



Can You Say Peace?

By Karen Katz

Themes: Peace, Diversity, Community

Grade: pre-K – 2

Story Synopsis: In recognition of International Day of Peace (September 21), this colorful picture book teaches readers how children in 11 different countries say “peace” in their native languages. Despite their language and cultural differences, all children share many of the same desires. Most importantly, children want to feel safe, and want peace in their world.

Why We Love This Book: Peace and peaceful behavior are the foundational concepts of all Peaceful People lessons. By increasing students’ understanding of what peace looks like, sounds like, and feels like, this book can help students visualize peace as a common classroom goal. We love using this book to introduce Peaceful People, to begin conversations about classroom expectations, to reinforce positive social skills, or in conjunction with activities that build classroom community.

Learning Goal/Objective:

Students will be able to:

- Say “peace” in multiple languages.
- Define “peace” and identify what peace feels like.
- Give examples of peaceful behavior.
- Identify similarities in communities around the world.

Estimated Time: 15 minutes (5 min. to read, 10 min. to debrief)

Before Reading:

- Review listening procedures. (LINK: LISTENING LESSON PLAN)
- Tell students they will get to hear and say words in new languages in this book. Remind them that though some words may sound strange, we show respect for other languages by trying to say the words correctly, without laughing.
- Review Voice Levels: Voice Level 0 during reading; Voice Level 2 during call-and-response.

During Reading/Active Engagement:

- Ask students to repeat each new word for “peace.”

After Reading:

Discussion questions to reach Learning Goals:

- What did you notice about the children's faces in each picture? (*They are smiling, look happy, having fun, etc.*)
- What did you notice about the pictures of the children's homes and families?
 - Highlight similarities from page to page. Possible responses: *kids playing together, families eating together, homes, kids going to school, animals, buildings, transportation (cars, buses, bikes, walking), natural resources (trees, water, farms, animals)*
- How do you think the people in these pictures feel? (*good, calm, happy, peaceful*)
- What do you think is making them feel this way?
 - List responses on the board – these will form the beginning of students' definition of peace.
 - Possible responses: *people being nice to each other, smiling, playing together, eating good food, being near animals, going to school, friends, families*
- Define PEACE: Peace means caring for yourself, others, and things around you. It means you don't hurt others, yourself, or property.
 - According to the author, despite the differences in where we live, children all around the world want peace. Do you agree?
- What kind of things make you feel peaceful? (List responses on board)
- Why is it important for people to act in a peaceful way? (*So people can be happy, can feel good; so there is no fighting, so people are not sad*)
- What can you do to help others in your class/family/school/community feel peaceful?
 - Brainstorm peaceful actions and specific ideas for your classroom/school to help others feel peaceful. (Examples: *Sit with someone new at lunch, share your toys, say something nice to a classmate (compliment), write a thank-you note to your teacher*)
- Why do you think people created the International Day of Peace, a special day set aside around the whole world for celebrating peace, wishing for peace, and working for peace?

Follow-up Activities:

- Peaceful Greetings
 - Post the word "peace" in different languages around the room. Use these words as a greeting for students during morning meeting or other classroom community times.

- Peace Visualization
 - Ask students to close their eyes. Ask them to think of their favorite person/place/toy/food. Tell them to imagine what it looks like, sounds like, smells like, feels like, and tastes like. Have students open their eyes, and discuss what it felt like to think of something so positive. Compare that to the feeling of “peace.”
- Peace Drawing
 - Students draw a picture of what they think peace looks like, or of a peaceful class/family/city.
- Writing Prompts: “Peace means...” “I can be peaceful by...” “I feel peaceful when...”
- Peaceful/Not-So-Peaceful Role Play (LINK: ACTIVITY FILE)
- “You Are Special” Circle (LINK: ACTIVITY FILE)