

Friendship



Friendship

Purpose

To know and appreciate the characteristics of a good friend.

To consider the problems with peer pressure.

Entrance of Pupils

A thought provoking slideshow introducing the theme of 'Friendship' for the pupils to enter assembly to (10 minutes)

Introduction

We couldn't survive without good friends. They are one of the most important groups of people that we have and we should value them.

However, poor friends can lead us into misery, low self esteem and even trouble.

That is why we are often advised to 'choose our friends wisely'.

But how do we do this?

Characteristics of a Good Friend

Honesty

This is one of the most important characteristics of a good friend. You need them to tell you the truth even when it may be difficult. You need to be able to trust that what they say is true.

Accepting

Great friends are accepting of the person that you are and the person that you are growing to be. A great friendship will withstand change and the test of time.



Low-Maintenance

A friendship should not be hard to maintain because you enjoy each other's interests and do not over demand attention.

Non-Judgemental

A good friend may not necessarily agree with everything you say , do and think, but they will take the time to understand why you feel or act in that way and they can accept that you can have differences of opinion and still get on well with each other.

Loyal

A real friend will back you up and stay loyal to you rather than go off when they get what they think is a better offer.

Respectful

Friends respect each other's view, characteristics and needs. They will know when you need to be by yourself for a while rather than wanting company. They respect what matters to you and they choose words that are kind, helpful and friendly rather than words that bring you down.

Trustworthy

A friend keeps your confidences. You can tell them private things knowing that they will not break your trust. You can also trust them to know if they need to support you by seeking help if appropriate.



A True Friend

I can't give solutions to all of life's problems, doubts or fears.
But I can listen to you, and together we will
search for answers.

I can't change your past with all its heartache and pain,
nor the future with its untold stories.
But I can be there now when you need me to care.

I can't keep your feet from stumbling.
I can only offer my hand that you may grasp it and not fall.

Your joys, triumphs, successes, and happiness are not mine;
Yet I can share in your laughter.

Your decisions in life are not mine to make, nor to judge;
I can only support you, encourage you and help you when you ask.

I can't prevent you from falling away from friendship, from your values, from
me.
I can only pray for you, talk to you and wait for you.

I can't give you boundaries which I have determined for you,
But I can give you the room to change, room to grow, room to be yourself.

I can't keep your heart from breaking and hurting,
But I can cry with you and help you pick up the pieces and put them back in
place.

I can't tell you who you are.
I can only love you and be your friend



Immoral - You may like them, but you know you can't trust them. They can be dishonest and/or unethical and they don't normally appreciate advice or judgement from people looking to steer them toward a better path.

Insincere - They pretend to like/support/be happy for you when they are with you, but behind your back it's a whole other story. Even when they're "being nice," there's always some sort of negative edge..

Unavailable - They expect you to be available for them whenever they need you, but when you're the one who needs a friend, they are too busy to meet you.

Inconsiderate - They don't care that their demands are inconvenient, and when you do make sacrifices to accommodate them, they're rarely even grateful.

A bad influence - They push you to do things you're uncomfortable with, and encourage you on to make bad decisions and poor life choices. We often refer to this as negative 'peer pressure'.

You can jump from the roof to the pool. Trust me. I have done this before.



Peer Pressure

Your friends and peers influence your day to day decisions, even if you don't realise it. Sometimes this can be a good thing. Maybe a friend suggested a film that's now your favourite. But at other times, they might pressure you to do things you don't want to do, like be unkind to someone else, truant from lessons, drink, smoke, shop lift or take drugs. They might also pressure you to change how you look or your character.

Peer pressure is feeling like you have to do something just because all your friends are doing it. But it's okay to say no and make your own choices.

Ways to Say 'No' - Tips From Childline

It can be hard to say 'no' to your friends, especially when they're all joining in. Sometimes it can feel like you have to do what they tell you to in order to be accepted. It can make you feel scared and alone.

It's not okay for friends to pressure you like this and it's not your fault. Try these tips to help:

1. Say it with confidence

Be assertive. Practise saying 'no' so that it's easier when someone asks. Avoid situations which feel unsafe or uncomfortable. You could explain that you're going to pay for something instead of stealing it.

2. Try not to judge them

By respecting their choices, they should respect yours. If they don't, are they really good friends?

