

## Lesson 4: Introduction to Peace Unit

Now that Easter has passed, the Nurture Program is moving into spring and Via Transformativa. This is the time when we focus on positively changing both ourselves and the world around us. This year, our theme is Peace. This unit has been published, so you'll get a chance to see bits and pieces of lesson plans that are now being used around the country in churches of various denominations.

For younger kids, we use an Introductory reading that I developed at Jubilee. Click [here](#) for a .pdf version of that. In the past, we've also used some great kids' books. For toddlers, you can use this You Tube reading of Todd Parr's [The Peace Book](#). For slightly older kids, you can use this You Tube reading of [What Does Peace Feel Like?](#) by Vladimir Radunsky.

For kids in Grades 3-8, we share peace quotes from various sacred texts across the world's faith traditions. You can find those below the craft.

Our craft is usually a group peace quilt. It's an easy one to adapt to quarantine circumstances.



At Jubilee!, we give each child a paper square measuring 5" x 5". Then, we simply ask them to depict whatever peace means to them. Some kids make one square. Some kids make several.

Then, we glue the paper squares onto a large background piece of black felt or butcher block paper. Usually, we hang it upstairs in the entryway for the rest of the Via.

This image is from a Sunday School group at a Methodist church in upstate SC that used our curriculum.

## Readings for Kids Grades 3-8

### **Abrahamic Traditions**

In these traditions, peace comes from God, a Divine entity that is generally considered to be outside of ourselves.

#### ***Psalms 29:11*** (Jewish Bible/Old Testament)

May the Lord give strength to his people!  
May the Lord bless his people with peace!

#### **2 *Thessalonians 3:16*** (Christian Bible/New Testament)

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in all ways. The Lord be with all of you.

#### ***Surah 33:44*** (Qur'an)

Their greeting the Day they meet Him will be, "Peace." And He has prepared for them a noble reward.

#### ***Surah 8:61*** (Qur'an)

But if the enemy inclines toward peace, you (also) incline toward peace, and trust in Allah, for He is One that hears and knows (all things).

We also teach them that the standard greetings, shared by both Jews and Muslims, is "Peace." For Jews, it's *shalom*, which can also mean "hello" or "goodbye." On their Sabbath, the greeting is "*Shabbat Shalom*" which is roughly translated as "peaceful Sabbath to you."

Muslims greet one another with the phrase "*As-salamu alaykum.*" As in the Jewish tradition, it means, "peace be upon you," but it can also be used as a general greeting. The response is "*Wa-alaykumu salam.*" Muslims also utter the phrase "peace be upon him" whenever they talk about Muhammad or any other major prophet from the Qur'an.

## **Eastern Traditions**

In the Eastern traditions, peace is more likely to come from within, as seen in the examples shown below.

### ***Tao Te Ching*** (2nd paragraph, chapter 32 - Mitchell translation)

If powerful men and women  
could remain centered in the Tao,  
all things would be in harmony.  
The world would become a paradise.  
All people would be at peace,  
and the law would be written in their hearts.

### ***Tao Te Ching*** (1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, chapter 35 - Mitchell translation)

She who is centered in the Tao  
can go where she wishes, without danger.  
She perceives the universal harmony,  
even amid great pain,  
because she has found peace in her heart.

### **Bhagavad Gita 2:66**

The disunited mind is far from wise; how can it meditate? How be at peace? When you know no peace, how can you know joy? When you let your mind follow the call of the senses, they carry away your better judgment as storms drive a boat off its charted course on the sea.