

# Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Issue 42

August 2010

Children



## Bayard Rustin

## A lost prophet

This children's work edition of "Journeys in the Spirit" comes out monthly. It offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children aged 4 –12 years in a Quaker setting. It is offered with the intention of providing an opportunity for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of worship in partnership on our shared journey in the spirit.

Included are sections on: **getting ready**, for those co-ordinating the programme; **gather**, meeting, centering, focusing; **engage**, beginning to think about the theme; **respond**, activities linked to the theme; **reflect**, ending appropriately; and **review**, evaluating what has happened. To offer a balanced session you should aim to do something from each section. Some of the activities are included on additional sheets. Timings or ages are not stated, as this will depend on the group and how the guidance and activities are used.

Underpinning each issue is the idea that there are four directions to our spiritual journey. **Inwards** to ourselves; **outwards** to others; **upwards** (or even further inwards) towards the deeper mystery; **downwards** to the world we live in.



The sixteenth in the series exploring our Quaker stories May 2009 - September 2010

## Getting ready

Take a moment to consider why you attend Meeting for Worship and what it means to you - how might you share that with the children? What people have influenced you in your life, also, what it might be in you that influences others?

This issue is about Bayard Rustin, an African American Quaker, who expressed his faith in action, challenging inequalities and responding to racism and prejudice nonviolently. In researching a project for Black History month, an 8-year-old child of Quaker parents learned of Bayard Rustin and was moved to develop a youtube film. The short film can be viewed online – the link is in the sidebar. Have a look before you read on. She explored complicated and difficult issues which were not easy to understand: racism, segregation, and the history of slavery. This led her to inquire about Quaker faith and issues, in doing so she learned more about being a Quaker herself. This issue is developed around the story she wrote, and her and her brother's suggestions on how other children might learn more about this remarkable man and Quaker ways of being. Think about how to make Bayard Rustin's story relevant to the age groups in your meeting. All children understand unfairness and inequality in some way, and given the chance, find kind ways to respond. Read *Sheets 42 A & B* for yourself.

### Equipment needed

To create a sense of sacred space set up a comfortable and welcoming room - maybe a blanket, rug or pillows on the floor, low lighting, teddy bears or comfort toys along with an array of some natural objects - stones, pine cones, sticks or leaves. Avoid clutter. Use soft pastel coloured fabric can cover book cases.

### Resources and background

This issue, like issues 27, 35 and 40, is based on an approach to children's work called 'Way of the Child'. Resources about this are listed under resources on page 4.

The youtube video by young Quaker about Bayard Rustin:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHJGCxMDaQg> or search in youtube for *African American Quaker*

# Gather

One adult greets each child at the door, shakes their hand and welcomes them by name. You can invite children to take off their shoes. Say that they are entering into a special place, a place of peace, a place to be quiet, to feel the presence of love, of God. In this moment, as everyone comes together, you are setting the tone for a simple sacred experience: children's meeting for worship.

The other adult sits on a rug large enough for all to sit together. Be calm, speak quietly and greet each child by name as they sit. Give time for each child to introduce themselves and say something about their week. You may want to do this in a circle or informally speak with them, engage in conversation about their families, how their week was, has anything happened to make them happy, anything to make them sad. Encourage everyone to listen, not comment and to leave a pause between comments. Ensure everyone has introduced themselves and, if they want, spoken.

When everyone is gathered and settled, light a candle and say "this candle is to remind us that God is present" – use language with which you are comfortable. Either light or support each child to light a smaller candle which is labelled with their name, inviting them to say their name – do this for absent children too. Encourage children to sit quietly on the rug, hands resting on their lap for a moment in silence. Invite them to look at the candle to help them focus on the silence, if that is helpful to them. See sidebar for information and resources about prayer, centering and guided meditation. Have a special table for the candles,

# Engage

Say that you are going to read a story written by, or show a youtube film made by an 8-year-old Quaker girl : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHJGCxMDaQg> . It is just over 7 minutes long. Say it is about a boy who did something that wasn't so nice but then learned friendly ways to stop bullies being mean. It is helpful to be able to tell a story in your own words, rather than read it but as these words are those of a child, you might just want to read it. If you are able to show the film do so because hearing another child's voice telling the story may have more of an impact. Also children get to hear Bayard Rustin's voice. See *Sheet 42.C* for Anya's *Story of Bayard Rustin* and *Sheets 42. B & D* for pictures of Bayard. After you have finished encourage sharing of experience of the story. Use "I wonder..." questions to help with this:

- I wonder what part of this story you like the best.
- I wonder what part of this story was most important to you.
- I wonder who you might like to be in this story.
- I wonder if there is any part of this story that you would like to leave out and still have all the story you need.

