

Peace Literacy Curriculum: Laying the Foundations

The Landscape of Our Human Needs An Allegory and Pictorial



The Landscape of our Human Needs, as interpreted by Carol Guagenti, 2018

This unit is built around an allegory “The Landscape of our Human Needs,” and is designed to accompany the essay *A New Peace Paradigm: Our Human Needs and the Tangles of Trauma* by Paul K. Chappell, available at www.peaceliteracy.org.

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The Landscape of Our Human Needs

An Allegory and Pictorial

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Foreword

Our understanding of peace is only as good as our understanding of the human condition and trauma. To better understand peace, the human condition, and trauma, we will start with a new way of understanding our human needs. This unit is built around a landscape allegory to accompany the essay *A New Peace Paradigm: Our Human Needs and the Tangles of Trauma*. As discussed in the essay, our basic human needs are not just physical and include nine non-physical human needs. Feeding these non-physical human needs in healthy ways is necessary for experiencing deep fulfillment, increasing meaningful happiness, and creating strong communities and a more peaceful world.

We use the landscape allegory to make complex ideas about our humanity accessible by connecting these ideas to metaphors, visual references, and sensory experiences, which engage more parts of a student's brain. The allegory also adds conceptual depth to these ideas, enhancing the ability of students to explore, discuss, and understand their humanity and the effects that social media and other societal influences can have on their wellbeing. The allegory gives students a vocabulary and a framework that empowers them to discuss and learn how to improve not just their personal wellbeing, but also the wellbeing of their communities, nation, and world. All of the features of the landscape allegory interact with each other, increasing the depth and relevance of the framework as each new feature is added.

Essential Questions

- What are our basic non-physical human needs?
- How can we meet these needs in healthy ways?
- What barriers keep us from meeting these needs in healthy ways?

Learning Outcomes

- List and compare our physical and non-physical needs
- Recognize how to meet our non-physical needs in healthy ways
- Discover and create options for meeting our non-physical needs without using social media

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Readings

Essays by Paul K. Chappell:

- *A New Peace Paradigm: Our Human Needs and the Tangles of Trauma*
- *The World of Electric Light: Understanding the Seductive Glow of Screens*

(Both of these are available for download at www.peaceliteracy.org)

Instructions for Use

Before teaching the Landscape Allegory, teachers should read the two essays, above, so that they have a greater understanding of our non-physical human needs and the tangles of trauma. For students in high school and higher education, these essays can be used as supplemental readings before or after the allegory is taught. We also have suggestions throughout this unit for making these ideas more accessible to elementary school students.

This unit works as a template that can be modified for any number of contexts, from k-12 classes through to higher education and adult education. Our team at Oregon State University can help you modify the lessons to suit specific grade-levels. We can also show you how to use the material to meet Common Core and other regional standards.

Contact Sharyn.Clough@oregonstate.edu for more details.

We are pleased to share this curriculum at no cost and ask only that you cite us, as below, when you use direct quotes or paraphrased passages from this lesson plan:

Paul K. Chappell and Susan Radford. 2018. *Peace Literacy Curriculum: Laying the Foundations*. <http://peaceliteracy.org/curriculum/>

And please send us copies of any materials you produce that are based on this lesson plan so we can put them up on the Peace Literacy website as models for others. Peace Literacy is meant to be shared!

This unit can be used to guide a number of discussions depending on the amount of discussion generated, and the number of exercises, projects, and films that are incorporated into the plan. We are building a compendium of ideas for group projects, in-class exercises, and community activities around the themes in this unit. We also have resources for teachers. Visit <http://peaceliteracy.org/compendium/> to download ideas or to contribute your own.

