



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

December 2014 Issue 94



An easy to use plan about the Quaker business method

Make sure you have a little time of worship for yourself and other volunteers before the session – even a couple of minutes are good. The outline is based on a 45 minutes children's meeting. Remember to have a copy of *Journeys in the Spirit* issue 94 available.

Gather:

Read Getting Ready and the introduction to the theme in Gather of this issue of *Journeys in the Spirit* before beginning this part of the session.

At the start create an atmosphere in your children's meeting of welcoming silence, a period during which everyone is asked to become still and to see who is there, who is missing and to settle down. This can be followed by a round of saying, "who we are" and saying, "whom we miss today" and "what is our news?"

This is an exercise in being mindful – helping children to focus their minds and keep others in their minds to help with engaging with each other and an issue. **5 minutes**

Engage:

Say to the children that today you are all going to be doing and finding out about something called the Quaker Business Method – a special way that we as Quakers have of deciding what to do and how to do things.

Resources for this session: a large blanket, a camera or a phone; a laptop, printer and cable; photo quality printer paper.

Do the whole of the activity to 'explore deciding things together' in the Engage section on page 2 of this issue of *Journeys in the Spirit*. **10 minutes**

Respond:

What are we good at?

This is good for using with young children but will suit all ages.

*Resources – a basket or bowl; a small coloured cloth or scarf to line the basket; a selection of small wooden figures (maybe from a Godly Play set – see sidebar on page 3 of *Journeys in the Spirit* for details) – figures could also be plastic or cut out from card.*

Lay down the basket of figures and ask everyone to take one in their hand and for a few moments to think about something that they are really good at. In turns all place their figure back in the basket or bowl in the middle, sharing their talent. Say that as Quakers we think that what we do or decide about together are helped to grow by what we are good at. **5 minutes**

Using the business method

Work with children to prepare a short agenda for a children's meeting for business – do this on the morning of the meeting or the session before. The length and topics will depend on your group. Things that could be talked about with children for going on an agenda might be:

- Finding out if there is a cause and charity the children want to hold an appeal for.
- Is there something they would like to change – in Meeting, in the world, in school? Would they like to ask Meeting for help?
- Activities they would like to do.

Talk about who might Clerk the business meeting and how that is done – an adult could offer to do it for the first time or at least to share it with a child.

Talk about waiting and listening. Say that in the quiet and stillness we are waiting to maybe hear 'a very quiet voice inside us – some people talk about the voice of God, others talk about what Love is telling us to do'.

Include minute writing. If a child can do this, maybe with assistance, it is better for learning and participation but an adult might do it the first time. This depends on ages and confidence in your children's meeting. The adult could use phrases like - "If I note what we have discussed like this....do you all think this says what we meant?" Agree a short sentence for each issue.

Begin with a little worship – put *Quaker Faith and Practice* in the middle of your group. The Clerk should say the first thing to talk about. Remember that a meeting for business with children may last a short while or it may last a lot longer. Decide who might tell adult meeting for business about any decisions or minutes.

20 minutes

Reflect:

Come back together into a circle. Everybody settles, feet and heads become quiet and still. Lay down the photos of the hands, feet and head activity in the middle of your circle. Ask if anybody has anything that they want to say to the group or to tell or ask the other meeting for worship.

After a brief pause talk about making a display. The photos can be used to create a display showing children's meeting at work with hands, feet and heads. Talk in this Reflect time about what words to put along side photographs and who is going to write them. Talk about where this can be displayed in the meetinghouse to show all Friends how they have been doing business together the Quaker way. **5 minutes**