

## What is Peace?

Is peace something outside us,  
or is peace something inside us?

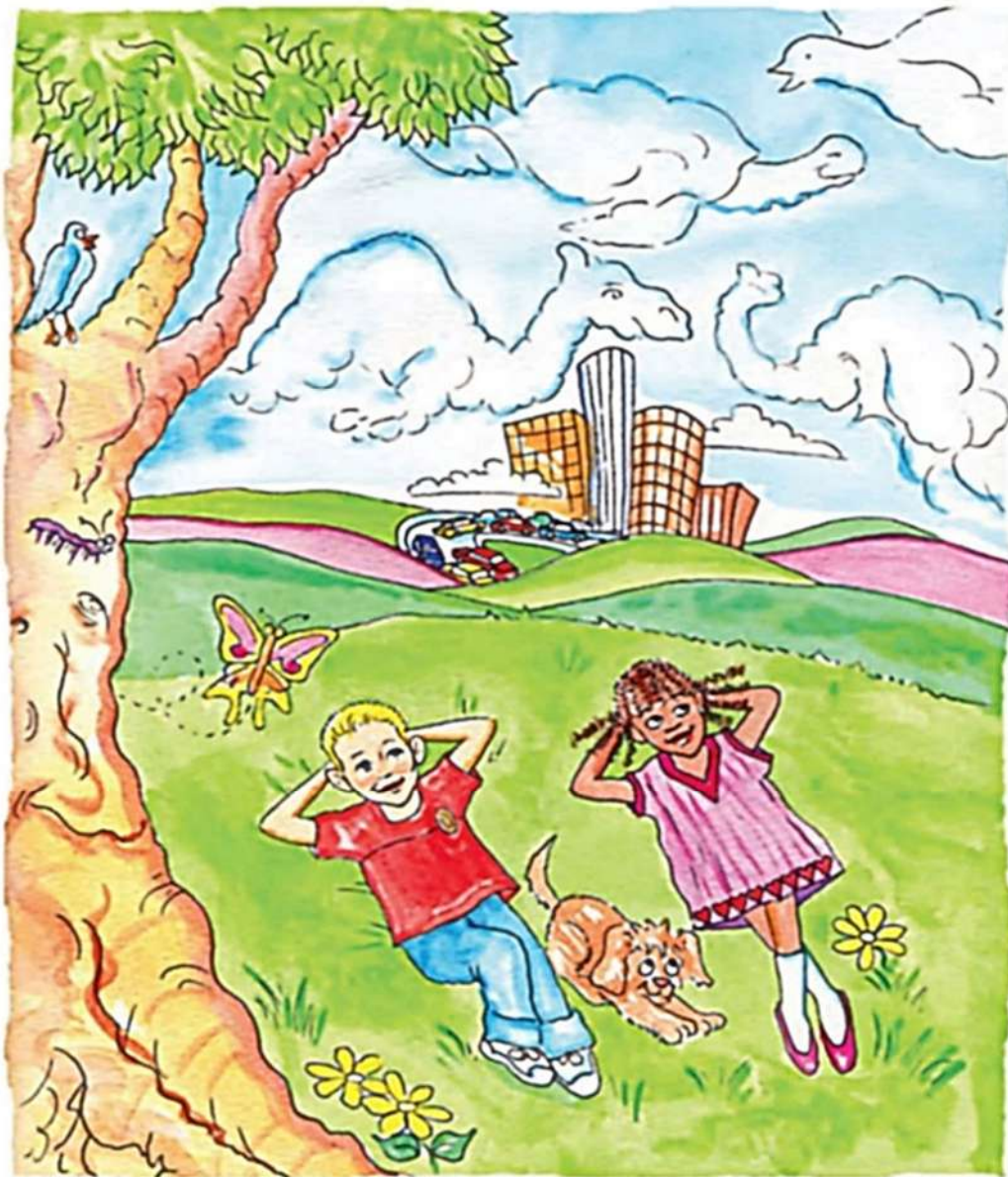
Is peace something you can learn,  
or is peace something we are born with?

Is peace something we can do, or is peace just a feeling?

*Or is peace both a feeling and something we can do?*

Maybe peace is a real nice feeling,  
not like being excited and jumping around all over the place,  
but not like being sleepy either.

Maybe peace is a nice kind of feeling,  
like just lying on your back and watching the clouds go by.



