

Living Together topic: ideas from Sulaman (Headteacher of Mother Tongue community classes) and Rakib (Bengali MFL teacher at primary school)

‘Community as a tree’ (see drawing on Living Together powerpoint):

- Roots can be in different countries (eg Bangladesh, Turkey etc) but all join in the same trunk to make one tree
- The tree could represent a whole society (eg UK or London) with the branches as different communities (Bangladeshi, Somali) – or the tree could be a school with the branches as pupils from different backgrounds – or the tree could be a child who might have roots in different countries/languages
- Could also think of different kinds of trees that enrich an orchard or garden (ie different individuals or communities that contribute to society)
- Importance of tree for our environment – produces leaves, fruit, seed for new trees, gives shade, produces oxygen and takes in carbon dioxide
- So we have to nurture the tree – it’s essential to life itself! In the same way, we have to nurture our community

**Fits with International Primary Curriculum International Task
RESEARCH ACTIVITY for Living Together topic**

‘Tell the children that there are many different communities made up of people with common and different beliefs, interests and culture. These communities add to the richness of life. Ask them to think how boring the world would be if we were all the same!’

1) Children consider why a tree is important

Each draws their own tree

- What does a tree do for us - why is it important?
- Why do we need to look after it?
- How can we look after it?

Discuss in Bengali/English, in groups. Each group to write a piece in English and/or transliterated Bengali/Bengali script. Which group produces the best piece?

Clarify ideas with teacher – make sure children understand that without trees there is no life, and growing trees involves planting seed, adding compost, watering, protecting the tree and giving medication if necessary.

Individual homework – write a piece based on the discussion.

Can also use riddles about trees – children have to guess which one, can make up own riddles.

2) Children think about the school community

- What is a school?
- What does school mean to you?
- What are the benefits school can give?
- What is the best age for schooling and why?

Again group discussion and writing, then help from teacher to get the whole picture. Clarify importance of school, how children are ready to develop learning at an early age.

3) Compare school and tree

- Link the benefits of both, how they both function and grow, how to look after them.
- If one part of the branch is not working properly, due to misunderstanding (could be because of different backgrounds, nationalities, abilities), needs to be sorted out.
- Branches could be different children from different backgrounds (different shaped fruits and leaves).
- Different kinds of trees grow in different ways and give different fruit – all are beneficial to life. A farmer grows different kinds of trees in an orchard to give fruit all year round and last for many years, providing an income throughout life. School community benefits from variety and if well nurtured will provide for all.

4) Link to village community life in Bangladesh or elsewhere

Photo of village courtyard surrounded by houses in Bangladesh (see Living Together powerpoint):

- What trees can you see here?
- What fruit do they give and when?

Tall palms – betel nut, small palms – coconut, also banana trees (all produce fruit all year round)

Banana tree grows everywhere, all year, and bananas are a complete food for people around the world, nourishing and full of vitamins. Once a bunch of bananas has been produced the tree produces a new shoot and therefore a new tree (like new communities!) Bananas are easy to grow and a gift to humanity!

5) *Different ways of life in village and city*

Photo of village courtyard in Bangladesh, compared with city photo from Bangladesh (see Village Life and City Life powerpoint) and London, or other cities

Questions that could be asked in class, then written in home languages to interview parents at home:

How does the day start in a village or city?

- What are the first noises you hear? (animals, alarm clock....)
- What activities do you do first? (wash in pond, in bathroom...)
- What clothes do you put on?
- Does it matter if you wake up a few minutes late? (natural rhythms of time in village, lives ruled by time in city)

How do families work together in a village?

- Who does what in a farming family – men, women, children?
- How does each contribute? (agriculture, housework, going to school)
- How does the extended family help each other? (individual families may grow different crops, share produce and income)
- What are the women doing in the village photo? (sharing the work of drying rice in the courtyard, walking on the rice that has been spread out on the ground and turning it over with their feet so it dries more quickly)

How do families work together in a city? (different contributions of each member)

How do families live together in a village?

- How many families live in each house in the village photo? (one family usually lives in each *gor* (house), the extended family lives in the *bari* - several houses around central courtyard)
- How is the central courtyard used? (for shared activities – drying rice in the middle of the day, then by children playing when come home from school, for groups to sit and chat, for meals when shared between whole family, to talk with visitors or neighbours, maybe to tell stories in the evening....)
- What do children do in the evening? (go inside after sunset, do homework and religious study, meal and bed – no TV or computers!)

How do families live together in a city? (what is same or different?)

Children interview parents/grandparents at home about way of life when they grew up. How did the family/community live and work together? Bring findings back to school and write them up, to compare with their own lives in London.

Fits with International Primary Curriculum Learning Targets:

Children will:

- 2.1 Know about some of the similarities and differences between the different home countries and between them and the host country
- 2.2 Know about ways in which these similarities and differences affect the lives of people
- 2.3 Be able to identify and talk about communities and cultures that are different from but equal to their own

Fits with Letter to Parents for International Primary Curriculum:

We will also be learning about rules, rights and responsibilities, how independence and interdependence are important when people live together in communities and how communities vary in size from small hamlets in single countries to global communities.

In particular, you might want to talk to your child about all of the different social and work communities you have experienced and continue to experience. You could explain how each community resolved its differences as well as supported its strengths. You could also help your child by pointing out the international dimension to any community in which you are involved.