

Yr 2 Age 5-6

General Theme: Friendship and the Classroom as a moral community

Module 1 (1st term): Friendship

Introduction

This module is about friendship understood as a special kind of sharing, a notion which is given special importance and explored in some depth. The discussions used should be interspersed with stories of friendship, or relating to friendship in this way, as a kind of sharing of things, experiences, and activities together. The stories told should explore, discuss and illustrate the importance of friendship and of the values associated with it; loyalty, truthfulness, respect, sensitivity to the needs of others, solidarity, help, and so on – these are qualities that children need to be helped to identify with and to regard as valuable in their relationships with others. Children are also led to begin to explore the differences between friends, acquaintances, and strangers. The idea of conflict, of quarrelling or fighting with someone, of someone not being my friend, is introduced for the first time to be taken up more fully in Module 2.

Objectives:

- to explore the relationship of friendship in order to sensitize children to its different forms, meanings, and dimensions;
- to get the children to explore and discuss the importance of friendship in their lives;
- to sensitize the children to the pain of those who are friendless, who have no friends, or are deprived of them;
- to instil a better understanding in children of the difference between friend, acquaintance, and stranger;
- to explore the notions of friend, special friend, acquaintance, stranger, ‘telling on’, trusting, intimacy (or closeness) sharing, giving and taking, equality;
- to take the notion of pet further by discussing whether one’s pet can be one’s friend;
- to develop the skills of discussing, narrating, exploring, explaining, imagining, reasoning, media gathering, empathising, self-examining, comparing;
- to explore the values of solidarity, friendship, help, comfort, understanding, protection, respect, giving, politeness.

Teaching Strategy

Tools: Narrative, understanding, exposition, discussion, exploration, story-telling, sensitization, comparison.

Resources: Stories, narrative, cartoons, videos, play acting, documentaries, docudramas, others.

Method

- (a) Children are led to explore the notion of a **friend** as someone who, in general terms, **means one well** and who one **trusts**, feels **familiar** with, and experiences **affection** for. To begin with they are asked who are the people they would identify as their friends, not their names (though it doesn't matter if they mention names), but generally. They are led to consider whether they regard their relatives, their parents to begin with, then their siblings if they have any, then their other relatives, as their friends. Then whether they have friends who are not their relatives, and who they are. Finally whether they regard their class-mates, for instance, as their friends, their teacher, and other grown-ups, whether their pets, if they have any, are their friends – but the matter is not explored deeper because this will come later.
- (b) The next question to be asked is whether everyone is my friend. And this leads into the question what being a friend **means**, who qualifies – how they would describe a friend, what his or her qualities would be. Their answers are collected, listed, and collected together by the teacher to create a rough composite picture of a friend and of the qualities of friendship. That picture/description is then discussed with the children and completed with additional suggestions that can come out of the discussion, if any. The teacher will help by adding his or her own suggestions of what friends do for each other, how they treat each other, and what they should mean for each other – the key notion and value to introduce here should be that of **sharing**. Stories are explored using different media about friendship, acts of friendship, and of becoming friends as acts of sharing.
- (c) Children are led to explore the notion of sharing as a social form of interacting with other – what does it mean to share? They are asked to discuss what kinds of relationships sharing with others implies, what are the things they share with their friends. The question is raised whether sharing always imply relationships of **giving** and **taking** which are the key notions in sharing? Is it possible to share something in the sense of giving without taking anything in return? Children are asked to give examples of this and to discuss them. What are the respective values of giving and taking, and which of the two denotes a gesture of friendship? The general purpose here is to explore the notion of sharing through stories and cartoons provided by the teacher and discussed with the children, and through anecdotes, stories of sharing, children provide themselves.
- (d) Children are asked to discuss special occasions of sharing with others where one gives gifts, like birthdays, Christmas, Easter, and other festivities and occasions, to discuss the value of such giving, and of giving in its different forms; its value as a sign of friendship, or a form of recognition, or of appreciation, or reward.

