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Teaching the Queries



To Quaker Children

A Syllabus for First-day Schools

Religious Education Executive Concerns Group
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
January, 1995
Revised February, 2001

Teaching the Queries To Quaker Children

This is a substantial revision of the 1995 edition of *Teaching the Queries to Quaker Children* which was originally created by Elinor P. (Penny) Briggs and Sara W. (Sally) Farneth who were on the Curriculum Committee of PYM.

Bible passages and other story suggestions have been added to illustrate the 1997 version of the PYM Queries. Special questions were developed by the current Curriculum Committee members (Ricki R. Gordon, Meredith Swift, and Yolanda Covarrubias), along with games, songs, and activities to enrich and extend each Query.

The quoted Queries are from the 1997 edition of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*. You may prefer to use your own Yearly Meeting's Queries.

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Religious Education

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

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Teaching the Queries To Quaker Children

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Teaching the Queries

To Quaker Children

Query #1. Meeting for Worship

1. The idea of this lesson is to think about what meeting is like, especially what happens to us as we sit in meeting and listen for God to talk to us.



2. Keywords:

- a) Worship - reverence offered a Divine being or supernatural power, an act of expressing such reverence.
- b) Faithful - true to one's word, promises; steady in allegiance or affection; reliable, trusted.
- c) Predetermination - to settle or decide in advance.

Meeting for Worship

Are our Meetings for worship held in stilled, expectant waiting upon God?

As we worship is there a living silence in which we are drawn together by the power of God in our midst?

Is the spirit of our worship together one that nurtures all worshipers?

How does our Meeting respond when the vocal ministry seems inappropriate, or when the Meeting for Worship is consistently not gathered?

3. Read or tell one of the following stories for elementary ages (available from FGC Bookstore or PYM Library):
 - a) *Benjamin. The Meetinghouse Mouse*, Clifford Pfeil, Friends Publishing Corporation, Philadelphia, PA 1997.
 - b) *Daniel Goes to Meeting*, Barbara Janoe, Family & Life Enrichment Service, 1988.
 - c) *We Are Going to Meeting for Worship*, Abby A. Hadley, Friends General Conference, 1996.
 - d) *My Book of Friends*, Joyce M. Holden, Friends United Meeting, 1985.

or Bible Resources (for elementary-high school age):

- a) *The Book of Psalms*, Selina Hastings. In: The Children's Illustrated Bible. DK Publishing, Inc. NY, 1994, pp. 176-177.
- b) *Samuel is Called to Serve God*, Selina Hastings. In: The Children's Illustrated Bible. DK Publishing, Inc. NY, 1994, pp. 108-109.
- c) In the Bible: read the story of Samuel in 1 Samuel 3:1-18

You may also use the *Beginner's Bible* (for preK and 1st grade) or the *Good News Bible*, T. Nelson Publishers, 1976 (for Middle School age).

4. Questions to gather information and for discussion:

Section c) might be especially appropriate for elementary ages.

- a) *How did early Quakers address the Query on Worship?* They met at homes, and worshipped in silence, because they did not want to be distracted from God. Later, simple Meetinghouses were built.
- b) *Do Quakers today still try to listen for God's voice?* Many monthly Meetings still worship as early Quakers did, but many Friends have paid pastors who deliver a message on First-day and allow for open worship.
- c) *What do you experience in Meeting for Worship?*
 - Have you ever had a special Meeting for Worship where you found a message which really spoke to you?
 - Have you ever felt called to say or do something during Meeting?
 - Do you worship any other time during the week?
- d) *Has your Meeting had disruptive people during worship? How did your Meeting handle the situation?*
- e) *What would help you to focus more on the Spirit in Meeting?*

5. Activities (choose one of the following depending on the ages of your students):

- ♦ Watch in silence a candle burning. Ask children to speak, if they wish, about what they are thinking (elementary through high school)
- ♦ Take a walk without talking, listening to the sounds of nature (younger children)
- ♦ Design an ideal Meetinghouse (the building with people inside) (for elementary-high school)
- ♦ Play with clay or make a picture silently; talk about what you are thinking (for elementary)
- ♦ Centering Mural - Middle school-aged youth can talk about what they do to center in Meeting (i.e., what methods helps them, what do they think about?
After the teacher lists all the ways of centering which are mentioned, the class thinks of ways to illustrate what they have just said. Maybe it will be a mural, perhaps a collage, perhaps a 3-D model made with clay. When their representation is finished, Middle Schoolers can share their ideas with Meeting at the beginning of Meeting for Worship, during opening exercises, or with a younger class. This will help attenders or younger children get as much meaning as possible out of worship.

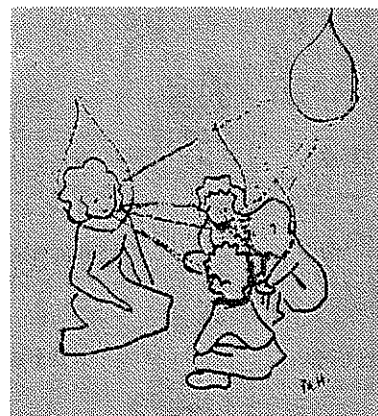
- ♦ Game – “Back Pictures (for elementary children)

This game sharpens children’s senses so that they might be more open to feel the presence of God in Meeting for Worship. The game is taken from *Let’s Play Together*, by Mildred Masheded, Green Print, 1989.

“The players sit in a circle, each one facing the back of the one in front. One starts by drawing with the finger an object on the back of the person in front of them. That person has to draw what they felt on the next back and so on. When it gets back to the first person, they tell the group how the picture started... It generally comes out differently at the end, especially if the object is complicated.”

One adaptation is to tape an 8½ x 11” piece of plain white paper to each child’s back. Instead of one’s finger, use a fine-point marker to draw on the person’s paper in front of them.

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Query #2. Meeting for Business

1. The purpose of this lesson is to consider the importance of making decisions in the context of the Monthly Meeting in particular and the Religious Society of Friends in general, and that it is held with God's guidance.

2. Keywords:

- a) Business – purposeful activity, an immediate task or objective
- b) Guidance – the act or function of guiding; leadership; direction

Meeting for Business

Is our Meeting for business held in the spirit of a Meeting for Worship in which we seek divine guidance?

Are we careful to keep in the spirit of worship each of the concerns that emerge, whether of nurture, of Spirit, of social concerns, of property, or of finance?

Are Meeting decisions directed by prayerful consideration of all aspects of an issue and are difficult problems considered carefully with patient search for truth, unhurried by the pressure of time?

How do we respond if we notice the Meeting has lost an understanding of the presence of God?

3. Read aloud or tell one of the stories which follows. Available from PYM Library:

The first, (a) and (b) are good for elementary aged children; (c) works well with junior high and (d) works for all ages.

- a) *Benjamin, The Meetinghouse Mouse*, Clifford Pfeil, Friends Publishing Corporation, Philadelphia, PA 1997.
- b) *The Sower*, in: "The Children's Illustrated Bible", Selina Hastings, DK Publishing, Inc. NY, 1994, pp. 224-225. (Illustrates how we can listen in Meeting)
- c) *Mount Pleasant and the Ghosts of Quakers Fighting*, in: "Fire in the Valley: Quaker Ghost Stories", Charles E. Fager, Kimo Press, 1992. (Tells how 19th century Quakers fought over the clerks table because each group wanted the "power" to clerk.
- d) In the Bible: Elijah I, Kings 19:3-15. (Elijah listened to God in the midst of earthquakes, wind and fire and did as God requested)

4. Questions to gather or give information and for discussion. Select one or more questions, depending upon the age of your class:
- Why did early Quakers hold meetings for Business?* Early on Friends felt the need to have some organization for making decisions to hold the Society in place while many of its members were in prison for their beliefs. They called them Meetings for Sufferings.
 - How do people make decisions today?* Many business decisions are made by majority vote or by consensus.
 - Have you ever seen or participated in Meeting for Business? Was it interesting? Did everyone have a chance to speak?*
 - If people in Meeting for Business seem to argue a lot or not listen to one another, is there anything we can do?*
 - Are Meeting members encouraged to attend Meeting for Business? Do you feel welcome?*
 - What can you do as a young person? How can you make Meetings for Business more interesting or more focused?*
 - Encourage adults to attend
 - Bring suggestions or requests to Meeting for Business after we have threshed concerns in Jr. Meeting for Business
 - Participate in a Meeting committee and help make decisions
5. Activities (choose an activity which fits with the age your are teaching. The first activity could take more than one class period – one to set it up, go over the guidelines and choose a clerk, and one to do a business meeting):
- ◆ Hold a Meeting for Business during class, making decisions for a trip, fundraising, etc., using directions which follow (middle and high school)

