

# Journeys in the Spirit



## Children

Sheet 32.A

Engage

Little stories



Here is Meg's mum when she was a little girl – she is with her mum, dad, brother and sisters.



This is Meg who is telling these stories



This is Wong Wong and Joanna in Scarborough

### Little story 2 - 'Everybody looks the same!'

"But they all look the same! I can't tell the difference between all these people. They look funny, and I can't understand a word they are saying. And they smell a bit funny, too. I wish I were safely at home with my mother and father, and my nurse, Wong Wong, who takes care of me when Mummy is busy".

This was my mother's feeling when she was about 5 years old. And where was she, when she felt scared and shy and different? She was in Scarborough, staying with her grandparents, on holiday with her family from their work in China, where she was born. She didn't speak any English, and hadn't seen many English people before. What would that be like?

Wong Wong, her nurse, who had come with them, felt just as strange, and the people in Scarborough stared at her, because she wore her Chinese clothes and also had tiny feet, which had been bound, to make them stay really small, because the Chinese thought big feet were terribly ugly.

# Journeys in the Spirit



## Children

Sheet 32.B

Engage

Little stories

### Little story 2 - 'War and other scary things 1'.

"China was a poor country, and there were many people called warlords, who used soldiers to fight each other for land and money. The poor people had to be in their armies, but they didn't always want to – sometimes even teenagers and children had to fight. Once, my Grandfather was away, and my Grandmother had her three little children with her in a house in the city, when fighting broke out all around. All day, and all night, guns were firing around them, and one bullet came through the window and into my little brother's cot, but it didn't hurt him. Sometimes people wanted to hide in the compound, the space around the house where my grandmother lived, where it felt safe, and my Grandmother had to let them."

### Little story 3 - 'War and other scary things 2'.

"As Quakers we think that if we can understand what makes war happen, we can help to find other ways of sorting out problems. But there was often fighting when my mother was little. Once, my Grandfather and two of his fellow missionaries were asked to stop two armies from trying to get into the town of Suining. Many people would have been killed if they had got in and fought each other. The three men talked to the different armies all day, and sometimes had to stand between the men who wanted to fight each other. In the end, one army agreed to withdraw, and the town and all its people were safe. To thank them, the town gave beautiful silk scrolls to them, telling them how thankful they were." See *Sheet 32.D* to read what was on the scroll. This story could be told using plain wooden figures or other toy people – duplo or lego for example.



### Little story 4 - 'Joanna up a mountain'.

"My mother and her family used to go up into the mountains in the hot weather in summer where it was cooler. They would be carried up the hills in a chair carried by two men. Once they dropped her, and she fell into a wet rice paddy – maybe like the one in the picture! She used to go off for walks by herself, and no-one seemed to think that was strange, or dangerous, although she did once meet a poisonous snake!



One day, she climbed up the mountain by herself. She came to a very high place, where she could see a big building below her, with lots of men going in and out, wearing orange robes. She knew that they were Buddhist monks at their monastery, and she watched them, and listened to their chanting. An old monk came and stood beside her, and they watched the monastery together. My mother was six, but she could only speak Chinese, so she understood the monk when he asked her who she was, and what she was doing there. She told him she was on holiday with her family, and when he asked her what her parents were doing in China, she did her best to explain that they were Quakers from England and that they wanted to help the Chinese people. He wanted to know why they would do that. At six, she couldn't tell him very much, but he seemed to understand. He walked with her back down to her house below."

### Little story 5 - 'What's not in the picture'.

Look again at the main family photo on *Sheet 32.A*. Everybody look at Joanna and her sister Phyllis standing next to her. What do you think their faces are saying? What about how they are standing? What do you think they might be feeling? Just before the photo was taken the sisters were arguing and pulling each others hair. Ask if anybody has been in arguments or fights like the sisters. Ask, what was that like – how did you feel? What happened afterwards?

