.

B. Post-viewing

The following questions for discussion are being suggested:

1. What was the cause of the feud between the Majid’s father and Baste’s mother? How did it get worse?

2. How was their misunderstanding resolved? What made them realize their mistake?

3. How else could they have resolved their problem? What could have been done?

4. Why is initiating communication important?

During the sharing, point out advantages of making the first move to talk and to clarify things with the other person. The following are some of them:

- We avoid misjudging the other person.
- We can prevent a petty misunderstanding from turning into a big conflict.

- We can find out what we did wrong or how we have unintentionally offended the other person.
- The other person will follow your example and would also go straight to you to clarify matters.

Journal Writing

In their Peace Journal, they can create their own story about how initiating dialogue with another person can prevent misunderstanding between them. The adult can give possible situations to help them begin their story. They can continue to develop the story. What is important is the dialogue or conversation which will prevent a possible cause of conflict. For example, their neighbor is playing music so loudly and they cannot study properly. How will they continue the story? How will they initiate the dialogue? What will they say? How will this possible cause of conflict be resolved by initiating communication?

IV. INITIATING COMMUNICATION AS PEACE CONCEPTS

The lack of initiative to communicate in order to resolve disputes is common among Filipinos. We, in general, practice “parinig” that is, to talk negatively and loud enough to make sure that the other person will hear what we say but we never go directly to address or to talk to the person. In the episode, Baste’s mother, commented about the leaves when Majid and his father were on the way out of their house. She did not approach her neighbor directly and nicely and commented about the volume of the leaves that fall on the road. Maybe if she did, her neighbor would have noticed that she was kind enough to include cleaning his side.

To initiate means we make the first move. We are not passive but actively taking part in finding the solution. Initiating communication is creating the opportunity to peacefully clarify and to talk about what is bothering us. It is very important in upholding peace because we nip the conflict in the bud.