

A group of children are holding a large, white banner with a black peace symbol in the center. The banner is held up by several children, and one child on the left is making a peace sign with their hand. The background is a chain-link fence.

# Peaceful Schools: Ideas to Inspire

a sampling of monthly school-wide ideas from  
Peaceful Schools International

# Creating a Peaceful School - month by month

At the beginning of each month, Peaceful Schools International (PSI) sends a suggested school-wide idea to each of its members. These activities help keep the peacebuilding momentum alive and well in our member schools around the world.

Based on feedback from our members, these ideas help foster a school-wide culture of sharing, harmony and understanding and the benefits of engaging the entire school community in collaborative initiatives are far-reaching.

We have put together this collection of monthly ideas from previous years to give you an idea of the ways in which our member schools are creatively building a school-wide culture of peace.

If you find these ideas inspiring, why not register your school to become a member of PSI. Everything you need to know can be found on our website.

Hetty van Gorp  
Founder, Peaceful Schools International



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## What will your school do on September 21?

This year, the **International Day of Peace** falls on a Friday – September 21. Why not spend the first few weeks of school planning an assembly to celebrate this important day? Organize a Peace Day committee, including parents, students, teachers and other support personnel to plan Peace Day activities. A few of the favorite activities in the past years were:

### Pinwheels for Peace



Once again, this year, participate in the **Pinwheels for Peace** project. For this year's details, go to: [www.pinwheelsforpeace.com](http://www.pinwheelsforpeace.com). Students can create pinwheels of all shapes and sizes – as part of the creation process, students write their thoughts about "war and peace / tolerance/ living in harmony with others" on one side. On the other side, students can draw, paint, collage, etc. to visually express their feelings. On **International Day of Peace, Sept. 21, 2007**, "plant" the pinwheels outside (at the school, museum, public places, etc.) as a public statement and art exhibit/installation. ©2007 Ayers and McMillan

### Giant Peace Dove campaign

The giant peace dove project as featured on Dr. Jane Goodall's "Roots and Shoots" website was a popular one among our member schools. There is now a manual available with detailed instructions for creating your own giant peace dove. Go to: [www.rootsandshoots.org](http://www.rootsandshoots.org) and go to the "Campaigns" page where you will find the manual. Organize a Peace Walk around the neighborhood with the Giant Peace Doves you make.



### Here are a few new ideas:

- 1. Have students create "**Wanted Posters**" outlining the type of classmates and friends they would like to see in their classroom. Display these on classroom doors.
- 2. Solicit help from parents to make a school **Peace Pole**. A Peace Pole is a monument that displays the message "May Peace Prevail on Earth," usually in a different language on each side. "Plant" your Peace Pole on September 21. <http://www.worldpeace.org/peacepoles.html>
- 3. Post key questions on large pieces of paper around the school and ask students to record their responses. (Ask each class to make up 2 – 3 questions.) On September 21, share some of the commonly recurring responses at an assembly. Some questions used at Symmes Junior High are: *What causes war? What is peace? Does any good come from gossip? What would a peaceful school look like? Is our school environment safe? Where do we learn to be violent?*
- 4. In secondary schools hold a dance - "**Give Peace a Dance**." Use proceeds to engage in a community service project.
- 5. Collect news articles on global topics such as ethnic, religious, and political struggles or disarmament, hunger, famine, or trade. Challenge students to come up with peaceful solutions to these and other issues.



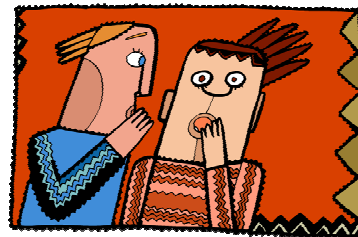
# Have You Heard?

