

## WHAT IS PEACE?

### Grades

- K to 3

### Curriculum Themes

- Peace, Global Citizenship, Interconnectedness, Culture, Identity, Children's Rights

### Overview

- This activity addresses the concept of peace and it can be used to celebrate the International Day of Peace on September 21<sup>st</sup>, during Remembrance Day on November 11<sup>th</sup>, or at any time during the school year to highlight how the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child aims to ensure children everywhere live in peace.
- Students will be asked to consider what peace means to them and to other children from different parts of the world. They will explore the concept of peace through different areas of the curriculum - visual arts, language arts, social studies, drama, music, and dance. The main objective is to help children understand that every child needs peace to live a full, healthy and happy life.

### Materials

- Choose and print three of the **Pictures of Peace** in colour (pages 9-20)
- Tape
- Chalkboard or whiteboard
- Chalk or whiteboard markers
- World Map
- Variety of art supplies, such as watercolours, pastels, crayons, pencil crayons, paint brushes, and paper
- **Artist's Statement** handout (page 21)
- Sticky notes of two different colours

### Global Themes

- Interdependence
- Images and Perceptions
- Social Justice

### Timing

2 hours

*"If we are to reach  
real peace in this  
world, we shall have  
to begin with the  
children."*

~ Gandhi

### Background Information for Teachers

- United Nations International Day of Peace: [un.org/en/events/peaceday/](http://un.org/en/events/peaceday/)
- United Nations Cyberschool Bus Pictures of Peace: [un.org/cyberschoolbus/gallery/peace/index.asp](http://un.org/cyberschoolbus/gallery/peace/index.asp)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Teaching Resources and Activities: [unicef.ca/en/teachers/article/elementary-resources](http://unicef.ca/en/teachers/article/elementary-resources)
- Playing For Change [playingforchange.com/](http://playingforchange.com/)

### Teacher Self-Reflection

Before bringing the concept of peace into your classroom and asking students to consider what it means to them, it may be helpful for you to take a few minutes to reflect upon peace on your own.

- Begin by quickly brainstorming a list of the first ten words or phrases that you think of when you hear the word peace.
- Then, consider the definition of peace from the Merriam-Webster online dictionary below. For each line in the definition, circle words or phrases from the list you made that connect.
- Next, try to define peace in your own words using one or two sentences.
- Finally, take a few minutes to reflect upon following points:
  - Think about a time in your life when you knew peace. What made this peace possible?
  - Was there a time when you did not experience peace? Why was peace absent?
  - When do you think you first became aware of the concept of peace? Has your view changed over time? If so, how has it changed and why?
  - How does the concept of peace connect to your classroom and what you are teaching? How might it relate to your student's life experience thus far?
  - How could you collaborate with other teachers about this topic?

<sup>1</sup>peace noun \ˈpēs\  
 1: a state of tranquillity or quiet: as  
 a: freedom from civil disturbance  
 b: a state of security or order within a community provided for by law or custom  
 <a breach of the *peace*>

2: freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions

3: harmony in personal relations

4: a: a state or period of mutual concord between governments

b: a pact or agreement to end hostilities between those who have been at war or in a state of enmity

5: used interjectionally to ask for silence or calm or as a greeting or farewell

Source: [merriam-ebster.com/dictionary/peace](http://merriam-ebster.com/dictionary/peace)

### Classroom Activity - Part 1 (40 minutes)

- **Step 1** (5 minutes) Have the class sit together as a whole group in front of the chalkboard/whiteboard. Tell them that you are going to look at three artworks by children from all around the world that communicate the concept of peace. Write "Peace Is..." on the board. Introduce each **Picture of Peace** to the class one by one by taping it to the board and reading the name of the young artist and the country they are from. Locate the artist's country on a world map.
- **Step 2** (10 minutes) Think/Pair/Share - First, ask students to think silently to themselves about what peace might mean to each of the young artists by looking at their artwork. Then, ask students to turn to the classmate next to them and share their thoughts. Finally, share ideas as a whole group. Record the ideas of students on the board under each work of art.

