

Yr 5 (Age 8-9)

General Theme: Values (Living with difference)

Module 1 (1st term) Values: what are they?

Module 2 (2nd term) Sameness and Diversity

Module 3 (3rd term) Living with difference (Tolerance and Solidarity)

Module 1 (1st term): The Nature of Values

Introduction

Module 1 opens the programme for Yr. 5 by considering values; what they are and what they mean. Not all values are moral values of course, because we value many other things differently than for moral reasons. For instance, we may value a work of art, or a present we have been given, or a day at the beach, or a friendship, or a good meal or book, none of which is a moral reason. But the reason why we value it in each case is because we regard it (the work of art, the present, being at the beach, a friendship, a meal or book) as ‘a good’; something we benefit from in various ways. We also use the word ‘good’ as an adjective to describe something we approve of; an act, an object, a person. We speak of a good act, a good book, a good person. While the word ‘good’ is used to signify moral approval it is frequently used for different purposes not connected with morality. Thus describing a book, a football player, a day at the beach, a tune, and so on as ‘good’, though it signifies our approval of it does not signify our **moral** approval which can be of an action or a person.

This distinction between approving an action and a person is taken up in the module which also makes another fundamental distinction between valuing something for its instrumental worth, as a means, because it enables one to achieve our purpose, and valuing something for its non-instrumental worth, as having intrinsic value. The main object of the distinction is to make the point about how we treat other people; that although we must, and do, use others as means to our purposes, we must never value them solely in this way and must always treat them as ends, as moral persons; i.e. with respect. But it is not just the person who is considered in this way, to have intrinsic value, to be an intrinsic good, various other candidates are proposed, such as Truth, Beauty, Happiness, the Moral Law, and so on. Intrinsic value may also be a personal matter since I may consider something in this way in a manner that is personal – others may see it differently. In this case, however, the thing I value has no moral worth, for to have such worth its value must be universal.

Finally, the distinction between judging a person and judging an act leads to the clarification of a moral act as something that requires responsible agency. In other words we do not judge anyone as being morally good or bad if, for some valid reason, that somebody cannot be held responsible for his or her actions. In other words if there is no free and responsible choice of the action, or if there is no understanding of what is good or bad, or the right and wrong thing to do, either generally or in a particular circumstance; i.e. if there is no free will. This excludes non-human animals (the actions of which are generally regarded as amoral, i.e. not morally relevant) and human persons who, for different reasons, may be incapable (temporarily or permanently) of making responsible choices, i.e. exercising a free will.

Objectives:

- To reinforce the notion of a virtue, which was the general theme of the Yr.4 programme.
- To introduce the pupils to the notion of something or someone being valuable; to take them into an analysis of the term and notion of value.
- To introduce the pupils to the notion of something being a **good** and of value being of this kind, as distinct from something being good, and to the distinction between intrinsic and instrumental goods.
- To explore more especially the difficult idea of something being an intrinsic good or having an intrinsic value and to connect the idea of having intrinsic value ethically with the idea of being a person.
- To make the connection between being human and being a person (an object of moral worth, and therefore worthy of respect for that reason) explicit.
- To introduce pupils to the idea of a moral law which will be important in the future.
- To introduce the moral distinction between judging persons and judging actions, and to introduce also the notions of moral approval and responsibility.
- To introduce the notion of a free will and to connect it with moral responsibility.

Teaching strategy

Tools: Narrative, exposition, discussion, exploration of ideas, comparison and contrast.

Resources: This module is conducted nearly entirely by discussion with some anecdote and stories and used to consolidate the last objective of the previous module.