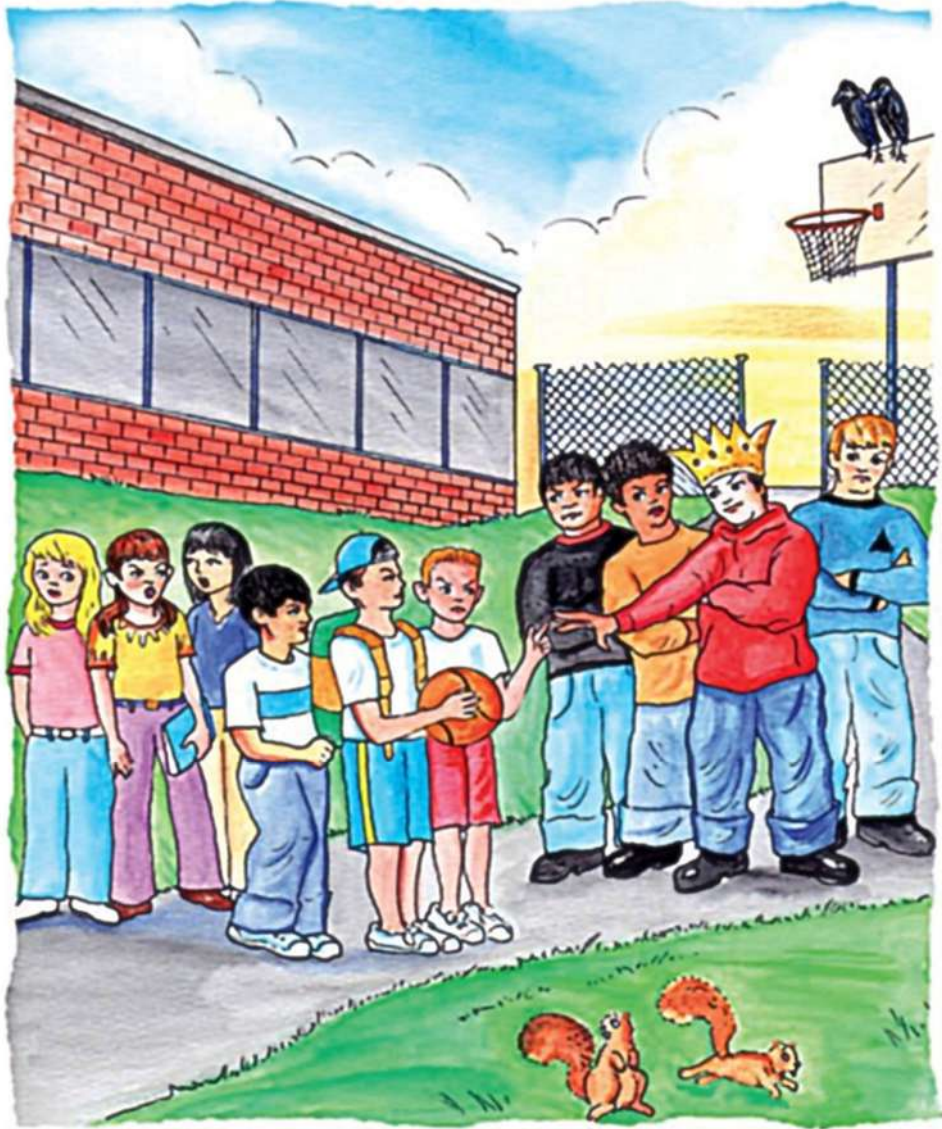
Did you ever go to some place really quiet like a deep green forest,  
or a hot dry desert, or up on a really high mountain?

If you ever go to one of those places  
and you stop talking and playing around,  
if you can stand or sit still, for just a few minutes,  
maybe you can feel peace there.

But do you have to go to a quiet place, far from the city  
with all the cars and people and noise and crazy stuff going on,  
to feel peace?

Maybe we are born with peace already deep inside us,  
and maybe we can feel the peace that is already deep inside us anywhere!



