

An assembly of promises for a Legacy of Hope (upper primary/lower Secondary)

Instructions for Assembly Leader: As people come into the hall give everyone a large piece of card, a marker pen and a post it note. One of the students participating in the Assembly will need a whistle and a stopwatch. Make sure that everyone has these to hand before the leader speaks. By each exit display an HMD2010 candle poster. You can download this here. <http://www.hmd.org.uk/files/1250508078-290.pdf> Timings are crucial in this assembly and you will need to rehearse the presentation with students A, B, C, and D.

Leader

Good morning. Today we are going to create a special assembly together. We will need to listen to each other and think very carefully about our feelings. We are going to reflect together about something called the **Legacy of Hope**.

*(Display power-point slide one- the **Legacy of Hope** logo on a yellow background.)*

Leader

Let's explore what it means. We conducted some research in our class and this is what we found.

Student A

A legacy could be a special promise which someone makes to pass on to the future.

Student B

We sometimes talk about people leaving a legacy as a way for people to remember them.

Student C

It is something they hand on to other people.

Student D

It could be a special gift that a person leaves in a will as a present to someone else.

Student A

It could be something a person has created...

Student B

Like a piece of music...

Student C

Or a painting...

Student D

Or even a prize in a competition or a scholarship awarded to a student to help them do something special like travel to a different part of the world or develop particular skills in sport, music or education.

Leader

A legacy is very important. It is passed on from one person to other people. It could be something for today but also something for tomorrow. Now let's think about the rest of the phrase and what a **Legacy of Hope** might be.

Student A

We need to think very carefully about the word hope. Please will you all turn to the person sitting next to you and listen carefully to the instructions Ms/Mr..... gives us.

Leader

Please talk together about hope. What do **you** think it means? I am going to ask.....(names student A) to set the stopwatch and give us five minutes (note this is a maximum time limit you may choose to use less time) to think of lots of ways we use the word hope and then write a sentence on your card which contain it. Here are some examples we prepared earlier. (Leader and students A B C and D hold up their own cards and sentences eg "I hope you are well." "We hope and pray for peace at Christmas." "We hope your birthday is happy." "I hope my Dad comes home soon.").....(name student A) will blow the whistle when we start and again when our time is up. When the whistle sounds the second time we have to hold our cards up for students B C and D to see. Ready student A?

(Student A nods, blows whistle and keeps time. After 5 minutes student A blows the whistle again.)

Leader

Well that went quickly. Now please hold up your cards and let's see all the things hope means to us. (Students B C and D and the leader read out some of the sentences, as directed by the leader. Try to select a good variety of ideas and pass impromptu comments about them e.g. So a hope could be a wish for something....hope could be something which makes us strong, I like that idea...hope means that life can be good, well that is an excellent thought.)

Leader

Well done everyone, we have demonstrated what hope means to us. The next task is more difficult. I would like us to hear some sadder stories to help us discover why hope always needs human beings to act to make it grow.

(Show power-point slide 2 Liliane)

Leader

This is Liliane. When she was fifteen she lived in Rwanda. One day she was sitting in her house with her four brothers, uncle, aunt and cousins. They were sitting together when soldiers broke into their house. They started to attack the family. Liliane was able to escape by jumping out of the window and running as fast as her legs could take her. The soldiers were everywhere so she decided to hide up in the trees. She heard what the soldiers were doing as they murdered everyone. Liliane managed to stay in hiding and survive but she has never forgotten what happened in Rwanda. Now Liliane lives here in Britain.

(Show power-point slide 3 Ben today.)

Leader

This is Ben Helfgott. He lived in Poland. When he was twelve years old his mother and little sister were murdered by the Nazis. Ben was imprisoned in a ghetto. He had to give up school and work hard in a

factory. His childhood was over. When the Nazis were defeated Ben came to live in Britain. He became a champion weightlifter and represented us in two Olympic Games. Here he is in action. *(Show power-point slide 4 of Ben weightlifting)* Even today, although he is 80 years old, Ben is still strong enough to lift weights.

(Show power-point slide 5 Denise.)

And this is Denise. She lived, with her partner and children in a big city in Cambodia. One day soldiers came and made Denise and her family leave their comfortable home. They stole their possessions and marched them into the countryside and made them work as slaves in the fields. Denise's husband was murdered and her daughter died of starvation because the people in power would not give her enough food. Her son was taken away from the family and forced to forget his old life. He had to pretend he did not love his family. When the soldiers were finally defeated Denise and her son went to live in France. Denise has written a book about what happened to them.