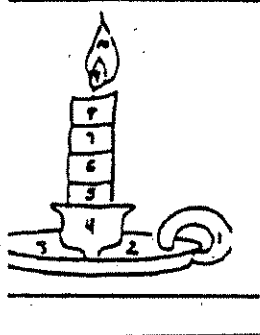
Holding a Meeting for Business

(from *Teaching Quaker Faith and Practice to Children, PYM RE Executive Concerns Group*)

1. The meeting opens in worship.
2. Out of worship, the clerk presents an issue.
3. Anyone may speak about the issue.
4. Sometimes there is silence between the speakers to listen for the Spirit beyond the words.
5. After all viewpoints are stated, the clerk tries to summarize what has been said.
6. If there is a decision made, and Friends seem to agree, the clerk asks if this is “the sense of the meeting.
7. There is a time for comments on what has been summarized.
8. When the Clerk feels there is agreement, s/he asks for approval. If there is approval, the recording secretary writes the decision in the form of a *minute*. There is no voting or show of hands.
9. If someone feels strongly that the decision is wrong, s/he can block the decision or stand aside after saying why s/he must speak against it.
10. If there is no agreement, Friends can wait a week or two, or until the following month, to address the issue again.
11. Meeting for Worship with a concern for business closes with handshakes all around.

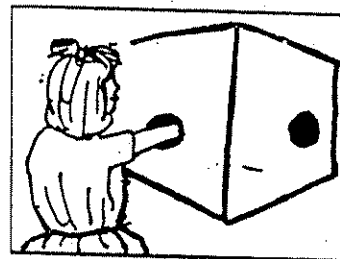
♦ Make a Group Candle

Looking for the Light (elementary – middle school): Draw the outline of a candle, at least 1½ ft. tall, in an old-fashioned candle holder. Precut pieces of a candle, flame, and a candle holder out of colored paper (see drawing). Number the pieces; the number does not matter, but have at least one piece per child. Older elementary and middle school will find the reassembling the candle more challenging without numbering the pieces. Help younger children paste the pieces together on a piece of poster board. If you have a large class, make two separate candles. The idea is that, in Meeting for Business, we each have a piece of the Light; everyone's piece of the Light helps the whole group decide what is best to do. In addition, we are seeking a greater Light which adds to our individual and group flames.

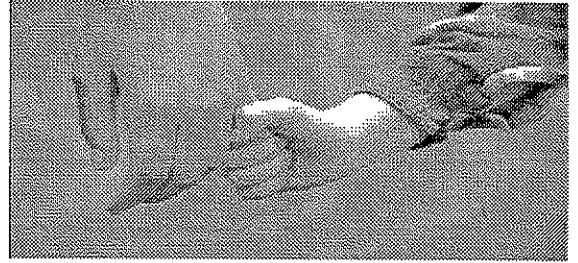


♦ I Know What It Is (pre-school and elementary). **Note:** This activity reinforces or builds on the story of the “Blind Men and the Elephant”, from *Shaking Out the Truth* (PYM RE Committee)

You need a large object, like a stuffed animal, which is not easily identified by only touching one part without seeing it, and a box large enough to hold the animal. Place the box on a table so that it opens up. Cut a hole, just large enough for the hand of a young person to get through, in the four vertical sides of a large cardboard box. Put the mystery object in the box making sure it is placed equidistant from all sides of the box. Close the top of the box and wrap or tie it up like a present (leaving the side holes open). One at a time, let each child reach through a hole and touch the object and then draw the part that they felt. When everyone has touched it, ask each one to guess what they think the object is; then have one person unwrap the box. Explain that we each thought we knew what the object was because of the part we touched. In Meeting for Business, each person has a little part of the solution or the right way of doing something. When we put together what each person thinks with what everyone else thinks, we can come up with what the whole picture is or the best way doing something.



Teaching the Queries To Quaker Children



Query #3. Spiritual Nurture, Ministry, and Religious Education

1. The theme of this lesson is to learn more about Quaker practice and worship and how we can nurture our own spirituality and ministry.
2. Keywords:
 - a) Ministry – the office, duties or functions of administering one’s faith. In Quakerism everyone is considered a minister, with direct access to God.
 - b) Nurture – to care for; educate, train
 - c) Religious – relating to or devoted to the Divine or that which is held to be of ultimate importance
 - d) Transformation – an act, process or instance of changing from one condition to another
 - e) Testimony – public profession of a religious experience or belief

Spiritual Nurture, Ministry, and Religious Education

Does our Meeting encourage the ministry of both word and deed? How does our Meeting recognize, develop, and nurture the gifts of our members and attenders of all ages?

Does our Meeting prepare all its members and children for worship and for a way of life consistent with the principles of the Religious Society of Friends? How do we teach about Quaker practices in business and worship and their importance to the functioning of our Meeting community?

In what ways do we support each other in order to seek God’s will and act upon our understanding of truth? Is there opportunity in our Meeting to share the excitement of religious discovery and the possibility of religious transformation?

Does our Meeting provide opportunities for all in the Meeting to learn about:

- *the Inner Light, the living Christ within, the Bible, the writings of Friends, our Christian heritage, other religious traditions and their respective roles in the history and formation of Friends’ principles?*
- *The common testimonies Friends share?*
- *The variety of expression Quaker faith takes today?*

3. Stories (choose one of the following based on the age of your class. Read the story ahead of time so that the meaning becomes part of you, then *tell* the story, if you can):

- a) Read two of Paul's Letters (Paul went about preaching about Christ. After he left the area, he wrote letters of encouragement): I Corinthians 12, 13, 15; Galatians 5; Ephesians 6; Philippians 2; Philemon; or II Timothy 2 (for middle and high school).
 - b) *Lighting Candles in the Dark*, "Elizabeth Fry", FGC, 1992. Elizabeth did a different kind of ministry in prisons in England. Available from FGC Bookstore or PYM Library (elementary and middle school).
4. Points a, b, and c are for information; questions d, e, and f are for children and young people to think about the gifts and talents they bring to Meeting.
- a) *Paul's letters* were written many years after the death of Christ, to early Christians in faraway places, such as Greece. Why would people back then have had trouble in keeping their spirits up, and learning more about Jesus? How did Paul suggest that they nurture their new faith?
 - c) *Early Quakers* formed the Religious Society of Friends in reaction to the organized churches of the early 1600's, where priests preached to a congregation, and the word from the pulpit was the only possible viewpoint. Individuality and initiative were discouraged, and people's gifts were not recognized, developed, or nurtured unless those gifts were completely in accord with the teachings of the church. Early Quakers began the practice of encouraging every individual to seek spirituality within him/herself, and to share aloud the spiritual journey whenever a person wished.
 - c) *In today's world*, in most countries there is a legal basis for individual human rights that did not exist hundreds of years ago. In our culture, it has become increasingly the norm to respect another's viewpoint and to help another develop his/her personal potential. Unfortunately, this attitude is not universally shared, but it is a big improvement over previous centuries. Quakers today encourage others to share their ministry both in words (such as speaking during Meeting for Worship) or in deeds (such as feeding the hungry). Meetings also have organized more formal ways enabling the search for spirituality by offering religious education programs for adults and youth.
 - d) *What are your talents?* Have your "ministry" or "gifts" been noticed or recognized by this Meeting? Do others share their talents or information with you? Have you ever watched someone try to learn something that you already know how to do? Have you tried to help them learn in a caring way, without making them feel inadequate?
 - e) *Within our Meeting:* Does everyone in our Meeting get a turn to speak in Worship? What leads some Friends to speak often and others never? What happens if someone speaks on an inappropriate subject, or for too long? Does your Meeting support and comfort those who need it, and make an effort to include those who are left out?
 - f) *What have you learned?* What classes or opportunities to learn does our Meeting offer? List the subjects (such as Quakerism 101 for adults or Bible stories for younger children). What have you already learned about Quaker faith or the Bible? What would you like to learn about that is not offered? Make a list and present it to your Meeting's Religious Education Committee. Do you try to learn more about Quakerism? How do you find out? Who do you ask?