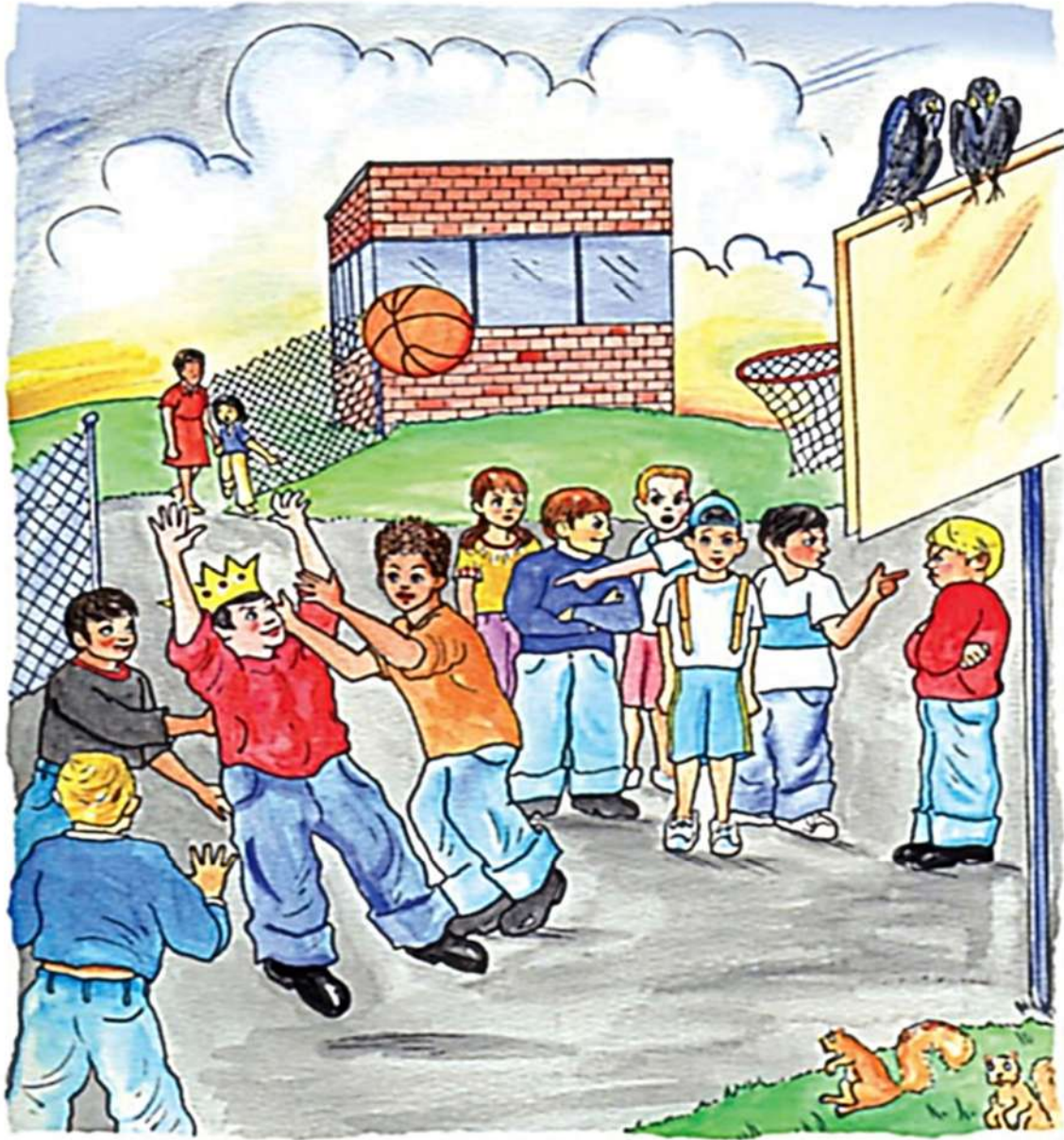


Maybe we can't always know what peace is  
if we always have to argue and try to get everything we want.

What if there is a king of a country  
and he orders people to do only the things he wants them to do,  
and he doesn't let them do any other things they want to do?

How can anybody feel peace  
if someone is bossing them around  
or being unfair and hurtful?

Can you sometimes argue, and still feel your peace inside?



What if the people get angry at the king,  
and they don't want to do what the king orders them to do anymore?

Can the people of that country do something peaceful  
to change the way the king thinks,  
so that the king will listen to them and change the things he does?

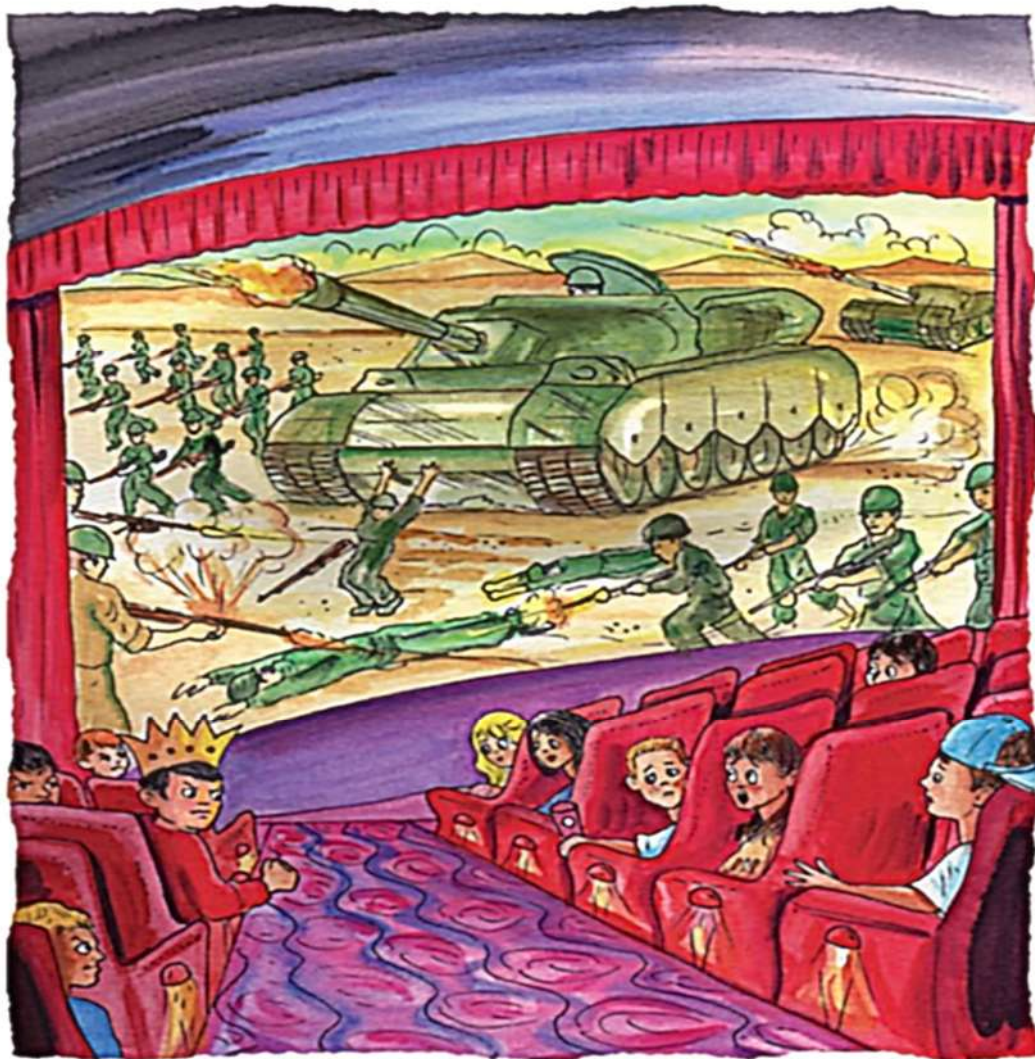
Maybe in your class you read about some women and men, and even kids,  
who had to live with a king  
who made them do things they didn't think were fair,  
and how they wanted to be free to do the things they thought were fair.