Method

- (a) The teacher returns the class to the virtues described and discussed in Yr 4 to remind them that virtues are qualities of character and dispositions to act in certain ways, that they are learnt, internalised, and manifested in practice, in the conduct of our daily lives, that they are defined as such (as virtues) by the communities to which we belong and in which we are raised. S/he next introduces them to the notion of **value** – what does valuing something mean? What does one mean when one says that one value something? The pupil are asked to mention things they value; the teacher may need to help them in this respect by mentioning some of the things s/he values; a good book, a good rest

after a hard day's work, a good friend, and makes the point that we value them **because** they are **goods**. But we also value friendship, health, happiness, justice, beauty, peace, and so on, in general as **goods** – because they give or add value to our lives and to the lives of others. And we value loyalty, courage, truth, honesty, and so on, in persons because they are qualities of character, **virtues**, that we approve of because they are the qualities of **good persons**, and we appreciate and value goodness in persons – this is why we **admire and approve** virtue and **disapprove and despise** its contrary **vice** which we regard as **bad** or **evil**.

- (b) The teacher summarizes by pointing out that we value a number of different things in life; objects, people, activities, actions, sentiments, situations, etc, and in different ways; because of their beauty, their artistic worth, their contribution to our happiness and state of well-being, their contribution to our knowledge, etc. S/he then makes the point that values are distinguishable into two kinds; **intrinsic** and **instrumental**. The second is easier to explain: something has instrumental value if it is valued as a **means** to something else which is its object. For instance we value good food **because** it contributes (is a **means**) to good health. There are several other things we value in this way, as a means; we value a good watch **because** it tells us the right time, we value a good mobile phone for what we can do with it, we value money for what we can get for it, and so on. In each case we value something as a means to something else which we value as an **end** – the end being the object for which we value the means; in these cases good health, knowing the right time, the things we can do with our phone and our money, and so on. Valuing something as a mean and as an end are two different ways we value things – but values do not come labelled as means and ends, the same value can be an end in one context and a means in another, and vice versa. For example; we value good health because it contributes to our happiness or well-being, we value knowing the time because it helps us plan our day better, and so on. The important thing is that the end has **primary** value, the means **secondary**, or inferior, value compared with the end, but that it is only by someone considering them as such that they obtain their value.
- (c) These (those in b) are difficult and important points and need to be made carefully by the teacher with the help of examples. The next point is that something is regarded as having intrinsic value if its value **lies in itself** and not as a means to something else – this is sometimes claimed about such diverse things as truth, beauty, faith, reason, happiness, justice, the human person, each of which is claimed as having **universal** intrinsic value; the **absolute good** to which all other goods are means. Since they cannot all be the absolute good which of them is absolute, is contentious. Examples of clashes over precedence are of Truth with Beauty? Faith with Reason? Happiness with Justice? – all written with a capital letter to denote their **absolute value**. The

teacher stops this trend of thought here and asks for a discussion on what has been said so far. S/he then points out that there is a different, **personal**, way in which the idea of intrinsic value is understood. In this way something may have intrinsic value for us individually only without that value being necessarily shared by others or universally. Thus something may be of intrinsic value to me which is only of instrumental value for others, in the sense that while I value it for what it means to me it may not mean the same thing for others because its meaning is personal. An ordinary watch, for instance, which may be meaningful to me and which I may value for that reason (it was a present from someone special) and which is just an object of instrumental value for others. The pupils are asked to discuss this point and to give examples of things that are meaningful to them in this way and they value not purely as **objects** (instrumentally) but **for their own sake** (intrinsically).

- (d) This last point is a crucial one and the teacher reinforces it with a definition: to treat something **merely** as an object is to treat it as a means, as having only instrumental value, to treat it as something **more** than as an object is to treat it as an end, as having intrinsic value. This distinction lies at the heart of moral thinking and leads to the following universal moral principle: that we should never treat human beings **merely** (not just) as means (i.e. as objects of merely instrumental value) but **always** as ends. The ‘merely’ and ‘always’ are explained to the class. The word ‘merely’ makes the point that we **do** use others in our society as means, i.e. as instrumentally valuable, to achieve our ends all the time, when they render us different services that we need; as waiters, doctors, policemen and women, teachers, parents, and so on, and that this kind of interaction is inevitable, but we must also treat them also as ends, i.e. as intrinsically valuable beings, and this always. The teacher points out that this way of treating them is to recognise them as **persons** rather than as objects, and thus as deserving special moral consideration – this is what we mean when we speak of **respecting them as persons**. This is another crucial point that needs making very carefully which will be returned to and explored in depth in the Secondary Programme [\[find\]](#). The pupils are asked to give and discuss examples of using others merely as means to ensure their understanding of the distinction.
- (e) The teacher points out that valuing something, some action or situations means that we **approve** of it, the same is true of valuing persons – to value is to feel or express **approval**. We show our approval of persons by describing them as **good** or **virtuous** – the language of virtue is the language of approval in the sense that to identify someone as virtuous (as possessing virtues), and to classify something as a virtue is to express our approval of him/her on the one hand, and for it on the other. On the other hand when we approve of an action or situation we can describe it as good and as right. But ‘good’ and ‘right’ though they are both terms of approval do not mean the same thing and have