**Bayard Rustin talking with children. See *Sheets 42.D* for more pictures of Bayard and the march to Washington**



## Advice & Queries 1

Take heed, dear Friends, to the prompting of love and truth in your hearts. Trust them as the leading of God whose Light shows us our darkness and bring us to new life.

## Advices & Queries 3:

Do you try to set aside times of quiet for openness to the Holy Spirit? All of us need to find a way into silence which allows us to deepen our awareness of the divine and to find the inward source of our strength. Seek to know an inward stillness, even amid the activities of daily life.

## Books and resources, stilling, centering, prayer and guided meditation:

See Issue 40 *Sheet 40.A of Journeys in the Spirit Children's edition* for information about guided meditation.

***Approaches to Prayer: a resource book for groups and individuals.*** Edit. H. Morgan (1991) London: SPCK.

***Praying with Children: some ways and means.*** J.Pate (1995) McCrimmon.

**Don't just do something, sit there: developing children's spiritual awareness.** Mary K. Stone (1995) Norwich: RMEP.

## References & other resources

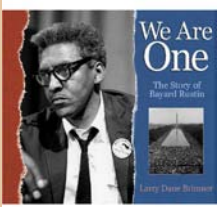
### Advice & Query 35

'Respect the laws of the state but let your first loyalty be to God's purposes.....'

**Lives that Speak: stories of Twentieth-Century Quakers.** Ed. Marnie Clark (2004) Quakers Press, Friends General Conference: Philadelphia.

Challenging issues are addressed in Journeys in the Spirit Children's edition issue 20 'Stop bullying – some Quaker ways': <http://www.quaker.org.uk/files/Journeys-in-the-Spirit-Children-Oct-08-No-20.pdf>

### A children's book about Bayard Rustin:



Calkins Creek Books (October 2007)  
ISBN: 978-1590784983

[Note: If you have siblings in your meeting, consider how you might respond if one of them accuses the other of some mean action. Also be prepared that difficult issues might arise relating to family relations, bullying or abuse. You may want to let your overseer know that you may be addressing challenging issues.]

# Respond

*In Meeting for Children's Worship it can be easy to get caught up in "producing" something to 'show and tell' to everyone else in Meeting. The suggestions here and on Sheets 42.E & F offer a variety of ways for supporting children to reflect on and respond to the Bayard Rustin story. Doing so in a calm and quiet manner may also lead children into their own precious inner silence and, for some this may be the only opportunity in their week to be in quiet and contemplation. The activities are those suggested by Anya and Arjun 8-year-old children who attend Meeting for Children's Worship regularly.*

### Rights and Wrongs: what would you do if....?

Ask the children if they remember what Bayard Rustin did when people were being mean to him and what he learned from his grandmother. Ask them to quietly think about what they would do in the following scenarios. This could be in the whole group or smaller groups:

- If some body in the playground hits you, or takes you ball away.
- If you hear another child call your friend a nasty name.
- If you saw a friends steal something from a shop.

For each scenario ask everyone to notice:

- What is their gut reaction - *point to your stomach*
- What do they feel - *point to your heart*
- What do they think - *point to your head*
- What would they do - *open your hands up, palms up*

Alternatively, you could create a scenario yourself or invite suggestions from the children by asking, "I wonder if someone has ever done something to you that made you sad or angry?" Or "I wonder if you have ever watched someone be mean to someone else?"

After conversation about the scenarios go to *Sheet 42.E* for creative ways for children to explore the scenarios and express or record their responses.