*Activity continued on the next page.*

**Classroom Activity - Part 1 (continued)**  
(40 minutes)

- **Step 3** (5 minutes) Explain that everyone is going to make their own pictures of peace next class. But first, we need to think about what peace means to us. As a class, we are going to create a concept chart to define peace. Draw a concept chart on peace on chart paper such as the example below. Begin by looking up the word “peace” in the dictionary as a class and using the definition to help you fill in the middle of the concept chart. Rephrase or simplify the definition to make it easily understood by your students (see example below). Ask for your student’s input, e.g. “Is there anything we could add to this definition?”
- **Step 4** (5 minutes) Complete the characteristics/non-characteristics sections as a class by asking students to contribute their ideas and recording them in the chart. For characteristics, ask “What does peace look like?”. For non-characteristics, ask “What does peace not look like?”. In the example concept chart below, possible student responses are listed.
- **Step 5** (10 minutes) Give students two sticky notes of different colours and send them back to their desks to work on the next step individually. On one colour, ask them to write or draw a specific example of a time when there was peace in their life. On the other colour, ask them to write or draw a specific non-example of peace (when there was not peace in their life). When they are finished, ask them to return to the carpet and stick their sticky in the appropriate categories. Share a few examples/non-examples as a class. In the example concept chart below, possible student responses are listed.
- **Step 6** (5 minutes) Think/Pair/Share – Ask students to think about picture books you have recently read as a class that demonstrate the concept of peace. First, ask students to think silently to themselves about books that showed an example of peace. Then, ask students to turn to the classmate next to them and share their thoughts. Finally, share ideas as a whole group. Record the class ideas in the concept chart under examples/non-examples from texts. **See examples below.**

**Classroom Activity - Part 2**  
(40-60 minutes)

- Students create their pictures of peace! Students will have the choice of using a variety of materials to create a work of art on a piece of paper that communicates what peace means to them or what it looks like in their life. Ask small groups of students at a time to collect their materials at the art table. Have them write their names on the backs of their papers. When they are finished, they can create an artist’s statement to display with their artwork. Use the artist’s statement handout with the sentence-starter “To me, peace is... By (name)”. Scribe for students who are not yet writing.

### Sample Concept Chart

<b>Examples of peace from my life</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When I was playing with Mary and we were laughing a lot together</li> <li>- When I can sleep in on Saturday mornings</li> <li>- When my family spent the weekend relaxing together</li> <li>- When I met a new student and became friends</li> </ul>		<b>Non-examples of peace from my life</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When a bully made fun of me yesterday and I felt sad</li> <li>- When I got a headache because children were yelling too much</li> <li>- When I got lost at the grocery store and I was scared</li> <li>- When I pushed my brother</li> </ul>	
<b>Characteristics (What does peace look like?)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Having a nap</li> <li>- Reading a book during silent reading time</li> <li>- Sharing my toys with my friends</li> <li>- Playing at the park with my brother and sister</li> <li>- Eating dinner with my family after a long day</li> <li>- Giving a hug</li> </ul>	<b>Peace is...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When it is quiet and I feel calm</li> <li>- When there is no fighting and everyone cooperates</li> <li>- When you feel free, happy, and safe</li> </ul>	<b>Non-characteristics (What does peace not look like?)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Having a nightmare</li> <li>- When the classroom is too noisy</li> <li>- Having a fight with friends</li> <li>- Not sharing toys</li> <li>- When there is a bully on the playground and you feel scared</li> <li>- When you worry about something</li> </ul>	
<b>Examples from texts</b>  <i>The Sandwich Swap</i> By Queen Rania of Jordan  <i>At the end, there is a school sandwich feast and everyone shared sandwiches from their countries.</i>		<b>Non-examples from texts</b>  <i>Say Something</i> By Peggy Moss  <i>When the other children bullied the girl in the cafeteria and said mean jokes about her.</i>	

### Follow-up: Silent Gallery Walk (20 minutes)

- Display students' pictures of peace around the classroom and do a silent gallery walk. A silent gallery walk is a chance for students to circulate around the classroom and interact with the artwork without any speaking.
- Facilitate this process by providing each student with two different coloured sticky notes. Before giving the students the sticky notes, draw a question mark on one and a happy face on the other. The cards should also have the student's names on them.
- Ask the students to place the sticky note with the question mark beside a work of art to ask a question about at the end of the gallery walk. Explain that the happy face sticky is to be left beside a work of art to describe one thing they liked about at the end of the gallery walk. Tell students that each work of art can only have one question mark and one happy face at the end. If there are already both sticky notes beside a picture, than they have to move on to a different one to ensure that each student ends up with a question and a comment on their work.
- Wrap-up the gallery walk by asking students to share their questions and positive comments about each other's artwork as a whole group.