5. Activities:

a) Sing (from *Songs of the Spirit*) (for elementary):

♪ *Dearly Beloved Friends* (#1)

♪ *Special Silence* (#6)

♪ *Quiet Moments* (#9)

♪ *Enter in the Meetinghouse* (#13)

♪ *George Fox* (#3) Also found in *Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal* (#272), Friends General Conference, 1996

b) Go on a treasure hunt to find the talents people have (for elementary). Make a list of ministry within your Meeting community. You may have to be a detective -- people rarely talk about what they do.

| Person | What They Do | How is it Ministry? |
|--------|--------------|---------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

c) Hold a *talent fair* to emphasize that we have many gifts which can be developed, recognized, and used in service to our Meeting (for elementary-high school)

- Ask students to think about what they are good at. For example: "I'm really good at getting scared at the scary parts of a play or of a movie", or "I can make animal noises better than anyone". Ask: Do you know anyone else who can do that? Why don't you get together and strengthen your talent with those similarly talented people?
- Can you teach your talent to others? Would you like to learn a new talent from someone in the class? Perhaps the class could learn to press flowers and send get-well notes with pressed flower designs. Perhaps a talented ice skater could show the class how to ice skate and all could have a "Skateathon for Peace". Encourage students to stretch themselves to their growing edges.
- Ask where our special talents come from (the "stork" is probably not the answer you are seeking). (from: *Stewardship of Time, Money, and Talent*, PYM, RE, 1996)

Teaching the Queries To Quaker Children

Query #4. Care for the Meeting Community

1. The purpose of this lesson is to learn how to be caring, considerate and helpful to those around us, both in our Meeting and in our homes.
2. Keywords:
 - a) Forbearance – the act of forbearing
 - b) Forbear – to control oneself when provoked; to be patient



Care for the Meeting Community

4a. Care for one another

Are love and unity maintained among us? When conflicts exist, are they faced with patience, forbearance, and openness to healing? Are avenues for exploring differences kept open? To what extent does our Meeting ignore differences in order to avoid possible conflicts?

Is the Meeting a safe, loving place? When we become aware of someone's need, do we offer assistance? Are the Meetinghouse and the Meeting property physically accessible to all?

Do all adults and children in our Meeting receive our loving care and encouragement to share in the life of our Meeting, and to live as Friends? Do we truly welcome newcomers and include them in our Meeting community?

When a member's conduct or manner of living gives cause for concern, how does the Meeting respond?

How does our Meeting keep in touch with all its members?

4b. Care in my home:

This set of personal queries may be helpful for the family to consider within the family setting. Families may also wish to explore the other Queries as part of regular family worship.

Is my home a place where all members of the family receive affection and understanding, and where visitors are welcome? Do I choose recreation and a manner of living that enriches the body, mind, and spirit, and shows a high regard for family, community, and creation?

Is our family prepared to discuss such sensitive topics as death, faith, money, even sex and drugs, in a manner that allows openness and honesty, and also direction?

How do I help to arrange life at home so that there is an opportunity for all to learn and absorb by example what it means to live a life of Spirit-led commitment?

Harrisburg Meeting helped their youth rewrite the Queries. The "Care for One Another" Query in its rewritten form is very poignant. See: "Youth Queries" and "Stamp Our Put-Downs" from *Working with Middle Schoolers*, PYM, RE Executive Concerns Group and at the end of this chapter.

3. Stories for Kindergarten-6th grade

- a) Luke 10 - The Good Samaritan (Children's Illustrated Bible, p. 232) or:
- b) "Love Finds A Way", in *Candles in the Dark*, RE Committee, 1964 (available in PYM Library). An example of the kind of situation which occurs often in Quaker Meetings.

4. Discussion Points:

- a) After reading the story of the Good Samaritan, discuss the following:
 - Why was it unusual for the Samaritan to stop and help the man?
 - Are we as willing today to offer relief to our enemies?
 - What about our neighbors? [This Query is clearly written so that each question it poses can be presented to the class *verbatim* for discussion.]
 - What do you do in school if a person you don't like falls and hurts him/herself and you are the only one nearby?
 - How do you feel if you help him/her? How do you feel if you ignore the problem?
 - When is it safe to help other people, and when is it better to call someone else for immediate help? For example, it would be unwise of you to stop your car on a dark and lonely road to help a person whose car was stopped. You would be safer to call 911, in case the stopped car was a trap.
- b) After reading "Love Finds A Way", discuss the following:
 - Have you ever been in a position similar to Jimmy's?
 - Has someone ever helped you do something that was difficult? Please share your story.
 - Have you ever been in a position to help someone else like William Bacon Evans did?

5. Activities:

- a) One way many Meetings keep track of people is to keep lists of resident members, non-resident members, attenders, etc. There are members and attenders in your Meeting who don't come to meeting very much. Ask Overseers how they try to keep in touch with those people (elementary-middle school).

Write a letter from your class telling what is going on in the Meeting and in the neighborhood; ask the Overseers if it can be mailed to people who have not been to Meeting in a long time.

Get a list of those children or young people who have not been coming to Meeting for a while. First-day class members can each choose a name and write to them telling what has been going on and that they are missed.

Get a list of shut-ins from your Meeting and plan to visit them (perhaps several live in the same retirement home), taking a gift such as a suitable food or flowers and some snapshots of a recent activity at your Meeting.

- b) Plan a "Visitors Day" for neighbors and some of your own friends, who go to other churches, and would like to know about Quakerism. Mail and post fliers; put a notice in a local paper about the day. Then create a display to show what Quakerism is (middle school, high school).
- c) The Monthly Meeting can create a website and keep it updated (high school).
- d) Sing from *Song of the Spirit*: "No Man (One) is an Island" (p. 20); "When I Needed a Neighbor" (p. 29; #293, *Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal*).
- e) *Picture Puzzle*: A skilled artist in your Meeting can draw a very large (4 x 5 feet) picture (on oaktag or lightweight cardboard) of the outside of the Meetinghouse, with the words "My Meeting Family" at the top of the picture. Or draw an outline of everyone sitting inside the Meetinghouse during Meeting for Worship. One class can then color or paint inside the outline of the Meetinghouse picture. (If the picture get too wet, it could take a day or so to dry before cutting, so paint with little water). Then cut the picture into as many pieces as there are people who will be putting the puzzle back together. Put the pieces in a pile. Each person takes a piece and writes his/her name on the back of the picture. Then, while getting to know one another, the Meeting family or one class tries to put the puzzle back together. When it is done, scotch tape the pieces together and display for all to see. (from: "Pieced Together Perfectly", in *Brothers and Sisters All*, CYPYM, PYM, 1997) (good for all ages together, but especially for elementary ages).
- f) "*Willow in the Winds*" game: A small group (7-10) stands in a circle with shoulders touching. One person steps into the center to be the "willow". Those making the circle put arms out with palms perpendicular to the ground (keep elbows slightly bent). When the person in the center says, "Ready?", the circle responds, "Ready" and gently (like the wind) supports and moves the person around in the center (the willow tree) who, while standing, trust his/her weight to the circle (like a "trust fall"). Then another child steps into the middle, and so on (elementary, middle school).

Processing the game: Is this relaxing or reassuring? Relate this experience to the importance of having a safety net or having the support of the Meeting and family by asking: When do you need support? To whom do you turn? Who turns to you? (from: "Pieced Together Perfectly", in *Brothers and Sisters All*, CYPYM, PYM, 1997)

Youth Queries

Harrisburg Meeting's middle-school class in 1986-87 worked on a project to rewrite the queries in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*. Other Meetings can easily adapt this project to their settings. This project can go on for several weeks depending on how many queries you choose to consider. Exploration of the Queries will provide both an introduction to Friends' beliefs and a chance to discuss important issues.

The following is excerpted from a booklet, *Youth Queries*, prepared by Harrisburg Meeting.

Preface

This booklet was prepared by the Youth Class of Harrisburg Friends Meeting during the 1986-87 First-day School year.

In preparing the booklet, the class accomplished the following:

1. The teacher selected the Query topics that best related to youth interests and needs.
2. The class then reviewed the individual queries currently in *Faith and Practice* and additional queries suggested by the teacher. Some queries were eliminated as not relevant to youth needs; some were edited (especially those with multiple clause sentences and/or words not familiar to the students), and others were accepted intact.
3. Students prepared art work for the Query topics.
4. The class selected teachings of Christ from the Bible and quotes from those who have lived those teachings. The selections were then related to specific queries.
5. The class selected and discussed news articles that related to specific queries. Those articles were gathered in a scrapbook. They could also be placed on a bulletin board.

The booklet was then reviewed with the parents and members of Meeting.

Introduction to the Queries

1. *What are the Queries?*

The Queries are questions that are used by Quakers to guide them toward "social action". The queries are concerned with action, not with creeds or common religious beliefs.

2. *What do we mean by "Social Action"?*

In the Quaker way of life, "social action" is the way in which we respond to the "inner light" or the god that is in all of us.