different moral force. To describe an action or situation as **good** means that we approve and **recommend** it to ourselves and others; eg. It is good to help the poor, to look after the environment, to help sick animals – remarks that express approval and recommendation. To describe it as **right** is to both approve **and** regard it as an **obligation**, something we **must** or are commanded to do whatever the circumstances, or our inclination, interest, prudence, etc. This sense of **impersonality** or **objectivity** of right is captured by the idea of a moral **law** (sometimes expressed by the word *ought*) – a command rather than a mere recommendation.

- (f) The teacher makes the point that we need to distinguish judging **people** from judging **actions** although we judge both and often judge people by their actions – we also tend to judge them by their motives or intentions, by their emotional state and circumstances, by their knowledge of likely outcomes etc. We may disapprove of an act **generally** but of the level of disapproval of the actor in terms of his/her **level of responsibility** in committing it, and may want to exonerate the actor completely in circumstances where s/he has no responsibility. **Responsibility** for their behaviour is key to how we judge people morally, and responsibility requires having a **will which can be guided by reflection**, the ability to consider one's actions and to think them through freely (referred to as a **free will; the ability to choose freely between right and wrong**). Hence we do not judge the actions of those who are incapable of taking **responsible action**, including animals and very young children, as having moral meaning or worth; we regard them as **amoral**. [**check on earlier or later use**] The teacher follows up by presenting the pupils with short narratives and asks them to discuss the moral behaviour of the protagonists; particularly the degree of moral responsibility for their actions or initiatives. Finally the teacher introduces the difficult distinction between **value** and **fact**; between value and factual judgments. S/he does this by giving examples of **factual judgments** (which are subject to **objective** proof, like scientific statements) and use the language of true/false which is different from the language of good, right, just, beautiful, comfortable, brave, etc. which we use in making our value judgments.

Module 2 (2nd term) Sameness and Diversity

Introduction

The module opens by latching onto the last part of the previous module which introduced the pupils to the notion of moral responsibility and that of a free will without the possession of which one cannot be held morally responsible, exploring the latter in some detail. It then reinforces what was said in the previous module about value, what it means, and how diverse values are, focusing more this time on the

origins of our values, where they come from; the role of the community we belong to in determining what our values are. From here a distinction is made between those values that appear to us to be universal (qualities of actions or persons that seem to be valued by human beings everywhere, independently of who they are and where they come from), and those that are particular to, and vary between, specific communities; i.e. values that are ethnocentric. The difference is very important and the explanation of the latter state of affairs, where different communities have different values and value things differently, as historical and geographical will be important later (in the next Module (3), in Yr. 6, and in Form 1). The introduction of the idea of a pluralist society introduces the notion of tolerance; a pluralist society being one that accommodates (i.e. tolerates) diversity, the co-existence of different communities together.

The distinction is made between pluralist and integral societies that do not tolerate diversity and everyone is constrained to embrace the same beliefs – s/he points out that the latter societies are exclusive and their integrity is ensured through the use of force and often of repression. Pluralist societies, on the other hand, are inclusive and find their political expression in democracy, and exercise a politics of persuasion rather than one of coercive force and repression. To make the distinction more actual for the pupils they are returned to the idea of a school as being a kind of small society, indeed a community, and are asked to discuss whether their preference would be for a pluralist school, one that is a community of communities, like the one they currently attend, or an integral one, a single homogenous community, where all embrace the same beliefs and values.

