



Quality Theatre In Education

ABN: 61 935 048 984

# ***GOOD VALUEs* - Teachers' Notes**

## INTRODUCTION

Good Values is an interactive theatre production which encourages students to identify and examine their own sets of values through role play.

Students are introduced to the concept of values through the comic confrontations of bushranger, Ned Kelly, and the trooper enlisted to hunt him down. These two characters then design and perform various short scenes with the help of the audience and replay the scenes in ways that encompass good value judgements suggested by volunteers. In this way, a list of some of the values deemed to be important by students is created and explained. The performance finishes with a comic chase routine between Kelly and the trooper.

It is not necessary to prepare students for the performance, but these notes may prove helpful in the classroom, following the show.

## THE PLAY

Initially wanting to arrest him, Trooper Henderson unwittingly comes to the aid of Ned Kelly, who has a bucket stuck on his head. "A little voice" inside the trooper's head, (his "values"), tells him to help remove the bucket.

Kelly tries to explain, but the trooper misunderstands the concept of values, thinking they must be "laws" or "rules". Kelly corrects him by saying, "**Laws are rules you are forced to follow, whereas values are rules you choose to follow**".

The trooper is re-assigned to find out whether values have gone missing from society or not and it is here that the audience is enlisted to help. A role playing sequence identifies the values of students, but in the end, the trooper discovers his partner is actually Ned Kelly, and attempts to arrest him in a comic chase and closing number.

## ROLE-PLAYING

Within the performance, a series of improvised scenes are created, in which the actors display poor value judgements. Students are questioned about how and why the characters in the scenes could have improved their behaviours. These suggestions are listed on a whiteboard to create a values set. The actors then repeat the scenes, making improved value judgements.

Students become progressively more involved in both the design and performance of these scenes, with some volunteers becoming characters themselves. In this way, teachers may later build on the role-playing process in the classroom, with students becoming the actors. Such exercises should draw from three types of potential situations; **Manners & Behaviour** (eg. table manners, introducing people), **General Living** (eg. on a bus, in a shop), & **Broader Social Awareness** (eg. the environment, immigrants).

SOME VALUES

EXPLANATION/CONSEQUENCES

*\* The explanations given here discuss the tangible benefits of some good values, but at the end of any discussion, emphasise that the best reason for doing something is simply because you think it's "the right thing to do".*

**Honesty** If you lie, you might feel guilty and create more problems. If you tell the truth straight away, any problems get solved quickly and you feel good again.

**Listening/ Respecting Others' Opinions** You feel angriest when people don't listen to you because it's frustrating not to be taken seriously. When other people get angry with you, they may be feeling that you don't respect them because you're not really listening or taking what they say seriously. (eg. mum nagging)

**Sensitivity (to others' feelings)** Understand why others are thinking or feeling the way they do, and behave in a way that helps both the other person and you. You'll have less arguments and fights, and solve problems quickly. Whenever you feel an argument starting, stop and take a deep breath, to remind you to be sensitive.

**Co-operation/** When a group of people do something together, they agree to follow a set of rules, so the activity runs smoothly, (eg. sport). Co-operation makes for a happier life.

**Respecting Property** If you use someone else's things, treat them with care, so when they borrow something from you, they treat your things well.

**Loyalty** Your friends and family may sometimes do the wrong thing, but it's at those times when they need your support the most. After

all, how would you feel if they turned their backs on you when you most needed them.

**Acceptance**

Acceptance means that you think about other people's right to have their own, different, opinions and ways of life.

**Forgiveness**

This doesn't mean forgetting, when people do the wrong thing, because remembering may keep you safe in the future, but if you forgive someone, it cures their feelings of guilt for what they have done, and yours for not liking them anymore. It's very stressful to hold a grudge against someone. Let it go, and both enjoy each other again.

**+ Many Many More Possibilities**

SUGGESTED EXERCISES *(for co-operation & sensitivity)*

1. Leading a blindfolded partner around the room.
2. Group attempts to catch a high-tossed object in a "fireman's blanket".

BEST REFERENCES

1. "Right & Wrong" Hugh Mackay Hodder
2. "Development Through Drama" Brian Way Longman
3. "Attitudes To The World – the views of 600 Australian primary school students" Dr Ruth Reynolds University of Newcastle

CONCLUSION

Since values are rules that individuals must choose for themselves, and because these may need to alter over a life-span, it is essential that specific values are not imposed. Rather, their development must be facilitated and encouraged, and the tangible benefits/consequences of chosen value judgements must be highlighted.

*We hope you enjoy "GOOD VALUES"!*