# Journeys in the Spirit

Children



Sheet 32.C

Respond

Little stories



# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children



Sheet 32.D

Respond

**The scroll given to John and his Friends was 7 feet long and made of silk. On the scroll it said:**

*'You, in your kindness, have come across the Seas, and it has become well known here that you have your hearts full of the preaching of the Truth, and your widely displayed love has shown the true benevolence of your hearts. Regarding Righteousness as of great price, you have travelled far like pilgrims, fearing no danger, whether to the remotest East or the most deserted regions of the West. Since, in your hearts, you have identified yourselves with all mankind, you are, in spite of the differences of our national customs, at one with us.*

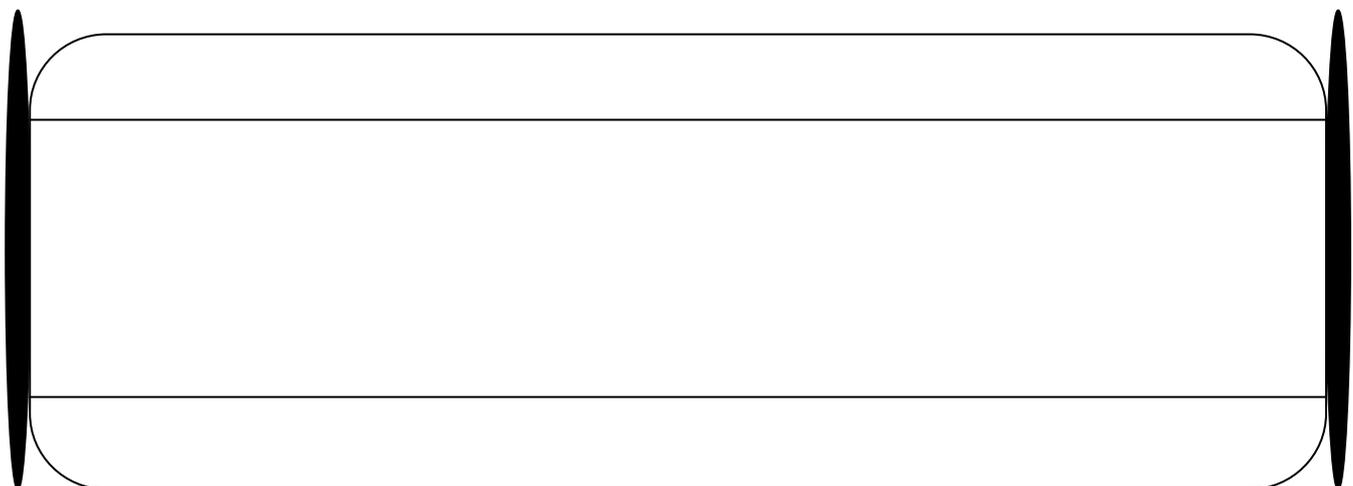
*When, within the last few years, you came to live with us at Suining, the inhabitants enjoyed peace as if we had partaken of good wine to repletion. But times changed and the beacons burned to warn the people. There was fighting over all the land so that we could not sleep in peace. Then you arose in your boldness, displaying hundred-fold bravery. You and we, the people of Suining, helped one another. In sympathy with our hearts you went in and out among the combatants, as a snake wriggles in its progress. Thus it came to pass that without firing an arrow or casting a stone, they freed us from the danger that was impending. How we admire your action! Truly may you be styled righteous. Well may you be compared to Lu Lien, the hero of olden story. We, people of Suining, ponder on this and can never forget it, and so that the true perfume of the good deed may be preserved, we have written this record.'*



**Children's Meeting and helpers could each make a scroll about some part of their own family history. This could be done over one or two meetings. If possible have a variety of scroll pictures from books or the internet so that children can see how different decoration can be done. Before the work begins have everybody sit around their paper in the quiet for just a few moments.**

How to make a scroll:

Take a long piece of paper (could use A3, or alternatively for a group effort try using the back of wall paper). Draw a margin against the edges of the length of the paper. Children to use a light hb pencil to sketch their drawings or story. Use watered down paint / watercolours to paint the finished picture and write the story at the bottom of the scroll when dry (still leaving the margin). Attach kitchen foil tubes or a piece of dowel to each end and roll – tie with string / ribbon / wool. This can be made either portrait or landscape. Have fun and experiment.



# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children



Sheet 32.E

Topical activity

Climate change - we can change

*Make sure you first read the Topical Activity paragraph on Page 4 of this issue of Journeys in the Spirit.*

People at the Copenhagen Conference will be discussing climate change and what can be done to reduce its impact. The Copenhagen Conference will be looking at what the whole world can do, getting a fair deal for everyone. Campaigners are hoping that this conference will decide that action must be taken to limit increase in global temperatures to 2°C, and that the poorest and most vulnerable will be protected.

We all have to think about changing our lifestyle so that we drastically reduce emission of gases that cause climate change. We in the West produce much more carbon dioxide (the most common climate damaging gas), than those in developing countries. The effects of climate change will be felt here in UK, but they will be much worse in countries such as Bangladesh, and these countries are producing far less greenhouse gases than we are.

As Quakers, we already have a commitment to looking after the planet and leading lives that show respect for the Earth. (See *Advice and Queries 1.02.41, 1.02.42*) Now, more than ever, we must 'let our lives speak'. These are some of the things that we can do.

- learn about climate change and its effects, especially on the poorest and most vulnerable countries
- promote and live in a way that actively reduces harmful emissions and waste.
- contacting our political representatives and telling them about our concerns.

.....and yes, children can add to and be part of this. Children can encourage adults to make changes – to love and nurture the world, its beauty and its gifts. Display a number of the Make Waves posters from the July Quaker News – these will be in your Meeting House. There is also a mini-version overleaf on *Sheet 32.F*.

Also visit <http://www.quaker.org.uk/files/Quaker-News-Summer-2009-No-71.pdf>

Sit in a circle, inside or outside, ask, "Who has heard of something called climate change?" Wait for any answers – add a simple version of your own about what it means. Have some objects or pictures which represent climate change, e.g. some tree leaves to represent forests, sand to represent desertification, water to represent flooding, dry plants to represent crop failure; say a little about them. Begin by saying something like: "we all love our planet, earth and want to help look after it". Now say something like, "We are going to think for a moment about what this thing called climate change might do and wonder a little bit if there is anything, that we as children, can do to help." Sit quietly for a few minutes to think about how this effects us and our world and what we might do. Take care that the emphasis is on positive action to minimise climate change, rather than causing alarm and fear.

Children will have learnt something about climate change at school. Some are likely to be very well informed. Have a 'go round' where each person has the opportunity to say something more of what they know about climate change or how they feel about it. A 'talking stick' or similar, can be used. This is also an opportunity for any misunderstandings or fears to be voiced. Emphasise that lots can be done to help – be careful not to provoke alarm.



**Activities:** First say that there are a lot of things we can all do – whatever size or age we are. Here are four possible things to do today:

**1.** Say that there is going to be a big march with lots of people making a big wave together London on 5<sup>th</sup> December. More than 100 organisations are involved, calling on the government to stop using coal and adopting greener options for releasing energy. There are a lot of things we can do to support this action - see <http://www.stopclimatechaos.org/files/scc-summer-action-pack.pdf>. Children's Meeting could be helped draft a Minute to go to Meeting asking for Meeting to support and arrange for Friends to go – including children. Posters could be designed and made to decorate the Meeting House or perhaps be ready take on the march.

Continued on *Sheet 32.F*

# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children



### Sheet 32.F Topical activity Climate change - we can change *continued*

2. Children and adults write a letter to your MP, expressing concerns about climate change and encouraging them to speak up about climate change. What would you put in the letter to remind them of what is at risk. You can find the name and address of your MP at [www.parliament.uk/mpslordsandoffices](http://www.parliament.uk/mpslordsandoffices). This might suit older children in the group. Ensure that the letter is polite, short and focused. This could be done as a group activity. What picture would younger children send your MP about climate change? Tell the local papers.