Another important distinction the module makes is between statements of fact, where one claims something to be true, and statements of value where one claims something to be good or right. The distinction is not easy and numerous examples of both kinds of statements need to be introduced by the teacher to explain it. The point to be made from the explanation is that truths are demonstrated by objective proof while values expressions of belief that are not so demonstrated. The distinction makes it easier to understand the nature of moral language and to accept the case for tolerance in Module 3 that follows.

Objectives:

- To reinforce the pupils' understanding of the notion of moral responsibility and to explore further the idea of a free will and the possible limitations to the exercise of such a will.
- To sophisticate the discourse of values further by exploring, this time, not what they mean but where they come from, namely the community/ies we belong to.
- To connect values with upbringing; to make the point, especially, that our values, the values that are dear to us, are passed on to us, and depend on where we are born and how we are raised – a point important for the value of tolerance.

- To distinguish what seems to be valued universally by virtually the whole of humanity, and what is valued particularly from within different communities.
- To begin to explain the differences between what different communities value and reject in historical and geographical terms.
- To introduce the idea of a pluralist society, one that tolerates difference and diversity and to represent Maltese society as such a society.
- To introduce peaceful and cooperative co-existence, which is based on the right to be different, as the first challenge of a pluralist society.
- To connect the ethics of a pluralist society with democratic politics which are introduced to the pupils as a politics of persuasion as opposed to a politics of coercive force or repression.
- To introduce the important distinction between values and facts.

Teaching strategy

Tools: Narrative, exposition, discussion, exploration of ideas, comparison and contrast.

Resources: This module is conducted nearly entirely by discussion with some anecdote and stories and used to consolidate the last objective of the previous module.

Method

- (a) The teacher returns the pupils to the discussion of the previous module on **responsibility** which was described as key to how we judge people's moral behaviour, to our claim that being responsible requires having a **will** which can be guided by reflection, which means being able to consider one's actions and to think them through freely and decide on our action, referred to as possessing a **free will**, and our claim that without the possession of such a will (the ability to choose freely between what is right and wrong), there is no moral responsibility. S/he invites the class to discuss this notion of a free will, what it can be, and what can be its limitations. Beginning with the last, its limitations. S/he helps them identify very obvious ways in which one is **not** free when one is under the authority of another, or one is prisoner to someone or to something else, or one is threatened, blackmailed, or tortured, or insane, or deceived, and so on. These situations obviously constrain our freedom and thereby our responsibility for our behaviour. At this point the teacher introduces the next question for discussion: can our will be absolutely, or completely, free? What would such a completely free will be like? The discussion is intended to introduce other limitations on our actions into the picture; obvious ones are age, illness, disability, our biological and genetic features which we inherit from our parents and are born with, and our

environmental limitations, including our social ones. The teacher picks on the last specifically to focus on; the fact, already familiar to them, that our behaviour is conditioned socially, and so is our understanding of ourselves, of who we are, and of our freedom and its limits – what it is morally legitimate for us to do.

