

difference.

**for Primary
Schools**



Host Guide

**Upper Key Stage 2
9-11 years old**

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RECONCILING LEADERS NETWORK



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Let's get started... ↘

Overview

Before you begin

We're so excited you've chosen to run the *Difference* course with your primary school!

If you haven't already, you'll need to create an online account so you can access everything you need, including films and slides provided for every session. This is free and simple to do – just follow the steps below:

- Register for training** – sign up for a training session at difference.rln.global/training.
- Head to difference.rln.global/sign-up and create an account** – this gives you access to the resources hub after completing training.
- Explore the dashboard** – this is where you'll find articles and introductory videos about the *Difference* course.
- Set up your *Difference* course** – we'd love to know when you're running the course and for how many people so we can best support you along the way. Please register a course per class/group.
- Download the course materials** – visit the training and resources hub to find the films and slides that accompany each session.

Scan here to
get started!





About

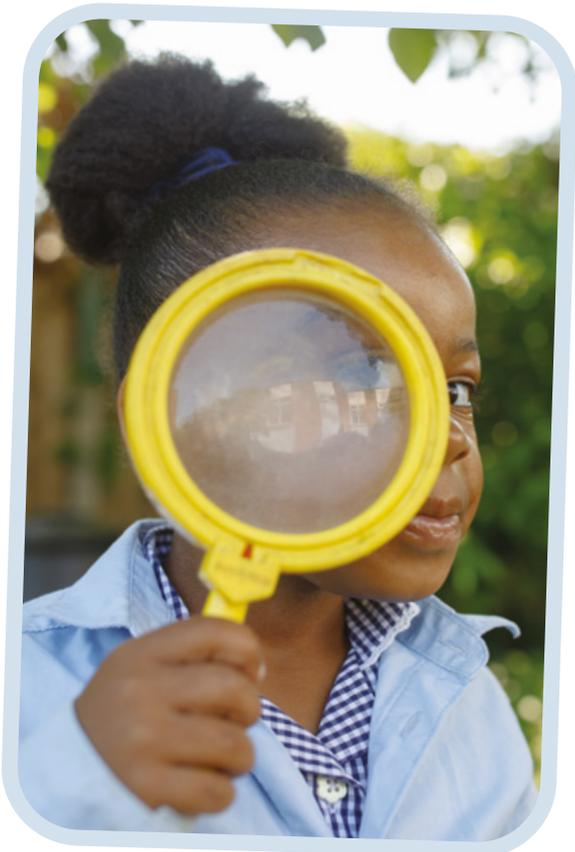
We live in a messy, hurting, and divided world. For children growing up and working out who they are, it can be especially hard to know how to handle conflict, difference, fear of saying the wrong thing, and the ups and downs of friendships.

Children and young people need the opportunity and support to build good relationships with themselves, their peers, and the world around them. Through *Difference*, pupils will develop formational habits to encounter others well and navigate difficult situations. By participating in this programme, they will gain the tools and skills to engage constructively and respectfully to build a flourishing and welcoming school community.

Key stages

Difference for Primary Schools has five sets of resources – one for each key stage. These course materials have been developed with education experts and school practitioners.

We are delighted that schools around the world are using these resources – please use the age ranges below as guidance for your context.



Early Years Foundation Stage

3-5 years old (Nursery and Reception)

Key Stage 1

5-7 years old

Lower Key Stage 2

7-9 years old

Upper Key Stage 2

9-11 years old

Transition

10-12 years old

In our diverse classroom contexts, it is important to recognise how worldviews can impact how pupils think, believe, feel, and act. The *Difference* course is rooted in Christian principles and is thoughtfully designed to speak to universal values, such as compassion, empathy, interconnectedness, forgiveness, belonging, and hospitality.

These values ensure that the content is inclusive and relevant to all pupils. Recognising the influence of different worldviews helps us create a more empathetic and supportive learning environment. The resources include optional prayers along with alternative reflections for the diversity of needs and beliefs of your pupils.

Sessions

With the exception of the Nursery materials, the *Difference* course for primary schools has six sessions:

1 Introduction

In complex and divided times, we can develop habits that help us to relate better to others and work towards building just and flourishing communities.

2 Crossing Divides

Sometimes our own assumptions or prejudices divide us from others. We can challenge these assumptions by being curious about the lives of those we don't know.

3 Navigating Disagreement

It is possible to have good relationships even when we disagree. Instead of being afraid of disagreement, we can develop empathy for those we disagree with, learning to see things from the other's point of view.

4 Pursuing Justice

Justice is an important part of peacemaking. We are invited to recognise that the world is not as it should be and to join with others to pursue just and flourishing communities to change the world around us.

5 Practising Forgiveness

Taking steps towards forgiveness can be complex but transformative. Having recognised a hurt, we can begin to see if a better relationship is possible in the future.

6 Belonging Together

We flourish when we recognise our interconnectedness and the unique value we each have.

Difference teaches three habits

Difference introduces three formational habits that can shape how we navigate everyday relationships. Rooted in the wisdom of experienced peacemakers and inspired by Jesus' encounters in the New Testament, these habits equip and encourage children in a fractured and fragile world.

Our habits matter. Research estimates that 45% of our daily actions are habitual¹ and neuroscientists have estimated that up to 95% of our behaviours are controlled – at least in part – by the subconscious mind.² This suggests a close connection between what we believe and what we do. If we can shape our habits, we will develop practices that have a deep and lasting impact on our actions, our thoughts and our character.

The three habits are:



Be Curious



Be Present



Reimagine

These habits are deeply interconnected and can be used flexibly, there is no correct order - they strengthen and support each other.

Let's take a closer look at the three habits →

¹ David T. Neal, Wendy Wood, and Jeffrey M. Quinn, 'Habits – A Repeat Performance', Duke University, 2006

² e.g. Lakoff and Johnson 1999, in Martin 2008



Be Curious Community

Listen well

Take an interest

Find out more

Ask respectful questions

"God created human beings, making them to be like himself." Genesis 1:27a (GNB)

Listen to others' stories and see the world through their eyes.

In Genesis 1, we read that every person is made in the image of God, with value and a unique story of deep worth. When we are curious enough to discover a person's story, we affirm their innate value.

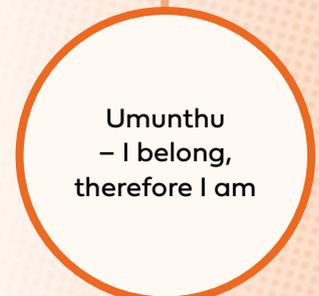
When a person feels seen, heard, and respected, it enables trust to grow and deeper conversations to become possible. Demonstrating a genuine interest in who another person is and how they experience the world can open a door to navigating more challenging territory together.

Curiosity about the other also invites us to stretch beyond the borders of our own experiences. Adopting a posture of enquiry and wonder cultivates humility, where we acknowledge that we don't have all the answers, while still valuing the experience and insights we do offer.