**October 17, 2008 is "Gossip Free Day."**

**On October 17, 2003 Peaceful Schools International announced its first "Gossip Free Day." This year it is back by popular demand.**

## WHAT IS GOSSIP?

Gossip is usually personal or private information spread behind someone's back. It can be true, false or a rumour. Rumours are often unverified stories or information – no one is sure if it is true or false. Usually, rumours spread quickly and the stories get more and more exaggerated.



## WHY DO PEOPLE GOSSIP?

Some people gossip because they want to feel superior so they spread rumours to put other people down. Others gossip because they want to feel like a part of the group – when you're in on the gossip you are in on the group. Similarly, some people gossip because they feel insecure or jealous of another person.

## GOSSIP: THE CONSEQUENCES

Gossip can hurt people the same way physical violence can. It can make people feel isolated or lower their self esteem. Rumours and gossip can also destroy friendships. Relationships are based on trust and if a friend tells one of your secrets to someone else, you may feel uncomfortable telling him or her something private again. Believing in gossip or rumours can also lead to bad choices. If you interpret a rumour as truth, it may have negative consequences.

## BREAK THE CHAIN

It feels like gossip is everywhere – in school, in magazines and on TV – how can you stop it? It's simple – **if you hear a rumour, don't pass it on.** If someone starts to gossip about a friend, tell him or her that you are not interested and walk away or change the topic. If you hear about someone or something that could harm other people or you know someone who is harming her/himself, it is important that you tell a trusted friend, teacher or relative.

## HOW TO DEAL WITH GOSSIP

If you are being talked about, there are several things you can do. You can try and figure who is spreading the rumour and ask him or her to stop. You can identify an ally who will tell others that the rumour is not true and it is hurtful. You can ignore the rumours or talk about the situation with a trusted friend or adult. Above all, resist the urge to retaliate – if you spread rumours you continue the vicious cycle of gossip.

## SOME SUGGESTIONS

- Read the new version of "The Gossiper" to your students. (attached) If possible, read the story outdoors and release a bag of feathers as you read the story.
- Encourage students to make a "Rumour Mill" - an imaginary machine that spreads and magnifies rumours. The machine can be as inventive as students want and should show how rumours get started and spread.
- Encourage students to design posters bearing anti-gossip and rumour messages such as "Rumours – Don't Listen to Them, Don't Pass Them" or "Rumours can be Dangerous – Check Them Out!"
- Ask students develop a contract or pledge that encourages positive statements and discourages gossip. A sample contract may ask students to not gossip in class, deal with such a situation peacefully and to discourage others from spreading rumours.
- Hold a class discussion about what gossip is, how it spreads, how it makes people feel and then develop some coping strategies. Students can then break away into smaller groups and develop a two minute skit about a gossip or rumour scenario and demonstrate how to resolve the issue.



## The Gossiper

Once upon a time a man said something about his neighbour that was untrue. The word spread around the village as one person told another. But soon the truth came out. What could the man do? He went to see a village elder, and she gave him some strange instructions.

"Take a bag full of feathers and place one feather on the doorstep of each person who heard the untrue story you told. Then go back a day later, pick up the feathers, and bring the bag back to me."

So the man did as he was told. But when he went back to pick up the feathers, nearly all of them were gone. When he went back to the village elder, he said, "I did as you said but when I went back, the wind had blown the feathers away and I could not get them back."

The village elder replied, "So it is with careless words, my son. Once they are spoken, they cannot be taken back. You may ask forgiveness for what you said, but you cannot take your words back. The damage has already been done."

Author Unknown

# Imagine...

For the past decade, PSI has collected responses from students, parents and community members to an exercise we name “Imagine.” In this activity, people are asked to imagine that they are working or learning in a school called Shangri-La.

*In this school, the atmosphere is so positive that people come from far and near to see for themselves what makes Shangri-La so unique. A reporter is coming to spend a day. When she visits Shangri-La what will she see... hear... feel...? What will she experience? What are the characteristics that make Shangri-La so peaceful?*

In each school and in every country, the responses are different but common themes arise wherever we have conducted this exercise... respectful communication, recognition and celebration of achievements, smiles and laughter, students helping one another, proactive discipline strategies... It seems that people everywhere have similar ideas of what makes a school a place where people want to be. The best news is that none of the characteristics of Shangri-La can be ordered through a catalogue! In other words, they can be achieved in any school with a clearly articulated vision and commitment on the part of all.