- (b) S/he returns the pupils to the earlier discussions on what we value in the previous module, reminding them that our values, our norms or rule of behaviour (what we believe and learn to consider with approval as acceptable and, therefore, good or right and disapprove of as unacceptable, as bad or wrong) are transmitted to us through the traditions and practices of the community we are raised in passed on to us by our parents who are our first moral educators. Our **community** is the source of what we believe and value, but the kind of influence and moral authority it has over us depends on the kind of community it is. Some communities have recognised moral leaders to whom they confer moral authority. This line of thought is left here at this point as the teacher takes up the point that in a world where, factually, different kinds of people living in different kinds of communities sustained by different traditions, beliefs and values, it is inevitable that there are different moral outlooks, different ways they consider morality, different rules of moral or ethical behaviour, different ways of understandings what is good and right, bad and wrong, different understandings of moral freedoms and responsibilities, different moral authorities they refer to. S/he asks the pupils to discuss this point and give their reactions to this situation.
- (c) Following this discussion s/he points out that, factually also, there seem to be values that people everywhere, whatever their difference, seem to **hold in common**, the values we have been discussing together; like justice, truth-telling, courage, honest dealing, fairness, hard work, a sense of responsibility, of solidarity with the less fortunate, and so on, many of which we have identified and approved of as virtues. Different communities, however, give different meanings to these values. This is because they are **different**, and their different outlooks are explained historically and geographically – they are related to the historical emergence in different regions of the world of different **religions** (Islam, Judaism, Christianity Buddhism, Hindu, Shinto, etc.), and in Europe and the Western world in general of a **secular** humanism, and to the historical spread of these religions and influences to different parts of the world through different kinds of colonialism and conversion. The point here is not to pursue this explanation (which is continued in Yr.6 and later in Form 1) but that our different **individual** moral outlooks are the result of this state of affairs. Like the different languages we speak we are **raised** in them and this includes the values that we, each of us, hold and our different ways of understanding what is the good and right and bad and wrong. In other words they also limit our freewill.

- (d) The teacher suggests that given this factual state of difference in the world, which is reflected in our society in Malta also where different communities with different moral outlooks co-exist together, what are termed **pluralist** societies (the word is introduced and explained), the key challenge is to find ways to make that co-existence peaceful and cooperative . S/he puts this suggestion to the class to discuss and asks them to suggest in turn what this cooperation could mean and how it can be obtained. S/he uses the discussion to make the point out that people's different outlooks are frequently sustained by deeply-rooted beliefs and values whatever they are, and that all are equally convinced of the truth of their beliefs and of their moral position. The next question is whether one can be mistaken about one's values the way one can be mistaken about one's facts? Whether other people's values are not just **different** from one's own but also **wrong**? S/he returns to the point made about values in the previous term that statement of value are not objective like those of **fact**, the latter being about **what is true** independently from what one believes. Statements of value are about **belief** (in ethics about what one **should do**) – the authority that establishes values is not science but **faith** with the religious, and **unaided reason** with the non-religious. One cannot **disprove** someone else's values as one can disprove what is claimed as a facts, one can only **disapprove** of and/or **disagree** with them, and people do often disapprove and/or disagree with each other on ethical or moral matters.
- (e) The teacher now suggests that peaceful and cooperative co-existence in any society, especially pluralistic ones (those that recognise the **right to be different**), requires the ability to accept and live with disagreement and disapproval, to use the tool of **persuasion** as against the tool of **force** – s/he points out that politically this undertaking corresponds with **democratic politics** that are the politics of persuasion. S/he puts this suggestion up for discussion using it: (1) to point out that human history from earliest times is full of examples of the use of violence to force other people to change their beliefs and convictions, frequently involving wars and harsh measures and persecutions of different kinds; (2) to cite examples in our part of the world of such wars of ferocity between Muslim and Christian, Christian and Christian, Moslem and Moslem – none of which achieved much more than deep-seated hatreds, and deep-rooted grudges between communities even with conquest, hatreds and grudges that are carried over like a festering wounds from one generation to another even among neighbours, and explode in acts of genocide where neighbours who may have lived peacefully together (but with their resentments) for centuries, finish up murdering each other. Examples from history and from the current world are needed to illustrate this point but they must be chosen sensitively because the subject is sensitive for some people. The pupils are asked to discuss these examples and the teacher's argument, that violence doesn't work.