(To be free means that we can think and say and do the things we like—  
as long as we're fair and don't hurt other people, or ourselves.)

Maybe you read how those brave women and men, and even kids  
tried to change things in that country.

(To be brave means that you are not afraid to say and do  
what you think and feel—  
as long as you don't hurt other people.)

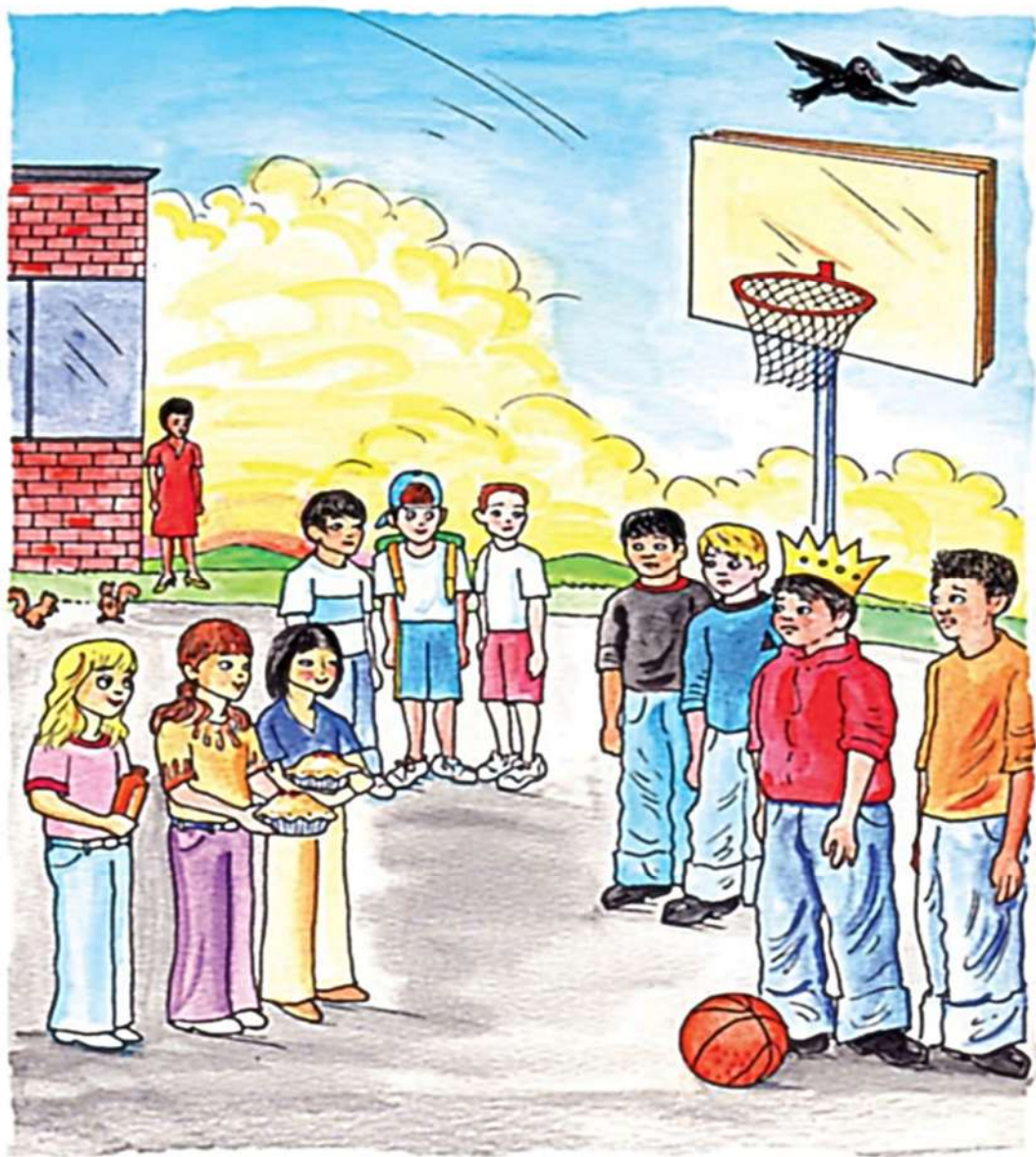
Maybe you read about how the king tried to stop those brave people  
and maybe he even hurt those people when they tried to change things.