### Ways to live

Remind children that Bayard Rustin was taught by his grandmother that:

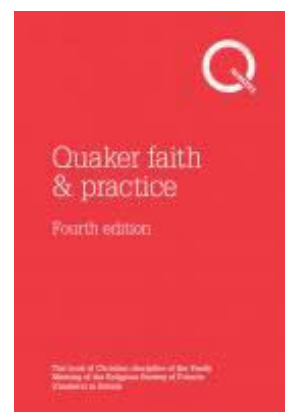
- All people are equal before God
- All violence is wrong
- Treat people with love and respect
- It is too tiresome to hate
- Never go to sleep still angry with anyone

Ask the children:

"I wonder what you think of these advices from his grandmother."

"I wonder if there is anything that you would add to this list – advice or ways to live that you think are important."

Leave silence between comments and remind children they do not need to put their hand up. Here we just listen to each other and take turns. See *Sheet 42.F* for activities to help explore ways to live – they are suitable for a variety of ages.



## Reflect

Remind children: "You sat quietly at the beginning of the meeting. Silence helps us to think and to listen to ourselves as well as to each other. Let us practice this again.". After a time, looking at the candle, say "Our candles remind us we are not alone. We lit one large candle to remind us that God is present with us and within us. As this Meeting for Worship draws to a close, I invite each child to extinguish their candle" (or you extinguish each candle, saying the child's name). As each child extinguishes their candle or you say their name, take from a basket a small prepared stone and give to each child, saying, "Take this with you as a reminder that God is with you (Or: you are loved)." Shake hands to close Meeting. After notices, invite children to help tidy up. One adult stands at the door and says goodbye to each child as they leave.

## Review

Reviewing can happen at the time or later and may help the planning of future children's meetings for worship. Do you keep simple records of the meeting, e.g. a notebook including who attended, their ages and the focus of worship. To aid review you might consider:

- Do you think the meeting was worshipful?
- Did it respect the Quaker testimonies – equality, peace, simplicity, truth?
- Did facilitators and children have fun?
- What went really well?
- What is there for you to learn from this session?
- What might you do differently another time?

## Topical activity      Your holiday story

*Sheets 42.G and H* offer an activity for everybody in Meeting to do during the summer holiday time. *Sheet 42.G* is for children and talks about each child being given a bag to collect all sorts of things in that could be part of the story of their holiday. *Sheet 42.H* is for older people in Meeting and invites each person to write a little story about a summer in their childhood. Both of these things would be ideal for sharing after the summer holidays and this could be after a shared

## Links to other organisations and resources

[www.racematters.org/bayardrustin.htm](http://www.racematters.org/bayardrustin.htm) and [www.quakerinfo.com/quak\\_br.shtml](http://www.quakerinfo.com/quak_br.shtml) for more about Bayard Rustin.

[www.quaker.org.uk/ideas](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ideas) for the Ideas Store with lots of activities and resources tried and tested by others in children's meetings.

[www.bookshop.quaker-secure.org.uk/quaker-resources](http://www.bookshop.quaker-secure.org.uk/quaker-resources) & [www.quaker.org.uk/bookshop](http://www.quaker.org.uk/bookshop) - for the Quaker Resources Centre and Bookshop includes books on stilling, centering, prayer and 'Way of the Child'.

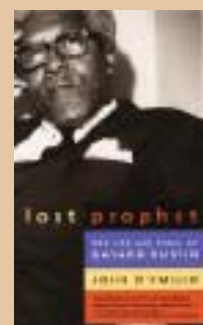
**This issue was written by Anya Nanning Ramamurthy, Arjun Nanning Ramamurthy and Eugene Nanning. Edited by Chris Nickolay with the assistance of Howard Nurden. The topical activity was by Beate Dehnen.**

The next issue, number 43 ends **Series 4** – it looks back over the whole series and also asks: "What is your story?" and is available on September 1<sup>st</sup>. **Series 5** begins with Issue 44 on October 1<sup>st</sup>. The new series is all about Advices and Queries; issue 44 concentrates on A&Q 3 and 7; Issue 45 is about A&Q 37 and 38 and is available on November 1<sup>st</sup>.

### A Meeting for Worship for all ages about Bayard Rustin

After gathering in stillness have the story of Bayard read by children and adults in parts – use a mix of the two stories on *Sheets 42 A,B & C*. Introduce the 'Ways to live' activity using the pillow idea. People can quietly help each other – end with finished and unfinished pillows on a table in the centre of your Meeting.

