

DESIDERATA LESSON PLAN



1. Discuss the following questions:

- a. What do you want in life? (Think of five things you desire to have). Why do you want those things?
- b. What can you do to live a happy life?
- c. Can your own attitude affect your degree of happiness?
- d. What everyday things can make you unhappy?



2. Read the poem *Desiderata*, written by Max Ehrmann in 1948.

*Go placidly amid the noise and haste,
and remember what peace there may be in silence.
As far as possible, without surrender,
be on good terms with all persons.
5 Speak your truth quietly and clearly;
and listen to others,
even to the dull and ignorant;
they too have their story.
Avoid loud and aggressive persons;
10 they are vexations to the spirit.
If you compare yourself with others,
you may become vain or bitter,
for always there will be greater
and lesser persons than yourself.
15 Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.
Keep interested in your own career, however humble,
it's a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.
Exercise caution in your business affairs,
for the world is full of trickery.
20 But let this not blind you to what virtue there is;
many persons strive for high ideals,
and everywhere life is full of heroism.
Be yourself.
Especially do not feign affection.
25 Neither be cynical about love;
for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment,
it is as perennial as the grass.
Take kindly the counsel of the years,
gracefully surrendering the things of youth.
30 Nurture strength of spirit
to shield you in sudden misfortune.
But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings.
Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.
Beyond a wholesome discipline,
35 be gentle with yourself.
You are a child of the universe
no less than the trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
40 no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.
Therefore be at peace with God,
whatever you conceive him to be.
And whatever your labors and aspirations,
in the noisy confusion of life,
45 keep peace in your soul.*



*With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams,
it is still a beautiful world.
Be cheerful.
Strive to be happy".*

3. What is the meaning of the following sentences? Use a dictionary if necessary.

- Be on good terms with all persons.
- Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexations to the spirit.
- Keep interested in your own career, however humble.
- Do not feign affection.
- Take kindly the counsel of the years.
- Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.
- Strive to be happy.

4. Read these sentences. What do they mean? Think of situations related to them.

- Listen to others, even to the dull and ignorant; they too have their story.
- If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter.
- Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.
- Many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.
- Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth.
- Do not distress yourself with dark imaginings.
- With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world.

5. What is the poem about?

6. In this poem we can find different pieces of advice. Put them in the right order of appearance and identify the lines where they appear.

- _____ Overcome insecurities
- _____ Be passionate in your career
- _____ Life is always wonderful
- _____ We learn as we grow
- _____ Be compassionate
- _____ Keep a peaceful heart
- _____ Be genuine



7. Do you agree with the writer? Would you change anything in this poem?



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REFERENCES:

<http://joshprojectpositive.blogspot.com.es/2016/06/8-spectacular-lessons-from-poem.html>
(exercise 6)

KEY:

Exercise 6:

1. Be compassionate (lines 1-8)
2. Overcome insecurities (lines 9-15)
3. Be passionate in your career (lines 16-22)
4. Be genuine (lines 23-27)
5. We learn as we grow (lines 28-40)
6. Keep a peaceful heart (lines 41-45)
7. Life is always wonderful (lines 46-49)