3. *Where does the "Inner Light" come from?*

The "Inner Light" comes from individual responses to the teachings of Christ and the examples of others who have attempted to follow those teachings.

4. *How are the Queries used?*

By asking ourselves these questions in private prayers, in Meeting for Worship, and in day-to-day decision making, we can develop a self-discipline that will help us achieve the ideals of a Quaker way of life.

5. *Why have individual Youth Queries?*

Youth are in the process of developing their own individual responses to Quaker ideals, and therefore have needs different from those of adults who have already shaped their responses and often have more global concerns.

Rewritten Queries on Care for One Another

1. Do you work toward keeping a good friend? Or at being a good friend?
2. Do you try to work out your problems with others instead of getting upset?
3. Do you respect the opinions of others and try not to put them down?
4. Do you treat others in a way that you would like to be treated?
5. Do you try to help others and expect nothing in return?
6. Do you try to refrain from jumping to conclusions about other people?
7. Do you contribute to the spirit of community among Meeting members and others as well?

Rewritten Queries on the Home

1. Is worship part of your personal and family life?
2. Is your home a place where friends are welcomed and where all members of the family, young and old, receive affection and understanding?
3. Do you encourage all family members to share within reason the activities of the home?
4. Are you reasonable in the way you share the phone, TV, and radio?
5. Do you help to make your home a better place to live for you and the others who live with you, or are you a constant complainer?
6. Do you try to understand the problems faced by your parents or guardians, or do you expect them to be perfect?
7. Do you apply the Golden Rule when thinking about who is right and who is wrong in family disagreements?

If your class is artistic, have them make a book which illustrates their queries.

See: "Youth Queries" and "Stamp Our Put-Downs" from *Working with Middle Schoolers*, PYM, RE Executive Concerns Group.

Teaching the Queries To Quaker Children



Query #5. Education

1. The purpose of this lesson is to consider the importance of education in helping people to take care of themselves and others, and to explore our Meeting's role in furthering educational opportunities within our Meeting and in the broader community.

Education

What is our Meeting's role in the life and support of Friends' education? If supporting or maintaining a Friends school, have we developed an appropriate relationship of Meeting and school? What is our role in the spiritual life of the school and its maintenance of Friends' principles?

What does our Meeting do to support education in the wider community?

What help do we provide for the children and adults in our Meeting to pursue the education they seek, whether academic, technical, or vocational? Do we make provision for children in our Meeting to attend a Friends school?

2. Read "To San Luis With Love", in *Lighting Candles in the Dark* (available from FGC Bookstore and PYM Library). Ask the following questions:
 - a) What did Ann do that made her job so special? (made people feel good about themselves)
 - b) Ann used a teaching technique appropriate with beginning first graders. Did you figure it out? Do you know why it works? Have you ever been taught to read in that way?
3. Following is background information about early Quaker education (section a) and questions to think about (section b)
 - a) *From the early years*, Friends believed that education was an important way to achieve economic and social freedom. Friends pioneered the education of women and minority races following the old adage that "Knowledge is power", meaning that individuals have the power to direct their own lives instead of being told what they must do. Friends also believed then and now, that faith is an important component of education, leading to one's acceptance of social responsibility.
In the 1650's when William Penn went to the Chigwell School in England, this is what it was like:

The school, if you were lucky enough to go, was called a Latin School. It started at 6:00 in the morning. You worked sitting still in your seat, studying Latin and math, until 11:00 a.m. and had a break until 1:00 p.m. At 1:00 p.m. you started again and were finished at 6:00 p.m. You had to memorize a lot of the things you learned because there were few books and not very much paper. The recess was the time you ate your lunch and ran races, the favorite pastime.

(from *William Penn, Young Rebel*, RE, PYM, 1998)

Show the picture of Chigwell School (at the end of this chapter). Ask the children to think about: What would you have liked about school in William Penn's time?

b) *Friends concern for education now:*

- Why do we need education? What do you like about your school? How would you like to be taught? (elementary and middle school)
- Are there Friends Schools in your area? (these might range from preschool through college). Does your Meeting have the care of a school? If so, talk about how your Meeting oversees the school. What does the Meeting do? (middle and high school) What makes a Quaker school different from or the same as other public and private schools? (elementary through high school)
- High school students can gather admissions information from Quaker colleges (they are only too happy to send it) and discuss the special qualities of these schools.
- What is your Meeting's responsibility in supporting members who attend school? Should that support be financial? Should the Meeting be more supportive if the member is attending a Quaker school? (middle and high school)

4. Activities:

- a) Related to the story, "To San Luis with Love", in *Lighting Candles in the Dark* (for elementary students):
 - ◆ If children are beginning readers, have them tell their own stories while the teacher records, and then illustrates them.
 - ◆ Older students can transcribe a younger child's story.
 - ◆ Put books together by sewing or spiral binding.
- b) If there is a Quaker school near you, especially if it is under the care of your Meeting, take a trip to see it. If there are teachers in your meeting who teach at the school, ask what distinguishes it as a Friends school. Compile a report with photos and text to present to your Meeting (middle or high school).
- c) Create-your-own-school. In groups of 2 or 3, using large mural paper, *younger children* can draw an ideal classroom, including important components such as pets, a bathroom, etc. A three-dimensional representation of an ideal school can also be made with building blocks and clay. In addition to the usual academics, include such things as an ideal class composition, geographic location or physical setting, etc. *For older students* -- Include important curriculum, decisions on how fees are to be assessed, expectations for students' performances and parent participation, hours of preparation, lunch menus, and school policies regarding admissions.



No. 3.

INTERIOR OF CHIGWELL SCHOOL.

Courtesy Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Education of William Penn

William Penn received much of his early education at Chigwell School near his family home. Later he enrolled at Oxford University as a "gentleman commoner" and at Lincoln's Inn, where he studied law. When traveling on the Continent he spent a year at the Protestant Academy of Saumur, which influenced his religious thinking.

Teaching the Queries To Quaker Children



Query #6. Equality

1. The theme of this lesson is to learn what constitutes prejudice, how we can recognize it, and what we can do about it.
2. Keywords:
 - a) Prejudice – preconceived judgment or opinion... an irrational attitude of hostility directed against an individual, a group, a race or their supposed characteristics.
 - b) Inequities – instances of injustice or unfairness.

Equality

How does our Meeting help to create and maintain a society whose institutions recognize and do away with the inequities rooted in patterns of prejudice and economic convenience?

Is our Meeting open to all regardless of race, ability, sexual orientation, or class?

What steps are we taking as a Meeting to assure that our Meeting and the committees and institutions under our care reflect our respect for all and are free from practices rooted in prejudice?

3. Story (choose either of these stories based on the age of your class):
 - a) Read two Bible stories: Esther 1-9. “Esther Becomes Queen” and “Esther Saves Her People” (Children’s Illustrated Bible, pp. 168-171) (for elementary-high school).
 - b) Read the story, “Hannah’s Bonnet”, in *Candles in the Dark*, RE, PYM, 1964 (for elementary).
4. Points a-c are for background information. Points d-f ask children to think about prejudice, difference and equality.
 - a) *Esther hid her Jewishness* to avoid discrimination many centuries ago, and succeeded in getting respect for the Jews in Persia. Yet, Jews today still often face discrimination and have been badly treated in the 20th century. What other ethnic groups have overcome prejudice?
 - b) *Early Quakers* tried to treat people equally, showing their respect for all by omitting honorific titles and keeping their hats on in the presence of those who had more wealth or status than Quakers. However, they still segregated men and women during Meeting! They did that so women could have an equal voice.

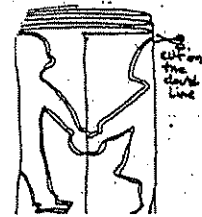
- c) *Today's Quakers* try to be sensitive to the differences among us. Talk about the ways your Meeting makes accommodations for the physically challenged, the non-English speaking, or other minorities.
- d) *Discuss how people differ from each other*, and how they face discrimination because of race, gender, age, beauty, physical or mental challenges, size, wealth, intelligence, etc. By treating people unequally, we can cause economic, political, moral and cultural consequences. Should we be color-blind or ignore cultural differences?
- e) *After reading the story, "Hannah's Bonnet"* ask the following:
- How did Hannah feel about the bonnet she wore on an errand for her Mother?
 - How did Hannah's parents treat the runaway slave and her son?
 - How did Hannah feel about being a Quaker at the end of the story? Why?

Is there any way that you are different from other people? In what way?
 Do you speak another language at home? Do you have a physically challenged family member? Are you overweight? Do you try to hide these differences? Are you ashamed of your differences?