Now, when people hurt each other,  
that's called violence, and that's not a good thing.

Violence means that people stop talking,  
or listening to each other, or trying to understand each other—  
and instead, they start to get angry  
and then they start to fight and hurt each other  
with nasty words, with their hands, or even with guns!

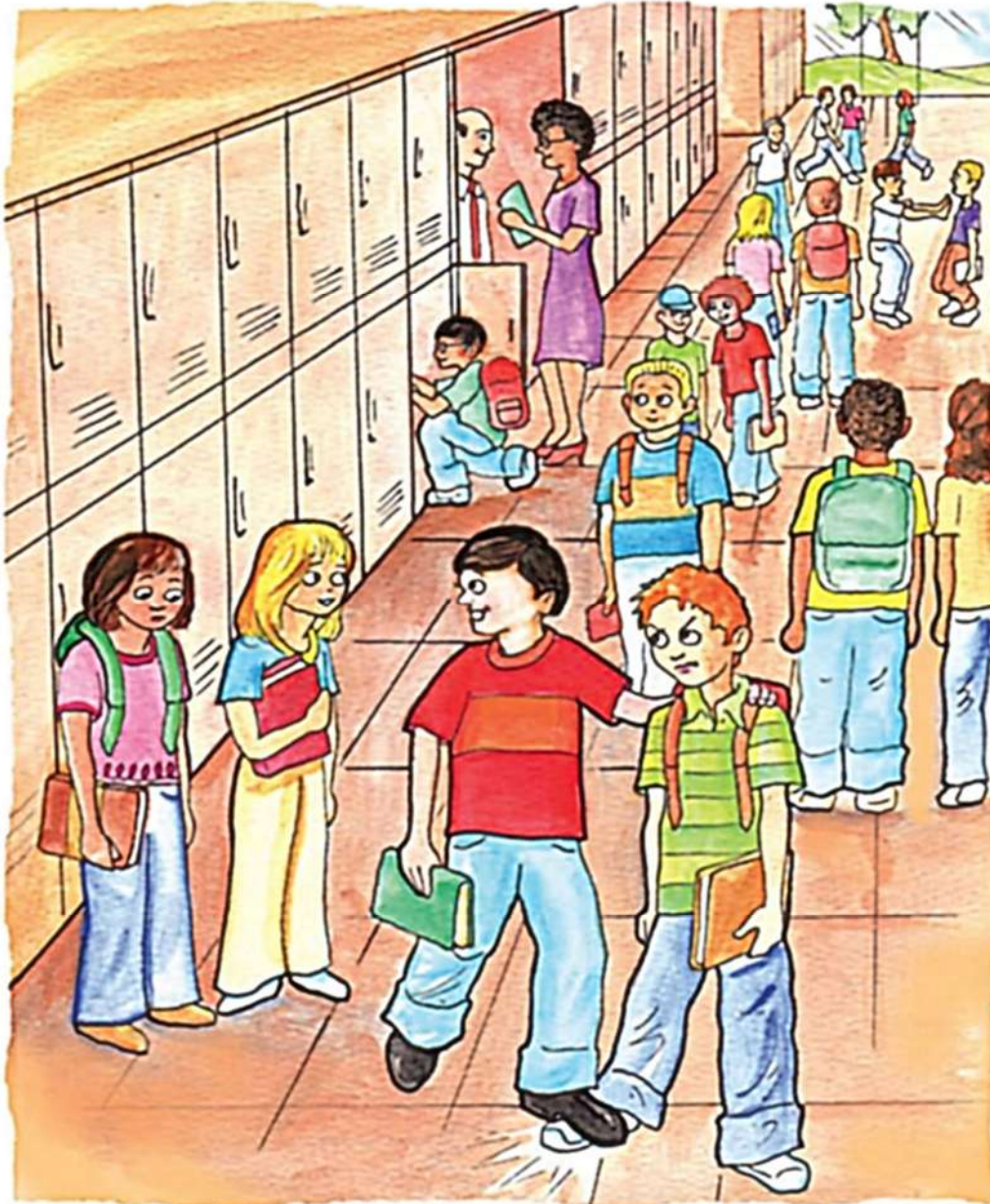
And when grown-ups get angry and violent,  
they sometimes start wars  
and then they really hurt each other!