**In November, take time to imagine...** imagine a school in which everyone feels, safe, valued and respected. Imagine a school in which students stand up against mistreatment of peers. Imagine a school in which fairness and justice are the order of the day. Imagine a school in which peaceful intentions align with practices. Imagine a school in which conflicts are resolved in a positive and peaceful manner. Then, turn these imaginings into reality!

Here are some additional ideas:

- ◆ In each class, ask students to write their responses to the “Imagine” question. This can be done individually or in small groups. (See attached page.)
- ◆ Collect the student responses and display them around the school.
- ◆ Using the commonly recurring themes, ask a committee of students to write a school vision statement.
- ◆ In your next newsletter, ask parents to respond to the “Imagine” activity.
- ◆ Ask students to make illustrated posters declaring the characteristics they come up with.  
    ex: *In our school people greet each other with a smile.*
- ◆ Discuss in classes what needs to be done to achieve the school vision.
- ◆ Make a plan of action.



**Shangri-La** is a fictional place described in the 1933 novel, *Lost Horizon* by James Hilton. In this book, Shangri-La is a mystical, harmonious valley... a permanently happy land... a place of peace, tranquility and happiness.



*Imagine...*

You are a student at Shangri-La School. Your school has a reputation for being the most positive one in your area. All students feel safe and respected at Shangri-La School and enjoy being there. Your school is often in the news for the positive things that happen there. Because of its excellent reputation, Oprah is sending a reporter to spend a day at your school. When the reporter comes to Shangri-La, what will she see...? What will she hear...? What will she feel and experience...? What are the characteristics that make your school so peaceful?

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# New Beginnings

**As this is the beginning of a new calendar year for many people, focus on the importance of new beginnings.**

- "Peace begins with me" is a commonly heard quotation. Discuss its meaning with your students.
- Ask each student to write down a **personal goal** he/she wishes to achieve between January and June. With tape, secure these goals to the top of students' desks where they will be a visible reminder. Check back once in a while for a progress report.
- Write a **school pledge** for peace. Enlarge it and ask each member of your school community to sign it. Display the pledge in a prominent place in your school.
- Encourage your students to think about ways in which they can as a class, **work collectively** to improve their school, their local community and their world. Put one of these plans into action!
- Hold a "**Burning Bowl Ceremony**." Write on a piece of paper something you feel inadequate about or believe you cannot do. Light a corner of the paper and drop it into a large bowl of water. (This is for older students and fire regulations permitting!)
- Ask each student to **write a letter** to him/herself describing a personal goal. Mail these letters to your students near the end of the school year.
- Compile a list of **inspirational quotations**. Post one each week and have a discussion about its meaning.
- Read the folk tale "**Stone Soup**" to your students. Explain that each of them contributes to making their school a peaceful place in a unique way. Collect flat, smooth stones and ask students to write their contributions on the stones with marker or paint. Decorate the stones and make a school display.



Peaceful Schools International

January, 2006



# Stone Soup

There was once a man who had been traveling for a long time. Having run out of food, he was weary and hungry from his journey. When he came upon a small village, he thought, "Maybe someone could share some food."

When the man knocked at the first house, he asked the woman who answered, "Could you spare a bit of food? I've traveled a long way and am very hungry." "I'm sorry, but I have nothing to give you," the woman replied.

So the traveler went to the next door and asked again. The answer was the same. He went from door to door and each time he was turned away. Not one of the villagers was willing to oblige the man as times were tough and no one had much to spare.

But then one villager said, "All I have is some water." "Thank you," the traveler said smiling gratefully, "We can make some soup from that water. We can make stone soup."