- f) Imagine that someone very different from you came to your home. Even if you wanted them to come and welcomed them, *which parts of your home might be discriminatory*. Could a person in a wheelchair get into your bedroom? Would a person of another ethnic background be comfortable eating your food? What would you need to provide for a person with allergies? Would a person of another race be accepted in your neighborhood? What would you do to make other people feel comfortable?

5. Activities (choose one of the following):

- a) *Paper People* (elementary) - Cut paper dolls out of white paper (the kind that are all connected in a chain). While talking about the family of God, let the children color the "brothers" and "sisters" with different colors and features. Then sing "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands" from *Songs of the Spirit* and talk about the fact that it is God's creation and love that makes us all part of His family.



(from *Brothers and Sisters*, All, RE, PYM, 1997)

- b) *Read* the book, "Black is Brown is Tan" by Arnold Adoff (early elementary). Beautiful poetic explanation of an interracial family and how it expresses all the shades of humanity and love.
- c) *Sing* the songs: "We Are All One Family Under One Sky" (#278); "If We Are the Children of God" (#217); "A Place in the Choir" (#306), from *Worship in Song: A Friends Hymnal*, Friends General Conference, 1996. Available from FGC Bookstore, call 1-800-956-4556 (elementary).
- d) Do the following Bias Awareness Exercises (middle and high school):

Who am I?

1. Individuals take turns going to chalkboard and writing their name (any way they'd like). They then can tell what they know about the reasons for or origins of their first and/or last name; also can tell briefly about their heritage/lineage.
2. Give three words that describe what you feel *your* personal culture is (one by one)
3. Two groups, 4-10 people in each group (same number): one group stands in the middle facing outward; the other group surrounds them, facing them. One person lines up with another, and takes turns (approximately 2 minutes on each turn) answering some of the following questions (these questions are designed to tell a little about your cultural inheritance and experiences):
 - What is the last really horrible tasting meal I've eaten?
 - Who is the crazy relative in my family?
 - What is my favorite song?
 - What is one of the fondest memories of my life so far?
 - What is my favorite article of clothing?

How have I *experienced* bias?

Divide into pairs and have each person in each pair take turns answering the following:

- Tell about one incident in which there was bias or prejudice against *you*. This could be due to biases of race (racism), gender (sexism), age (ageism), culture or economic status (classism), sexual orientation (homophobia), or other prejudicial factor.
- Tell about one time when you actually felt or acted upon a bias of your own to someone else.

Afterwards, discuss: how did it feel to talk about these things?

What are some of my own biases?

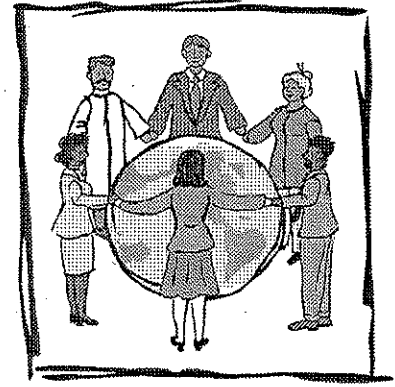
On a postcard (on one side of which is written "good impression" and on the other side "bad impression"), have the young people list five things that would make a good impression on them upon seeing a person for the first time, and on the other side, five things which would make a bad impression – physical, visible things only, as they don't know the person. List on chart some of the responses (under two headings), then discuss.

How do I deal with bias when I see or experience it?

1. Have class list five or more feelings that experiencing biased behavior elicits in them. List on blackboard; discuss how each feeling might make you react in a different way. How?
2. Discuss technique of using "I" statements when communicating your discomfort with prejudiced behavior or statements ("I" statements do blame; they put the responsibility of the feeling on the speaker). Example: *I feel* (uncomfortable) *when you* (speak that way about gays) *because* (I have several close gay friends and I haven't found it to be true.)

(from: *The John Woolman Curriculum*, PYM Religious Education Committee, 1994.)

Teaching the Queries To Quaker Children



Query #7. Social Responsibility and Witness

1. The purpose of this lesson is to learn how one can be socially responsible and provide equal opportunity to all.

2. Keywords:

- a) Concern – a marked interest or regard, usually arising from a personal tie or relationship; matter to be considered.
- b) Witness – to see or know by personal presence or direct cognizance; to bear witness
- c) Conviction – a strong persuasion or belief.

Social Responsibility and Witness

How does our Meeting work:

- to overcome social, legal, economic and political injustices, locally and in the wider world?

- for the funding of community services that does not rely on gaming income?

Does our Meeting serve the community through action on concerns for civic improvement? What actions are we taking to assure everyone equal access to education, health care, legal services, housing, and employment as well as equal opportunities in business and in the professions?

When a member has lifted up a concern, how does our Meeting respond?

Does our Meeting encourage those seeking clearness for their convictions of conscience to hold up such convictions with prayerful openness to the Light?

3. Choose from among the three stories, questions, and activities which follow, depending on the age of students you have:

- a) “Who Said It Can’t Happen Here?”, in *Lighting Candles in the Dark* (for elementary age)

Questions:

- ♦ What group(s) in your community take the roles of the thief and the Japanese-American community?
- ♦ What/who made a difference in each of these instances?

- ◆ What is the common element (helping someone help himself)
- ◆ Are there any self-help programs in your community? What group do they reach out to?
- ◆ What can you or your First-day school do to help this agency?
- ◆ Is there something you can do, by yourself or with a small, independent group, for a family or individual?

Or:

- b) The story of Levi Coffin (from *Lives that Speak*, Friends United Press) (upper elementary-middle school)

Levi Coffin was born in 1798 in New Garden, North Carolina. He came from a Quaker family. As a young man he worked with his cousin, Vestil Coffin, to help runaway slaves. When he was 15, he convinced a judge not to separate a slave woman and her baby, who belonged to the judge. Levi married and emigrated to Indiana. He settled in Newport, where he became a successful businessman.



In 1826 the Coffins opened their home to runaway slaves. Gradually other Friends began to help him. Three "lines" of the Underground Railway converged at the Coffin home. Levi and his wife helped thousands of slaves escape, perhaps as many as 4,000!

Because he was rich and influential, slave hunters were afraid of him, and local people wouldn't tell on him.

At the close of the Civil War, Levi became active in the Western Freedman's Aid Commission, which distributed food, bedding, clothing and money to freed slaves. Levi visited Abraham Lincoln to ask for help for freed men and women. He traveled throughout the United States and England seeking aid. Levi Coffin who died in 1877, is remembered as the "President of the Underground Railroad".

Role Play (middle school) – Choose an event from the story such as the following:

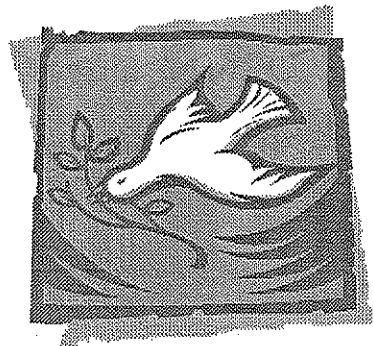
One night a slave named Jim came to Levi Coffin's house. Levi knew Jim had been there before. "Where is thee going now, Jim?", asked Levi. "Sir, I have a wife and two children who are still slaves. I am going back to help them run away. I can't be happy if they are still slaves. We want to be a family. We will be back." Jim went back to his old master. He pretended he was sorry he had run away. He fooled his master. At the same time, Jim was planning how to escape. In a few months, Jim, his wife and his two children got away in the night. They all came to Levi Coffin's house once more on their way to freedom.

Or:

- c) Read the Bible passage (James 2:15-17) (high school): "If a brother or sister is ill-clad, and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed, and filled', without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead". Then ask:

- ◆ What is social injustice?
- ◆ What organizations and laws exist to provide public services?
- ◆ Who are the victims of social injustice?
- ◆ From what public services could those people also benefit?
- ◆ What has your Meeting done locally to show that the Quaker faith isn't dead?

Teaching the Queries To Quaker Children



Query #8. Peace

1. The purpose of this lesson is to learn what constitutes peace, and how we can contribute to a lasting peace in our world.
2. Keywords:
 - a) Peace – a state of tranquility or quiet freedom from civil disturbance; a state of security; order within a community provided by law or custom
 - b) Violence – exertion of physical force so as to injure or abuse; intense, turbulent or furious, often-destructive action or force.
 - c) Authority – power to influence or command thought, opinion or behavior.
 - d) Militarization – the act or process of equipping with military forces and defenses.