### A book about Bayard Rustin:



Publisher: Chicago University Press;  
ISBN: 978-0226142692

**Published by Children & Young People's Staff Team, Quaker Life**

Available free by subscription.

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# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children

### Sheet 42.A

### Getting Ready

### A personal story about Bayard Rustin

**A personal story, by Ruth Serner, a Quaker who met Bayard in the late 1950s & early 1960s.**

At the Friends International Centre in London, one never quite knew who would walk through the door next. Working there provided me with an opportunity to meet and listen to the views and aspirations of people who later became writers, politicians and activists in their own countries.

But the figure I remember and knew best in this group was a tall gangly black American who used to wear a grey raincoat far too big for him. We seldom knew exactly when he would arrive, but somehow there was always a room for Bayard Rustin.

At the time I had not heard of Bayard, but I was fascinated by this character, who spoke with a slight lisp and could discuss any book you cared to mention, and on rare occasions would take out his guitar and sing for whoever happened to be around. I was at the time being educated in black American and Caribbean literature by an aspiring writer from the previous British Guyana, who had initiated me into the work of James Baldwin. One night I talked for a long time to Bayard about literature and learnt that he knew Baldwin well. He also told me quite venomously that he would love to play Othello for the sole reason that he could strangle a white woman. This seemed odd to me coming from someone I had by then learnt had been the secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, but it was only in later years that some of his behaviour made sense to me.

One of Bayard's passions was antique watches and clocks. I watched with interest whenever he left us, to see how large his bulk looked, for I had learnt that the dirty grey raincoat was lined with several pockets in which he secreted the smaller of these objects when he left which ever country in which they had been acquired. Bayard was a wonderful person who was utterly impossible to categorise. A Quaker who would honestly admit to trying to cheat the customs; an important international figure who would drop everything to come and fix a clock I had picked up for 25p; the grandson of a slave who had been given his freedom by his Quaker owner and adopted his name in gratitude, Bayard showed no genuine hatred and spent his life working for justice for any oppressed group.

When I was producing Andre Obey's play 'Noah' at the Centre, the actor playing the Cow fell ill on the day of our performance. Bayard happened to be in town and stepped into the breach, giving a performance to bring the house down. Well, he didn't have many lines to learn – only when to moo!

After I left the Centre, I heard nothing of Bayard until in August 1963. There on the front page were pictures of the march on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, and one of Martin Luther King Jnr. giving his seminal 'I have a dream' speech. Right behind him was Bayard.

Bayard had in fact been the chief architect of the march, and for some years he had been one of the main advisors to Luther King. When in 1956 Bayard had arrived in Montgomery to assist Luther King with the bus boycott, King was not then dedicated to non-violence. There were guns inside his house and armed guards at his doors. Bayard persuaded the boycott leaders to adopt non-violence, giving them practical advice on how to use the principles of Ghandi.

Bayard was gay. He had refused to serve in the armed forces, and was imprisoned for three years in 1944. During his sentence, he organised protests against segregated seating in the dining hall. In 1947 he was again imprisoned for violating the State's Jim Crow bus statute and was sentenced to 30 days on a chain gang, an experience he spoke of in an interview in 1985:

# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children

### Sheet 42.B Getting Ready .....a personal story about Bayard Rustin continued

*'We had chains on us when we left prison and went out to work on the roads. We were chained to one another while we used picks and shovels. It was a very harrowing and ugly experience. People were hanged on the bars by their wrists, their feet dangling above the ground. People were put into a hole-just a hole in the ground – for two or three days if they misbehaved. No toilet, nothing. On one occasion when the guards insisted that I entertain them by dancing I refused. They took out pistols and shot at the ground around my feet, trying to make me dance.'*

A further imprisonment for 'gross acts of indecency', and the fact that in the early 40s he had been a member of the American Communist party meant that Edgar Hoover and his friends kept a file on Bayard. He had only to spread rumours of Bayard being a 'communist, draft dodger and homosexual', to discredit any movement with which he was associated. In spite of this, the decision to ask him to organise the 1963 march was taken because he was the best person to do the job. But that did not prevent his subsequently being written out of American history.