Being curious enables pupils to build community. The word community comes from ideas of shared belonging and unity. This concept will be explored through specific examples to help pupils better understand how context – geographic, historical, cultural, etc. – impacts what it means to live, believe, and think as a member of a global community.

Habits progression

EYFS
(3-5 years old)



Transition
(10-12 years old)



Be Present Embrace

Show up

Stick around

Listen well

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." John 1:14a (NIV)

Encounter others with authenticity and confidence.

It is often in our encounters with others that we notice complexity, divisions, and differences in human relationships. Such encounters are at the heart of many of Jesus' teachings.

Being present with others means more than just being there physically. It means being fully present – showing up and sticking around, making time for the other, giving them our full attention, and meeting them as they truly are.

The Christian faith teaches that God became human and chose to be part of a hurting world. God's response to injustice and hurt was to step into the reality of the human experience through the person of Jesus Christ.

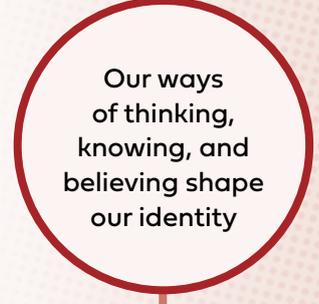
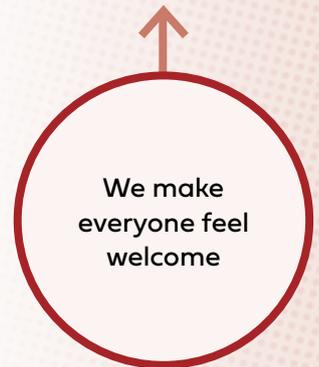
Being present involves having the courage to bring our unique selves into our encounters – not just the filtered version of ourselves we want others to see. When we show up with our experiences, backgrounds, strengths, hopes, and fears, it can make way for deeper, more meaningful relationships.

When we choose to be present, we move towards embrace. Embrace is not just about welcoming others – it's about taking the opportunity to broaden our perspectives. Through the lens of Ubuntu, this relational concept invites pupils to expand their understanding and gain insight into how their own environment has influenced their understanding of the world.

difference.

Habits progression

EYFS
(3-5 years old)



Transition
(10-12 years old)



Reimagine Power

Seek hope

See beyond

Find a new way

"I am making everything new!"
Revelation 21:5 (NIV)

Find hope and opportunity in the places where we long to see change.

Our perceptions of the world are shaped by our imaginations. When divisions and conflict seem intractable and we face repeated disappointment, it can sometimes be difficult to find hope or to envision a future where healing, restoration, and thriving relationships are possible.

Yet we read in Revelation 21 that 'God is making all things new.' The habit of reimagining encourages us through being renewed by the Holy Spirit to seek for God to expand our understanding of what is possible. Reimagining is rarely a solo activity; it often happens in community. For relationships to be restored, the systems and structures we live by may need to be reimagined and reshaped in ways we have not yet considered.

The habit of reimagining helps pupils reflect on the dynamics of power. Power cannot be divorced from context; it is undeniably the case that some people have more power than others and that this power can be used for both good and ill. This concept asks pupils to critically analyse ways in which power has shaped lived experience – positively and negatively – in a global context.

Habits progression

EYFS
(3-5 years old)



Everyone can make a difference



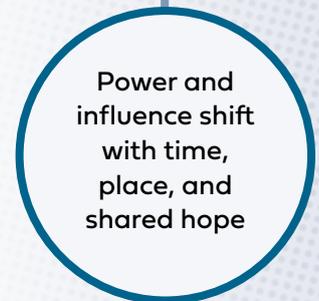
There are important stories and experiences; we can listen, care, and understand



Lived experiences shape and deepen how we understand our worldview



People in a worldview may follow different sources of authority



Power and influence shift with time, place, and shared hope

Transition
(10-12 years old)

Using the habits with your pupils

Pose, Pause, Pounce, Bounce is a simple but powerful strategy to create meaningful dialogue in the classroom. It encourages deeper thinking, active listening, and respectful discussion – all essential for nurturing the three habits:

Be Curious

Take a genuine interest in others' thoughts and experiences

Pose

Ask a thoughtful question linked to your learning but let pupils know you don't want an answer yet. This invites curiosity and builds anticipation.

Be Present

Give your full attention, really listening to what others say

Pause

Give pupils silent thinking time. This models being present – allowing everyone space to reflect, especially those who may need longer to process their thoughts.

Pounce

Gently invite one pupil to share their answer. This encourages full engagement and shows that every voice matters. If they're unsure, reassure them and invite another to try – it's all part of the learning.

Reimagine

Explore how your thoughts may adapt and change after hearing other people's responses

Bounce

Ask another pupil what they think about the first answer. Do they agree, disagree, or have something to add? This helps pupils reimagine – exploring how their own thinking might shift or grow after hearing someone else's perspective.

By combining this method with the *Difference* habits, you're not just asking questions – you're building a classroom culture of curiosity, empathy, and collaborative thinking.

The *Difference* Song

In partnership with iSingPop, we're excited to share *This is the Day (The Difference Song)* for use in classrooms, collective worship and assemblies. The song highlights the three habits and the themes of the *Difference* programme. It also includes fun, easy-to-follow actions to help pupils join in and bring the message to life.



Scan here! →



Feedback

As part of our commitment to keep improving, we would love to hear how *Difference* is going for you and your pupils. As you begin using the materials, please share any reflections, stories, and feedback, which will greatly help us understand the impact these resources are having in classrooms – and how we can make them even better.

At the end of your course, please remember to complete a feedback form in your final session by visiting difference.rln.global/feedback or by scanning this QR code.

Scan here! →



Using the session guides

Session structure

The sessions are designed to be flexible and adaptable to suit your school's context. You can choose how and when to deliver the materials, depending on what works best for your pupils and timetable.

As a guide, some schools have delivered the sessions over six weeks – spending around an hour per session through subjects like RE, PSHE, English, History, or whole school learning such as collective worship or assemblies. Others have run the sessions daily over a single week. There's no fixed approach – you're encouraged to deliver the course in a way that complements your pupils' engagement and learning.

Each session of the course follows the structure below:

Story (Be Curious)

Stories matter, so we start with a section called **Story**. Each key stage embeds learning in children's literature with a story book chosen for each stage and we've produced a short film introducing pupils to the three habits. Every session highlights a story or Bible reference to reflect on relevant themes. Questions are provided to guide your discussion with pupils.

During this part of the session, pupils are encouraged to explore, ask questions and engage with the world around them, nurturing their natural sense of wonder and deepening their appreciation for diverse perspectives and experiences.



Space (Be Present)

The middle section of each session is called **Space**. The spaces we create can have a powerful impact on the relationships we build. This part of the session helps embed the habits through a variety of facilitated activities. Pupils will learn to broaden their horizons by welcoming and understanding others' experiences, while also recognising that their own hopes, beliefs, and values are just as important as those of others.