Peace

How does our Meeting act to advance peace, to oppose violence, and to support the constructive use of authority in our community, our nation, and the world?

What are we doing as a Meeting:

- *to free our nation from militarization, so evident in our society and in its economy?*
- *to understand the causes of war and violence and to work for the development of the attitudes and institutions of peace?*
- *to recognize and correct the causes of violence within our communities, and to work toward overcoming separations and restoring wholeness?*
- *to increase the understanding and use of nonviolent approaches for the resolution of conflicts?*

3. Background for the teacher:

One source of the Quaker belief in peace is the Light Within. This light so educates and enlightens us that we will begin to see God's truth. That truth reveals to us that the use of force is not consistent with a life lived in the presence of God. Friends believe that God's kingdom is present now; fighting with weapons has no place in that kingdom. The Light Within "takes away the occasion of all wars", in George Fox's terms. The word "occasion" is very important. Friends have always worked as hard to alleviate the causes of war such as hunger and injustice as they have to end war itself. Note that it is our own portion of the Light, not so much our respect for the presence of the Light in others, which will not allow us to use force.

A good example of how the Peace Testimony is not something we do to others but a way we live our lives, is George Fox's famous response to William Penn when Penn asked him whether or not he should wear a sword. Fox said, "Wear it as long as thou canst." The meaning is that when you are living more fully in the Light you will be unable to wear a sword. Thus each of us comes to our own way of expressing the Peace Testimony.

Point out to the children that while the Peace Testimony only talks about fighting with outward weapons, Friends have used it as a basis for developing an approach to life which emphasizes harmony in all kinds of situations; a harmony based not on superficial agreement or a glossing over of differences, but on a deep commitment to the resolution of disputes via non-coercive means.

4. Read one of these quotes from the Journal of George Fox (a) or the Bible (b), or read *The Butter Battle* (c).

- a) From the Journal of George Fox: "A Declaration from the Harmless and Innocent People of God, called Quakers", presented to Charles II.

We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fighting with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretence whatsoever. And this is our testimony to the whole world. The spirit of Christ, by which we are guided, is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil and again to move unto it; and we do certainly know, and so testify to the world, that the spirit of Christ, which leads us into all Truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ, nor for the kingdoms of this world... therefore we cannot learn war any more.

- For very little children: write and share a simple version of the declaration such as: "We will not fight with weapons because God tells us not to fight. We will do God's work in peaceful ways." Explain that a long time ago Quakers decided that fighting was not a good way to solve problems.
- For high school: Although the peace testimony was an important part of *early Quaker life*, some Friends fought in the American Revolution. By the Civil War, however, most Quakers refused to bear arms at all and often sheltered those who were victims on both sides. They were particularly active in the "Underground Railroad". During World Wars I and II, some Quakers joined the military because of the global nature of the war, but most worked as conscientious objectors. After World War II, the American Friends Service Committee was active in the rebuilding of Europe and its displaced peoples.

Ask:

1. What causes violence and how can it be prevented?
2. How is human violence different from the violence we see in the natural world?
3. What organizations are working for world peace today?
4. What groups are working to promote violence, and why would they do that?

From the *Journal of George Fox*:

I told them I knew from whence all wars arose, even from the lust, according to James' doctrine; and that I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars. (from the Journal of George Fox)

- b) Read the "Sermon on the Mount" (Children's Illustrated Bible, p. 214); Matthew, Chapter 5, or the quotes which follow, which are another source of the Quaker Peace Testimony:

Happy are those who work for peace, God will call them His children (Matthew 5:9)

So if you are about to offer your gift to God at the altar and there you remember that your neighbor as something against you, leave your gift, go at once and make peace with your neighbor, and then come back to offer your gift to God. (Matthew 5:23-24)

Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. (Matthew 5:44)

Or:

- c) After reading the "The Butter Battle", choose among these questions (elementary ages):
1. For factual recall: What's going to happen next? Can you think of more than one ending? Can you think of an argument you've had in which the issue was as silly as how to eat bread? Are people this stubborn in real life?
 2. For the four questions which follow, decide whether you want to talk about the arms race or about more personal disputes or both. Children will respond more vocally to a discussion of personal disputes, but they are also concerned about the arms race. Brainstorm solutions to the problem mentioned in the book.
 - How else could the Yooks and Zooks solve their controversy?
 - Think of international or religious disputes.
 - What are the causes of these conflicts?
 - Would any of your solutions work in these cases?

5. Activities:

If you read the Peace Testimony:

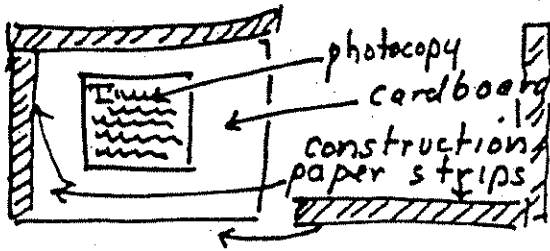
- a) *Rewrite the Peace Testimony* (for ages 7 and up).

Use one of the following methods to produce a modern version of the Peace Testimony:

1. Using a large sheet of paper and a marker or a blackboard and chalk, work as a group to rephrase the Peace Testimony so everyone understands it – including the younger children.
2. Divide into small groups of three to five people. Be sure each group has someone in it who can take notes. Each group rewrites the Peace Testimony in modern language and then the groups share the results with each other. The

point here is not to write a personal testimony – we’ll do that later – but to understand the meaning of the original document.

b) *Personalized Copies of the Peace Testimony* (all ages)



For each child make a photocopy of the Peace Testimony on white paper with lots of margin space. For *little children* use the simplified version in part (a) or one you wrote yourself. Have the children decorate the margin with peace images. Mount the photocopies on lightweight cardboard and frame with strips of construction paper. Be sure the cardboard is larger than the photocopy so there is room to paste on the frame.

Ask the children to think of the opposites of the images they’ve drawn. These opposites are the forces the Peace Testimony is meant to overcome. Some children may want to draw these negative images as well.

Hang up the decorated versions in your First-day schoolroom or Meetinghouse.

d) *Memorization*. Older children can memorize and recite, with great feeling and inflection, the Peace Testimony and then recite to a younger class.

If you read the Butter Battle:



a) “The Butter Battle”, by Dr. Seuss, Random House, NY, 1984. This book is Dr. Seuss for *grown-ups* and *children*. The story is simple enough. The Yooks, who eat their bread with the butter side up, are engaged in an escalating standoff with the Zooks, who eat their bread with the butter side down. Each side creates more and more sophisticated weapons with names like “Blue Gooer” and “Poo-a-Doo Powder”. Patriotic songs, marching bands, and fancy uniforms dignify the combatants. The story ends with a Zook and a Yook, each holding a “Big-Boy Boomer”, ready to annihilate each other.

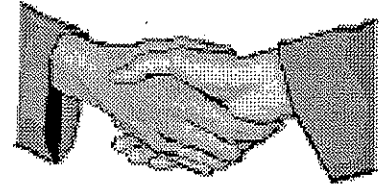
No happy endings here. Dr. Seuss leaves the reader with questions, not answers. On one level he has satirized and arms race and military pomp and ceremony; on another he mocks all our smaller disputes and attempts to prove our rightness. This is a scary book – not be read without follow-up discussion and activities, see pp. 27 and 29.

b) Act out the story. Simple props might include flags and uniforms or hats for each side. Make up more than one ending and act out each ending. Talk about the effects of uniforms, patriotic music and parades.

- c) Using paint or crayons *draw two pictures*, one depicting a peaceful solution, one a less peaceful solution to the story. Or have each person write their own ending; illustrate and share it.
- d) Take a conflict you've had such as "who gets to ride in the front seat" or "who gets the last piece of candy", and *create appropriate flags or songs or speeches for your side*. Share and talk about these conflicts and your creative solutions.
- e) *Make butter*. Into a small margarine container or baby food jar, pour heavy cream or butter milk to ½ inch from the top. Secure the lid. Shake gently for 10-15 minutes giving each student a turn. After the contents have thickened to a soft margarine consistency, stir in a dash of salt and/or a teaspoon of honey. Spread on each student's cracker and enjoy.
- f) *Sing*: from *Songs of the Spirit*, #11, "In Thy Peace"; #15, "The Prayer of St. Francis"; #18, "Let There Be Peace on Earth"; #32, "Study War No More". From *Worship in Song: A Friends Hymnal*, sing #299, "Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream".
- g) *Quaker Peacemakers*. Throughout Friends history, individual Friends have worked hard for peace. Choose a person or incident which demonstrates Friends' commitment to peace. We suggest you share a story about that person or incident. Three excellent and easily accessible examples are:
1. "The White Feather", in *Friendly Story Caravan*, Friends General Conference or PYM Library.
 2. "Fierce Feathers", in *Candles in the Dark*, PYM Library.
 3. "The Story of Thomas and the Pirates", in *Candles in the Dark*, PYM Library.