But is there a peaceful way to stop violence?  
Yes, there is a peaceful way to stop violence—  
and that's called nonviolence.

Nonviolence means that you talk to somebody  
that hurt you or that made you angry,  
and you explain to that person why you are feeling hurt or angry,  
and that person explains why she or he is feeling hurt or angry—  
all without using nasty words or fighting.

Sometimes you can practice nonviolence  
just by compromising,  
and that means that you give up a little bit of what you want,  
and the other person gives up a little bit of what she or he wants.  
Compromising is another way to practice peace.



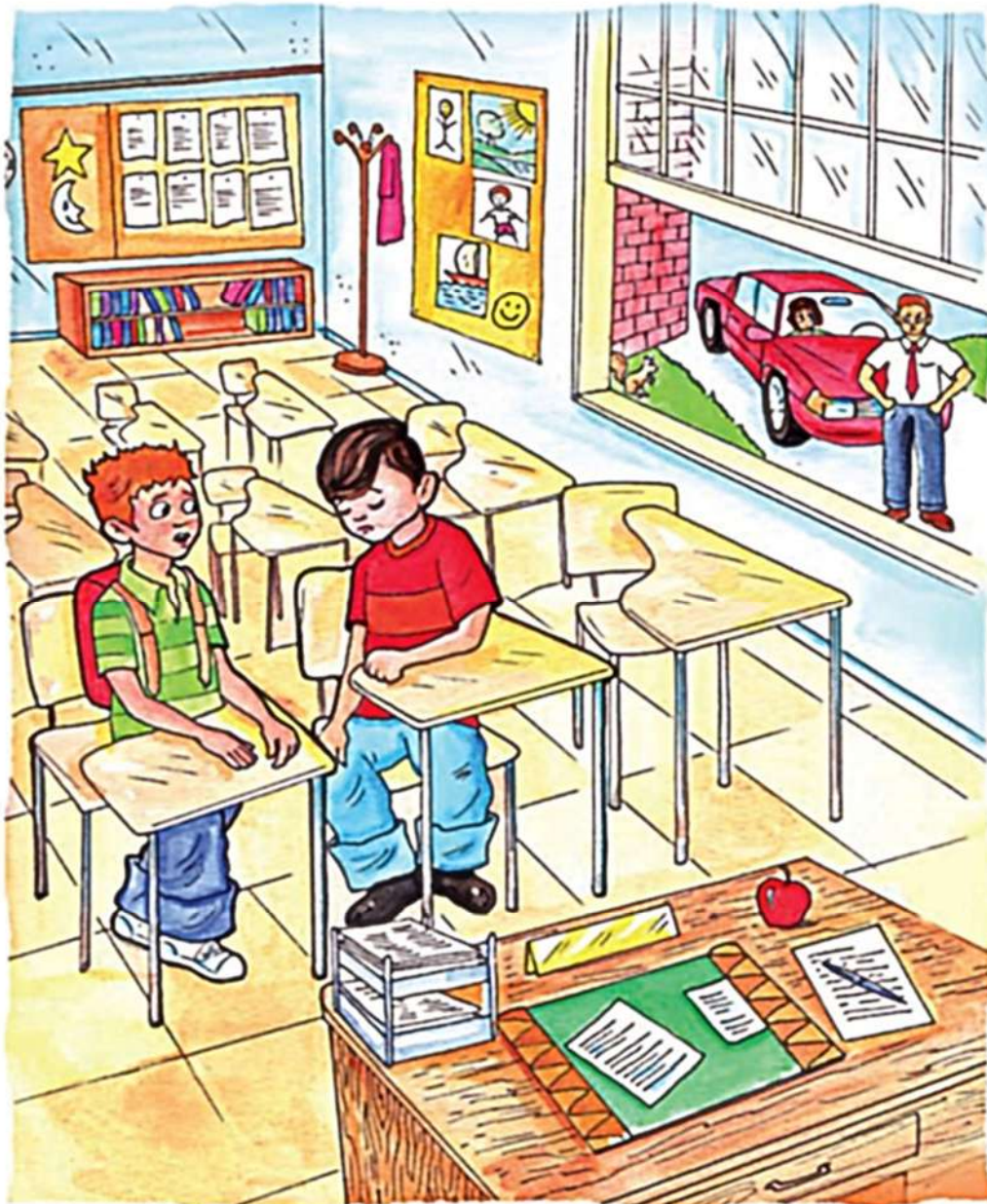


But what happens if somebody does something to you,  
maybe not on purpose,  
but it really hurts you or makes you angry?