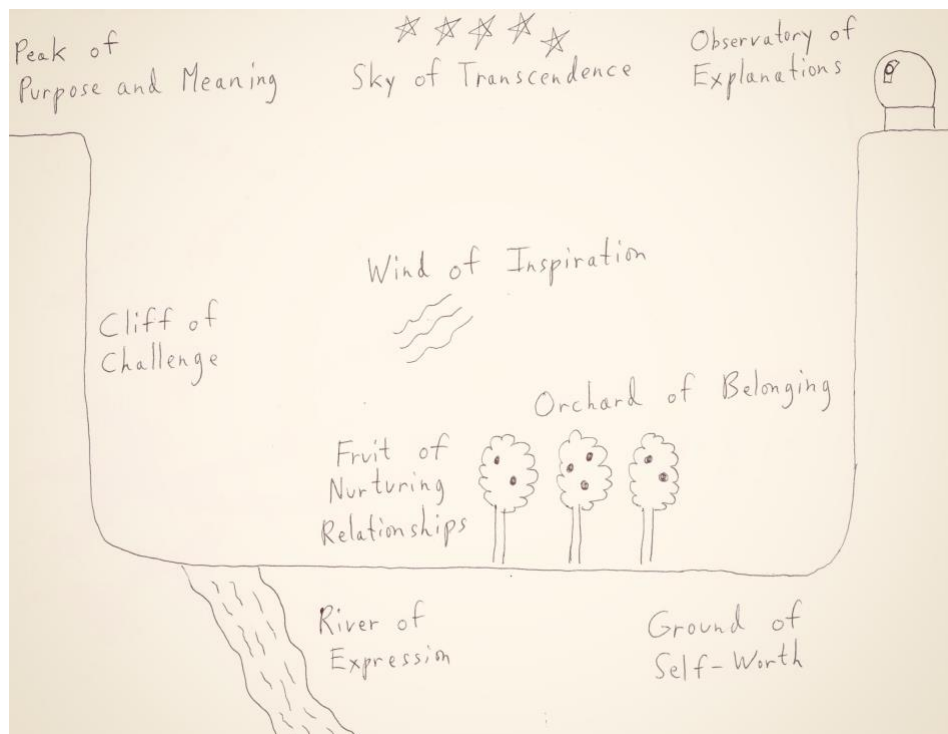
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Set up

Hang on the wall a large piece of white craft paper that is about four feet tall and about seven feet long. Draw one part of the landscape on the craft paper and then tape up the accompanying text box (all of the text boxes for this lesson can be downloaded in an easy-to-print format from peaceliteracy.org/curriculum). After going through the questions and discussion for that part of the landscape draw the next part of the landscape.

Here is an image of the completed landscape drawing (which would include text boxes taped to the landscape). You do not have to be an artist!



The painting on the cover of this lesson plan depicts the completed landscape. A print of the painting can be downloaded for free at www.peaceliteracy.org/curriculum courtesy of the artist, Carol Guagenti. It looks best on poster-sized paper (24 inches x 36 inches). You can use the print in the classroom to reinforce the lesson plan learning outcomes throughout the school year and to offer an inspiring visual reference for students.

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The Landscape of Our Human Needs An Allegory and Pictorial

Begin by asking students:

- What do humans need to survive?
(Allow brainstorming, have students think/write, then pair/share, prepare a T-chart of responses, separating lists of physical and non-physical needs)
- What happens if a human being doesn't have...? (Pick a non-physical need from the list, such as belonging). If a person is isolated (for example), how would that affect them?
- Some non-physical needs that students might list, such as compassion, respect, and friendship, fit under "nurturing relationships." Students might also list freedom or justice. The essay *A New Peace Paradigm: Our Human Needs and the Tangles of Trauma* discusses how freedom and justice help us meet the needs listed in the Landscape Allegory.

Tell students:

- Today we are going to begin an exploration of nine non-physical needs.

For older students you can add:

- We are going to use an allegory of a landscape. What is an allegory?

Tell students:

- We're going to start our exploration of our nine non-physical needs by examining the idea of self-worth.

Ask students:

- What is self-worth? (list some responses)

Introduce the Allegory:

1. The Ground of Self-Worth

On the craft paper draw a solid piece of ground.

Print and put up this text box and read it out loud:

The Ground of Self-Worth:

Think of the feeling of sturdy ground beneath your feet. This ground symbolizes a strong and stable foundation of self-worth. You feel grounded, secure, and confident.

On the craft paper draw a section of ground that has cracks in it.

Read this out loud:

We can stand on strong, stable ground, or we can stand on shakier, less stable ground. In other words, there are many different sources of self-worth that we can stand on, and not all of them are equally strong and stable.

The ground we stand on can consist of more than one source of self-worth. We can go from basing most of our self-worth on shaky ground to basing more of our self-worth on stronger ground.