(f) The teacher returns to the definition of plurality as the recognition of the right to be different, to live differently and contrasts pluralist societies that are tolerant of difference from **integral** societies that are not, that demand sameness of belief and values and are intolerant of diversity. The students are asked in which society they would prefer to live, and there is a discussion of both kinds of society. They are asked to discuss whether they would rather attend a school which is **homogeneous**, where pupils and teachers all share **the same** faith and beliefs and the same moral values, or one which is pluralist, which accommodates **diversity**. This leads them to discuss their life in and experience of their present school which is of the latter kind, which is multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-faith, multi-national and so on, and which seeks to **include**, i.e. **to give equal value to everyone**, despite the deep differences of culture, race, religion, nationality, etc., whether it deals successfully with its pluralism, to what extent, and how it seeks to do so. The notion of **inclusion** is introduced by the teacher and linked with the **notion of community** which they met with in Year 2 (Module 2). With the pupils s/he goes over its main features then recalls how that class had been represented as a community and the school presented as **a community of different communities**. S/he suggests that the kind of community of communities their school is, is one which accommodates these and other deep differences. S/he also points out that the contrary notion to that of inclusion, namely that of **exclusion**, whereby individuals are accepted in the community, in the school in this case, only if they are **the same**, if they come from the same community; i.e., they share the same beliefs, values, faith, and so on, is the mark of a homogeneous school community, one which excludes other communities.

Module 3 (3rd term) Living with difference (Tolerance and Solidarity)

Introduction

The module opens by taking up the distinction between sameness and diversity in the previous module in order to probe the notion of sameness, as what we share with others, and to make a further distinction between the universal sameness that characterizes us all as human beings, which we recognise when we speak of ‘we’ humans, and the limited sense of sameness, the ethnocentric sense of our sameness, of our being an ‘us’ which, at the same time, distinguishes us from others and renders us profoundly different from them. The pupils learn that the universal sense of sameness among human beings leads to the idea of humanity being a single human moral community which entitles its members (all human beings) to the enjoyment of the same rights and of equal moral consideration, and which gives rise to the notion of human rights.

The pupils are returned to the previous module once more, to the way their school was described as a society and as a community of communities, in order to take this idea

further. A community of communities is, of course, a pluralist, multicultural community, and the school is represented as a community of this kind, but in this since it is but a miniature of the wider Maltese society, which is similarly pluralist and values an inclusive social environment. The next task is to describe inclusiveness; what are its marks? To enter the question one needs to go back to the notion of community, to what it is that defines a community; namely its commonality, what its members share together and the presence of communication – people who live together but share nothing but a common space and do not communicate with each other are not a community. A basic requirement of a pluralist community is tolerance, while communities in general value loyalty and solidarity between its members.

The notion of tolerance is explored next. Its meaning is made partially by distinguishing it from what it is not; tolerance means accepting diversity while not agreeing with what that diversity expresses. In democratic terms it can be captured by the condition where one disagrees, even profoundly, with what another says or does, but will defend that other's right to say and do it to the hilt. The point is made that there are degrees of tolerance that vary between different individuals and societies, the latter depending on whether they are democratic and pluralist or autocratic and integral – this leads to a discussion of the notion of democratic tolerance from which its characteristics will emerge. This discussion, leads, in turn to the allied notion of open-mindedness, which is similarly explored to determine what it should and should not mean. And finally to the notion of solidarity which takes the notion of an inclusive community beyond mere tolerance.

Objectives:

- To take up the meaning of sameness and diversity from Module 2 and explore it further and deeper.
- To distinguish a universal sense of sameness, our human sameness, from the restricted sense of sameness which is our ethnocentric sameness and which makes us different from other humans who do not share it.
- To introduce the idea of human beings as all belonging to a universal moral community which idea, in turn, produces the language of human rights.
- To extend the idea of a community of communities in Module 2 from the school to the wider Maltese society, as an inclusive community, one which tolerates and accommodates diverse communities.
- To explore the notion of inclusiveness, of an inclusive society or community and how such a society or community expresses itself socially.
- To sophisticate the notion of a pluralist community by returning to the meaning of community and describing how a community is inclusive or pluralist.

- To explore the notion of tolerance which is required for people to coexist peacefully as a community in depth, particularly the notion of democratic tolerance and its limits.
- To enter into a similar exploration of the allied notion of open-mindedness, which should not be confused with extreme permissiveness or subjectivity.
- To represent an inclusive, pluralist, community as one which requires more than tolerance, which is the minimal requirement for co-existence, which requires the solidarity of community between its members.

Teaching strategy

Tools: Narrative, exposition, discussion, exploration of ideas, comparison and contrast.

