

Chapter 2 Discovering a New World



General Information

Topic

Being part of a community implies responsibilities.

Content

- ▶ Fitting in
- ▶ When in Rome, do as the Romans do
- ▶ Attitude and aptitude
- ▶ Rules and responsibilities

Objectives

Knowing

- ▶ To understand the need for rules, norms and responsibilities in good community living.

Accepting

- ▶ To feel the importance of following rules in order to facilitate and optimise life in common.

Doing

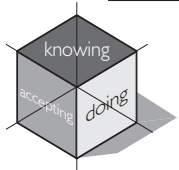
- ▶ To make an effort to co-operate, with rules and norms as the best way to fit into a community and help it flourish.

Areas of Human Development to Be Emphasised

- ▶ Group skills (getting along, friendship)
- ▶ Social
- ▶ Respect for the social group
- ▶ Openness to group experience
- ▶ The relationship between doing right and happiness
- ▶ Growing in freedom and responsibility

Class Plan

1 Knowing



Motivation

Ask the students if they have ever been 'the new kid' at school or on the block or as part of a sports or community group. Ask them how they felt at first, how they adjusted, and how others helped them to adjust.

Story context:

Alice and Charlie must adjust to going to a new school. Their teacher welcomes them, but emphasises that they must participate in class chores. Charlie does so eagerly, but Alice holds back, eventually getting into a fight with Charlie and having a talk with her new teacher.

Introduction

Alice learns the hard way that she must invest in the new situation responsibly if she wants to be happy in it.

Presentation

Key Ideas

- ▶ Everyone needs others and is needed by others
- ▶ This need implies responsibilities
- ▶ Rules and responsibilities help people get along in an orderly and harmonious way

Topic Development

A Fitting in

Everyone wants to fit in and be a part of things. Participation and belonging are key human needs. If students have ever been the 'new kid' they know how awkward and bad they can feel until they have a solid place in the new scheme of things.

Alice doesn't fit in straight away, which is natural. But she is only hurting herself with her attitude. Point out that when the teacher suggests that doing chores together is a great way to make friends, Alice sullenly thinks to herself that she doesn't want to make friends. Ask students if they think this is really how Alice feels. Contrast Alice's attitude with Charlie's, which is much healthier:

Charlie looked down the list of jobs. Cleaning the boards sounded good! A boy named Ron was already cleaning them.

"Hi," Charlie said to Ron. "Can I help you clean the boards?"

"Sure," said Ron.

Alice's attitude is far less healthy: *Alice ignored the jobs list. Why should she work for this stupid school!*

Because he has already approached Ron about chores, Charlie is able to strike up a friendship with him: *Outside, Charlie played with Ron. In contrast, Alice stayed by herself.* What is more, when Charlie comes up to see how she is and is impatient with her attitude, she gets mad, punches him, and gets in trouble.

Before we judge Alice too harshly, though, we need to recognise how hard it is to adjust to a new situation, while remembering that a person's attitude makes a big difference. We must also realise that Alice's attitude is a product of a misplaced loyalty and love of her friends.

Mrs. Patterson is very helpful to Alice. She recounts the time when her kitten died. How many students have had a pet die only to have their parents say right away, "We'll get you another"? At the moment of grieving over the lost pet, a child usually isn't ready to think about having another pet right away. They

have to grieve. That's why, as Mrs. Patterson tells Alice, when we lose something, we have to do something to acknowledge that loss before we are ready to go on. She suggests that Alice write a goodbye letter to her old classmates as a way to close off the wounds of leaving them before starting to make new friends. Mention to students that grieving and saying goodbye are rituals that help us to cope with loss.

B When in Rome, do as the Romans do.

Direct students' attention to the Inset at the end of the chapter in their book (p.13).

When in Rome, do as the Romans do

This piece of advice is at least 2000 years old. It's a good way to adjust to new surroundings: to fit in and do like the others.

Ask students what they think this saying means and if they think it is good advice when coming into a new situation and trying to fit in.

C Attitude and Aptitude

A wise person once said there is no such thing as 'can't'. There is only 'won't'. Others say you can do anything you set your mind to. These are instructions in attitude. It doesn't mean that wanting something will bring it to us; wanting it is the first step... Then comes the hard work to reach what we want.

Ask students what they think 'attitude' means. Define attitude for the students as a 'mental position with regard to a fact or state'. Ask students what is Alice's mental position towards going to the new school? What is Charlie's?

Ask students what they think 'aptitude' is. Only one letter is different between attitude and aptitude, but they means very different things. 'Aptitude' means 'a natural ability or talent; a capacity for learning'. Students may already have noticed that they are better at some things than others: maybe maths comes easily to them, but languages do not; football is a breeze, but rollerblading is impossible. Something they are naturally good at is something they have an 'aptitude' for.