Ask students:

- What does it feel like when the ground of self-worth beneath us becomes unstable or collapses? What metaphors can describe what happens to this ground when we feel humiliation, shame, or self-loathing?

- What are examples of shaky and unstable sources of self-worth that people can seek in life?

Note: If students have trouble answering this question, ask this follow-up question:

- As mentioned earlier, not all sources of self-worth are equally stable when we stand on them, and we can have more than one source of self-worth. If a large portion of your ground of self-worth is based on how many likes you get on social media, how do you feel when you didn't get as many likes as you thought you would get? Discuss what you feel like before, during, and after this experience.

Ask students:

- What are ways that people can try to shake the ground of self-worth beneath our feet? What are ways that people can try to destroy the ground of self-worth beneath us? Are there examples of this that you have experienced in your life or witnessed in the lives of others?
- What are examples of stronger and more stable sources of self-worth that we can seek in life?

Note: The metaphor of choosing what ground we stand on conveys the crucial and empowering idea that we can make choices that increase our sense of self-worth. This is not to downplay the negative influence of structural injustice. Peace Literacy gives us frameworks and skills that empower us to improve both our inner world (represented by this landscape) and our outer world (that includes the structural conditions that can limit our choices). The Landscape Allegory shows how a wide variety of internal and external factors can affect human self-worth. These factors make self-worth far more complex than it is commonly understood to be.

Many popular articulations of “self-esteem” oversimplify the nature of human self-worth, by not addressing how self-worth interacts not only with our outer world but also with all of our other non-physical human needs. Our need for purpose and meaning, along with every other feature in the Landscape Allegory, can play a critical role in affecting our self-worth.

People can stand on unstable ground, but this ground might seem more stable to them than what they previously stood on. An example of this can be a person who finds self-worth in a gang. Although this can be a shaky foundation of self-worth in many ways, this may seem stronger than the ground of self-worth the person stood on before joining a gang. We need to offer people stronger ground that they can stand on instead of simply ridiculing the ground they are standing on, and we must also be aware that people might not trust the stronger ground we are offering because they are worried about falling and that it can take time to build trust.

2. The Orchard of Belonging

Draw several trees.

Print and put up the following text box and read it out loud:

The Orchard of Belonging:

Imagine being surrounded by trees, feeling protected, and having shade from the heat. This symbolizes belonging to a strong community. You are not alone.

Ask students:

- What makes you feel like you belong somewhere or to a group? How do people help you feel like you belong?
- In what ways can we help other people feel like they belong?
- What kinds of behaviors can make people feel like they don't belong?
- Can belonging be created not only in healthy ways, but also in unhealthy ways? Explain your thinking.
- What are examples of healthy forms of belonging? What are examples of unhealthy forms of belonging?

Optional question for older students:

- Khalil Gibran tells us, "Stand together, yet not too near together. For the pillars of the temple stand apart, and the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow." What does he mean by this?

Draw roots descending from the trees into the ground.

Read this out loud:

Our community can have shallow roots, causing it to be toppled and split apart during the storms of adversity.

Ask students:

- What makes a community weak? What do these shallow roots represent? What creates the deep roots of a strong community?

Note: For younger students you can have them either draw or cut out images of things that provide strong roots and add these to the craft paper landscape.

Read this out loud:

When the storms of life affect us, deep and strong roots from the Orchard of Belonging can help protect our ground of self-worth from being washed away in a mudslide. We can become deep and strong roots that help anchor the self-worth of others.

Peace Literacy Follow-Up Lesson

The Seven Ingredients in the Recipe for Strong Communities, Families, and Relationships

The following text box lists the Seven Ingredients that allow human beings to bond and create deep roots of strong communities. This is one among many follow-up lessons that can be done after the Landscape Allegory, at which point this text box can be placed next to the roots in the pictorial. All of the follow-up lessons can refer back to and build on the Landscape Allegory.

The Seven Ingredients that Create Deep Roots of Strong Communities.

1. Shared Trust
2. Shared Empathy
3. Shared Participation (Teamwork)
4. Shared Purpose, Ideals, or Vision
5. Shared Experiences
6. Shared History
7. Shared Struggle (Strengthening each other during struggle)

The stronger these seven ingredients are, the stronger and more resilient a community/family/relationship will be.

3. The Fruit of Nurturing Relationships

Draw pieces of fruit in the trees.