Leader

Liliane, Ben and Denise saw terrible things when they were young. Their families were treated cruelly by people who targeted them because they were thought to be different. The people in power who murdered Ben's mother and sister, Liliane's whole family and Denise's partner and daughter, did so because they hated anyone they believed did not belong to their own special group.

Student C

Please stop! These are terrible stories. They make me sad and they make me angry. You said we were going to create an assembly about a **Legacy of Hope**.

Student D

You said that a legacy was a promise and a gift but these stories are all about people who hate others and try to hurt them.

Student A

And in the stories everything is unfair but we all thought about good things linked with hope.

Leader

So we did but the sadness in these stories and the promises we thought about are linked together.

Students A B C and D

How?

Leader

Like you, many people in the world feel angry and sad when they hear about terrible things some human beings have done and still sometimes do, to other human beings. As soon as they hear about the families of Liliane, Ben and Denise they say that we must all work hard to get rid of hatred and stop such things happening to other people. Ben, Liliane and Denise agree and that's why they share their stories, they want us to listen to them and pass them on to other people. We can remember what happened to them and then make a promise to work together to challenge unfairness and discrimination. To speak out when we see or hear people treating others badly. That's where the sadness, the hope and the promises as linked.

Students A B C and D

But how?

Student A

Getting rid of hatred is very difficult.

Student B

And we are only young.

Student C

We can't stop bad things on the other side of the world.

Student D

We can't tell Prime Ministers what to do.

Leader

Perhaps not but have you ever stopped to think about things which happen around us, here in our school, here in.....(*name the local community*)

Student A

What sort of things?

Student B

What do you mean?

Student C

This is a good school/college!

Student D

We like living here.

Leader

That's good to hear but is everyone always happy? Are we always fair to other people?

Student A

Mostly....I think.

Student B

But sometimes someone might get left out.

Student C

And sometimes someone might feel lonely because they are new here and don't have many friends.

Student D

And sometimes we hear about people being picked on or teased...

Student A

But not very often.

Leader

No, not very often, but it shouldn't happen at all and that's where our promise and our thoughts about hope come in.

Student B

But how do they link with the sad stories you have just told us?

Leader

Liliane, Ben and Denise rebuilt their lives after the terrible things which happened to them and their families. Today they look forward to a more positive future but they want people, especially young people like you, to hear their stories and to pass them on to other people. This is their **Legacy of Hope** and they want you to join it. Today is Holocaust Memorial Day, a good time to remember the stories of Ben, Denise and Liliane and an excellent day to make a special promise to work hard together to treat everyone kindly.

Student A

Denise thinks young people should learn from the past and tell others why it is important to work together to prevent hatred and this is what Liliane says when people ask why she tells her story.

Student C

I can use my voice to tell the world what happened to people like me...I can use my experience to help others.

Leader

And Ben says

Student D

"I did not harbour revenge nor hatred. I put all my energy into creating a positive and meaningful life. In a matter of nine years after my liberation, I had established my career as well as becoming a British weightlifting champion. I travelled the world and made many friends from different countries and different cultures...respect for others should be the guideline for living in harmony with one another."

Leader

So Denise, Ben and Liliane want us to join the **Legacy of Hope** and make a promise as a gift to the future of the world.

Student A

So promising to speak out when someone bullies another person would be good.

Student B

And promising to include everyone when we plan projects would be another.

Student C

And refusing to join in when someone tells us to tease another person or call them names might be something else to promise.

Leader

Yes those are good ideas because they show that we value, respect and care for other people. When people know others care for them they are filled with hope. At the start of this assembly we wrote down sentences about hope, now to finish our assembly let's write down one more. Think for a moment about your hopes for a better world and something you could promise to do to encourage people to be kinder to one another. Write one of them on your post it note and on the way out stick your note on the candle posters. All these hopes and promises will remind everyone that the **Legacy of Hope** is important and each time you pass the candle poster this week you will know that your own special thoughts are encouraging others to join it.

Note to teachers and group leaders you can read more about Ben <http://education.hmd.org.uk/case-studies/ben-helfgott> Denise <http://education.hmd.org.uk/case-studies/denise-affonco> and Liliane <http://www.hmd.org.uk/files/1227715032-257.pdf>