Yet it is important to emphasise that aptitude without a good attitude is almost worthless. As Mark Twain said, the man who never reads a book is no better off than the man who can't read one. Talents and aptitudes need to be used, worked at and practised with an attitude of determination to improve, in order to develop maximally.

Charlie probably doesn't have any more aptitude for making friends, fitting in and adjusting to a new situation than Alice does. He does have a more willing attitude and is not hanging on to the past, however. This is why he enjoys an easier time of it at the new school than Alice does.

He chides her: "*Alice, why don't you join in and have some fun, like me? There are some nice people here!*"

D Rules and Responsibilities

These sound like dull, heavy, words. But they are what help us get along harmoniously in our world, and they lead to happiness and contentment as well as good relationships.

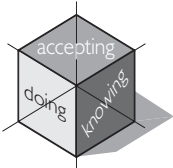
Rules are there to protect us, not to harm us, defeat us or burden us. A rule like 'no hitting' protects all of us. How would Alice like to attend a school where there was no rule against hitting? How would anyone? Would we enjoy living in a society where there were no rules about killing people? Since rules protect us, we have to uphold them in regard to others.

A simple illustration is red and green traffic lights. Draw a double-lined cross on the board. With erasers, show a car going horizontally and a car going vertically. Demonstrate what happens when both cars obey the traffic lights. Then demonstrate what happens when one of the cars disobeys a red traffic light.

Ask the students if they have seen the movie *The Lion King*. What happened to Simba when he disobeyed his father's rule not to go into certain areas? He almost got eaten by hyenas!

Taking responsibility in a new situation is a great way to start 'fitting in'. It makes you a participant and it ensures belonging. We've already said that this is an important desire in human beings to participate and belong. Mrs. Patterson is doing Charlie and Alice a favour by asking them to participate in the class jobs. It is, as she says, a great way to make new friends. Advise them that if they join a new group or club, are new in school or in a group, the best way to feel a part of things is to start taking responsibility by volunteering to help out.

2 Accepting



Guided Work

Activity 2A 'Grieving Rituals'

How do we get over a loss? Mrs. Patterson said she held a funeral for her dead kitten. Have the children ever held a funeral for a pet? Ask volunteers to describe such events. Did it help ease the pain of the loss? Explain that crying, mourning, burial rites and ceremonies all help everyone begin to adjust to the changes when there is a loss.

Activity 2B 'Do as the Roman do'

Ask students to imagine themselves entering several new situations and how a person would 'Do as the Roman do'. Lead students to Activity 2 in their Student Books (p.138):

Activity 2B

Imagine yourself in the following situations. How would you 'do as the Romans do'?

- You go into a church you have never been in before. Everyone is kneeling and holding a special book open.
- You go into a town meeting. All the men and women have removed their hats. You are wearing a hat.
- You go into a library talking to a friend. There are many signs saying, "No talking."
- You are in a foreign country where people greet one another by turning their backs. You see someone you would like to meet.

Activity 2C

Ask the students to look at Activity 2C in their Student Book (p.139) and motivate them to work in groups, taking different parts of the house.

Activity 2C

Draw a picture of all the rooms in your house. Now write down a job that needs to be done in each room. For example: the bathroom. The sink must be cleaned often, with disinfectant. Next, write a rule for each room. An example would be: Kitchen: do not touch the hob or oven when it is hot.

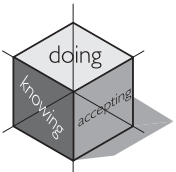
Activity 2D

Ask students to discuss the question in Activity 2D in their Student Books (p.139) and exchange opinions about having or not having rules at School or at Home.

Activity 2D

What are the benefits of having jobs and rules at home or at school?

3 Doing



Evaluation

Students should show some comprehension of how upholding rules and responsibilities helps a person fit in and keeps things running smoothly.

They should have incorporated 'When in Rome, do as the Romans do' into their memory-bank of famous sayings.

They should understand the concept of closure in alleviating grief over a loss of any kind.

Activity 2A

Ask the class if they have experienced any moment of grieving. Be careful not to invade any personal space or to embarrass. Explain that remembering our loved ones helps us to adapt to change and loss.

Activity 2B

Try to hear as many opinions as possible in order to find a consensus in the classroom.

Activity 2C

After the students have worked on each part of the house, lead a discussion with the whole class to hear their points of view. Try to emphasise that rules might be different according to each household, but all need rules.

Activity 2D

Lead a brief debate with the students about having or not having rules at home and school.

Specific Resolutions

Ask students to notice during the week what groups they are part of throughout a day.

Ask students to list and perform two responsibilities they can do in each group to fit in better and promote belonging.