Sanctuary (Reimagine)

Each session ends with a moment of **Sanctuary**. This is a time for pupils to reflect on what they've learned and how they could apply it in practice. This part of the session embraces the habit of reimagining, encouraging pupils to think creatively about how they can shape a hope-filled future, considering the impact of power, influence, and their role in it. This helps them develop problem-solving skills and a positive, forward-thinking mindset. If appropriate for your setting, this section is also an opportunity to pray.

◀ Before the session

Ahead of each session, the following steps will help you prepare.

Read

Read the guide for the session, paying close attention to the instructions and the session theme. Familiarise yourself with the provided slide deck, making any edits ahead of the session.

Set up

Prepare your room and ensure you have the materials you need for the activities. Make the space feel welcoming.

► During the session

Each session has a set of notes to help you host it, giving guidance on what to say, questions to ask, and activities to run.

Sessions contain the following elements:



Film

Suggested videos to explore with pupils, encouraging meaningful discussions around key themes and habits.



Song

Songs are included to help pupils connect with the themes, remember key messages, and express their learning in creative and joyful ways - including the *Difference* song.



Children's literature

Stories that connect to the session theme to aid exploration and discussion.



Slides

A slide deck for every session, with images, videos, and discussion questions included.



Activity

Guidance for activities is provided, along with key discussion questions to link activities to the learning.



Bible

Biblical passages and stories are offered for those who wish to explore the session themes from a Christian perspective.



Prayer and reflection

Prayers and reflections to read with your pupils, or to put into your own words.

►► Beyond the session

To help embed the *Difference* habits – **Be Curious**, **Be Present**, and **Reimagine** – beyond each session, schools are encouraged to create reflective, empowering, and inclusive spaces that allow pupils to continue practising these habits in meaningful ways throughout the school day. These spaces should go beyond one-off lessons, integrating the habits into the rhythms and culture of classroom life, contributing towards pupils' continuous learning.

By creating opportunities for ongoing reflection, dialogue, and creativity, pupils are supported in exploring their own identities, understanding others, and imagining more just and compassionate communities. These spaces might take the form of physical areas, like a Working Wall, Peace Diary, or Harmony Haven (see page 30), but can also be woven into routines such as circle time and collective worship.

Such environments invite pupils to be active participants in their own learning and development, encouraging them to:

- Consider thoughtful questions and be open to new perspectives
- Practise presence and empathy with peers
- Reflect on how they can make a positive difference in their relationships and communities

Ultimately, these intentional practices help pupils move from learning about: difference to living it, developing the skills and values they need to flourish as individuals and as part of a diverse and interconnected world.



Including everyone

Wellbeing

The below guidance is intended to help you create an accessible and welcoming environment that will enable the pupils in your school to engage with – and enjoy – *Difference*.

Every person is different

It is particularly important to bear in mind that every person in your group will come to *Difference* with unique life experiences, perspectives, and needs. Some children may need encouragement to step out of their comfort zones and be given opportunities for reflection. For others, it will be important to underline the importance of their wellbeing and ensure that they do not feel under pressure to engage (with individuals, groups, or issues) if it does not feel helpful or safe for them to do so at this point.

Emotional regulation

Emotional regulation involves recognising, understanding, and responding to emotions. It plays a key role in how we learn to reflect on our own experiences and build relationships with others. Some pupils may be going through personal situations that make it hard for them to regulate emotion. It is important to keep this in mind when facilitating activities where children are invited to reflect on area of conflict or on their own perspectives.

When we feel threatened, embarrassed, or angry, it's normal for there to be an emotional reaction. This happens because the emotional part of our brain (the amygdala) takes over, and puts our rational thinking on hold. It's like our brain switches to survival mode, focusing on protecting ourselves in the moment rather than engage in careful thinking. This can make it hard to regulate emotions, stay focused, or prevent impulsive actions.

Feeling safe

Starting a journey to explore and develop the habits of being curious, being present, and reimagining involves pupils feeling safe enough to share stories, express personal opinions, and listen to those of others.

Creating a safe social, physical, and emotional space for pupils will provide containment for the sessions – particularly for any pupils who may be struggling to regulate emotion. The following recommendations will help create a safe and nurturing environment where children feel empowered to explore and express complex emotions and ideas.



A safe social space

As we welcome pupils, we need to create a space where they feel comfortable and safe to be themselves. This is not something that can be done by you alone, as an educator; it requires involvement and collaboration with your pupils.

Before beginning the sessions, establish a positive group culture – for example, by creating a class agreement. As pupils contribute their ideas, reflect back what you believe the children are expressing and avoid making assumptions. Think about how you can enable the children to have ownership of the process – for example, a pupil could act as a scribe or help summarise suggestions. The more ownership the children feel through this process, the easier it will be to establish and maintain a group culture that practices the habits.

A safe emotional space

When exploring personal or emotive topics, creating a psychologically safe space is essential to ensure pupils feel secure, respected, and able to engage meaningfully.

- Start by collaboratively establishing clear ground rules that promote respectful behaviour and active listening without judgement, so every child knows their thoughts and feelings will be valued.
- Encourage a culture of empathy by encouraging pupils to recognise and appreciate one another's perspectives, using storytelling, role play, or shared experiences to build understanding and connection.
- Provide opportunities for self-expression in various forms – through drawing, writing, speaking, or using reflection or thought boxes – allowing pupils the flexibility to process and share in ways that suit them best.
- Ensure all language and materials used are age-appropriate and accessible. Avoid jargon and offer clear, simple explanations that children can easily understand.
- Most importantly, remain present and responsive throughout, tuning into emotional cues, offering reassurance, and making space for pupils to talk privately if they need extra support (in accordance with your school's pupil wellbeing and safeguarding guidelines).



A safe physical space

In addition to creating a space that is emotionally, mentally, and spiritually safe, we need to create a space that is physically safe.

Location

It can be beneficial to consider how the pupils in your group perceive the space where you are gathering. The space you are using may carry specific connotations influenced by its other uses – for example, it may be associated with a class subject at school that they find boring or challenging. Consider ways to enhance their sense of ownership for the purpose of this course, making it a place where the children can relax and be themselves.



Set-up

Think carefully about the layout of your room. How are the chairs positioned? Are some arrangements more formal or imposing? Will you use chairs, or would beanbags or floor cushions be more appropriate? If you choose the latter, will everyone be able to sit down and get up comfortably? If some people in your group have limited mobility, consider how to make the room inclusive for them.



Area to take a break

It could be helpful to designate an area as a quiet space. Sometimes discussions, activities, or interactions can become overwhelming for some people – we don't always know what may be triggering due to different experiences or circumstances. A pupil might need to spend a few moments on their own in a quiet space until they feel ready to return to the group. If possible, set up a corner of your room with comfortable seating and items such as noise-cancelling headphones and fidget toys. Ask the children what would help them most if they need to take a break. At the start of each session, remind the group that this area is available.



Consider accessibility

The course materials are designed to be inclusive and interactive, including some movement around the room. It's essential to review each session and consider any necessary adaptations based on the needs of your group.