Print and put up the following text box and read it out loud:

The Fruit of Nurturing Relationships:

We can receive sweet and nourishing fruit from the Orchard of Belonging.

We can also become a source of sweet and nourishing fruit for others. This fruit represents trust, empathy, and other forms of nurturing.

Ask students:

- What does the sweet and nourishing fruit of nurturing relationships taste like? How are you being treated? How do you feel?
- People can also give us poisonous fruit in the form of abuse. What does this taste like? How are you being treated? How do you feel?

Note: In our curriculum on the Fires of Aggression (see Peace Literacy Lesson Plan 1), The Muscles of Metis and The Anatomy of Metis, as well as the essay *A New Peace Paradigm: Our Human Needs and the Tangles of Trauma*, we discuss root causes of abuse (peaceliteracy.org)

- If we have been given poisonous fruit in the past, can this make us mistrustful and anxious when sweet and nourishing fruit is given to us? Explain your thinking.

Note: Mistrust is one of the Tangles of Trauma that is described in *A New Peace Paradigm*.

- The fruit can look delicious, but when we bite into it, it doesn't taste as sweet as it looks, or it lacks nutrients. What are examples of fruit that looks delicious on the surface but tastes like cardboard and isn't fulfilling?
- Can social media offer forms of nurturing that look delicious on the surface, but aren't as fulfilling as other forms of nurturing? Provide examples.
- In addition to giving sweet and nourishing fruit to others, can we also give this fruit to ourselves in the form of self-respect and self-compassion? What makes it difficult to do this? What advice can you offer on how to do this?

Peace Literacy Follow-Up Lesson

Seven Skills that Build a Culture of Trust

The following text box lists seven skills that build a culture of trust and nurture people's humanity. For a full presentation of the skills see Peace Literacy Lesson Plan 1 (<http://peaceliteracy.org/curriculum>). This is one among many follow-up lessons that can be done after the Landscape Allegory, at which point this text box can be placed next to the fruit in the pictorial. Trust is an essential nutrient in the fruit of nurturing relationships.

The following Peace Literacy skills help develop the kind of culture in which shared trust thrives:

3 Elements of Universal Respect

- Listen with Empathy
- Don't Be Hypocritical (Lead by Example)
- Speak to People's Potential

4 Ways to Remain Calm During Conflict

- Give the Benefit of the Doubt
- Do Not Personalize the Conflict
- Keep Things in Perspective
(Use appreciation to gain and maintain perspective)
- Maintain Empathy
(This is a psychological skill that precedes Listening with Empathy and ties into the lesson on the Fires of Aggression found in Peace Literacy Lesson Plan 1, peaceliteracy.org/curriculum)

The more these skills are practiced as a cultural norm, the stronger and more resilient a community/family/relationship will be. These seven Peace Literacy skills nurture people's humanity.

4. The River of Expression

Draw a river.

Print and put up the following text box and read it out loud:

The River of Expression:

Our human need to express our emotions and thoughts is like the current of a river, which can vary in intensity depending on how we feel. Our river of expression can provide fresh water that nourishes the ground of self-worth in others and our relationships in the orchard of belonging. Our river of expression can also cause destruction through flooding and the spreading of pollution.

Ask students:

- What are different ways that human beings can express their emotions?
- How many different forms of expression can you think of?
- The words people say are only one form of expression when talking. What are other forms of expression that people can use when talking?

Note: To help with this question, have students watch this video of babies trying to talk. Ask students to identify all the forms of expression that don't involve words.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_JmA2CIUvUY

- What can make someone's current in the river of expression stronger or weaker?
- What can cause someone's river of expression to become dammed up, resulting in a build-up of pressure? Have you had any life experiences that caused your river of expression to become dammed up? What are some things that can happen if this pressure is not released?
- Have you ever expressed yourself in an unhealthy way? What are examples of healthy forms of expression?

Note: As an exercise for younger students, you can have them write journal entries where they practice expressing themselves verbally in healthy ways. Give them sentence starters that prompt reflection on their emotional states such as "I feel lonely when..." or "I feel happy when..."

