

Cooperation Heaven or Hell

Foundation House / Elementary/ Intermediate (Classes 7 - 8)



To show the importance of co-operation

Instructions to Students:

Two students are each given a bowl, with some unwrapped sweets in them, and a spoon with handles lengthened as explained above. Each student is told beforehand that he or she can have one sweet, but the spoon tied to the stick must be used to take the sweet out of the bowl and to put the sweet in the mouth. It must be stated very clearly that the stick should be held by the very end opposite the spoon-end.

The students will be unable to feed themselves but should be allowed to try for a while. They may realise how they can both eat (by feeding each other). If they fail to do so, the teacher should direct all the students towards, but allow them to finally find, the solution.

All the students discuss how it felt being unable to eat and then how it felt, and what was involved, in enabling both students to eat. It involved cooperation - the action of working together towards the same end. Sharing is part of cooperation and the students with the sweets now share them with the rest of the students.

The teacher explains to the students that the above example is an analogy (a comparison between one thing and another, usually to explain or clarify) and that this analogy is sometimes used to describe heaven and hell.

The teacher asks the students to think of other analogies to illustrate the importance of cooperation. For example: Two buffaloes are tied to the same plough with two piles of hay some distance away on either side of them. If each buffalo goes for the pile of hay on its own side, neither buffalo can reach the pile and neither can get any food. How can they both feed? Only if both buffaloes go for the same pile of hay at the same time!

Materials Needed

- Two spoons and two long sticks tied to their handles (NB: The sticks must be at least as long as the arm-span of the tallest student, so that no student can hold the stick by one end and succeed in making the other end reach his or her mouth)
- Two bowls of sweets (enough for each student)



Pestalozzi taught that cooperation is very important. He encouraged his students to work together and discouraged competitiveness between them. His students taught each other. Staff and students respected each other and worked together, as far as possible as equals.