

The International Day of Peace

The International Day of Peace is on 21 September. It aims to build a more peaceful world for everyone who lives in it.

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the article and do the exercises to check your understanding.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

- a misunderstanding
- trauma
- a mediator
- to contribute (to something)
- unity
- conflict
- to focus on something
- to resolve

Definition

- a. serious and lasting emotional pain caused by an extremely stressful or upsetting experience
- b. the state of being or acting together
- c. to give attention to one particular thing
- d. a person who talks to the people or groups involved in an argument, fight, war, etc. and tries to help them find a solution
- e. disagreement, argument or fighting between people, groups or countries
- f. to find a way to end a problem or difficulty
- g. an argument resulting from the failure of two people or groups to understand each other
- h. to give help, money, support, ideas, etc. to something that other people are also involved in

The International Day of Peace

With so many people around the world suffering because of war and violence, working towards peace is as important as ever. The International Day of Peace is on 21 September every year.

The meaning of 'peace'

Peace can mean different things to different people. To many, peace means freedom from violence or war. It means living without fear and anxiety. Peace also means understanding other people and living with them without fights or arguments.

The consequences of war

War destroys homes, families and communities. People affected by war often go through huge emotional stress. They may suffer from anxiety, depression and other effects of trauma for a long time afterwards. Teenagers may also lose their education as schooling is interrupted or stopped.

The International Day of Peace

The International Day of Peace is on 21 September every year and aims to build a more peaceful world for everyone who lives in it. Every year on this day the United Nations asks for all fighting around the world to stop for 24 hours. This is called a ceasefire. There is also a minute of silence at 12 midday to honour victims of war and violence. Each year, there is a different theme for the Day of Peace, for example 'End racism: build peace' or 'Climate action for peace'.

International Day of Peace events

As well as taking part in the one-minute silence, people worldwide can get involved in many different events on 21 September. There are sports activities such as a football match for peace, or people can participate in yoga and meditation. Teenagers might choose to make artwork with a message about peace or explore the topic through film, music or dance projects.

Peace at school

Schools also take part in a wide range of activities related to peace and unity, often focusing on preventing school violence and bullying. Working on peace at school doesn't have to stop after 21 September. Conflict between students can create a stressful learning environment and often take up time that should be for learning and teaching. To help with this problem, some schools are training students to be peacemakers or mediators. Mediators talk to people or groups involved in a conflict to help them find a solution. Training as a mediator is a great way for young people to learn negotiation skills and take responsibility for resolving disagreements themselves.

What we can all do for peace

War and conflict are often out of our control, but everyone can be responsible for their own behaviour. For example, you can try to bring peace to your personal life by saying sorry and making peace with someone you know. Or you can learn and practise the skills to help your

schoolmates resolve misunderstandings and arguments. Individual actions add up to great things when they are multiplied by millions of people all over the planet, and we can all contribute to making the world a more peaceful place.

Tasks

Task 1

Are the sentences true or false?

| | Answer | |
|---|---------------|-------|
| | True | False |
| 1. The International Day of Peace is an annual event. | True | False |
| 2. Peace means living without arguments, violence or war. | True | False |
| 3. People who experience war soon feel OK when the fighting stops. | True | False |
| 4. War can stop young people from learning with their classmates. | True | False |
| 5. On 21 September the United Nations asks for a week-long ceasefire all over the world. | True | False |
| 6. There are different ways for teenagers to get involved in the International Day of Peace. | True | False |
| 7. Conflicts between students at school always need an adult like a teacher to help resolve them. | True | False |
| 8. Everyone can do something to build a more peaceful world. | True | False |

Task 2

Complete the sentences with words from the box.

| | | | |
|----------|-----------|--------|------------|
| bullying | conflict | trauma | peacemaker |
| unity | ceasefire | theme | behaviour |

1. The United Nations asks for a of 24 hours.
2. People affected by war often experience anxiety, depression and
3. The International Day of Peace is a day for people to come together and show
4. Each year there is a different for the International Day of Peace.
5. Activities for young people often focus on the problem of
6. Mediators try to help resolve by talking to the people or groups involved.
7. Another word for 'mediator' is '.....'.
8. We can help to make the world more peaceful by taking responsibility for our

Discussion

What can you do in your everyday life to create peace with people around you?

Answers

Preparation task

1. g
2. a
3. d
4. h
5. b
6. e
7. c
8. f

Task 1

1. True
2. True
3. False
4. True
5. False
6. True
7. False
8. True

Task 2

1. ceasefire
2. trauma
3. unity
4. theme
5. bullying
6. conflict
7. peacemaker
8. behaviour