Ask students:

- How can the river of expression both help and harm others?
- Can someone's current become overwhelming? How does this affect others around them?
- What are some ways that the river of expression can turn into a flashflood? What does it feel like to be on the receiving end of it? What does it feel like to be causing it?
- Can a person causing a flashflood be unaware of how this is affecting others? Give an example.
- What are examples of pollutants that can get in our river of expression? Where do these pollutants come from?
- How can pollutants in our river of expression poison the ground of self-worth in others? How can pollutants in our river of expression poison their orchard of belonging?
- Just as people can transform pollution into non-toxic art supplies such as paint and ink, how can we also transform pollution into beauty? What does this look like?

Note: It is important to help students understand that pollution (trauma) has the potential to be turned into beauty. Although we should not glamorize trauma in ways that trivialize the enormous harm it causes every day, it is also important to see trauma not as something that permanently ruins someone's worth, but also as potential.

Here are two videos about turning pollution into art supplies: one from Ohio University <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJv6WtfxLUk&> ; and the other from MIT Media Lab <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqOplj2HSdE> .

Ask students:

- Although pollutants in our river of expression can harm the ground of self-worth in others, they can also harm the ground of self-worth in ourselves through negative self-talk. Have you ever talked to yourself in disrespectful and abusive ways that attacked your own sense of self-worth? Can you offer any advice on how not to do this and how to give yourself self-respect and self-compassion?
- How can increasing our empathy and understanding empower us to confront the sources of these pollutants, instead of merely addressing their symptoms?

Draw a boat on the river.

Read this out loud:

Having a conversation is like being on a boat where rivers of expression merge. A healthy and productive conversation occurs when we successfully pilot the boat and navigate these merged rivers together. We can learn to skillfully navigate even the most turbulent current so that the boat is not capsized. An unhealthy and unproductive conversation can involve someone being thrown off the boat or choosing to jump off. This boat symbolizes that people must work together as a team during a conversation and that they have a shared fate.

Ask students:

- When one or both people are removed from this metaphorical boat, the conversation ends. What can cause the boat to capsize during a conversation? What skills are needed to prevent this from happening?
- What can cause someone to get thrown out of the boat during a conversation? What skills are needed to prevent this from happening?
- What can happen during a conversation that makes you want to jump out of the boat? In addition to what a person says or does during a conversation, can turbulent water also make you want to jump out of the boat?
- Can we jump out of the boat too early? Explain your thinking. What skills can we use to ensure that we are not jumping out of the boat too early?
- Since conversation involves the merging of two rivers of expression, why are both people needed to help pilot the boat? What happens if a person tries to navigate your turbulent current and winding river passages with none of your input?
- Can we use skills to calm the turbulence of our current during a conversation? What are ways to calm ourselves during a conversation? What are ways to help calm the turbulent current of others?

Note: In Peace Literacy Lesson Plan 1, we discuss skills that can help calm ourselves and others.

- What happens if we lack the introspection skills needed to understand the current and content in our river of expression, along with what is shaping its many winding passages and where they lead? How can a lack of self-awareness cause us to capsize the boat when navigating our own river of expression?

5. The Wind of Inspiration

Draw wavy lines representing wind.

Print and put up the following text box and read it out loud:

The Wind of Inspiration:

Healthy forms of inspiration are like a cool breeze, refreshing us during the hottest and muggiest days, helping us move forward during times of adversity. Like the Santa Ana winds in California that can spread fire, the wind of inspiration can also assume dangerous forms that spread destructive behavior. When the role models we look up to for inspiration promote harmful behavior that we emulate, this is like wind that spreads pollution, which we can inhale and internalize without even realizing it.

Ask students:

- Who are some people that you look up to that are good role models in your life? What characteristics make them good role models?
- What are examples of role models (that students in particular look up to) who promote harmful behaviors? What kinds of harmful behaviors can be understood metaphorically as pollutants? Where do these pollutants come from?
- When adults spread pollution by modeling harmful behaviors to children, how can this pollute the ground of self-worth, the orchard of belonging, the fruit of nurturing relationships, and the river of expression? What are examples of this that you have seen in your life?
- Like the Santa Ana winds in California that can spread fire, what are examples where people have inspired others to cause destruction?
- What kind of flammable pollutants can get into the wind of inspiration, making it more combustible?
- The wind of inspiration can spread rain, seeds, and nutrients that increase the wellbeing of the landscape. What can the rain, seeds, and nutrients represent metaphorically? How can people play a more active role in being the wind of inspiration?