He asked the man for a cooking pot and started building a small fire. As the water started to boil, a passing villager stopped and asked him what he was doing. "I'm making stone soup," the traveler replied. "Would you like to join me?" The curious villager agreed.

"First, we must add a special stone," said the traveler. He reached into his knapsack and carefully unwrapped a special stone he'd been carrying with him for many years. Then he put it in the simmering pot.

Soon people from the village heard about this strange man who was making soup from a stone. They started gathering around the fire, asking questions. "What does your stone soup taste like?" asked one of the villagers. "Well, it would be better with a few onions," the traveler admitted. "Oh, I have some onions," he replied.

Another villager said, "I could bring a few carrots." Someone else offered, "We still have some potatoes in our garden. I'll go get them."

One by one, each villager brought something to add to the pot. What had started as just some water and a magic stone, had now become a delicious soup, enough to feed the whole village. The traveler and the villagers sat down together to enjoy the feast they'd help to create.



# Kindness and Justice Challenge

**Act of Kindness:** Doing something helpful for someone (especially someone you don't know) or for your community.

**Act of Justice:** Standing up for what's right – even when it's not popular to do so.

Each year, during the month of February, Peaceful Schools International has encouraged its member schools to focus on kindness. This year, we hope you will expand this initiative to include acts of **justice**. By looking out for injustice, students will become more aware of all incidents of mistreatment and will develop a greater confidence to intervene and speak up.

**This month we are issuing a challenge to our member schools.** After discussing the meaning of kindness and justice, encourage students to carry out Acts of Kindness and Justice and keep a tally for the entire school. At the end of February, we will create a special webpage on the PSI site to post responses from our member schools. We would especially love to share your stories with all of our member schools.



**Keep a record:** At the end of February, please send us a tally of the number of Acts of Kindness and Justice performed by your students.



Build a **Wall of Kindness and Justice** with paper bricks to keep track of the acts students perform.

**Collect one penny for each Act of Kindness and Justice** and donate the money collected to a charitable organization. (Please keep our Sierra Leone Centre for Peace and Development in mind!)



Draw a **Kindness and Justice Thermometer** on a large piece of poster board. Write the goal for the number of Acts students hope to perform on the top of the thermometer, and fill it in from the bottom throughout the month.

Establish a **Kindness Crew**. All members of the Kindness Crew commit to performing one act of kindness – big or small, each day.



# Trashformation Art



In March, with the coming of spring, our attention often focuses on the environment. International Earth Day was declared in a proclamation written by John McConnell in 1970 and signed by then - UN Secretary General U Thant on March 21, 1971. It continues to be celebrated by the UN each year on March 21, the first day of spring. March can be a time for reflection on our commitment to pursuing peace, justice and the care of Earth, locally and globally.

The United Nations has declared 2000-2010 as the decade for *Creating a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World* and 2005-2015 as the decade for *Education for Sustainable Development*. A Trashformation Art Exhibition will be a good way to focus discussions in your school around earthkeeping and peacebuilding.

PSI encourages its members to organize a **Trashformation Art Exhibition**. Challenge your students to use recycled materials to create a piece of art incorporating the themes of peacebuilding and earthkeeping. Plan an exhibition of the art in your school. From mobiles to murals to sculptures... let your imagination be your guide.

Some ideas:

- Ask students to write about the interconnectedness between care for the environment and peace.
- To foster cooperation, decide on a school theme and encourage each class to create an art piece focused on the theme.
- Plan an exhibition of the Trashformation art pieces.
- Invite special guests... including the media.
- Ask your local art gallery to display the art pieces.
- Display the pieces in a local public place such as a shopping mall.
- Make your own paper. (see directions attached)
- Visit <http://www.kid-at-art.com/> for many ideas to teach reuse and recycling concepts through art activities.
- Collect junk mail and make paper beads. Have a bead trading day.