Widgit mats

A printable widgit mat is provided for each session to enhance accessibility and support diverse learning needs. The widgit symbols and visual aids provide clear, visual representations of key terms and concepts, which can significantly benefit pupils with different learning styles and abilities, including those with language or cognitive challenges.



Widgit mats can be particularly useful for pre-teaching – giving pupils the opportunity to familiarise themselves with vocabulary and concepts before they come up in the main lesson. This proactive approach not only aids comprehension and retention but also creates an inclusive environment where all pupils can engage more effectively with the material. The use of visual vocabulary helps to bridge gaps in communication and ensures that every pupil has the opportunity to understand and participate in the lessons.

- ✉ Widgit mats for every session will be available to download in English via the training and resources hub. If you require widgit mats in a different language, please email us (via hello@rln.global) – we'd be happy to provide these for you!

Some things to consider are:

- For children with auditory impairments, consider what adjustments they need so that you can ensure they are in the best position to hear clearly or lip-read if applicable.
- When using visual materials, be prepared to describe them accurately and promptly for pupils with visual impairments.
- Some children may struggle to empathise with others or understand different perspectives. Break down activities into smaller steps and provide extra support in assessing emotions.
- Listening can be challenging for those who struggle with interrupting, inferring, or changing topics while others are speaking. Provide additional support by reminding them of how they can demonstrate active listening during these sessions.
- Fidget toys or putty can be beneficial for pupils who need to occupy their hands to aid concentration.
- A visual running order for the session (displayed on a flip chart or piece of paper), along with time warnings/notices about activity endings, can help your group prepare for transitions and changes.



**Upper Key
Stage 2
overview
and sessions**

Upper Key Stage 2 (UKS2)

UKS2 resources are designed to guide pupils through profound and interconnected themes, helping them to navigate complex ideas and develop their own understanding. Pupils will be encouraged to reflect on their own perspectives, interact meaningfully with others, and consider how they can contribute to positive change in the world around them.

Be Curious (Community)

It takes time, commitment, and patience to get to know each other better.

True community is built on a foundation of curiosity – taking time, showing commitment, and exercising patience as we seek to know each other better. By embracing diverse perspectives and experiences, we create deeper connections and spaces where all feel valued and understood.

Be Present (Embrace)

We're all responsible for helping others feel that they belong.

Being fully present in our interactions means listening actively, acknowledging different experiences, and ensuring that everyone's voice carries weight. When we create an environment where individuals feel recognised and respected, we cultivate a culture of belonging that nurtures confidence and mutual understanding.

Reimagine (Power)

People in a worldview may follow different sources of authority.

Reimagining how power is used means recognising different sources of authority, questioning assumptions, and exploring new possibilities. When we encourage fairness, hope, creativity, and courage, we create environments where power is shared and used for the good of all - helping to build communities that are more just, compassionate, and inclusive.

Encouraging young people to engage critically with these perspectives is at the heart of the Upper Key Stage 2 *Difference* resources. These materials explore key themes that help pupils develop awareness and empathy, including:

1 Assumptions

Pupils will explore how assumptions shape their perceptions of the world and the people around them. Through critical reflection, they will examine how assumptions can lead to misunderstandings and biases, recognising the importance of questioning preconceived notions.

2 Environmentalism

The resources highlight the significance of caring for the environment, prompting pupils to consider the impact of human actions on the natural world. By discussing sustainability and conservation, they will be encouraged to think about their role in protecting the planet for future generations.

3 Marginalisation

Engaging with the experiences of marginalised groups, pupils will develop empathy and a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by those who are often excluded or oppressed. By confronting these issues, they will be equipped to contribute to a more just and inclusive society.

Through these themes, pupils will gain the tools to think critically, challenge assumptions, and engage in meaningful discussions that help shape a more inclusive and thoughtful world.

Theological underpinning

- All humans are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139) and have intrinsic worth.
- We value the contribution of a whole range of people, not just those who look, think or speak like us. (Romans 12)
- We recognise that humans do not have the right to own or dominate others for any reason; for example, because of their race. (Galatians 3)

Children's literature



Central to these resources is the importance of creating a sense of belonging among pupils, their communities, and beyond. The storybook, *Varmints* by Helen Ward and Marc Craste, serves as a powerful tool to illustrate these themes.

Varmints is a beautifully illustrated book that tells the story of creatures living in harmony with nature until their world is disrupted by a force that transforms their environment. The narrative explores themes of loss, hope, and regeneration, making it an ideal starting point for discussions about environmentalism and the consequences of unchecked development.

Through *Varmints*, pupils can:

- Reflect on how assumptions about others can lead to conflict and exclusion.
- Understand the importance of protecting our environment and the impact of human actions on ecosystems.
- Develop empathy by considering the experiences of marginalised groups and the importance of inclusion.
- Feel inspired by themes of hope and renewal, which are crucial in a world often marked by conflict.

Wondering questions

Each course begins with a wondering question – an open-ended prompt designed to spark curiosity and reflection. Wonderings are a powerful teaching approach that support pupils to take ownership of their learning, leading to greater engagement and deeper thinking. Wonderings encourage children to make meaningful connections across a range of concepts and topics, creating a more connected and thoughtful learning experience.

Upper Key Stage 2



I wonder...

How can we intentionally flourish together?



Continuous learning



Working Wall

Develop an interactive classroom display that reflects current learning. It evolves over time to show the learning journey, helping pupils to recall key concepts, vocabulary, and ideas. In RE or in thematic learning, a Working Wall might include key questions, scripture, artwork, pupil responses, and prompts for reflection. It serves as both a learning aid and a celebration of pupil thinking and progress.

Upper Key Stage 2

Q Prompt question: How can you use your voice to help yourself and others to flourish?



Harmony Havens

Create dedicated spaces designed to promote prayer, mindfulness, and reflection for pupils to cultivate a sense of presence. Utilise these havens as spaces for pupils to recharge and reflect.

Upper Key Stage 2

Q Questions to reflect on: What stops people from flourishing both individually and in communities? What helps people to flourish?



Peace Diaries

Introduce Peace Diaries-where pupils document their experiences, thoughts, and unique approaches to conflict resolution. Create a platform for pupils to share their insights, creating a sense of empowerment and collective learning.

Upper Key Stage 2

Q Consider: How does caring about social justice help people and communities to intentionally do better?

UN Sustainable Development Goals

Difference for Primary Schools reflects some of the aims of the **United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals** by nurturing values and habits that encourage pupils to think critically, care deeply, and act responsibly. Through the habits of **Be Curious**, **Be Present**, and **Reimagine**, children explore themes of justice, inclusion, peace, and sustainability in age-appropriate ways. This helps to build a foundation for global citizenship, empowering pupils to reflect on their place in the world and their potential to make a positive difference in their communities and beyond.

For every key stage, we have identified how *Difference* links to these global goals, helping educators connect classroom learning with wider global themes and real-world impact.

Upper Key Stage 2



At this stage, learners explore how people's choices (such as building roads, factories, or using natural resources) can help or harm the environment. Learners are encouraged to think carefully, ask questions, and share ideas about making things fairer for people and the planet.