And so I find that my gangly visitor in the grey raincoat stuffed with watches, who saved the day by mooing with a papier-mâché head, is quoted in the history books as standing at the convergence of great struggles for civil, legal and human rights for Afro-American, lesbian and gay American citizens. In Quaker circles Bayard became known as Luther King's secretary. His death was briefly recorded in the papers in 1987, and I gave thanks for his witness to the principles I believed in.

As I write this in May 2004, I came across a quotation from Bayard in 1986, a year before his death: *"The barometer of where one is on human rights questions is no longer the black community, it's the gay community. Because it is the community which is most easily mistreated."*

**[Editor: I wonder what he would say now.]**



# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children

### Sheet 42.C

### Engage

### Bayard Rustin – Anya’s story

#### Bayard Rustin: African American Quaker

View the video of this story, made by young Quaker, Anya Nanning Ramamurthy for her contribution to Black History month, 2009, at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhJGCxMDaQg>. The text below is spoken during the film.

Bayard Rustin was an African American Quaker. He was born in 1912, in West Chester, Pennsylvania. He was the youngest of twelve children. He worked to make black people’s lives better. His grandmother taught him important Quaker ideas:

**All people are equal before God. All violence is wrong. Treat people with love and respect.**

Bayard’s grandmother taught him *“it is too tiresome to hate”*, and *“never go to sleep still angry with anyone.”* When Bayard was born, there were no restaurants and theatres black people could use. White people could sit anywhere on the bus, but black people couldn’t. He went to an all black school till he was 14. At 15, he went to a mixed school. He was good at football, tennis, basketball, singing and his studies. He had lots of friends, black and white. Outside school, his white friends could come to his house, but he wasn’t allowed to go to their house.

He played football and led the team to win every game for a whole season. After a game, he and his friends went to a restaurant for lunch. Bayard was not allowed to enter. All his friends left with him.

Another team refused to play Bayard and his team because he was black. Later they did play. When his team practiced at the YMCA he couldn’t practice with them. Black people were not allowed in the YMCA.

One day his friends made fun of a Chinese family who ran the laundry. Bayard joined in being mean to them. His grandmother heard about it and arranged for Bayard to go to the laundry after school to help for two weeks.

As an adult, Bayard knew the laws about black people were wrong, because they thought white people were better. He felt angry when people treated him badly. But he wouldn’t hurt the back. He would sit where he wasn’t supposed to sit. He would go into toilets he wasn’t supposed to. Sometimes people would throw him out. Sometimes they hurt him. Sometimes he was arrested. But he never hurt anyone.

He would not go into the army. So in 1942 he was sent to prison for three years. In prison there was segregation too. Black people could not eat with white people. He went on a hunger strike. The rule was finally changed and prisoners could eat together. Still some white people didn’t like him. A white man hit him with a stick. He wouldn’t hit back. He said to his friends don’t hit. The man stopped hitting. He felt he could not hit someone who wouldn’t hit back.

While in prison he taught himself the guitar. He got permission to teach classes in reading, writing, drama and music, which other prisoners enjoyed. Most white people had never been taught by a black person.

In 1947, he and his friends, white and black, sat on buses where they were not supposed to because they thought segregation was wrong. This was long before Rosa Parks. He was sent to prison again. He wrote in newspapers about how badly he was treated there and the laws were changed to stop this.

In 1948 he went to India to learn about Gandhi’s peaceful demonstration. Bayard thought only non-violent actions would make white people stop discriminating against black people.

Bayard also worked with Martin Luther King. Bayard taught Martin Luther King about nonviolent protests. In 1963 Bayard organised the famous March on Washington. Over 200,000 people came. At the end of the march Martin Luther King made his “I have a dream speech.”

# Journeys in the Spirit

Children

Sheet 42.D

Engage

The march on Washington



Bayard Rustin

Martin Luther-King



**Martin Luther – King was speaking from a big building just out of this picture looking out on this huge crowd. He was giving a famous speech in which he said, 'I have a dream.'**



# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children

### Sheet 42.E Respond

### Rights and Wrongs

Encourage children to listen carefully to each other and to talk about their different responses. Then, provide age appropriate opportunities for children to respond further. If appropriate, plan more than one Meeting for children to contemplate the complex issues, to discuss more fully and to develop their response. Depending on the size and ages of the children in your Meeting, children may work in groups on a chosen scenario, or a child might choose to respond on her or his own.