6. The Cliff of Challenge

Draw a mountain cliff with a person climbing on it.

Put up the following text box and read it out loud:

The Cliff of Challenge:

We cannot become stronger physically or psychologically unless we are challenged. Challenge allows us to climb toward our highest human potential.

Ask students:

- What types of challenges do you enjoy and seek out?
- What types of challenges do you dislike?
- Why are both types of challenges necessary to grow as a person?
- Do you play any games or are you involved in any activities that help you feed your need for challenge, self-worth, belonging, nurturing relationships, expression, or inspiration? Provide examples that illustrate the connections between games/activities and these needs.
- The fear of falling when facing the cliff of challenge can resemble the feeling of having no ground of self-worth beneath our feet. How can a lack of stable self-worth discourage people from climbing? Explain your thinking and offer examples.
- When people stand on unstable ground of self-worth that constantly makes them feel like they are about to fall, can this also motivate some people to climb? Explain your thinking and offer examples.
- How can the wind of inspiration, the fruit of nurturing relationships, and the ground of self-worth help us climb by increasing our confidence and strength?
- The cliff of challenge can assume many forms. Which cliffs allow us to heal the root causes of our problems and increase peace and justice in our world?
- An important cliff of challenge we must climb involves, “Choosing the harder right over the easier wrong.” What are examples of negative consequences that can happen when we don’t climb this cliff of challenge?
- The muscles of metis (hope, empathy, appreciation, conscience, reason, discipline, curiosity, language, and imagination) can give us the strength to climb the greatest cliffs of challenge. Many people do not learn how to strengthen their metis muscles or develop the Peace Literacy skills that help us climb to our highest human potential. What cliffs of challenge do people in our world today need to climb to solve our national and global problems? How can these muscles help people climb these cliffs?

7. The Peak of Purpose and Meaning

Draw a mountain peak.

Read the following:

“When we ascend the peak of purpose and meaning, life becomes worth living.”

Ask students:

What do you think that different heights of purpose and meaning, like different heights on a mountain, represent?

Print and put up the following text box and read it out loud:

The Peak of Purpose and Meaning:

When we ascend the peak of purpose and meaning, life becomes worth living. A purpose involves us, while a *higher* purpose not only involves us but also goes beyond us. When we stand atop a high peak of purpose and meaning, we can see the other features of the landscape from a new and more fulfilling perspective.

Draw a waterfall.

Read the following out loud:

We can have a purpose or higher purpose that is healthy, unhealthy, or somewhere in-between. Pollutants can originate from an unhealthy purpose or higher purpose, falling onto the landscape below. Pollutants from an unhealthy purpose or higher purpose can also descend from the waterfall into the river of expression, harming the other aspects of the landscape.

Ask students:

- What is the difference between a purpose in life (something that is just about you) and a higher purpose in life (something that also goes beyond you)? What are examples of unhealthy purposes and higher purposes? What are examples of healthy purposes and higher purposes?
- How do we know if a purpose or higher purpose is healthy, unhealthy, or somewhere in-between?
- Can a purpose or higher purpose be healthy in some ways and unhealthy in other ways? Provide examples.
- What is an example of a purpose or higher purpose in your life that you have found fulfilling? How did this purpose or higher purpose give you a different perspective on your self-worth, belonging, and other features of the landscape?
- If our peak of purpose and meaning is unstable, boulders can fall onto the landscape below, or the peak can collapse. What are examples of purposes or higher purposes that are unstable and potentially destructive to ourselves and others?
- If we know how to build our self-worth on stable ground, this can help us build our peak of purpose and meaning on stable ground. What are examples where healthy self-worth leads to healthy purpose or higher purpose? What are examples where unhealthy self-worth leads to unhealthy purpose or higher purpose?
- Reaching higher peaks of purpose and meaning requires us to climb higher on the cliff of challenge. What additional challenges are required to reach higher peaks of purpose and meaning?
- We can climb high cliffs of challenge together and stand on high peaks of purpose and meaning as a community. How can higher purpose and meaning not only make us more resilient as individuals, but also as families, communities, nations, and a global civilization?
- What are examples of great challenges that require multiple decades or multiple generations to accomplish? How can higher purpose and meaning allow us to see far so that we take future generations into account?

