



photo by Patsy Arnold Martin

Approved! A Story about Quaker Meeting for Business

Overview

Young Friends can have their own Meeting for Business after reading the book *Approved! A Story About Quaker Meeting for Business*, by Nancy L. Haines.



45 minutes



Elementary (ages 6-11)



Newcomer Friendly

Aims & Objectives

Reading this story and wondering together about it will provide an opportunity to share what it's like to listen to one another, especially in Meeting for Business..

Reading List

Sparkling Still provides tools for teachers of children ages 3-12. Included are sample lessons, a master lesson plan, ideas for building classroom community, an introduction to wondering questions and more.

Sparkling Still provides useful instructions on:

- Creating the circle and other components of your time together: pages 5-22
- Reading out loud with children: pages 16-17
- Wondering with children and adults: pages vii-xi and 6-7
- Individual Art Responses: page 7
- Art Supplies: pages 20-22

Credits: Anne Collins, Sally Farneth, Susan Hopkins, and Erika Mittag, Exercise Authors

Materials & Setup

Book: *Approved! A Story About Quaker Meeting for Business* by Nancy L. Haines
([link to purchase: http://tinyurl.com/j283jlj](http://tinyurl.com/j283jlj))

Summary of the Story

This story revolves around the decision-making needed to determine how to spend the funds generated from the children's hot dog sale. The Quaker Process of decision-making is used as Sense of the Meeting is gained. In addition to the helpful process described in the story, there is also included a glossary of terms and queries to think about.

Suggestions for reading for teacher spiritual preparation before exercise/lesson

Read your yearly meeting's "Faith and Practice" for specific practices for Meeting for Business.

Sense of Meeting: "When we seek the sense of the meeting we allow ourselves to be directed to the solution that awaits us. It is a process of surrender to our highest natures, and a recognition that, even though each of us is possessed of light, there is only one Light. At the end of the process we reside in that Light. We have allowed ourselves to be led to a transcendent place of unmistakable harmony, peace, and tender love."

From: "Beyond Consensus" by Barry Morley p. 12 (Pendle Hill Pamphlet #307)

Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal

#242 I Am an Acorn

"Quiet Moments" by LaRue Evans (Sparkling Still, pg. 85)

Materials Needed for Activity Response

For Individual Art Response:

- drawing paper
- crayons, markers, or pastels
- other supplies

For Teacher-directed Activity:

- Chart paper and pens may be useful to help record ideas, practices, helpful strategies.

Take Home Notes (one per family)

Note for children to take home after exercise/lesson or to email to parents during week prior to this lesson:

Today we read *Approved! A Story About Quaker Meeting for Business*, by Nancy L. Haines. We learned about the practices of holding a Meeting for Business and the Quaker Process of decision-making.

Instructions

Welcome the children to the circle. Be sure to introduce everyone, if visitors are present.

Invite children and adults to go around the circle sharing one or two plusses and minuses from their day or week. It helps to ask for 2 items only, either 2 of one or one of each. Children are comfortable with a limit, unless another person's comment sparks another one for an individual child.

Sing a centering song, such as "God's Love is a Light," hymn #218, *Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal*, and/or one of the songs previously suggested under Materials. In addition, or instead of, use breathing or other exercise to center the group. The simplest way is to breathe deeply three times. Adding lifting arms up and down with the breath or holding tummy during deep breaths can help.

Show the cover of the book, read the title and author's name. Ask the children a question that invites them to wonder about the story.

"I wonder how these children held their own Meeting for Business". Then, "Let's see what happens."

Read the story, holding the book so all can see. Depending on reader's comfort level with the children, allow comments during the story, especially from younger children.

After reading the story, invite the children to wonder about the story with you.

Wondering Questions

I wonder how you feel about what you heard in the story today?

I wonder what you liked in the story today?

I wonder what seems hard in the story you heard?

I wonder how you feel about this idea of having a meeting for Business?

After the children have finished wondering and are ready to go to the next activity, introduce the option for Individual Reflective Art Response or a Teacher-directed Activity.

Individual Reflective Art Response

Very possibly for the younger children in the group, children choose from a collection of attractive art supplies and work individually for about 15 minutes to create something of importance to the child. It may or may not be a direct reflection on the story they just heard and wondered about.

Teacher-directed Activities

Vocabulary building for the older kids:

- Laying a decision over until...
- Standing aside or I won't stand aside.
- A decision needs to season.

Guide the children through a practice Meeting for Business. Discuss the roles of the Clerk and the Recording Clerk, pose a decision to use for practice, and review good listening practice by working together as partners to listen to each other. These preliminary activities could take more than one week, easily. After children have the needed skills, then they can be guided through a real Meeting for Business with the support of a facilitator.

Closing

Provide a 5-minute warning before the children need to clean up. After clean up, gather the children in a circle and ask them to name one thing for which they are grateful. Sing songs while waiting for their parents to pick them up, or before joining the adults after the rise of Meeting for Worship.

If the children join their loved ones while Meeting for Worship is still in progress, before you lead them back to the meeting room, invite them to remember how they still themselves and some things about the morning that they may want to think about during the final moments of Meeting for Worship.

Hand out the Take Home Notes, if using, as parents pick up the children in the First Day School room, or after the rise of Meeting for Worship, if joining loved ones in worship.