Resources: This module is conducted nearly entirely by discussion with some anecdote and stories and used to consolidate the last objective of the previous module.

Method

- (a) The teacher returns the class to the distinction between sameness and diversity which was the subject of the previous module. S/he focuses on the subject of **sameness** to begin with in order to define it a bit more precisely; what one is the same in is **what one shares with others**. S/he distinguishes different ways in which people are the same, different things they share with each other. To begin with the **universal** sense in which they are **human**, which is defined by what they share, good and bad, with other human beings (their proneness to experience joy, sorrow, pain, pleasure, happiness, suffering, hope, delusion, ambition, envy, hate, fear, etc. – quoting Shylock from Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* to make this point could be useful – and so on) because they are human. The pupils are invited to give their own examples of this commonality of human experience in which there are no differences of race, faith, ethnicity, etc. Then the sense in which they are members of **restricted** groups, of societies, communities, and other associations, where their sameness is shared **only** with fellow members and is based on a common ethnicity, faith, nationality, traditions, nationality, and so on. A kind of sameness which, at the same time, separates them, makes them **different** from other human beings from other societies, groups, etc. The teacher reminds them of another sense in which human beings are different from each other even if they belong to the same community; the sense in which they are **individuals**, since what makes us individuals is our difference.
- (b) S/he summarizes by making the point that as individuals we are human beings with our own lives, concerns, joys, sufferings, ambitions, and so on, and members of different groups, societies, communities and other forms of

association. S/he points out that within certain traditions and moral languages we find humanity in general, the whole human race, described as a **single moral community**. The outcome of this way of thinking, which derives from our recognition of the communality of our human experience described earlier, is that we should consider **all** human beings, whoever they are, whatever their race, ethnicity, faith, beliefs etc. as deserving **equal** (namely the same) **moral** consideration and treatment – briefly put, it recognises **all** human beings, whoever they are and no matter what their differences, as **moral equals**. The teacher points out that this way of thinking leads to the notion of **human rights** which is mentioned to the pupils. They are here explained as rights all human beings are taken to share **as human beings** or members of the human race, whatever their differences. The pupils are asked to discuss the notion of human rights, what sense if any they make of it, but the examination of the notion itself is not taken further at this stage beyond this free discussion.

- (c) The teacher next suggests that this description of things matches the description of the pluralist, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic etc. school and society discussed in the previous term where both were described as **communities of communities**. In other words **general** communities that accommodate, are inclusive of, different restricted communities that are distinguished from each other by culture, tradition, faith, nationality, race, and so on. S/he points out that Maltese society is such a community; not only is it an inclusive society, not only does it value difference, it actually identifies inclusion and the respect for difference, as a key value to support and promote in its broadest sense, to include also people who are different by virtue of their ability, sexuality, life-style, and so on – and this is reflected in its schools which are micro-societies (like the family), including this one the pupils attend which is committed to adopting **inclusive policies** and an **inclusive social environment**. S/he points out that our school, like our society, although it is not homogenous and exclusive, **is still a community**; one that, unlike exclusive communities, accommodates difference – this is, of course, the point made in the previous module which is returned to and reinforced here.
- (d) It is now time to turn to the question: what are the signs of an inclusive community or society, one that accommodates difference? The teacher enters it by asking the pupils to remember what defined a community; a notion explored in Yr.2. A community, s/he reminds them, is one where the members **share** common purposes and interests, a common political language, and **communicate** between themselves, one that values loyalty and support for each other, or **solidarity**. But what are the values that accommodate diversity in a pluralist community? This is the question that is put by the teacher next – s/he points out that to **accommodate** means to accept and to make room for. The first purpose of the discussion is to introduce the notion of **tolerance**. A pluralist society is a tolerant society, one that acknowledges, i.e. **accepts**,

difference, social, cultural, moral, and political, in the sense that it does not exclude, persecute, or discriminate against it but to be ready **to live with** it. Tolerance is the quality people need possess in order to be able to live with those who are significantly different from them – it means **accepting diversity**. Tolerance does not mean **agreement** – this point also needs to come out of the discussion, which is turned into one about the **meaning and quality** of tolerance. On the contrary tolerance comes into the picture where there **is** difference, of belief, of values, of norms of behaviour, and the need for it grows where beliefs and values are not just different but clash with each other.