3. Spend time with friends who can say 'no'

It takes confidence to say no to your friends. You could try seeing how your other friends stand up to peer pressure and you can try this too.

4. Suggest something else to do

If you don't feel comfortable doing what your friends are doing, why not suggest something you could do instead?



Listen to this Story

The Cold Within

Six humans trapped by happenstance
In black and bitter cold.
Each one possessed a stick of wood,
Or so the story's told.

Their dying fire in need of logs,
The first man held his back
For on the faces around the fire
He noticed one was black.

The next man looking across the way
Saw one not of his church,
And couldn't bring himself to give
The fire his stick of birch.

The third one sat in tattered clothes
He gave his coat a hitch.
Why should his log be put to use
To warm the idle rich?

The rich man just sat back and thought
Of the wealth he had in store.
And how to keep what he had earned
From the lazy poor.



The black man's face spoke revenge
As the fire passed from his sight.
For all he saw in his stick of wood
Was a chance to spite the white.

And the last man of this forlorn group
Did naught except for gain.
Giving only to those who gave
Was how he played the game.

The logs held tight in death's still hands
Was proof of human sin.
They didn't die from the cold without
They died from the cold within.

James Patrick Kinney

Far from being good friends to each other, these six are damaged by their own characteristics of discrimination, racism, religious prejudice and bigotry, bitterness, class difference and selfishness. Their negativity and mean spiritedness leads to fatal consequences for them all.



The Bible Says

The Bible has many stories about friendship like the 'Parable of the Good Samaritan'. Although not in the Bible itself, the following story tells us of the friendship of Jesus for each one of us.

Footprints in the Sand

One night I dreamed a dream.

As I was walking along the beach with my Lord.
Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.
For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand,
One belonging to me and one to my Lord.

After the last scene of my life flashed before me,
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.
I noticed that at many times along the path of my life,
especially at the very lowest and saddest times,
there was only one set of footprints.

This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it.
"Lord, you said once I decided to follow you,
You'd walk with me all the way.
But I noticed that during the saddest and most troublesome times of my life,
there was only one set of footprints.
I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, You would leave me."

He whispered, "My precious child, I love
you and will never leave you
Never, ever.
During your trials and testing times,
When you saw only one set of footprints,
it was then that I carried you.'



Let's Pray

Dear God

Thank you for our good friends. For those that make us smile and laugh; those who help in times of trouble; and those who accept us for who we are.

Amen

Putting It Into Practice

Think about how good a friend you are to others.

What would other people say were your best five qualities?

What would you say were the five things that you could work on to be a better friend.

Make a commitment to yourself to improve at least one of those aspects.

Exit of Pupils

A thought provoking slideshow of the key issues raised in the assembly about the theme of 'Friendship' for the pupils to exit assembly to (10 minutes)



Collective Worship and Putting it into Practice for the Rest of the Week

Day 2

Dear God

Help me to be a good friend today. Let me listen to others rather than just having my own say; help me give a good example in what I say and what I do and help me to support someone in times of need.

Amen

Think about your classmates at school. Who do you think makes a really good friend to others (perhaps someone in a different group to the one you usually mix in)?

What qualities do they have that you could work on?

Day 3

Dear God

Sometimes I am tempted to try to fit in with other people even though I don't really agree with what they do. It is hard to stand up for what I believe is right. Please give me courage to do the right thing, not the easy thing just to please my peers.

Amen

Think about someone famous—a celebrity, a politician, an actor, a sports person or someone from the past.

Who would you chose to become friends with if you could and why?

Remember that money and fame are not usually characteristics that are necessary to be a good friend!



Day 4

Dear God

I've fallen out with some of my friends. It's not easy to say that I was wrong and I'm worried that they might reject any approach I make to them.

Give me the courage to say I'm sorry and to try to put things right knowing that real friends will give me another chance.

Amen

Think about someone famous—a celebrity, a politician, an actor, a sports person or someone from the past that you think would make a really poor 'friend'.

Discuss why you think this.

Day 5

Dear God

Thank you for my friends. For connections and laughter; for their encouragement and support; for making time for me and for enjoying my successes.

Amen

Write / draw a brief play under the heading of 'Peer Pressure'.

Is peer pressure always a bad thing?

Your play could involve someone being led into trouble or someone being led away from trouble.