*"Let every individual and institution, now think and act as a responsible trustee of Earth, seeking choices in ecology, economics and ethics that will provide a sustainable future, eliminate pollution, poverty and violence, awaken the wonder of life and foster peaceful progress in the human adventure."*

**John McConnell**, founder of International Earth Day





# A Few Examples



[www.johndahlsen.com](http://www.johndahlsen.com)



Skateboard Bench



Plastic bag basket



*1,000 Flattened Can Spiral*, 2005. Robert Zverina,  
[www.zverina.com](http://www.zverina.com)



Trashasaurus  
[www.kid-at-art.com](http://www.kid-at-art.com)





# Seeds of Peace

As spring gets underway, Peaceful Schools International encourages its member schools to plant a **SUNFLOWER PEACE GARDEN** to improve the school culture and the environment as well. A peace garden can be a quiet place to think and dream. A flower, like peace, starts small and grows into something beautiful. To survive, however, it requires care so as you tend your garden encourage your students to tend to the culture of peace at your school.

*If you want to be happy your whole life long, become a gardener.*

Old Chinese Proverb

## Plant sunflower seeds of peace

- \* In class, germinate sunflower seeds to transplant in the school peace garden. (Bulk sunflower bird seed works well and is more economical than packaged seeds.)
- \* Give each student a few sunflower seeds to take home for planting.
- \* Once growing season starts in your area, plant sunflower seeds outside around the school.
- \* Share "The Message of the Sunflowers: A Magic Symbol of Peace," with students. (Story is on the following page.)
- \* Plant sunflowers to create a sheltered area. Use this as a place for students to solve conflicts or simply to reflect.



## The Sunflower Project



The "Sunflower Project" is a global appeal to the citizens of the planet concerned about nuclear war, pollution, violence, injustice and threats to the balance of nature – to plant at least one sunflower seed in a sunny place where it will be noticed. This simple act of planting a seed will demonstrate the energy, simplicity and practicality of nature.

[www.thesunflowerproject.com](http://www.thesunflowerproject.com)

## Start a garden

- \* If your school does not already have a peace garden, create a design for a garden and prepare the soil for planting.
- \* Consider planting a tree in the garden.
- \* Reserve a section of the garden for vegetables.
- \* Once flowers and plants start to grow in the garden, plan a dedication ceremony.

*If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.* Cicero



## The Message of the Sunflowers: A Magic Symbol of Peace

by Georgianna Moore

*Dedicated to the children of the world who will sow the sunflower seeds of peace*

Once upon a time the earth was even more beautiful than it is today. The water was pure and deep, reflecting within itself the sunlight which gave life to all the creatures beneath the waves.

The earth was green with many kinds of trees and plants. These gave food and shelter to the birds, the animals, and to all mankind. At night the air was so clear that the starlight gave a glow almost as bright as the moon.

The people of the earth lived close to nature. They understood it and honored it and never took more than what they needed from it. The people lived in peace so they prospered and began to build many nations all around the world according to nature's climate.

But one day, a terrible thing happened. A strange spirit of greed entered the hearts of mankind. People began to be jealous of one another, and they were not satisfied with all the good things they already had. The nations wanted more and more of everything: more land, more water, more resources. They squeezed precious minerals from the earth to build terrible weapons to defend their nations from other greedier nations. They killed one another. They polluted the air and the water with poisons. Nature began to die. This is called war. War is ugly. It destroys love and hope and peace.

Then one day a magical thing occurred. The birds of the air, the animals of the land, and the creatures beneath the waters came to an agreement: if they were to survive, something would have to be done to stop these wars. Only through peace could their world survive.

We cannot speak the human language, they declared, and mankind can no longer understand ours. We must find among us a symbol of peace so brilliant that all who see it will stop and remember that peace and sharing are beautiful.

I am what you need, said a golden sunflower. I am tall and bright. My leaves are food for the animals, my yellow petals can turn plain cloth to gold, my seeds are many and are used for food by all living beings.