Teaching the Queries To Quaker Children

Query #9. Ministry of Outreach



1. The purpose of this lesson is to learn how we can make the people in our community more aware of our presence, more knowledgeable about our faith and welcome at our Meeting.

2. Keywords:

- a) Outreach – to reach beyond; exceed.
- b) Aware – have knowledge; be conscious; cognizant, informed or alert.

Outreach

What are we doing as a Meeting to communicate our presence and our principles to the community around us? Does our Meetings' ministry of outreach lead Friends to share their spiritual experience with others?

What are we doing to invite persons not in membership to attend our Meetings for Worship and to encourage their continued attendance? How does the Meeting welcome visitors? Are we sensitive to the needs and hesitations of each visitor?

Are we tender to the needs of isolated Friends and Meetings, and to nearby Meetings seeking support?

Collaboration

In what ways does our Meeting respond to opportunities to join with other faiths in worship, in social action, and in spiritual dialogue?

How does our Meeting encourage its members to seek opportunities to meet and work with Friends worldwide?

3. Read or tell one of the following stories:

- a) *Mary Fisher*. In: *Lighting Candles in the Dark*. Friends General Conference, Philadelphia, PA, 1992, pp. 34-37.
- b) *The Sermon on the Mount*, by Selina Hastings. In: *The Children's Illustrated Bible*. DK Publishing, Inc. NY, 1994, pp. 214-215.
- c) Matthew 5: 1-14 (putting one's light on a candlestick, not under a bushel)
- d) *The Children and the Salmon*. In: *Lighting Candles in the Dark*, Friends General Conference, 1992, p. 190.

4. Discussion Points:

- a) *How did early Quakers reach out to others and spread their faith?* Early Quakers traveled all over the countryside announcing the truth they had found.
- b) *How do Friends reach out to the community and world today?* Missionaries, especially those sent by Friends United Meeting, are one way.
- c) *Are you able to tell your friends about your faith? Is it easy? Do you feel comfortable letting your friends know that you are a Quaker? How do you explain our belief that "there is that of God in everyone"?*
- d) *Does your Meeting have an Outreach Committee to handle this concern?*

5. Putting our faith into practice:

- a) In what ways can our Meeting let others know about Quakerism?
 - Advertise in local newspapers
 - Assign greeters for welcoming visitors, and answering questions.
 - Have literature available for attenders and visitors
 - Share Thanksgiving with other churches
 - Organize a candlelight Christmas vigil for peace and have hot cocoa afterwards
- b) What can I do to spread my faith?
 - Invite a friend to First-day School
 - Organize a Halloween party and invite a friend
 - Adopt a Nursing Home resident
- c) Perhaps the class (high school age) can decide to hold an outreach day for children and adults in the neighborhood. They can design the program, invite a speaker, prepare a meal, even organize a craft or games for children.

Teaching the Queries To Quaker Children

Query #10. Stewardship of the Environment

1. The aim of this lesson is to make us aware of how to protect, preserve, and restore the natural resources around us, and how our actions can affect the environment as a whole.
2. Keywords:



a) Stewardship. The office, duties, and obligations of a steward; the conducting, supervising, or managing of something, especially the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.

b) Environment. The aggregate of surrounding things, conditions, or the influences, especially as affecting the existence or development of someone or something.

Stewardship of the Environment

Is the Meeting concerned that human interaction with nature be responsible, guided by a reverence for life and a sense of the splendor of God's continuing creation?

Are the decisions of the Meeting and its committees relating to the uses of property, goods, services, and energy made with sensitivity toward the environmental impact of those choices?

3. Stories:

a) *The Creation*, by Selina Hastings. In: *The Children's Illustrated Bible*, DK Publishing, Inc., New York, 1994. Pp. 18-19.

b) *The Children and the Salmon*. In: *Lighting Candles in the Dark*, Friends General Conference, 1992, p. 190.

c) Genesis 1-3.

4. Discussion Points:

a) *How did early Quakers address this issue?* From the beginning Quakers recognized the importance of protecting the natural resources and urged us to walk gently on the earth.

b) *How does today's world steward its resources?* By implementing environmental protection programs at local and regional levels. More public awareness on waste reduction. Attempts to reestablish natural preserves that are ecologically self-maintained.

c) *What have you done about protecting or preserving the environment around you?*

- Remember to turn off lights when leaving rooms? Reducing paper waste at home, school and Meeting? Limiting time for showers? Evaluate snack and other food packages and let companies know about their excessive use of wrappings?
- What do you know about the three "R's" for environmental protection: (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle)?
- Do you know about local environmental protection programs?
- Are you aware of the loss of natural resources in other parts of the world due to our increased consumption?

d) *What has your Meeting done to protect the environment around your Meetinghouse or in your community?*

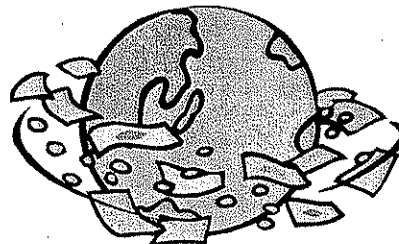
e) *What could our Meeting do to better in this area?* Look for ways to reduce waste, improve energy use, and water consumption.

5. Activities:

- Organize a work crew and clean a local park or creek.
- Make a birdhouse to hang around your Meeting, home or park.
- Plant a garden and maintain it organically.
- Use vegetables for "Simple Meals" at the Meeting or donate them to a local food bank or homeless shelter.

Teaching the Queries To Quaker Children

Query #11. Stewardship of Resources



1. The aim of studying this Query is to learn that all we have within ourselves and all our possessions are gifts from God, for us to use in a responsible way.
2. Keywords:
 - a) Stewardship. The office, duties, and obligations of a steward; the conducting, supervising, or managing of something, especially the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.
 - b) Resources. The collective wealth of a country or its means of producing wealth.

Stewardship of Resources

Does our Meeting serve social and economic justice in its uses of property and money?

How does our Meeting engage its members in the support of the Meeting's work, its ministry, and the upkeep of its property?

How does our Meeting engage its members in the support of the Quarterly and Yearly Meetings and other Quaker organizations?

To what extent does our Meeting rely on current members for financial support, and what role does endowment income serve? Does the Meeting consider carefully the appropriate role of invested funds?

3. Stories:
 - a) *Frederick*, by Leo Lionni. Pantheon, NY, 1967.
 - b) *The Parable of the Talents*, by Selina Hastings. In: *The Children's Illustrated Bible*, DK Publishing, Inc., New York, 1994, pp. 254-255. (or Matthew 18: 23-35)
 - c) *Wings*, by Christopher Myers, Scholastic Press, NY, 2000.
 - d) *The Table Where Rich People Sit*, by Byrd Baylor, Atheneum, NY, 1994.

4. Discussion Points:

- a) *How did early Quakers address this issue?* Initially one of the reasons for organizing into Meetings for Sufferings was to help children after their parents were put in prison because of their beliefs.
- b) *How does today's world address this issue?* People are taken care of by Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid
- c) After reading the first two individual parts of the Stewardship Query in the Appendix, ask children or teens to respond to the following: How does your Meeting recognize and use talents of its members? What are the talents you have? What are ways you can share your talents in the Meeting, school, home?
- d) How large is your Meeting's budget? On what does your Meeting spend its money?
- e) How could your Meeting take better care of its finances or property? Does your Meeting have "workdays"?
- f) If you have pets at home, how could you take better care of them?

5. Activities:

a) *Making Pizza*

Go to the grocery store as a class time field trip and determine the cost of purchasing several large frozen, ready-made pizzas. Then determine the price of the raw ingredients (flour, tomato paste, cheese, mushrooms, etc.) to make the pizza from scratch. By all means go ahead and make and enjoy eating the pizza! How much money is saved by making the pizza from scratch? Is the money saved "worth it" in terms of the extra time consumed? Could that time be more "productively" spent? Is the love and care (and fellowship if two or more people work together) given to prepare food a valuable use of time?

b) *Should We Spend Money for Hobbies?*

Ask the children to talk about their hobbies. Ask if it costs money to keep up with a hobby (i.e., cameras/film for photography, art supplies, model materials for trains or cars, CD's for music lovers, baseball cards, etc.), and if so, how much? Ask children their reaction to the cost of other's hobbies. Do our hobbies cost us more than money? What do we gain by spending time and money on them? Are hobbies necessary or frivolous? Should we spend money on hobbies?