At this level, learners begin to explore what inequality means and how it can affect people's lives in different areas. They start to understand that inequality can be unfair and can stop people from having the same chances in life. Through children's literature and real-life examples, learners are supported to express why a situation might be unfair and to think of respectful, inclusive ways to make a difference, while celebrating diversity and the choices of others.

Scan QR to access United Nations' educational materials



The sessions →

Session 1

Introduction

Key learning

Pupils begin developing the *Difference* habits – **Be Curious**, **Be Present**, and **Reimagine** – to explore how they see the world and their place in their community.



Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- Pens and pencils
- Paper or journals for drawing/writing
- *Optional*: LEGO bricks, building blocks, paper straws, or cubes

Story

Be Curious (Community)

Discussing the habits

It is essential to help pupils develop the *Difference* habits that will enhance their engagement and understanding. These habits – **Be Curious**, **Be Present**, and **Reimagine** – will help pupils approach the resources with an open mind, active engagement, and creative thinking.

Notes

 **Notes**


Film

Show your class the UKS2 *Difference* habits video and *This is the Day* (The *Difference* song).

We recommend beginning the first session with the UKS2 *Difference* habits video as a gentle and engaging way to introduce the key ideas of the course. We'd encourage you to replay this video at any point during the course – it can be a helpful reminder of the habits or a prompt for reflection as pupils grow in their understanding.



Film

Watch the animation *Nobody Stands Nowhere*.

Allow time for the pupils to share their initial responses before asking the suggested questions (on the next page).

Space

Be Present (Embrace)

Suggested questions for discussion:

- What is your view of the world?
- How do you see things?
- What makes you who you are?
- On what do you base your decisions?

Children can share their thoughts orally, in writing, or through drawings.



Optional activity

Building blocks

Here is an additional activity you may like to do with your UKS2 pupils as they explore the concept of difference.

- Divide the children into small teams of 3-4 members.
- Provide each team with a set of LEGO bricks, building blocks, paper straws, or cubes.
- Explain the objective of the challenge: to collaboratively build a specific structure or object.

1 Choose a building task

Select a building task that is age-appropriate and suits the interests of the children. For example: building a spaceship, a castle, a bridge, or a futuristic cityscape. Present the chosen task to all teams.

2 Start building

Give the teams a set amount of time to plan and build their structure. Encourage communication and collaboration within each team as they decide on the design, allocate tasks, and work together to construct the building.

3 Decision points

Introduce decision points during the building process where teams must make choices about the design, materials to use, or how to solve construction challenges. Encourage teams to discuss different ideas, listen to each other's perspectives, and come to agreements democratically.

4 Navigating disagreements

When disagreements arise within teams about design choices or building methods, encourage the children to communicate respectfully and find compromises. Guide them in thinking about solutions that satisfy everyone's preferences and contribute to the overall success of the project.



Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)

Suggested questions for reflection:

- What makes you feel seen?
- What makes you feel cherished?
- What does it mean to be in a community with others?

Pupils can record their responses in a journal or verbally (with the option to revisit this in the last session).



Bible passage

**"For as he thinks in his heart,
so is he."**

Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV)

This verse teaches us that the way you think shapes who you are and how you act. If you think positively and kindly, you can live a life filled with goodness. But if you focus on negative or harmful thoughts, it can affect how you treat others and yourself. It's important to treasure who you are as a person, and what helps you to feel part of a community.



Song

**Play the song *Hey, hey, hey!*
from iSingPop.**



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

Imagine our world as a big, beautiful puzzle. Each of us is like a unique puzzle piece, with our own colours, shapes, and patterns. No two pieces are exactly the same, which makes the puzzle so amazing when it's all put together.

Some of us might love the bright blue sky and think it's the best part of the picture, while others might see the tall green trees and find them the most interesting. Our different views and experiences make the world richer and more exciting.

When we take time to listen and learn from each other, we can see the whole picture more clearly and appreciate the beauty of every piece. So, let's celebrate our differences and remember that every perspective is important in creating the wonderful world we live in.



Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for making each of us unique and special. Help us to see the beauty in our differences and to appreciate the gifts that everyone brings.

Teach us to love and support each other, knowing that we are all important in your eyes. May we work together in kindness and harmony, sharing your love with everyone we meet.

Amen.

 **Notes**

End of session 1

Session 2

Crossing Divides

Key learning

Pupils explore how assumptions can divide us and how curiosity about unknown stories can enable understanding.



Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- Dictionaries (or devices with internet access)
- A copy of the *Varmints* book
- Drawing paper
- A3/A4 card
- Pencils, crayons, or markers
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Markers or paints
- Sticky tack or pegs

Notes

Story

Be Curious (Community)

 Notes



Song

Begin the session by playing the song *Hey, hey, hey!* by iSingPop.

Explore vocabulary

Put “varmint” on the board in an interesting font.

varmint

In pairs, have the children look up the word “varmint” in the dictionary.

Ask them to discuss what a varmint is and what it might look like based on the definition.

Encourage pupils to consider the language and vocabulary used to describe the varmint and how it might be represented physically.



Children’s literature

Without showing the book’s cover, display the first page with the definition of a varmint. Discuss how this adds to their initial thoughts.

Space

Be Present (Embrace)



Activity

Drawing the varmint

Ask pupils to draw their own interpretation of a varmint based on their thoughts and ideas.

Display the drawings or place them on desks around your classroom and get your class to take a gallery walk, where pupils observe each other's work.

Ask:

- What do these drawings tell us about varmints?
- How does this help us understand them better?





Activity

Varmints outbreak

Discussion

Explain that there has been a local and national outbreak of varmints. Split your pupils into small groups for discussion – you may want to take your class outside for a walk and talk discussion time. Ask the groups to discuss how public awareness campaigns help inform people and keep them safe, and how to create an effective awareness campaign about the varmint outbreak.

When the pupils have finished their discussions, share real world examples such as:

- COVID-19 awareness campaigns – teaching hygiene and safety measures.
- Anti-littering campaigns – encouraging people to care for the environment.
- Bike safety campaigns – promoting helmet use and road safety.
- Road safety campaigns – emphasising safe crossing and seatbelt use.

Posters and placards

Pupils work individually, in pairs, or in groups to create their own campaign posters/placards. Emphasise clarity, impact, and how effectively their posters communicate important information. Encourage pupils to consider:

- What key information should a campaign include?
- How can we communicate it clearly?

Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)



Bible passage

“Let each of you look not only to his own interests but also to the interests of others.”

Philippians 2:4 (ESV)

This verse encourages us to care not just about ourselves, but about those around us. When we share helpful information and support one another, we can build a stronger, safer, and more loving community.



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

It's important to stay curious about what's happening in our local community. When we take the time to learn about the events, people, and issues around us, we can better understand and appreciate our neighbours. Being curious helps us see the challenges and opportunities that affect everyone. By asking questions and seeking to understand, we can find ways to contribute positively and make a difference in our community. Let's stay curious, engaged, and open to learning from those around us.



Prayer

Dear God,

We thank you for the community we live in.