Ways of responding to the scenario include:

- Role play or creating a play possibly using home made masks and dress up clothes.
- Make and use puppets. *Simple puppets* can be made from cutting a person shape from card and sticking onto a lollystick or recyclable wood spoon – use wool for hair, cloth for clothes and wobbly eyes from craft shops. You will also need glue and felt pens. *Sock puppets* using clean socks. Decorate with wobbly eyes, glued on cloth for face and clothing, or embroider designs and faces.
- Create a comic strip to tell the story.
- Work together to create a poster.
- Make clay models to create a frieze.
- Make a mobile with items or images of what helps the child stay calm. For images, have a selection of inspiring post cards and greeting cards, or pictures cut from magazines and already glued on card or simply have some natural items available: shells, pine cones, feathers.

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/mobiles/> for lots more pictures and ideas for mobiles

[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_2120115\\_make-mobile.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_2120115_make-mobile.html) for some alternative instructions.

- Making masks: cereal boxes or paper plates to make a quick mask or when working over more than one Meeting for Worship: paper mache over one side of a balloon, let dry, decorate. Decorate either mask with crayons, used wrapping paper and ribbons, feathers collected from a field.

# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children

### Sheet 42.F

### Respond

### Ways to live

#### **A wall of children speaking advices**

Help the children to create life size portraits of themselves. With a pencil, trace each child onto wallpaper lining paper or paper table covering. Use wool for hair and decorate the body. Paint works best, but pasting wrapping paper on to create their favourite clothing works, too.

Provide big speech bubble shapes on card. Invite children to write or draw their advice for the world, people they know, or where they live and paste it to their image.

*Resources: wallpaper lining or paper table covering, wool, scissors, pencil, paint or glue, wrapping paper and big pieces of card.*

#### **Quaker poster**

Provide a sample of Quaker posters. These may be in your Meeting and they are also available from the Quaker Bookshop: 020 7663 1030; email [bookshop@quaker.org.uk](mailto:bookshop@quaker.org.uk) or go to <https://bookshop.quaker-secure.org.uk/shop> and enter 'posters' in the search box for smaller, printable versions. Point out that the posters are uncluttered with a simple image and the wording is bold. Children may want to create a similar style or their own.

Invite the children to make their own posters or incorporating an advice of their own or one from Bayard Ruskin's grandmother. They may want to sketch with pencil, then paint or use felt pens or pastels and crayons.

*Resources: A2 size paper, pencils, markers or paint.*

#### **Quaker lavender pillow**

*Children 7+.* Print the chosen advice onto a rectangle of felt using felt using chalk. Show the children a simple stitch. Provide yarn and needle and let them stitch their advice onto the felt which will become one side of a pillow. When done, provide another rectangle of felt. Invite children to stitch the two together, but leave a large gap. Into the gap push cotton wool with lavender essence or cotton wool and a pouch or little bunch of lavender.

*Working with under 7s.* Create pillows as above, have the pillows nearly made and invite children to draw a picture to show their advice with fabric markers. Help them stuff in the cotton and lavender pouches. Then finish sewing it closed.