- (e) The question that follows is whether we consider all our friends as the same or **equal** or whether there are different kinds of friends, some more special than others. They are asked to say whether they have special friends and to discuss whether it is important to have special friends. Then to describe what makes a friend 'special' – the example is given to them of relatives who are special because they are **family**. The notion of family which was already explored in Module 1 of Year 1, now needs to be returned to in connection with the notion of friendship and explored further. The question to be explored is what do I share with the other members of my family which makes them my family **special** friends.
- (f) The next question is who are my special friends apart from my family – and what one does with one's special friends, what it is one shares with them that makes them special. The idea of special friends is connected with the qualities of intimacy, trust, etc., with a special kind of sharing that does not exist with ordinary friends. The question what it is one shares with special friends is discussed extensively and with stories and anecdotes. The children are returned to the question whether they have special friends of their own (without mentioning names) and to describe what makes these friends special for them – what they share with special friends.
- (g) Children are asked to discuss if we should always help a **friend** when she or he asks for it or is in need. Then whether we should help even when we know that the help we give is harmful to him or her or to others? Children are asked to identify and discuss occasions when we should not feel obliged to help – relevant stories should be brought in by the teacher to aid and enliven the activity.
- (h) Next the children are asked whether they know of children who have no friends who nobody plays with, who are **left out**, who play alone, and why they think this is so. They are asked to discuss the experience of not having friends or not having anyone to play with, of being left out, and invited to tell stories about children who are friendless or find it hard to make friends. The teacher then narrates or shows stories of being left out connected with bullying which should be used to generate a discussion on the subject of **exclusion**. Children are invited to describe, from personal anecdotes or stories they know, how it feels to be excluded – what kind of suffering it creates for those who experience it. The stories are reinforced with the strategy of empathy where the children are asked to put themselves in the shoes of those who are friendless, who nobody plays with.
- (i) The next question is whether they should do anything about friendless children if they know of any? Why should I care that some children are left out of play? Am I a part of the reason or *the* reason why this is so? The children are invited to examine themselves, introducing a new skill. Is it my **responsibility** to mend matters if it is my fault, to do something about it? And if it is not my fault? Do I think that there are children who *should* (who **deserve** to) be left out? Why? Being left out is represented by the teacher as not something friends do, as not consistent with friendship. The teacher then suggests **the right to play**, putting it to the children for discussion and

adoption as a recognised right in the classroom emphasising and repeating the word **right** but not looking for any deep examination of it.

- (j) Finally, children are returned to the fact that not everyone is my friend, and asked who is **not** their friend. They will predictably mention other children they may have fallen out with, possibly including former friends who are not now their friends and may include class or school mates. The discussion of this kind of non-friends will be left to the next module. The object is to identify people who are not one's friends because one does not **know** them, or one does not know them enough to count them as one's friends. These are **mere acquaintances** and **complete strangers** who one does not know at all. The question to be discussed but not taken into depth is how we should treat non-friends of this kind differently from friends, and how we should treat them as the same

Module 2 (2nd term): The classroom as a moral community

Introduction

The main aim of this module is to introduce the children to the idea of their classroom as a **moral** community; a community of friends with rights and obligations. The first discussion will return them to the notion of being a friend explored in Module 1 to turn to the question whether one's class-mates are one's friends, and if so what kind. The point that needs to be brought out with the children is that they share their life in the classroom with their classmates just as they share their life with their family in their home – the analogy will be pursued throughout. The example of the family should be used to take the discussion into the notion of a community; a kind of life that requires more than just sharing a friendship. The family is discussed again as an example of community deepening the previous discussion in Module 2 of the previous year – children are asked to identify what the characteristics of the family as a community are. The discussion is then switched to the class to see how many of these characteristics hold for it also. The class is identified with the children as a kind of community similar in some senses but also different in others from the family. The general purpose is to lead the children to value the inclusion that being a community implies and not just friendship as an important quality of their lives in the classroom. To lead them to the idea that being a community binds them to each other in different ways that involve how they communicate with, care, share, respect the difference, empathise, show solidarity with, and so on, their classmates. The moral notions of obligation and right are also brought into the discussions at this stage