What if one day at school your friend stomps real hard on your foot—  
by accident, or treats it like a joke?

That can make you feel really angry,  
so that you want to stomp back hard on your friend's foot!

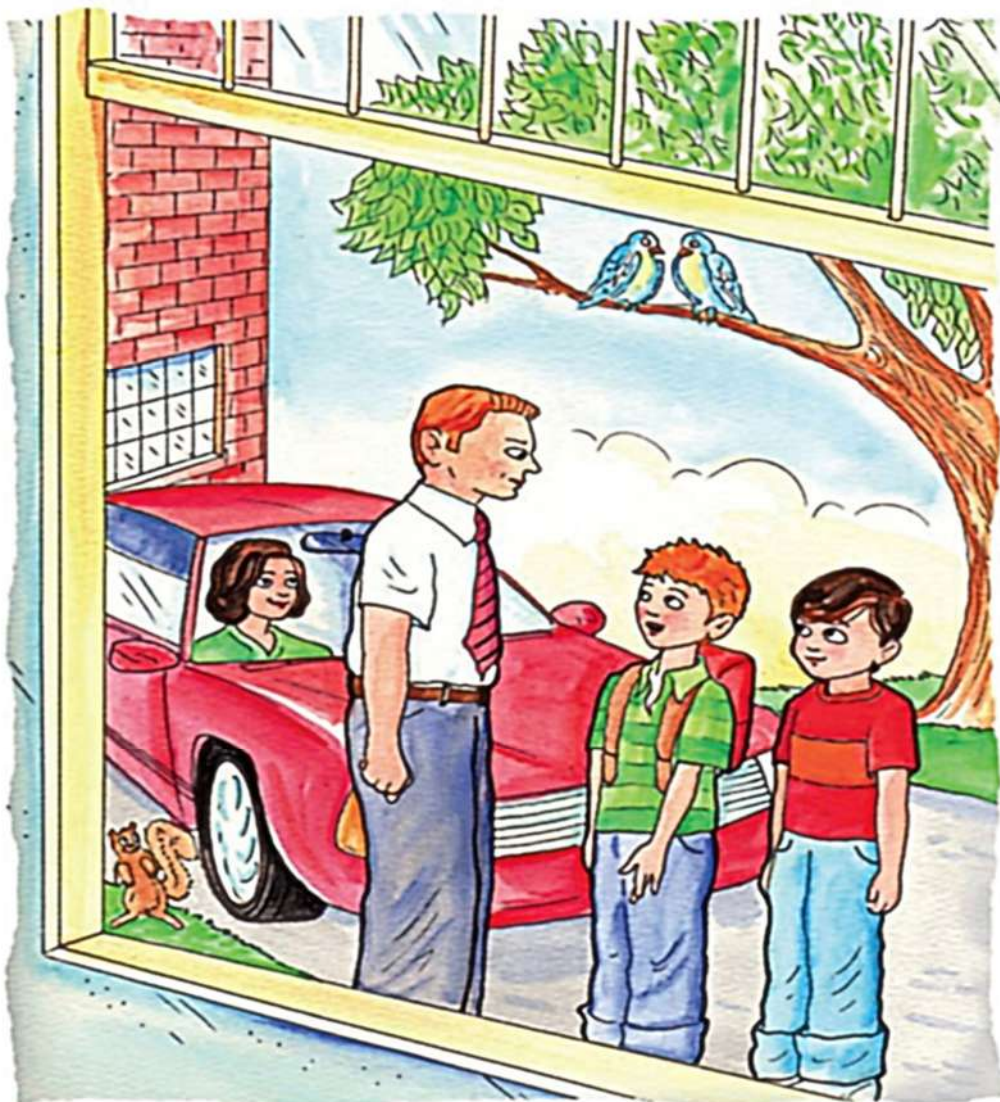
How can you compromise,  
or practice nonviolence in such a situation?