- (e) The next point the teacher makes is that tolerance has its **degrees** and that no society is tolerant **of everything**, all societies have their limits, even pluralist ones – things they are not ready to tolerate. The pupils are asked to discuss what, in their opinion, these **limits** to tolerance should be, what it is that **no society** should tolerate, at the same time that the teacher points out that the level of tolerance **varies** between different societies; from the absolute **zero** tolerance of difference in **absolutist and totalitarian** (non-democratic) societies to the **permissiveness** of **pluralist and democratic** ones. At the end of the discussion s/he reminds the pupils that Maltese society is of the latter type but every society has the right and duty to **defend itself**, its fundamental beliefs, values, and norms of behaviour. While it can be tolerant of others who are in **disagreement** with these, with its democratic beliefs and values, its moral tradition, and its pluralist moral and political culture, it cannot tolerate those who would want to attack these beliefs, values, tradition, with force or using hate language in the form, for instance, of racist and homophobic speech – otherwise its pluralism commits it to permitting individual and collective freedom of expression. Recognition of the latter, leads us, in turn, to permit freedom of association; the freedom of a collective or interest group to set up groups, societies, parties, pressure groups etc. to articulate and defend its interests. Both kinds of freedom are a part of what being democratic means.
- (f) The teacher points out that it is not just societies that are tolerant or otherwise, and tolerant to different degrees, the same is true of individuals. The pupils are asked to discuss what they are not tolerant of, where the limit of their tolerance is (what they feel they cannot tolerate), whether there are not beliefs and actions we should all be intolerant of no matter what our other differences are. S/he makes the point that tolerance is frequently linked with **open-mindedness** in the sense that it is defined as open-mindedness. Open-mindedness can mean being open to **consider** every point of view, argument, belief, idea, or whatever. Considering, however, does not mean accepting, since one can consider a point of view etc., and reject it just as one can consider and accept it. Open-mindedness is a **disposition** to act in a certain way, to consider something **before** judging it. Being open-minded means not being willing to pre-judge something before one considers it well, and is

considered a virtue in a pluralist society. Like being tolerant being open-minded does not mean accepting everything, not having any principles or firm beliefs, values, or opinions, it means accepting that others may have beliefs, values, and principles also that may be different from one's own but worth considering, and being willing to consider them on their merits. Being open-minded can be described as being open to diversity which is the first condition for tolerating it. People can be tolerant but not open-minded, the motive for their tolerance of the other being that it is **necessary** for living together peacefully, but tolerance without open-mindedness, without being able to value the diversity of the other, is fragile. The pupils are asked to discuss the latter part of this statement; that tolerance is necessary for peaceful co-existence.

- (g) The teacher moves on with the suggestion that while in our society we value the tolerance of diversity as necessary for the purpose of peaceful coexistence in a pluralist society we should value diversity also because a diverse society is richer than a monolithic one. The pupils are asked to discuss this suggestion. In any case, the teacher suggests after open discussion, a pluralist society which wants to be a community needs more than tolerance (which is a minimal requirement for living together), it needs **solidarity** between its members. Solidarity is the **ability**, the **disposition**, to see others who are different from us as **one of us**, as being a member of the same moral community as ourselves. Solidarity with those others who are **the same** as us is easy and natural, solidarity with those others who are different is more difficult and needs to be educated; it requires the **understanding** of and **empathy** with the different other – it requires **an educated moral imagination**. In this instance, the teacher begins to cultivate such an imagination with the pupils, and through it to educate their sentiment of **empathy**, of feeling for the other. S/he uses examples (which s/he discusses with them) for the purpose, using appropriate visual and other narrative material, documentary and otherwise, selected locally (the plight of migrants) and from different regions of the world to raise the pupils' awareness of the suffering and hardships of other kinds of people in order to promote this sentiment.