Teaching the Queries To Quaker Children

Query #12. Integrity and Simplicity

1. The aim of this Query is to help us think about being truthful all the time, and the peace that simplifying our lives can bring.
2. Keywords:
 - a) Integrity. Firm adherence to a code of specific moral or artistic values.
 - b) Simplicity. The state of being simple, uncomplicated, or uncompounded; freedom from pretense or guile; restraint in ornamentation.
 - c) Discipline. Training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character; control gained by enforcing obedience or order.



Integrity and Simplicity

What does our Meeting understand to be the meaning and implication of our testimonies on simplicity and integrity?

How do our Meeting's actions demonstrate this understanding?

As a Meeting, what are we doing to encourage members to embody integrity and simplicity in their everyday lives?

To what extent does our Meeting rely on current members for financial support, and what role does endowment income serve? Does the Meeting consider carefully the appropriate role of invested funds?

3. Stories:
 - a) *The Pearl*, by Helme Heine, Atheneum, NY, 1985.
 - b) *Canoeing*, by Laurie Lattig-Ehlers, Picture Book Studio, Natick, MA, 1986.
 - c) *The Sermon on the Mount*, by Selina Hastings. In: *The Children's Illustrated Bible*. DK Publishing, Inc. NY, 1994, pp. 214-215.
 - d) *The Quilt Maker's Gift*, by Jeff Brumbeau (illustrated by Gail de Marcken), Pfeiffer-Hamilton Publishers, Duluth, MN, 2000.

4. Discussion Points:

- a) *How did early Quakers address this issue?* Not taking oaths, not taking off their hats to greet someone, speaking and dressing plainly. Not varying the prices they charged their customers for goods. Living what they believed every day in the face of harsh consequences of their actions (i.e., imprisonment).
- b) *How does today's world address this issue?* In court, Quakers are allowed to "affirm" instead of swear that they will tell the truth. In three locations in the United States, "Plain Friends" still wear the plain dress and speak the plain language (i.e., using "thee" and "thou").
- c) *What could our Meeting do to show more integrity or simplicity?*
- d) *Tell some parts of your life which make it very complex, very confusing. When is the last time you had time to yourself to just think?*
- e) *What are some things you could do to keep your life simple?*
- f) *Is it easy to be truthful all the time? Should I tell the absolute truth every time I am asked, or is telling a "white lie" ok some of the time? Why is truth telling simpler than lying?*
- g) *If integrity is blending the Quaker faith with our actions, does our Meeting show integrity? How?*

5. Activities:

- Make a chart for simple vs. complex clothes, cars, homes, etc.
- Play the "Whisper Down the Lane" game. This works best with more than six Kg.-6th graders. Children sit in a circle. Someone is designated to start the "rumor". They tell the person on their right a phrase, 2 or 3 words. That person tells the next, and so on until the "rumor" gets back to the original person. The trick is to listen very carefully and say to the next person exactly what was told to you. The goal is for the originator to get back almost exactly the words that he or she said in the beginning of the game.
- Organize a Simple Meal using very few basic ingredients.

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Teaching the Queries To Quaker Children



APPENDIX

Personal Queries

Query #1: Meeting for Worship

Do I faithfully attend Meeting with heart and mind prepared for worship, clear of any predetermination to speak or not to speak, and expecting that worship will be a source of strength and guidance?

Does worship deepen my relationship with God, increase my faithfulness, and refresh and renew my daily life, both inwardly and in my relationship with others?

Have I experienced in worship that direct leading to listen or to speak, and have I been faithful to my own experience?

Query #2: Meeting for Business

Do we recognize that we speak through our inaction as well as our action?

Do I regularly attend Meeting for Business and in a spirit of love and unity? If unable to attend, how do I attend to my responsibility?

Do I consider prayerfully the many concerns that are lifted up on any issue, acknowledging that the search for truth in unity involves what God requires, being open to personal transformation as the community arrives at the sense of the Meeting?

Query #3: Spiritual Nurture, Ministry and Religious Education

Do I maintain as part of my personal and family life those daily practices that focus on continued spiritual growth, with disciplined worship, inward retirement, and communion with the divine spirit?

Do I frequently read the Bible and other religious literature, including the records of the lives and experiences of Friends? Do I take the time to explore these resources with others and likewise encourage my children?

Do I share my own faith and spiritual journey, and encourage such sharing with my family?

Query #4: Care for the Meeting Community

*Am I ready to offer assistance as part of my religious community serving its members?
Am I equally willing to accept graciously the help of others?*

Do I recognize and face disagreements and other situations that put me in conflict with others? Do I manifest a spirit ready to give or receive forgiveness?

Do I treat adults and children alike with respect and without condescension? Is my manner with visitors and attenders to my Meeting one of welcome?

Query #5: Education

How do I show my concern for the improvement of public education in my community and in the world?

Am I aware of what Friends schools are doing and of their plans for the future? How do I show encouragement and support?

Query #6: Equality

Do I examine myself for aspects of prejudice that may be buried, including beliefs that seem to justify biases based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, class, and feelings of inferiority or superiority?

What am I doing to help overcome the contemporary effects of past and present oppression?

Am I teaching my children, and do I show through my way of living, that love of God includes affirming the equality of people, treating others with dignity and respect, and seeking to recognize and address that of God within every person?

Query #7: Social Responsibility and Witness

Am I mindful of how my lifestyle and my investments can contribute to the improvement of the human condition, or to the exploitation of others?

Am I open to seeking clearness on matters of conscience and to assisting others in doing so? How do I respond and support one who acts out of a clear leading when I am under the weight of another?

What am I doing toward for the betterment of my community to assure the maintenance of effective public services which do not rely on funding from gaming?

Do I fulfill my civic responsibilities when they do not conflict with divine leadings?

Query #8: Peace

Do I live in the power of that Life and Spirit that takes away the occasion of all wars?

How do I maintain Friends' testimony that military training and all participation in war and its preparation are inconsistent with the teaching and the spirit of Christ?

Do I work for the establishment of alternative ways of settling disputes? Am I aware that to build a world community requires that we all face our differences honestly, openly, and in trust?

Do I treat conflict as an opportunity for growth, and address it with careful attention? Do I seek to recognize and respect the Divine in those with whom I have a basic disagreement? Do I look for ways to reaffirm in action and attitude my love for the one with whom I am in conflict?

Query #9: Ministry of Outreach

How do I ground myself in the understandings of my faith? Am I clear about my beliefs? How do I prepare myself to share my faith and beliefs with others?

Does my manner of life as a Friend attract others to our religious society?

Do I seize opportunities to tell others about the Religious Society of Friends and invite them to worship with us?

Is my manner with visitors and attenders to our Meeting one of welcome?

What opportunities have I taken to know people from different religious and cultural backgrounds, to worship with them, and to work with them on common concerns?

What opportunities have I taken to know, to work, and to worship with Friends outside of my own Meeting?

Query #10: Stewardship of the Environment

How am I helping to develop a social, economic, and political system which will nurture an environment which sustains and enriches life for all?

Am I aware of the place of water, air, and soil in my life? Do I consider with care the necessity of purchasing substances hazardous to the environment? Do I act as a faithful steward of the environment in the use and disposal of such hazardous substances?

Do I choose with care the use of technology and devices that truly simplify and add quality to my life without adding an undue burden to essential resources?

Query #11: Stewardship of Resources

Am I clear that I am the steward, not the owner, of property in my care?

Do I simplify my needs, making choices that balance self-sufficiency (to avoid unnecessary dependence on others) and fair sharing of resources? Do I make choices as a consumer that support the equitable distribution of income?

Do my employment and other activities allow for use of time and energy in spiritual growth and in service to the Religious Society of Friends?

Do I contribute generously within my means to the funding of the work of Friends in my Meeting, in the Yearly Meeting, and in the wider world of Friends?

Query #12: Integrity and Simplicity

How do I strive to maintain the integrity of my inner and outer lives – in my spiritual journey, my work, and my family responsibilities? How do I manage my commitments so that over-commitment, worry, and stress do not diminish my integrity?

Am I temperate in all things? Am I open to counsel and advice on overindulgence and addictive behavior, such as gambling? Do I take seriously the hazards associated with addictive and mood-altering substances?

Am I careful to speak truth as I know it and am I open to truth spoken to me? Am I mindful that judicial oaths imply a double standard of truth?

Do I refrain from membership in organizations whose purposes and methods compromise our testimonies?