Yet, the seeds I drop upon the ground can take root and I will grow again and again. I can be your symbol of peace.

All nature rejoiced, and it was decided that the birds would each take one sunflower seed and that they would fly over every nation and plant the seed in the earth as a gift. The seeds took root and grew, and the sunflowers multiplied.

Wherever the sunflowers grew, there seemed to be a special golden glow in the air. The people could not ignore such a magical sight.

Soon they began to understand the message of the sunflowers so they decided to destroy all of their terrible weapons and to put an end to the greed and to the fear of war. They chose the sunflower as a symbol of peace and new life for all the world to recognize and understand.

A ceremony was celebrated by planting a whole field of sunflowers. Artists painted pictures of the sunflowers, writers wrote about them, and the people of the world were asked to plant more sunflowers seeds as a symbol of remembrance.

All nature rejoiced once more as the golden sunflowers stood tall with their faces turned eastward to the rising sun, then following the sun until the setting in the west.

They gave their goodness to the world so that everyone who sees a sunflower will know that the golden light of peace is beautiful.

Sunflowers have become the symbol of a world free of nuclear weapons. After Ukraine gave up its last nuclear warhead, the Defense Ministers of the US, Russia and Ukraine met on a former Ukrainian missile base, June 4, 1996. They celebrated by scattering sunflower seeds and planting sunflowers.

Reprinted with permission from The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's *Waging Peace Newsletter*, Vol. 12. No. 1, Winter 2002. [www.wagingpeace.org](http://www.wagingpeace.org)

# "May" Peace Prevail on Earth

"May Peace Prevail on Earth" is a common wish among nations. Masahisa Goi, a Japanese poet, philosopher and teacher, was inspired to write this prayer/affirmation after the devastation of the Second World War. He believed that this prayer was the highest aspiration for humanity.

Peace Poles are four-sided pillars with the message "May Peace Prevail on Earth" inscribed on each side in a different language. There are more than 200,000 Peace Poles in 180 countries all over the world dedicated as monuments to peace.

The United Nations has declared **May 15** as the **International Day of the Family**. Reach out to your families for their involvement with this initiative:

- Take a poll of languages spoken among your students. Ask families to translate "May Peace Prevail on Earth." See attached for some examples.
- Make posters and flags to hang in your school.
- Invite students to make greeting cards with the "May Peace Prevail on Earth" message in several languages.
- If possible, make a Peace Pole. There are probably some crafts-persons in your community who could make one for your school. If you choose to purchase one you can do so at:  
<http://www.peacepoles.com/>
- Create a "May Peace Prevail on Earth" mural on a school wall – either inside or outside.
- Approach a local service club such as Rotary or Kiwanis for sponsorship of a Peace Pole. (St. Maria Goretti, one of our member schools was chosen as a Peace School by the Rotary Club and received a Peace Pole to be erected on their school property.)
- Make "May Day" baskets to give to community members who have been supportive of your school. May Day (May 1st) is celebrated in many places around the world. One of the most popularly known May Day traditions is to hang a basket full of spring flowers and/or other small gifts on someone's doorknob. The trick is not to let them see you!



May, 2008

[www.peacefulschoolsinternational.org](http://www.peacefulschoolsinternational.org)



Peaceful Schools International

May peace prevail on earth.