8. The Observatory of Explanations

Draw an observatory.

Print and put up the following text box and read it out loud:

The Observatory of Explanations:

We start craving explanations during early childhood when we begin asking questions. Our human need for explanations is so powerful that if people do not have accurate explanations, they will come up with inaccurate explanations. These explanations form our worldview. Unlike observatories in our outer world that mostly observe our outer reality, the Observatory of Explanations in our inner world uses what it sees to help *create* our inner reality. Our explanations help create our inner reality by shaping our worldview and every feature in the landscape of our inner world.

Note: The “Explanations” section in the essay *A New Peace Paradigm: Our Human Needs and the Tangles of Trauma* discusses worldviews in more depth.

Ask students:

- Explanations can vary not only in terms of accuracy but also depth. What are examples of shallow explanations? What are examples of deep explanations?
- When the lens used by the Observatory of Explanations is out of focus or has dirt smeared on it, this can limit its ability to perceive with accuracy and depth. What can this lack of focus and dirt symbolize in our everyday lives? Can people try to put our lens out of focus or smear dirt on it so that we cannot perceive with accuracy and depth? What are examples of this?
- Why are accurate and deep explanations necessary for healing the root causes of problems? Offer examples. How can inaccurate or shallow explanations cause us to merely address symptoms rather than confront root causes? Offer examples.
- How can inaccurate or shallow explanations cause us to respond in ways that make these root causes worse? Offer examples.
- A half-truth is often more dangerous than an outright lie. In other words, an explanation that is half-true and half-false can be more dangerous than an explanation that is fully false. In what ways can explanations that mix bits of truth with bits of untruth be more dangerous than explanations that are completely untrue? What are examples of this?

Explanations can affect and are affected by each and every other one of our non-physical human needs. For this next section of the unit we examine these interactions in turn.

How Explanations Can Shape the Ground of Self-Worth

Re-read this quote from the text box:

“Unlike observatories in our outer world that mostly observe our outer reality, the Observatory of Explanations in our inner world uses what it sees to help *create* our inner reality. Our explanations help create our inner reality by shaping our worldview and every feature in the landscape of our inner world.”

Ask students:

- For example, our explanations for why people have hurt us can shape our ground of self-worth. What kinds of explanations for why people have hurt us can decrease the stability of our ground of self-worth, and what kinds of explanations can increase this stability?

Note: The discussion on trauma in the “Explanations” section from the essay *A New Peace Paradigm* provides more information on this.

How Explanations Can Shape the Orchard of Belonging

Ask students:

- What are examples where people in a local community or on a national stage have spread inaccurate explanations to create mistrust and restrict people’s sense of belonging?
- What are examples of explanations (in terms of accuracy or depth) that increase the empathy needed to expand people’s sense of belonging in healthy ways?

How Explanations Can Shape the Fruit of Nurturing Relationships

Share with students the section on the Fires of Aggression in Peace Literacy Lesson Plan 1 to help them understand that aggression is a distress response. For the following questions, have students think of examples where people are behaving aggressively but not creating imminent danger (remind students that most examples of aggression do not involve imminent danger).

Then ask students:

- How can the explanation that aggression is caused by distress help us respond to people's aggression with empathy, respect, and a willingness to listen?
- Describe an example that you have experienced or witnessed in your life.
- How can the explanation that aggression is caused by distress help us heal the root causes of aggression rather than merely addressing its symptoms?
- What are these root causes?

How Explanations Can Shape the River of Expression

Ask students:

- How can inaccurate explanations about the causes of violence, along with inaccurate explanations that exaggerate and misrepresent the effectiveness of violence, make people more prone to expressing themselves through violence?

Note: *The Cosmic Ocean* (Chappell, 2015) discusses how the myth that human beings are naturally violent is an inaccurate and oversimplistic explanation about the causes of violence that can make us more prone to expressing ourselves through violence. Chapter 4 of *Soldiers of Peace* (Chappell, 2017) discusses how “romantic illusions of violence” give us inaccurate explanations that exaggerate and misrepresent the effectiveness of violence, which can also make us more prone to expressing ourselves through violence.

How Explanations Can Shape the Wind of Inspiration

Ask students:

- What are examples where inaccurate or shallow explanations can spread wind that inspires hatred?
- Why is social media especially prone to the spreading of explanations that are inaccurate or shallow?