Objectives

- to extend the notion of a friend to classmates; to get the children to see their classmates as friends;
- to introduce classroom friendship as a special kind of relationship based on the perception of the class as a community;

- to begin to introduce moral issues for discussion and exploration and through them highlight key values that are shared by a moral community;
- to sensitize the children to harm and hurting others as moral issues and acts contrary to friendship;
- to sensitize the children to the fact and immorality of different kinds of bullying and to begin to foster, through the idea of community, a spirit of solidarity with victimised classmates;
- to explore the notions of: special friends, relationships, sharing, community, telling, teasing, loyalty, harm, hurt, affection, common purpose and interest, acting together, support, leaving out, getting one's own back, sharing, rule-making, solidarity, deserving, forgiveness, making-up;
- to introduce the moral principles of rightness, obligation, and right (to play) into the children's vocabulary and thinking;
- to further cultivate the skills of discussing, narrating, exploring, explaining, imagining, reasoning, media gathering, empathising, comparing;
- to explore the values of: loyalty, betrayal, affection, sharing together, solidarity, acting together, supporting others, falling out, forgiveness, making-up, caring for, respecting difference, empathising.

Teaching strategy

Tools: Narrative, exposition, discussion, exploration, story-telling, comparison.

Resources: Stories, narrative, cartoons, videos, play acting, documentaries, docudramas, others.

Method

- (a) Children are returned to the discussion where they identified their class-mates as their friends. They are asked to explore this aspect of friendship more widely and deeply, discussing what kinds of friends they regard their class-mates to be, how they are different from their other friends and how they are similar. In this manner the qualities of friendship brought out in the previous module are briefly recalled and enumerated. This discussion is the first step towards the exploration of **relationships** in the classroom between members who regard themselves as a moral community.
- (b) The point of entry is again through the notion of **sharing**. The children are asked to return to the discussion of what they share with their family at home and to the intimate relationships of the family circle which was described in that discussion as a community. The idea of **community** is returned to and explored deeper to identify what is **shared** in a community, namely **common purposes** and **interests**,

communication and ways of **acting together** and **regarding each other** marked by the values of **loyalty**, **solidarity** or **support** for each other.

- (c) The children are asked, with the teacher's help, to itemize what they share together as a class and how this is similar with or varies with what they share with their family. The discussion leads them to consider whether the classroom can be described as another home they share with their teacher and classmates, the class another family and therefore also a community. The teacher should help the children reach the conclusion that the class is **a community of friends** who owe one another the attitudes and behaviour of friendship and of being fellow membership in a moral community.
- (d) The children are then asked if they have **special friends** in the class, classmates who are special to them (without mentioning names, though there is no harm if they do so) and who they play with, why they regard these friends as special, what they do with them at school that they don't do with their other friends. This is a return to the notion of special friends, again already taken up in the previous term, but with a difference. Then they are taken into a discussion whether there **should** be special friends in a class which regards itself as a community of friends and whether they should play only with their special friends or with everybody else in the classroom – the issue of children who are left out is also again returned to and taken up. The discussion is then turned to the question what special friends **do not** do to each other – **tell** and **tease**, for instance, and other things the children may mention. However telling and teasing, common complaints with children of this age, will become the focus of the discussions to follow – the children are asked to give their views whether telling and teasing is all right with **anyone**.
- (e) The first that is explored in discussion is telling. The children are asked to say what it means to tell, why **telling** on special friends, to begin with, is something I do **not** do – the quality of friendship that is violated in the act and which is introduced in the discussion is that of **loyalty** and what it means. The message elicited by the teacher is that one owes loyalty to special friends and that being a special friend means being loyal to one another. The next question is whether loyalty should be owed to special friends **only**, whether telling on other friends is all right. Then whether loyalty should be owed to others who are not their friends also, even to people they do not know. At this stage children are left free to express their views on the matter, to explore the notion of loyalty, without being taken into too deep a discussion. The teacher should supplement and animate the discussions with stories of loyalty and its contrary, **betrayal**.
- (f) The same route is taken with regard to teasing where the quality of friendship focused on is **not hurting** one's special friends first, then one's friends in general, then others who are not friends. The discussion begins with the teacher inviting the children to describe their experiences of being teased, their own anecdotes and stories. The children are asked to discuss the whether it is ever **right** to tease. Then to discuss why children tease - the teacher's object is to distinguish two kinds of teasing; the

