



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

June 2014 Issue 88



An easy to use plan for a Children's Meeting about Quakers meeting up

Make sure you have a little time of worship for yourself and other volunteers before the session – even a couple of minutes are good. This outline is based on a 45 minutes children's meeting.

Gather:

Open with short silence. Welcome each child into the circle. Ask them, and any adult, to say their names if there are people in the group who do not know each other. Ask each of them to say something about their week, something that made them happy or was exciting. Go on to say that you are all going to be talking and doing things about something that Quakers get very excited about.

This exciting event is Yearly Meeting Gathering, also known as YMG. It happens every 3 years. Friends come from lots of Yearly Meeting's or countries in the world and many Local Quaker Meetings in the UK. Over 2,000 Friends are coming to YMG at Bath University 2 – 9 August; nearly 300 of these will be children and young people.

5 minutes

Engage:

Say to children that, a long time ago when Quakers first started, they would travel many miles to Gatherings. Sometimes there would be 1,000's of Quakers (or *Children of the Light* – see *Qf&p 11.01, 18.20*), as they were sometimes called.

Go on to tell the opening part of the Engage section, like a story, on page 2, of the main sheets of this current issue of *Journeys in the Spirit*. When you do this use the '*seeing each other's faces*' activity at the bottom of the page. Do the picture comparison activity that is also in Engage.

10 minutes

Respond:

Talk with children about thinking about and making their own map or mind maps of how people get to YMG – or to any other Quaker event – Sunday Meeting, gatherings, Quaker parties. See *Additional Resource 88.B* of this issue of *Journeys in the Spirit* for a range of activities and details of resources and equipment for making maps and mind maps as ways of exploring the journeys that Friends make to get to gatherings and meetings. Choose one of these to do.

Talking about parties. Read the story, '*The Surprise Party*', or show the online animated version – there is a link in the sidebar on page 3 of this current issue of *Journeys in the Spirit*. Go on to do one of the activities under the heading Talking about parties in the Respond section of this issue of *Journeys in the Spirit*.

25 minutes

Reflect:

Talk about some of the things you've done together – did anything surprise them?

Invite children to share what they've done. Assure them they only have to if they want to, and when they're ready.

Ask if there were any parts they really enjoyed doing – what they're excited to tell their Mum or Dad about!

Are there some other ideas or activities they would like to try out another time?

Give everyone a chance to speak!

Close with some moments of silence in the way the early Quakers might have ended their Meetings. Imagine there would be no sound of cars or buses. No planes flying overhead – just the sound of birdsong and the wind blowing in the trees.

5 minutes