### Discussion

- How are our pictures of peace the same? How are they different?
- Does peace mean the same thing to everyone in our class? What about other children around the world?
- What did we learn from this activity? Why do all children need peace?
- Do you think all children are able to live in peace? Why or why not?
- Link the ideas to Remembrance Day, the International Day of Peace, or the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### Extensions

#### Music and Dance

*Playing for Change* films and records musicians from different parts of the globe playing songs together. Their objective is *to inspire, connect, and bring peace to the world through music*. Numerous videos are available for viewing on the website and they are a great tool for learning about the universal power of music to break down boundaries and unite people of different countries, languages, and cultures. The videos can also lead students to the understanding that music can be used to voice a positive message about peace and have a global impact.



Suggested Video: “*What a Wonderful World*”

- Use the video to discuss: What is the message of this video? How does it relate to the conversation we have been having about peace?
- Help students to understand the universality of music in all cultures and in all parts of the world, and how it has the power to contribute to peace by bringing all different kinds of people together.
- Perform the song “*What a Wonderful World*” as a class using different musical instruments, different types of dance, and singing. Share the performance in the school and community and send a message about global peace.
- Use the video as a starting point for ongoing learning about different dance and music traditions from different regions of the world.

#### Drama

*For Kindergarten and Grade 1*

Use the poem “Dove” by Ann Bonner to engage the class in oral dramatization. Oral dramatization is reading aloud a text using oral drama techniques and musical elements (pitch, tempo, tone) to make a text more exciting and to convey the mood.

Examples of oral dramatization techniques:

- Clapping, snapping, tapping the word syllables
- Voice combinations
- Unison – read words together
- Echoing – repeating the last word 3 times
- Assigning words – each person in a small group gets to say a word in sequence
- Singing the words
- Rounds (like “row, row, row, your boat...”)
- Quiet to loud or loud to quiet by word, sentence, or verse
- Staccato (really pronouncing the words)

Write the poem on chart paper and read it aloud as a whole class using chosen oral dramatization techniques. Students should use different levels, facial expression, and creative movement on the spot while applying oral dramatization strategies to increase engagement and bring meaning to the poem.

**Dove**

*By Ann Bonner*

The white dove  
stands  
for peace.

For love  
Of other lands  
Your enemy.  
Your friend.  
Your neighbour.

Join hands.  
Labour  
for love.  
Send  
the peaceful message  
of the dove.

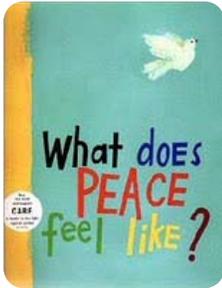
*Source: [Peace Begins With Me: A Collection of Poems By Jill Bennett, pg. 54.](#)*

*For Grade 2 and 3*

Use a tableau activity with your class to allow students to express their understanding of the concept of peace in a different way. Tableau is a 3-D frozen 10 second arrangement using only bodies, levels, space and facial expressions to communicate an idea, in this case, “peace”.

- Students work in small groups to make a tableau that portrays the concept of peace. No props are used. Describe this activity as a “frozen picture” that students must hold for 10 seconds.
- Co-create success criteria for tableau with your class on chart paper to ensure that expectations are clear. For example, success criteria could include convincing facial expressions, staying in role for the entire duration of the tableau, remaining still and silent, using different levels, using their bodies to express the idea, etc. It is also a good idea to set clear expectations for the audience. For example, active listening and respectful behaviour, saving applause until the very end, accountable talk, etc.
- Have students present their tableau in front of the class by first providing an oral explanation of their idea of peace in the tableau they are about to portray.
- Teacher Tips: Count aloud or beat out a rhythm with a drum to 10 seconds while students perform their tableau. Use an imaginary remote control to press “play”, “pause”, “stop” to help students transition into their tableau and hold their positions until 10 seconds is up.