Fill our hearts with curiosity and a desire to learn more about those around us.

Help us to see the needs and joys of our neighbours and to find ways to support and uplift one another.

Amen.

Notes

Session 2



End of session 2

Session 3

Navigating Disagreement



Key learning

Pupils reflect on disagreement, empathy, and assumptions. They learn that respectful relationships are possible even with differing views.

Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- A copy of the *Varmints* book
- Pens and pencils
- Paper or journals for drawing/writing
- Posters/placards from Session 2

Story

Be Curious (Community)

Review the gallery walk where pupils view and review the posters and placards created. Have them consider and discuss the potential impact of these posters on managing the outbreak of varmints.

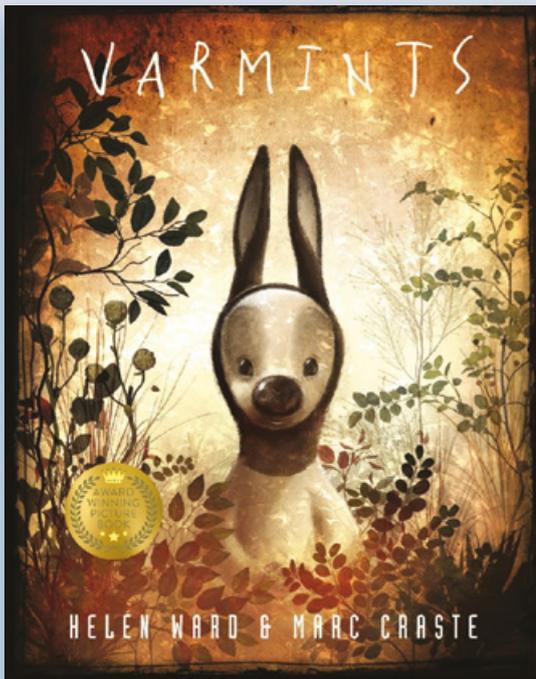
difference.

Notes



Children's literature

Show your class the front cover of *Varmints*, hiding the title.



Ask:

- What do you see?
- What do you think?
- What do you know?
- What do you want to know?

Encourage the pupils to describe what they see. Compare this creature with the varmint that they drew previously. Invite pupils to draw out the contrasts.



Children's literature

Show the pupils the whole of the front cover.

Begin with a moment of silence for pupils to reflect on the image, before moving into asking questions.

Ask:

- What did you notice?
- What assumptions did you make?
- Does this remind you of any local, national, or global events, past or present?

Discussion

Move into a time of exploring agreeing and disagreeing.

Ask:

- Did you agree or disagree with the previous discussions about varmints?
- What can we do when we disagree with others?
- How should we respond if the person is older or in a position of power (for example, a teacher)?

Discuss how some communities have been or are treated differently.

Encourage pupils to reflect on and reframe their initial thoughts.

Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)



Bible passage

"Do to others as you would have them do to you."

Luke 6:31 (NIV)

This verse encourages kindness and empathy, reminding us to consider how others feel and to treat them with understanding.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- How can we be mindful of our assumptions?
- How can we develop empathy for those different from us?



Film

Play the audio of the first 2:50 of the *Varmints* animation.

Make sure that the pupils can listen to the soundscape but not see any visuals.

Ask:

- What did you hear?
- How would you describe it?
- What images came to mind?
- How did it make you feel?



Optional activity

Soundscape artwork

Invite pupils to create artwork reflecting the mood of the soundscape in the video. This can lighten emotions and shift perspectives.



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

Sometimes, we make assumptions about others without really knowing them. It's important to remember that everyone has their own story and experiences. Just like we don't want others to assume things about us, we should try to understand and be kind to those who are different from us. By putting ourselves in someone else's shoes, we can learn to be more caring and respectful.



Prayer

Dear God,

Help us to see others through your eyes and not make assumptions. Teach us to be kind and understanding to everyone, no matter how different they may seem. Fill our hearts with empathy and love, so we can treat others with respect and make our world a better place.

Amen.

Notes



End of session 3

Session 4

Pursuing Justice



Key learning

Pupils understand justice as an essential part of peacemaking and learn that even small voices can stand up for what is right.

Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- A3 paper or card
- Markers, paint, scissors, glue
- Examples of Banksy's artwork
- Materials for props/posters for mock march (e.g. sticks, string, banners, paper rolls)

Notes

Story

Be Curious (Community)



Children's literature

Watch or read up to the point about noise and halting thinking in *Varmints*.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- Where are the moments of noise in our lives? How do they relate to disagreements or conflict?
- Why are moments of quiet or silence important? What do they allow us to do?
- What has happened to the creatures in the story? Does this remind you of any past or present events? (Some pupils may link this to colonisation or extremism – additional guidance provided in the appendix on p74)



Highlight the mood and imagery the authors use:

- The authors use dark and light elements. How does this affect the mood you feel as a reader/observer?
- (Optional) Recall the artwork created in the last session. How does this piece differ from the one created previously?

Space

Be Present (Embrace)



Children's literature

Read up to "It was...TIME" in *Varmints*.

Talk to pupils about what "darkness leading to light" means.

Ask:

- Why do you think people use the words 'dark' and 'light' to talk about hard times and hopeful times?

This can help children begin to explore the metaphor and its deeper meaning.

Highlight that in life, we sometimes face difficult times that make us feel sad, scared, or confused. These are like the dark parts of our journey. But just like the creature finds a light switch, we can always find brightness again.

Ask:

- Have you ever had a time when you felt like you were in the 'dark' – maybe confused, sad, or worried?

- What helped you feel better again?
- What does 'light' mean to you when you're going through something difficult?

The creature in the book faces challenges, but instead of giving up, they find hope – even in the darkest times.

Encourage discussion with questions such as:

- What challenges did the creature face?
- How did they respond?
- What do you think the 'light' was for the creature?
- What helped them keep going?

'Darkness leading to light' reminds us that even in tough times, there's always hope and a way forward. By staying strong, having faith, and learning from experiences, we can find happiness again – just like finding light in a dark room.



Invite pupils to reflect on:

- How can we be a 'light' for someone else when they're going through a hard time?
- What can we learn from hard times that can help us grow stronger or wiser?



Activity

Peaceful protests

Look at examples of peaceful protests using powerful but safe imagery.

Ask:

- What do you see?
- What do you think?
- What do you know?
- What do you want to know?

Suggested questions for discussion:

- How can people express their opinions peacefully?
- Why do people have peaceful protests?
- How can peaceful protests help bring change in society?



Activity

Creative campaigns

Pick one of the activities below to do with your pupils:

1 Banksy-inspired art

Banksy's art often uses simple yet powerful images to express big ideas about society, such as the beauty of nature, urban development, and environmental conservation.

Discuss how Banksy's art addresses these themes, then encourage pupils to create their own artwork about nature, urban change, or protecting the environment.

Remind pupils to respect public spaces – art should be created on paper or canvas, not walls (without permission).

We've provided some additional slides with some images of Banksy's artwork, or you may like to print your own. You'll find this on the slides.