Puisse la paix régner dans le monde. French

Möge Friede auf Erden sein. German

Εύχομαι να επικρατήσει η ειρήνη στον κόσμο. Greek

विश्व में शांति रहे। Hindi

ישרה שלום עלי אדמות. Hebrew

السلام للعالم أجمع. Arabic

Che la pace regni sulla terra. Italian

Niech będzie pokój na Ziemi. Polish

Que la paz prevalezca en la tierra. Spanish

ලොවෙහි භාවය ජවින්ව. Sinhalese

Cầu chúc hòa bình cho toàn nhân loại trên thế giới. Vietnamese

Нека мир завлада на земљи. Serbian

برقرار باد صلح در سراسر جهان. Persian

More at: <http://www1.ocn.ne.jp/~infinite/>





# Pebbles for Peace

Dartmouth, Nova Scotia is the home of the World Peace Pavilion. The concept for the Peace Pavilion began in 1989 when a group of youth held a Unity Conference. The group was made up of youth from various religious and cultural backgrounds. Their vision was to create a testament to peace. They decided to write to every country in the World asking for a stone to represent our efforts to shape our future. Seventy countries participated in the exhibit and contributions included a chunk of the Great Wall of China and some remains of the Berlin Wall.

## Some Ideas:

- See how many stones you can collect from countries around the world. Use these stones to construct a monument to peace.
- Ask student to bring in pebbles. Make peace symbols using the collected stones.
- Explain to your students that each of them contributes to making their school a peaceful place in a unique way. Collect flat, smooth stones and ask students to write their contributions on the stones with marker or paint. Decorate the stones and make a school display. (Read the Stone Soup story as motivation.)
- In each classroom, fill an empty can or jar with pebbles for peace. Each time someone witnesses an act of kindness, place a pebble in the jar. When the jar is filled, hold a class celebration.



## Traveling Peace Stones



Traveling Peace Stones are small smooth stones - tiny ambassadors of peace.

**How to make a Traveling Peace Stone:** Choose a small smooth flat stone. Using a permanent marker, on one side of the stone draw four concentric circles. The inner circle represents peace within you, the next circle represents peace to family and friends, the next circle the community, and the last circle represents peace to the world and environment, peace ripples and radiates from self out into the world. Draw two birds. These represent the peace you are sending out and the peace that you are receiving. Then write: Peace 2 U Always (in your native language.)

On the other side write the name of your town or city, country, and the date. Pass the stone on to someone as a heart felt gift with the wish of peace and good will. If you receive a Traveling Peace Stone you may keep your special gift or pass it on. If you keep it, just create two more to pass on to others so that we keep the wish of peace alive and traveling around the world. This idea comes from <http://www.travellingpeacestones.com.au/>

*The least movement is of importance to all nature. The entire ocean is affected by a pebble.*  
Blaise Pascal



Peaceful Schools International

# Stone Soup



There was once a man who had been traveling for a long time. Having run out of food, he was weary and hungry from his journey. When he came upon a small village, he thought, "Maybe someone will share some food with me."

When the man knocked at the first house, he asked the woman, "Could you spare a bit of food? I've traveled a long way and am very hungry."

"I'm sorry, but I have nothing to give you," the woman replied.

So the traveler went to the next door and asked again. The answer was the same. He went from door to door and each time he was turned away. Not one of the villagers was willing to give the traveler any food, as no one had much to spare.

But then one villager said, "All I have is some water."

"Thank you," the traveler said smiling gratefully, "I can make some soup from that water. I can make stone soup."

He asked the man for a cooking pot and started building a small fire. As the water started to boil, a passing villager stopped and asked him what he was doing. "I'm making stone soup," the traveler replied. "Would you like to join me?" The curious villager agreed.

"First, we must add a special stone," said the traveler. He reached into his knapsack and carefully unwrapped a special stone he'd been carrying with him for many years. Then he put it in the simmering pot.

Soon people from the village heard about this strange man who was making soup from a stone. They started gathering around the fire, asking questions. "What does your stone soup taste like?" asked one of the villagers.

"Well, it would be better with a few onions," the traveler admitted.

"Oh, I have some onions," he replied.

Another villager said, "I could bring a few carrots."

Someone else offered, "We still have some potatoes in our garden. I'll go get them."

One by one, each villager brought something to add to the pot. What had started as just water and a magic stone, had now become a delicious soup, enough to feed the whole village. The traveler and the villagers sat down together to enjoy the feast they'd help to create.



Peaceful Schools International