## Language Arts



Read-aloud *What Does Peace Feel Like?* By Vladimir Radunsky

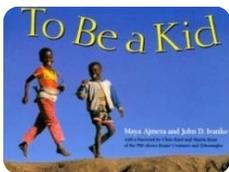
This picture book is co-authored by children from different countries. It explores the concept of peace through beautiful artwork and the children’s descriptions of what peace feels, sounds, smells, looks, and tastes like in their lives. The word “peace” is translated into languages from around the world at the back of the book. This book allows for a great discussion about different cultures, languages, and countries around the world and helps students come to the understanding that no matter where we live, no matter what our culture or language is, we all need peace to live full, healthy and happy lives.

Teaching ideas:

- Before reading – ask students what the 5 senses are. Then, ask them to use the 5 senses to describe what peace is like in their lives. Record their ideas.
- During reading – Point out the parts of the world that the children in the book are from on your classroom map. Discuss how the way they experience peace with the 5 senses is similar or different to the students in your class.
- After reading – Use the translations of the word “peace” on the last pages of the book for an activity. If you have culturally diverse students or English Language Learners in your classroom, this book is a great way to bring their languages and cultures into the classroom. One suggestion is to decorate and display the word “peace” in different languages with the pictures of peace they created in art class. You may choose the word in your student’s first languages or allow each student to choose which language they will decorate the word peace in.

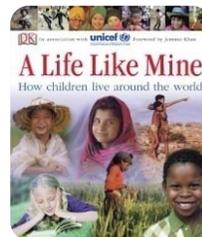
## Social Studies

Consider using the following picture books to introduce your students to our global community and the diverse children and families that live in it. The texts allow students to discover that we live in an interconnected world where cooperation and respect for differences is essential to ensuring peace, which in turn allows all children to live a happy and safe life.



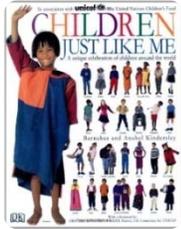
**To Be a Kid**  
By Maya Ajmera and John Ivanko

Using colourful photographs and the simple text, readers discover what it is like to be a kid in different parts of the globe. The book sends the message that children from diverse cultures have the same need for creative play and love from family and friends.



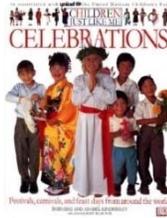
**A Life Like Mine: How Children Live Around the World**  
By UNICEF

This book provides insight on how children in diverse places and of different cultures live their lives.



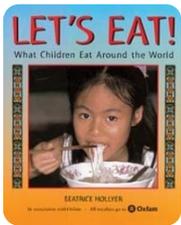
**Children Just Like Me**  
By Anabel Kindersley

Discover the homes, schools, families, and cultures of young people around the world.



**Celebrations**  
By Anabel Kindersley

Learn about the festivals, traditions and celebrations of children everywhere.



**Let's Eat: What Children Eat Around the World**  
By Beatrice Hollyer

Learn all about the way children and their families eat!

Teaching ideas:

- How are children, families, and communities different around the world? How are they the same?
- Discuss everyday life in another community. How do the people there meet their needs? How is this similar or different to the way we meet our needs in our community?
- How is our local community connected to other communities in other parts of the world?
- How can we contribute to peaceful relationships within a global community?
- Why does understanding and respecting differences to ensure peace?
- Give students the opportunity to reflect on their own heritage and cultural background and the traditions and celebrations of their own family, community, and country.
- Get students to research their family heritage by conducting interviews with grandparents or other family members.
- Locate your community, country, and continent on the world map. If your classroom is culturally diverse, create a world map using pins and string to connect student's names to their country of heritage.



Source: Alex Arbuckle, UNICEF Canada Intern 2013

**Additional Resources**

On pages 13 to 15 of UNICEF Canada's *Children's Rights and Social Justice Booklist*, you will find a variety of texts that address the theme of peace and the effects of war to use in your classroom.