2 Wildlife protection march

Inspired by the book's theme of conservation, pupils can organise a march to raise awareness about protecting wildlife and habitats.

Create posters with messages like "Save Our Wild Friends" or "Protect Our Forests" and walk together peacefully to advocate for nature preservation.

3 Anti-bullying campaign

Varmints addresses standing up to bullies and promoting kindness. Pupils can organise a peaceful protest against bullying at school or in the community.

Create banners with messages like "Spread Kindness, Not Bullying" or "Stand Up Against Bullying," and organise activities promoting inclusivity and empathy.



Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)



Bible passage

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

John 1:5 (NIV)

This reminds us that even in difficult moments, light and hope can always overcome darkness.

It is undeniably the case that some people have more power than others and this power can be used for good or ill.

Ask:

- How was power used in *Varmints*?
- How much power do you think you have? What influences this?
- How can you use your position of power? Emphasise that even from a young age, our pupils can still stand up against things that they see as wrong and that their voices matter.



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

Sometimes, we see things that aren't right, and it can be hard to know what to do. But standing up for what is wrong means being brave and speaking up or helping out when we see someone being treated unfairly. It's important to remember that even though it might be

difference.

difficult, standing up for what is right helps make things better and shows that we care about others. By doing this, we help make our world a kinder and fairer place for everyone.

Notes



Prayer

Dear God,

Give us the courage to stand up for what is right and to speak out when we see something that isn't fair or kind. Help us to be brave and loving, just as you are.

Guide us to make choices that reflect your love and justice. May we always act with compassion and make our world a better place for everyone.

Amen.



End of session 4

Session 5

Practising Forgiveness



Key learning

Pupils explore the complexity and transformational power of forgiveness, including self-forgiveness and reconciliation.

Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- Chairs/tables arranged for role-play or interviews
- Quiet space for reflection
- Pens, pencils
- Drawing paper



Notes

difference.

Story

Be Curious (Community)

 Notes



Children's literature

Finish reading or watching *Varmints*.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- Whose voice is heard in the story?
- Whose voice is missing?
- How was forgiveness practised? Was it linked to actions, or did the creature demonstrate forgiveness towards itself to move on?

Discussion

Read this quote with your group:

**"It is the heart that makes
[someone] rich."**

Henry Ward Beecher

Ask:

- Reflect on a time when you might not have recognised the richness of another person because you focused on material wealth, access to technology, or held an attitude of superiority. **How could you view things differently?**

- When engaging with forgiveness, we can pursue restoration. Forgiveness can be within ourselves or with others. To forgive someone may also involve working on making things right with them, finding a way to repair the relationship and understand each other better. **What could this look like in practice?**



Bible passage

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”

Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

This verse teaches us that forgiveness and kindness are important in building and repairing relationships. Christians believe that God always forgives those who are sorry.

Space

Be Present (Embrace)



Activity

Role play or interview

Ask your pupils to conduct an interview or engage in role play with the creature from *Varmints* to explore themes of empathy and self-forgiveness.

Suggested questions:

- How did it feel when your home was taken away?
- What do you wish others had understood about you?
- Have you been able to forgive those who caused the destruction?
- Was it hard to forgive yourself? Why or why not?
- What helped you find peace and move forward?
- What advice would you give to someone who feels like they've lost everything?

**Children's literature**

Reflect on *Varmints*. In the story, the creature's home is destroyed by urban development, and it feels helpless. However, it finds peace by focusing on what it can control – rebuilding and nurturing a new environment – rather than dwelling on what it couldn't change. This involves the creature forgiving itself for not preventing the destruction and embracing its ability to create positive change.

Ask pupils how they would help the creature understand that self-forgiveness is key to finding peace and moving forward.

Through this discussion, pupils can learn that, like the creature, they too can find peace by focusing on their strengths, acknowledging their efforts, and practising self-compassion in challenging times.

Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)

Suggested questions for reflection:

- How can we find spaces of peace?
- Why is this important?
- What does peace look like?





Activity

Places of peace

Here are some optional ways for your pupils to respond:

1 Create a peace map

Ask pupils to draw or map out places where they feel peaceful – this could be a real place (e.g. bedroom, garden, reading corner) or imagined (e.g. floating on a cloud, a forest with animals). Encourage them to include details that make that space peaceful (colours, sounds, smells).

2 Art response: “Peace looks like...”

Provide art materials and ask pupils to draw or paint what peace looks like to them. This can be abstract (e.g. calming colours and shapes) or literal (e.g. friends playing, someone meditating, nature scenes).

3 Peace journal prompt

Ask your pupils to write a short paragraph or poem answering one of these prompts:

- Where do you go when you need peace?
- Why is that place important?
- What does peace sound, feel, or look like for you?

4 Mindfulness reflection

Lead a short mindfulness activity (e.g. deep breathing, listening to peaceful music). Then, have pupils reflect silently or with a partner:

- How did that feel?
- How can we create these peaceful moments in our daily lives?

5 Class discussion or circle time

Encourage pupils to share where they feel most calm and why. Use talking objects to ensure everyone has a chance to speak and be heard.



Bible passage

“Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

John 14:27 (NIV)

This verse teaches us that it's possible to find peace even when we feel worried or unsure. It encourages us to stay calm and not be afraid, knowing that we are not alone.



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

Finding places of peace is important for everyone. These are places where we feel calm and happy, like a cosy corner at home, a quiet spot in the park, or while reading a favourite book. It's also important to be kind to ourselves, giving ourselves breaks when we need them and speaking gentle words to ourselves. By discovering our own peaceful places and practicing self-kindness, we can bring more calm and happiness into our lives and the lives of those around us.



Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for the peaceful places in our lives where we can feel calm and happy. Help us to find and cherish these moments of tranquillity, whether it's a cosy corner at home, a quiet spot in the park, or enjoying a favourite book. Teach us to be kind to ourselves, giving ourselves the breaks we need and treating ourselves with gentle words. May we share this peace and kindness with those around us, spreading your love and serenity.

Amen.

Notes



End of session 5

Session 6

Belonging Together



Key learning

Pupils explore the concept of “Ubuntu” and the value of community, understanding that we flourish by valuing our interconnectedness and shared belonging.

Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- Card cut-outs in house shapes
- Coloured wool, fabric pieces, buttons, sequins, feathers
- Scissors, glue, coloured pens or pencils
- Large display board or backing paper
- *Optional:* Plant pots or saucers
- *Optional:* Soil or compost
- *Optional:* Seeds or small plants

Notes

Story

Be Curious (Community)



Children's literature

Highlight that the story ends in an interesting way, with "The beginning." This leaves space to imagine what could happen next.

Show pupils three different images (on the slides) and ask them to describe what they see, noting both similarities and differences. Explain that each image could represent a varmint, their experiences, changes, and challenges.

Discussion questions:

- What can happen when we don't see the value of others because they are different to us?
- What can happen when we value the inherent worth and dignity of others?