affectionate kind and the **hurting** kind. Children are asked to give examples of both kinds and to identify the difference between them. The **intention** of the teaser is highlighted but the point is also made that even teasing not intended to hurt may be hurtful, so that it is important to think first. The teacher should, again, supplement and animate the discussions with stories of teasing.

- (g) The message on teasing the teacher should get across through a combination of story and discussion is that though there are **harmless**, even affectionate, kinds of teasing the practice can also be **hurtful** and **harmful**, sometimes very harmful, for those who experience it, and that it is often intended in this way. That it can be **a form of bullying when hurt is intended**, that some may be more sensitive to it than others and that it must always be stopped when it gets out of hand or when those being teased show it to be unwelcome. Harming and hurting are identified with the class as **moral evils** – things one should never do. Not hurting each other is proposed to the class by the teacher as a general **rule** for everybody to observe, and the children are asked to approve the proposal. Its first form will be not to tease – the rule could be written down by the teacher and displayed.
- (h) The discussion is returned to telling and the children are asked to explore the question whether telling is, in fact, **always** wrong, whether there are not cases, situations, when we **should**, when we are **obliged** (when it is our **duty**), to tell, even on our special friends. The teacher will promote and assist the discussion by bringing in examples, stories and anecdotes of different kinds, that exemplify obvious or fairly obvious situations where telling, or informing on someone is indeed a disloyal act, and others where it is justified to prevent or report some **harm** that is caused or when its object is the good of one's friend. The difficult moral point to be made is that it is sometimes one's duty to tell even if it makes one unpopular or ends a friendship, and it need to be made with the children – they should be led to arrive at it themselves. The priority of duty is emphasised by the teacher here. Another rule the children are asked to adopt is that preventing or reporting harm is more important than being loyal.
- (i) The next question is whether friends are always friends and whether when they quarrel they stop being friends. The children are asked to describe the things that hurt or have hurt them and led them to quarrel or **fall out** with their friends and these are itemized by the teacher and discussed by the pupils. They are then asked to say what they do when they quarrel with a friend, what they feel, what they do. The matter of **getting one's own back**, or **revenge**, is then introduced through a story and discussed as an issue – is it ever right? What happens through getting one's own back, who gains from it, what is gained, and what is lost? Again the teacher needs stories around which to discuss these questions of **retributive justice** – a sentiment children feel strongly at this stage of their lives.
- (j) The discussion is followed with one on **forgiveness** which is contrary to revenge-seeking, and which is also introduced with stories. The meaning and merits of forgiveness are explored with the children in the same way as revenge. The object

should be to inculcate the value of forgiveness and **making-up**, of mending and restoring friendship as against breaking and destroying it which is what revenge brings. The notion of forgiveness and making up is not, however, entered into any deeper at this stage.

Module 3 (3rd term): Rules and Authority

Introduction

This module continues with the previous in representing the class as a community of friends, the notion which was first explored in Module 1. It takes the notion of community in the different direction of exploring the role of rules and authority in the class. However it continues to exploit the earlier comparison of the class and classroom with the family as communities and homes for the children. The idea of equality of treatment among classmates is promoted with the children. The argument for the necessity, purpose, and use of rules is made with the children first in the context of the home then transferred to the classroom. This discussion leads into the notion of authority which is required for the making and enforcement of rules, and to the status of the teacher as authority. Reference is made for the purpose of illustrating the necessity of authority to the rules in force in the wider society, laws and regulation of different kinds; traffic, building, parking, garbage collection, games of different kinds and the necessity of authorities to apply and enforce them; police-men, traffic wardens, referees and umpires – an analogy is made in with the classroom. The children are invited to discuss, more specifically, the distinction between the status of equality based on friendship between classmates, and that of the authority of the teacher in relation with the class.