## PICTURES OF PEACE - 1

By Quinton

*United States of  
America*

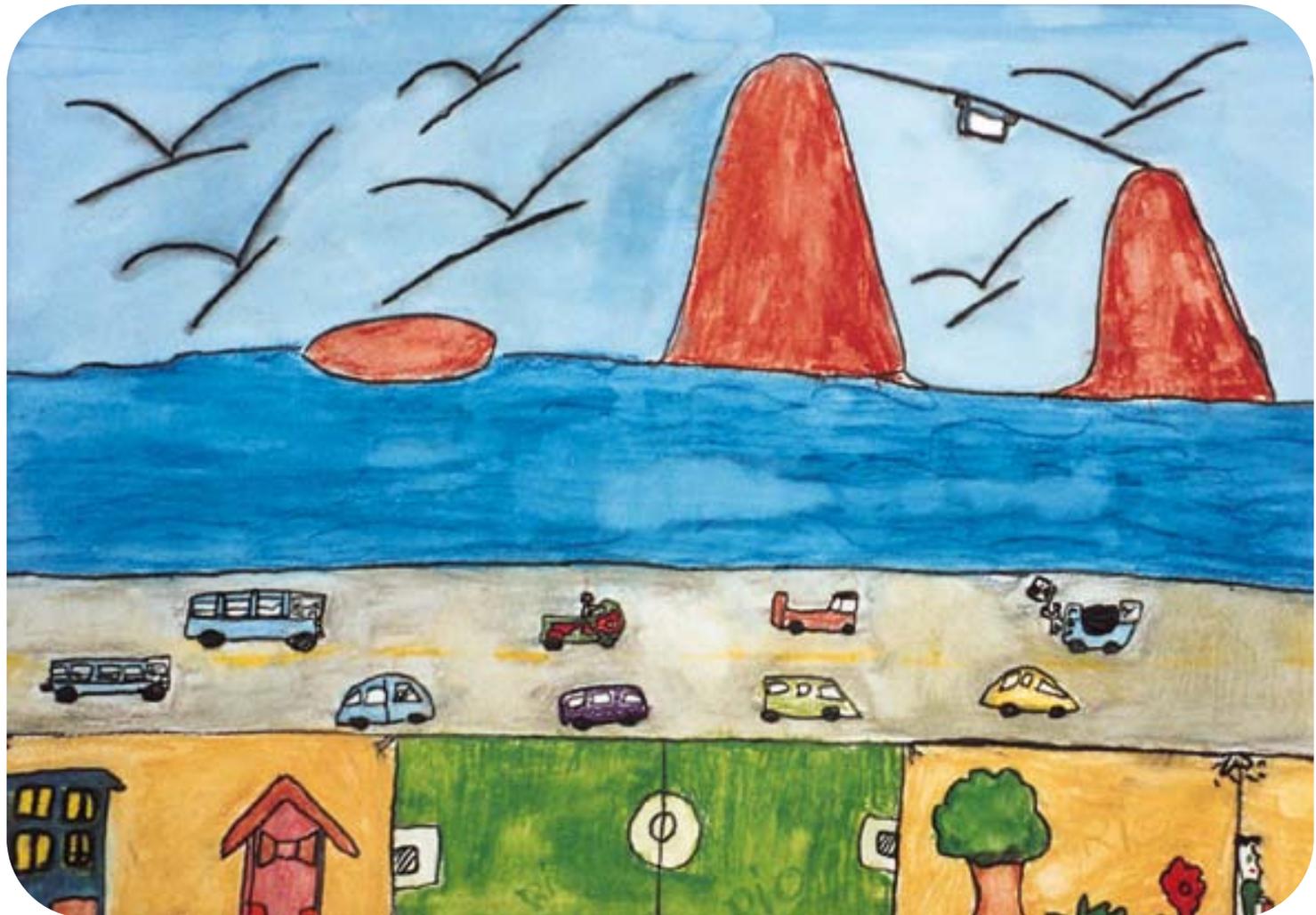


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## PICTURES OF PEACE - 2

By Anderson

Brazil

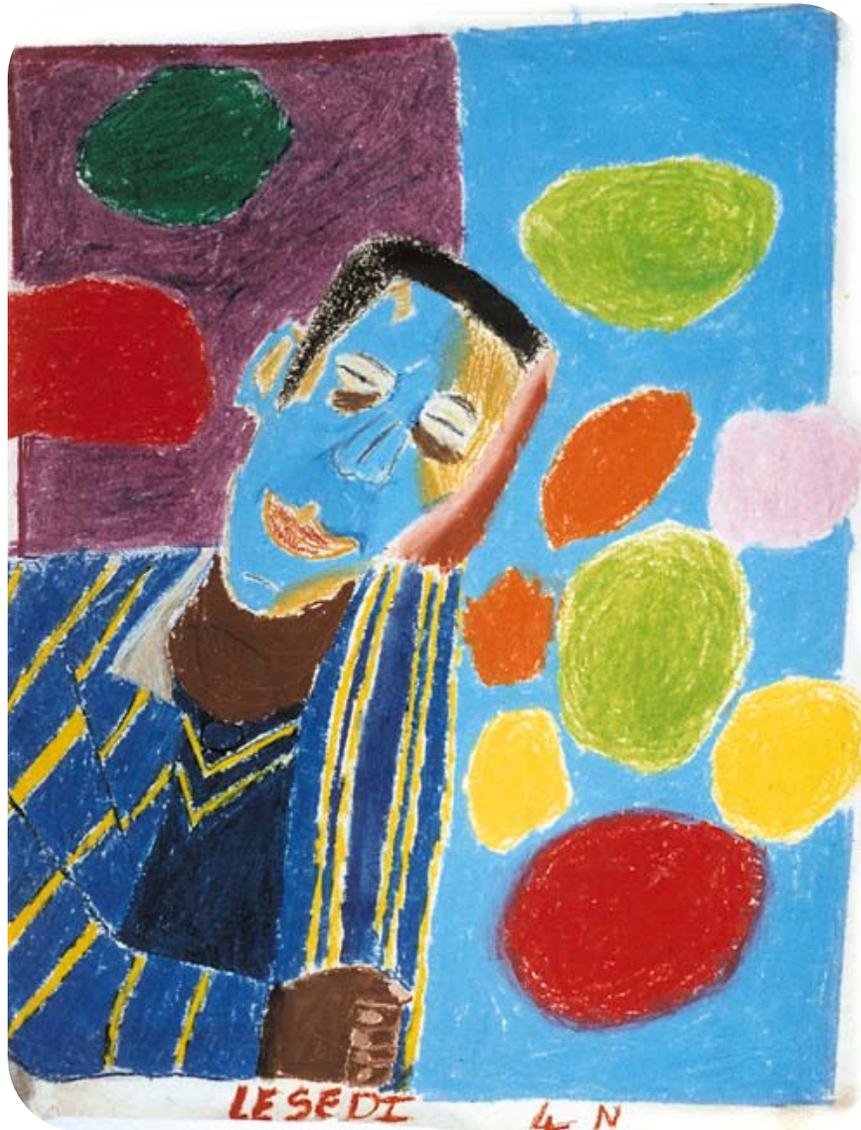


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## PICTURES OF PEACE – 3

By Nay

*South Africa*



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## PICTURES OF PEACE - 4

By Timea

Hungary



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## PICTURES OF PEACE - 5

By Sidik

*United States  
of America*



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## PICTURES OF PEACE - 6

By Valentina

*Russia*



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## PICTURES OF PEACE - 7

By Relka

Namibia



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## PICTURES OF PEACE - 8

By Shruti

India



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[globalclassroom.unicef.ca](http://globalclassroom.unicef.ca)

## PICTURES OF PEACE - 9

By Inka

Slovakia



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## PICTURES OF PEACE - 10

By Tanja

Russia



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## PICTURES OF PEACE - 11

By Olivia

Namibia



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## PICTURES OF PEACE – 12

By Midrot

*Poland*



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## ARTIST'S STATEMENT



To me, peace is....

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By \_\_\_\_\_

To me, peace is....

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By \_\_\_\_\_

To me, peace is....

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By \_\_\_\_\_

To me, peace is....

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By \_\_\_\_\_