3. Blue decorated cup cakes.

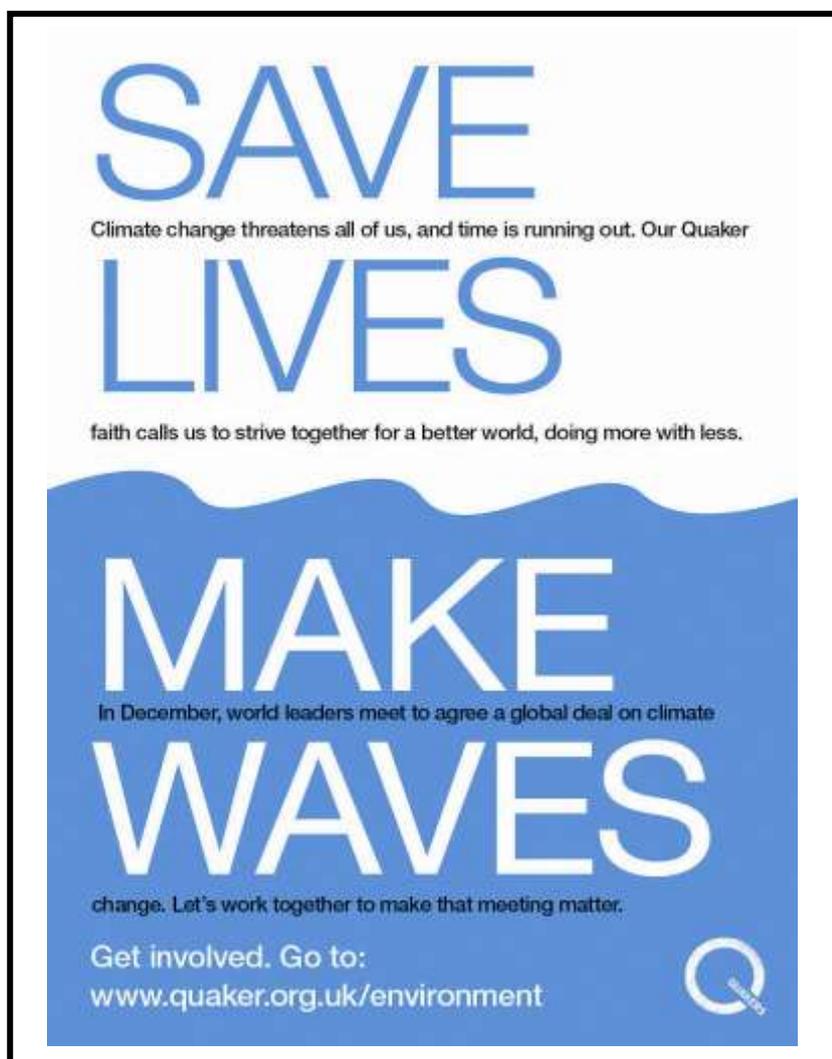
Decorate cup cakes or biscuits with blue icing. Blue is the theme colour for the march - the colour of the sea and water, the rising water levels of climate change, and also the rising tide of people raising awareness about climate change. Have some cup cakes already made or bought, or use plain biscuits. Decorate with blue water icing, or roll- on icing, dyed blue with food colouring or blueberry juice. Be prepared with aprons and warn about blue fingers if the children are using the blue food dye. These cakes or biscuits could be shared with the rest of Meeting, after an explanation of their significance, and a plug for the march on December 5<sup>th</sup>.

Settle into quiet. Each person to think of something they love about the Earth – a special place, an animal, a bird.

At some point check by yourself or with others how this session went and what might be done differently next time.

The next Topical Activity, In Journeys in the Spirit 33 will focus on our own lifestyle, and how we can influence others to make changes.

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/copenhagen> - for Quaker Peace and Social Witness Resources



This is a small version of the Quaker News poster – you could copy enough for people in your Meeting. You could decorate the children's meeting room. Hang lots of them as pennants at the front of your Meeting House.