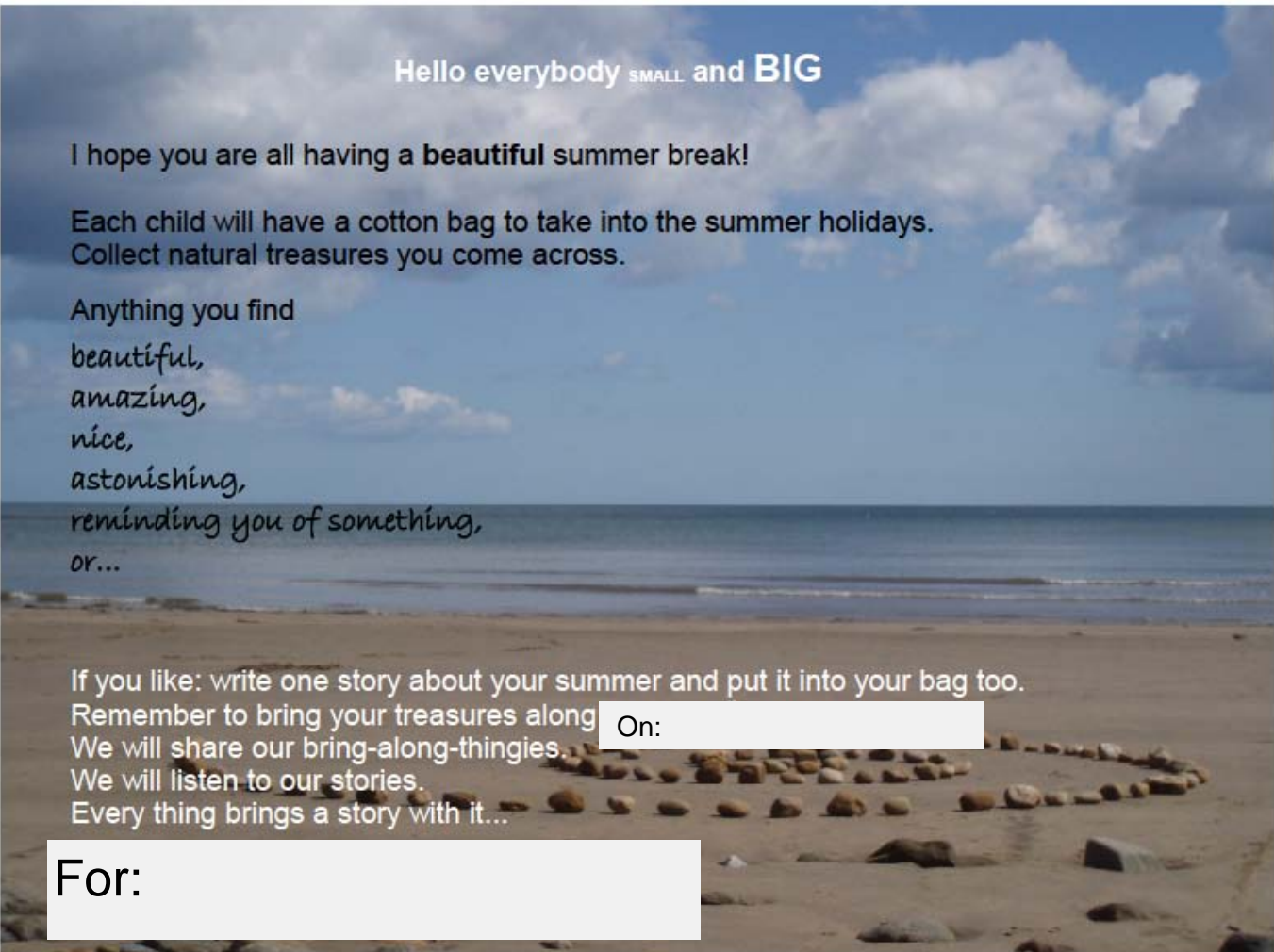
*Resources: Rectangles of coloured felt (try wool, craft and fabric shops); fabric pens; needles of various sizes; cotton and yarn; cotton wool; lavender oil or dried lavender.*

# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children

Sheet 42.G    Topical activity

Holiday bags and stories



Hello everybody SMALL and **BIG**

I hope you are all having a **beautiful** summer break!

Each child will have a cotton bag to take into the summer holidays.  
Collect natural treasures you come across.

Anything you find  
*beautiful,*  
*amazing,*  
*nice,*  
*astonishing,*  
*reminding you of something,*  
*or...*

If you like: write one story about your summer and put it into your bag too.  
Remember to bring your treasures along  On:  
We will share our bring-along-thingies.  
We will listen to our stories.  
Every thing brings a story with it...

For:

This is a picture with instructions for children. Give a copy to each child – write their name in the lower box. Each child will also need to be given a simple cotton bag for collecting treasures and building stories about their holiday.

# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children

Sheet 42.H Topical activity

Holiday bags and stories



**Our children will be setting out this summer collecting treasures and stories about their summer in a cotton bag to bring along and share when we meet again in September**

For older members of Meetings – give a copy to each person.



Wishing you all a good time until we meet again in friendship

Children always like stories and so we want to ask you to take some time during this summer's weeks and think of your childhood's summers, write down one story about one of them and bring your story along to share with our children.