Objectives

- to complete the exploration in the previous module of the classroom as a community, by bringing in the other aspect to that of friendship and cooperation, namely rules and authority;
- to explore the notions of rules and authority for better understanding of their meaning in a broader context, in the home, and in the classroom;
- to introduce the notion of equality, what it implies, and what it could mean in practice in a classroom setting, what its limits are, and to introduce the notion of equality of treatment;
- to introduce the notion of rules and to highlight their importance in any cooperative undertaking, including the home and classroom;
- to sensitize the children to the meaning of dependence as a positive quality;
- to explore the meaning, justifications, forms, and limitations of punishment as a form of rules-enforcement;

- to explore the notions of: authority, inequality, equality of treatment, status, rules, enforcement, game, dependence, caring, responsibility, protecting, enabling, restricting, commanding, making rules, taking decisions, fairness, respect, consideration, punishment, upbringing;
- to develop the skills of: discussing, arguing, narrating, exploring, explaining, understanding, reasoning, comparing;
- to explore the values of: equality of treatment, enforcement of rules, caring, responsibility, protecting, enabling, fairness, respect, consideration.

Teaching strategy

Tools: Narrative, exposition, discussion, exploration, story-telling, comparison.

Resources: Stories, narrative, cartoons, videos, play acting, documentaries, docudramas, others.

Method

- a) The children are returned briefly to the earlier discussion about the home as a special place we share with our intimate family, where we feel safe, cared for, comfortable and wanted. The idea of the family is re-explored through discussion now of the kinds of **rights** and **responsibilities** being a member of a family entails for the different members of the family in general and for the children more specifically – the important difference of **status** between the members is introduced in the discussion. The teacher needs to ensure that the children connect the idea of rights and responsibilities with that of difference of status. The question is then raised whether there should not also be rights and responsibilities tied to status in the classroom and these are discussed.
- b) The introduction of the concept of difference of status will introduce that of **authority** with the implication that not all relations in the family are one's of **equality**. These are connections the teacher will need to help the children to then extended to the classroom as a similar kind of community as the family. The notion of equality is introduced and discussed to some extent as is that of authority. Children are introduced to the idea of equality **of treatment** depending on **status** as a requirement (the distinction between political and moral cannot be made at this point because it is too difficult) in both contexts, home and classroom – the idea of justice is brought in that those equal in status, siblings and classmates should be treated and should treat one another the same, but should treat their parents/guardians and teachers differently – as in authority.
- c) The children are shown through examples that things are the same in the wider society where some command and enforce rules (police, traffic wardens, officers in the army, managers and bosses at the place of work, referees in games, and so on) and others obey. The idea of **rules** is explored; rules enable people to know what is

expected of them, they require to be **interpreted** and **enforced** when they are not observed; this is what happens in all these situations referred to. The example especially focused on, the most familiar and relevant for the children is the rules in **games**. The general point made by the teacher through the example of play is that games require rules otherwise they **cannot be played**, there are games played with written rules where there are referees and umpires others are unwritten and accepted by the players but no game can be played without rules. This point about the necessity of rules even when there is no need for anyone to enforce them, as with the games they play among themselves for instance, must be strongly made. The children should be led to value rules themselves by being asked whether they would play with children who ignore the rules of the game they play and why not?