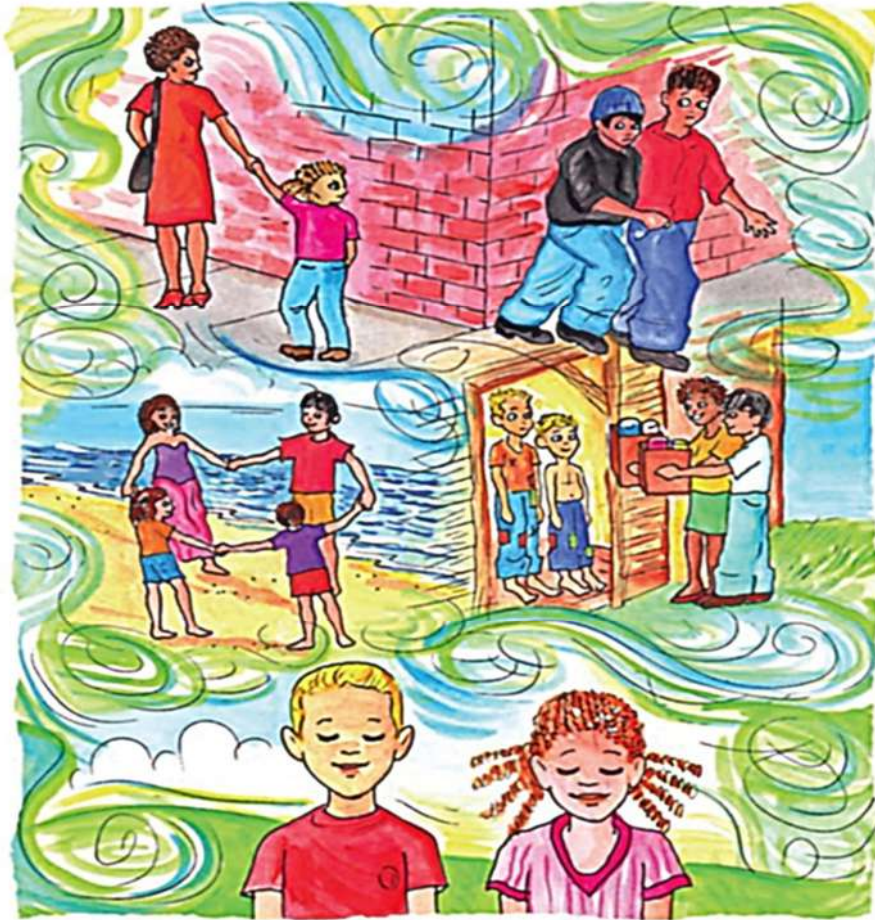
Maybe instead of getting angry at your friend  
and losing your peace,  
you can take a deep breath,  
and you can look deep into your friend's eyeballs,  
and you can try to understand why he hurt you.

Maybe after you talk with your friend  
you find out that somebody is hurting him,  
and that's why he wants to hurt other people.  
Maybe you find out that your friend really needs some help.

Now, if you can help other people to find their peace,  
that will make you feel peace inside yourself, too.



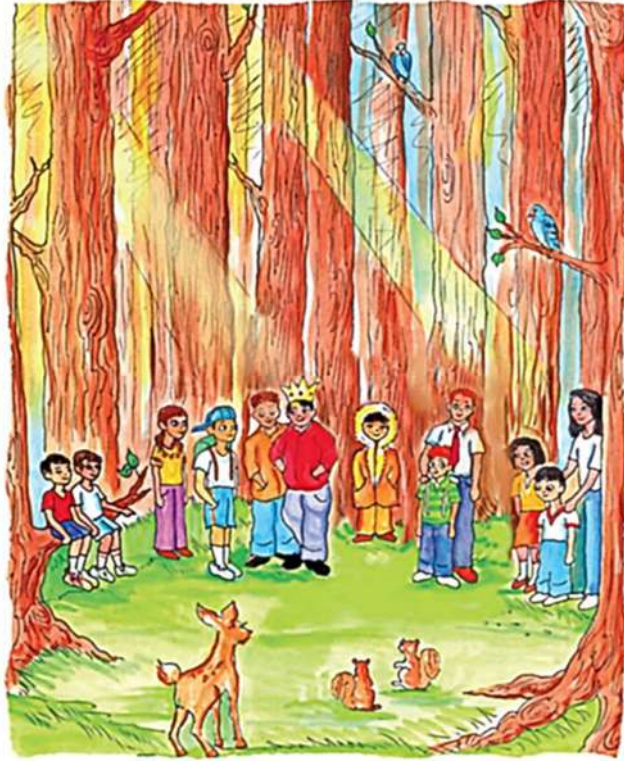
Saying peaceful things to other people,  
doing peaceful things for other people,  
even thinking peaceful thoughts about other people,  
will make you a peacemaker—  
and being a peacemaker will even make  
you feel more peace inside too.



Maybe we all have to try a little harder to remember  
to talk to each other and to understand each other,  
instead of fighting each other—  
until one day we can all become peacemakers.

## *What is Peace?*

Peace is a quiet thing like watching clouds go by,  
but it is not like being a quiet bug that gets stepped on.



*Peace is being really awake,*  
like listening closely in a deep green forest  
and hearing the plants breathing and the trees growing,  
and the little animals moving their eyes around.

*Peace is compromise and nonviolence.*  
Peace is not hurting anything or anybody—  
not even the little animals in that beautiful forest,  
or anything on our beautiful planet.  
And not hurting others is a way not to hurt ourselves.

*And finally, peace is knowing that we are all connected,*  
through the sunlight and the starlight,  
through the wind and the rain and the clouds—  
to something much, much bigger than we can ever even imagine.