

HOW DO WE ALL LIVE TOGETHER?

Starfish story

The starfish story can be a helpful way to help learners understand active citizenship and encourage them that it is worth taking action to make a difference.

KS2 | 15 Mins | Teacher led

KEY QUESTION: There is so much that's difficult in the world and I can only make a small difference so why should I bother? How can I help?

Background

This is a response story. It is intended to be read in an animated way and to involve the audience in the story. It is a good activity for engaging learners in active citizenship and helps them to think about how they might make a difference to how we all live together.

Activity

1. This activity depends on learner participation so begin by explaining that they are going to play a part in a story. You may wish to think about how best to arrange your learners for this activity - in circle, outside, standing, sitting etc.
2. Next take time to teach the four stage directions (below) that are needed to participate in the story. Practice each until everyone is confident that they understand them.



Image supplied by
Dave Seipp -
From the [Free
Colouring](#) site.

Stage Directions for key words:

Beach - dust sand off hands

Starfish - flick out fingers of both hands like stars

Millions - look amazed

Difference - snap fingers

3. Explain to learners that whenever they hear one of the words during the story they should all immediately do the appropriate action. Then share the story as a group.

*An old man was walking along the **beach** one day, very early in the morning, when he saw a young man ahead of him picking up **starfish** and flinging them into the sea. Catching up with the young man he asked him what he was doing.*

*"The **starfish** will die if they are still on the **beach** when the sun comes up-it will be too hot for them," the young man said.*

*"But the **beach** goes on for miles and there are **millions** of **starfish**," replied the old man. "What good can you do? How can your little effort make any **difference**?"*

*The young man looked at the little **starfish** in his hand then smiled and threw it safely into the waves.*

*"Yes," he said, "there are **millions**, and I can't make a **difference** to all of them... but I can make a **difference** to this one."*

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*And with that he walked on, picking up another **starfish** as he went.*

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4. You could ask the learners to discuss in pairs:

What is the message of the story?

What could the starfish represent?

They may come up with examples such as recycling one tin can at a time or making one new friend.

You could then ask them to draw a starfish and write on it two actions they want to take that would make a difference. You can also click on the starfish image (above) to download for colouring in.

There are a lot of interesting ideas about taking actions in the book *Teach your granny to text*. The web link (right) connects you to We Are What We Do - the organisation behind this publication.

Linking Activity

This can be a really useful shared story which two classes or a cluster of schools could read and discuss in their own schools and then share together at a linked meeting or final celebration.

One pair used the story at a parents celebration event at the end of a linking year when adults were invited to join in the actions together with their children.



Related Links

<http://www.wearewhatwedo.org/>