- d) The children should then be led to the idea that authority sometimes follows from **dependence**, this is an authority of knowledge; of the doctor in matters of health, for instance, the plumber or electrician if something goes seriously wrong with the electricity, the technician if there is a problem with the computer. The children should be asked to identify those persons on whom they depend for their knowledge, including their parents, adult relatives, and other adults. They are asked to list what are the things their parents **do** for them and what they depend on their parents or guardians for – this should bring home the fact and extent of their **dependence**, which must be treated here as a **positive** thing, something natural, not as a defect of some sort but an **obligation** on others.
- e) This point about dependence should be made by showing and discussing documentaries and other material that shows how dependence is experienced by the young of all animals. The point the teacher should pursue through discussion is that on the other side of dependence is **care** – that adult parents and guardians of all species respond to the dependence of the young by **caring** for them, and that this means taking **responsibility** for them, making rules for their safety and growth – authority goes with this responsibility as necessary to carry it out. The general point that should emerge from it is that authority can be a **protective** and **enabling** as well as a **restricting** experience because without support from adults young animals would not survive never mind grow into adults, and that **both are necessary**.
- f) This dependence of their young should be represented by the teacher as the reason why the relation with their parents is **unequal**, why their parents have **authority** on them without which they would be unable to carry out their **responsibilities** to ensure their children's safety, growth and well-being – sending them to school is one such responsibility. Without the power to **command**, to make **rules** and take **decisions**, the teacher points out, there is no authority everyone does what she or he pleases – there is no family or community. Because of their dependence, for their own well-being, someone has to make rules for them and to take decisions **for them** and **on their behalf** in the home and elsewhere, that someone is primarily their parents and guardians.

- g) The general point that should emerge from these discussions is the necessity of rules and decisions on the one hand and obedience to them on the other, and that this necessity requires another kind of relationship than friendship, which is built on equality, that of authority. There should not be an attempt to discuss authority, its legitimate extent and limits, at this time – the discussion will follow in later years. Children are asked to discuss the house rules and other rules made for them by their parents and guardians in their homes with respect to whether they regard them as **fair** or otherwise; the notion of fairness, another aspect of **justice**, is brought in and children are asked to give their reasons which the teacher brings together as their definition of fairness.
- h) Children are asked whether they can mention other people who have authority over their behaviour and **influence** on their lives; grand-parents, other adult relatives, their teachers, and so on. The focus is returned to the classroom as a community explored in the previous module (Module 2) in order now to explore authority in the classroom – first in terms of the relation between class-mates. The children are asked to discuss how they think they should regard relations between themselves – the teacher should lead them to the view that class-mates should treat each other as friends and equals, then to a discussion of what this means, how one **treats** another who is one's friend and equal; namely with **respect** and **consideration**, and what these words mean in turn with examples drawn from stories.
- i) The children are then invited to describe and discuss the role and status of the teacher; what they think teachers are for and what kind of friend the teacher is – they are asked if the teacher is their friend like their class-mates or like their parents or guardians and therefore are also in a relation of authority over them, like their parents. The teacher should lead them to the latter conclusion which in turn should be followed with the question how their relation with their teacher is different from that with their parents or guardians and how it is similar. The latter leads to the point that the teacher's authority over them is required because their teachers assist their parents in their **upbringing** and therefore act for their parents when they are at school. Also from the fact that the school is a place of learning which is important for their future and that teachers are employed to provide this learning – without rules teachers cannot do their job and they miss out, and the teachers, like their parents at home, must make and enforce the rules and ensure that they learn and are brought up well.
- j) The last issue discussed in this module is that of **punishment**. Beginning with the question whether the rules should be the same for all the teacher leads the children to consider the question whether someone who breaks a rule should be punished. Then what should be the object of punishing someone – different reasons for punishment are introduced into the discussion by the teacher, **retributive**, **deterrent**, and **corrective** – which are also different notions of **justice**, a notion which could be brought in but not explored at this point. The question then follows whether there should be limits on the kind of punishment they are given, what they are through

examples or stories, or anecdotes, and what is wrong with the kinds of punishment they identify – the discussion should be animated and illustrated with stories introduced by the teacher.