Space

Be Present (Embrace)

Explore vocabulary

"Ubuntu" means "I am because we are," highlighting the connection between our identities and the wellbeing of others.

Discuss how pupils' actions and relationships with others shape their sense of self and community.



Activity Our Village

Notes

Pupils will explore Chief Oloruntoba's artwork "Our Village," which represents a vibrant, interconnected community where everyone belongs and contributes.



In pairs, ask pupils to create a village using colourful wool and card in the shape of a home. Each pair will design and decorate their home, adding unique details that reflect different aspects of their community.

Discuss how their artwork represents a sense of belonging. Just like in Oloruntoba's piece, each colourful home represents different people and their contributions.

By combining their creations, pupils will create a collective artwork symbolising how unique qualities and efforts come together to build a strong, supportive community.

This activity helps pupils understand that a strong community is built on diversity, collaboration, and shared belonging.

difference.

Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)



Bible passage

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.”

1 Corinthians 12:27 (NIV)

This verse reminds us that, like members of a body, each person has a unique role to play, and together, we form a whole community that thrives when everyone contributes.



Activity

Compassion bridges hearts

Show pupils the image on the slide – *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan.

Ask:

- What do you see?
- What do you think?
- What do you know?
- What do you want to know?

Discussion:

- Who is marginalised or excluded in our communities?

- How can compassion help our village/community grow?
- Can our village grow by making others feel welcome?
- What could this look like globally?



Optional activity

Community project

Here are some ways for your pupils to respond to the themes within *Difference* – you could involve local community members, including parents, carers, parish partners, and school governors or trustees:

1 Community garden

Pupils work together to plant flowers, vegetables, and herbs.

This teaches teamwork, sharing resources, and caring for the environment, whilst fostering belonging by creating a shared space where everyone contributes.

2 Mini garden project

Pupils create individual plant pot saucers as mini gardens.

This encourages responsibility, empathy, and creativity as well as building a collective green space, symbolising unity and care.



Song

Play the song ***Big God*** by Tim Godfrey x Fearless Community ft Anderson or ***This is the Day*** (The *Difference* Song)



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

In our communities, it's important to include everyone and make sure no one feels left out. Ubuntu means "I am because we are," which reminds us that we are all connected and need each other. When we include others and help everyone feel welcome, we make our community stronger and happier. By working together and supporting each other, we show that everyone matters and that we are all part of one big circle of compassion.



Prayer

Dear God,

Help us to include everyone in our community and make sure no one feels left out. Teach us the spirit of Ubuntu, reminding us that we are all connected and that we need each other. Guide us to show kindness and compassion, making our community a place where everyone feels welcome and valued. May our actions reflect your love and create a circle of compassion that brings us all closer together.

Amen.

Feedback



We'd love to celebrate the amazing work your school is doing through the *Difference for Primary Schools* programme. Whether it's pupil quotes, classroom displays, photos (with permission), creative responses, or stories of impact – please do share them with us! It's a joy to see how schools are engaging with the resources, and we'd be delighted to highlight your school's journey as part of a growing community of young peacemakers.

Please share your feedback

We'd also love to hear your feedback and suggestions for how to improve future versions of *Difference*. Share your stories and ideas with us at hello@rln.global.

Appendix

Appendix 1

Navigating discussions about extremism

When addressing sensitive topics, such as the rise of extremism movements, while using the *Difference* resources, it is vital to approach the conversation with care, sensitivity, and awareness of pupils' emotional wellbeing.

In today's fast-moving world, children are increasingly exposed to complex social and political issues, making this a crucial time for shaping their values. Creating a psychologically safe and supportive environment allows pupils to explore these topics openly, ask questions without fear, and develop a deeper understanding of justice, inclusion, and community.

Create a safe space for discussion

Start by setting clear guidelines for discussions. Emphasise the importance of respect, kindness, and active listening. Let pupils know it's okay to ask questions and express their thoughts but remind them to be considerate of how their words might impact others. Reinforce that the classroom should be a place where everyone feels safe and valued, regardless of their background or beliefs. Establishing this environment supports open, honest, and empathetic dialogue.

Acknowledge and clarify

If the topic of extremism comes up, acknowledge it in a way that is age-appropriate and not overly distressing. Explain that sometimes, people express strong opinions through actions that may be harmful or unfair to others. Stress that while everyone has the right to their views, it's important to understand how such actions can affect others, especially when they promote exclusion or hatred. Use this opportunity to discuss the values of compassion and hospitality, explaining that these principles encourage us to care for others and to treat everyone with kindness and respect.

Focus on core values

Reframe the discussion around the core values of empathy, respect, and understanding. Encourage pupils to think about how they can contribute to a more positive and inclusive society. Discuss how compassion involves understanding and caring for others' feelings, while hospitality means welcoming and respecting everyone. This is a chance to reinforce the importance of kindness and standing up against unfair treatment in a thoughtful and constructive manner.

Provide reassurance and positive actions

Reassure pupils that while there are difficult issues in the world, many people are working to make things better. Highlight the positive actions they can take, such as showing empathy towards others, being inclusive, and speaking up against unkind behaviour in ways that are appropriate for their age. Emphasise that their own acts of compassion and hospitality can make a significant difference in their communities.

By guiding these discussions with sensitivity and focusing on values such as empathy, compassion, and hospitality, you'll help pupils navigate complex issues while reinforcing important moral principles. This approach not only supports their emotional wellbeing but also encourages them to act with kindness and respect in their interactions with others.

Optional prayer

Dear God,

We thank you for the gift of understanding and the power of kindness. Help us to open our hearts to others, showing compassion in our words and actions. Teach us to listen with empathy, to welcome everyone with love, and to stand up for what is right in a way that reflects your grace.

Guide us to be a light in the world, spreading peace and respect wherever we go. May we always seek to build a community where everyone feels safe, valued, and loved.

Amen.

Appendix 2

Talking about colonisation

When discussing colonisation with Upper Key Stage 2 pupils, it is important to approach the topic with sensitivity and clarity.

Begin by explaining the concept in simple terms, such as how it involved people from one country moving to another place and often taking control of the land and its resources. For example, you might say, "Imagine if someone moved into your home without asking and changed everything." Highlight that this often led to significant changes, challenges and harm for the people who originally lived there, such as the Indigenous peoples of North America, Australia, or in Africa.

Use age-appropriate examples and stories to illustrate these points. Ensure to include diverse perspectives, particularly those of Indigenous peoples, by sharing their stories, traditions, and the impact colonisation had on their lives. For instance, you could read a book or show a video that depicts these perspectives in a respectful and engaging way.

Encourage empathy and understanding by discussing the impact on cultures, communities, and individuals. For example, talk about how colonisation led to the loss of land, traditions, and languages for many Indigenous communities. Create an open environment where pupils feel comfortable asking questions and expressing their thoughts, perhaps by having a class discussion or a Q&A session.

Reinforce the importance of respect and the value of different cultures by celebrating Indigenous cultures through art projects, music, and stories. Provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on what fair and respectful interactions between different communities look like, emphasising the importance of kindness and using power for good not ill.

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