How Explanations Can Shape the Cliff of Challenge

Ask students:

- Why are accurate explanations necessary to overcome challenge?
- What are examples of challenges that could not have been overcome without accurate explanations?
- What are examples where inaccurate explanations prevent people from overcoming challenge?
- What does the cliff of challenge look like when inaccurate explanations make it unclimbable?

How Explanations Can Shape the Peak of Purpose and Meaning

Ask students:

- What are examples where inaccurate and shallow explanations create a peak of purpose and meaning (or peak of *higher* purpose and meaning) that is unstable and more likely to cause destruction through releasing boulders or collapsing?

How Trauma Can Affect the Observatory of Explanations

Ask students:

- When pollutants (trauma) affecting other parts of the landscape get into the air, this can decrease our Observatory of Explanation's ability to perceive with accuracy and depth. What are examples where trauma can limit our perception in ways that reduce the accuracy and depth of our explanations?

9. The Sky of Transcendence

Draw a sky with stars.

Put up the following text box and read it out loud:

The Sky of Transcendence:

Human beings have a need for *transcendence*, which means to transcend our sense of time, to feel a sense of timelessness, to touch and taste the eternal. Transcendence can occur when we lose our sense of time, when we are lost in the moment. There are healthy and unhealthy ways to transcend our sense of time, and transcendence can be experienced at varying depths. When we live according to our highest human ideals, this can help us transcend time in deep and healthy ways.

Ask students:

- What are healthy ways to experience a sense of timelessness?
- What are unhealthy ways to experience a sense of timelessness?

Note: These two questions will be explored more fully in a follow-up unit titled *The Pantheon of Transcendence*, which uses a new allegory that builds on the Landscape Allegory to explore transcendence in much greater depth. When discussing transcendence in the Landscape Allegory you might want to introduce the idea of healthy and unhealthy forms of transcendence briefly, but then focus the discussion of transcendence on high ideals.

Read the following out loud:

The stars depicted in the sky represent high ideals. Our Observatory of Explanations can use the light from those stars to expand our perspective on our explanations and help shape our worldview. For example, “people being guided by high ideals” can be part of our explanation for how to increase wellbeing in the world, while “people lacking high ideals” can be part of our explanation for a lack of wellbeing in the world.

Ask students:

- What are examples of high ideals that increase wellbeing? What high ideals are important to you?
- What high ideals are needed for improving our world?

Read the following out loud:

Just as it is easier to see stars in the night sky than know how to use them to navigate when journeying through a wide variety of places, it is easier to see high ideals than know how to use them to navigate when journeying through a wide variety of situations we may face in life. Learning how to use high ideals to navigate life in ways that improve our wellbeing along with the wellbeing of others is a competency (like learning math) that many people are never taught.

Ask students:

- What does the preceding statement mean? Although math is important, how could learning how to use high ideals to navigate life help us in ways that math does not? Why are people not taught this? What are examples of harmful consequences that can result from not teaching people this?
- What can make it difficult for people to see and be guided by high ideals?
- Smog, light pollution, and being trapped in a room without windows can prevent us from seeing stars in the sky. What can smog, light pollution, and being trapped in a room without windows represent metaphorically, in terms of obstructions that prevent people from seeing and being guided by high ideals?
- Just as people can mistake lower-orbiting objects (such as satellites) for stars, can people try to replace high ideals with lower substitutes? Explain your thinking. What lower substitutes can people mistake for high ideals?
- When we perceive the landscape of our inner world from the perspective of high ideals, how can this change our perspective on our self-worth, belonging, the power of empathy, how we express ourselves, what we find inspiring, how we view challenge and what challenges we seek in life, and how we view purpose and meaning?

Read this out loud:

Our high ideals, symbolized by stars, are above the landscape because not only are they part of our internal universe, they also go beyond us. Our ideals can represent fundamental features of reality and outlive the stars in our external universe.

Ask students:

- Explain what Albert Schweitzer meant when he said, “As long as my ideals are alive I will be alive.”

Peace Literacy Follow-Up Unit

The Constellation of Peace

In this unit we have used stars to symbolize ideals. In a follow-up unit titled *The Constellation of Peace* (coming soon) we discuss four ideals that form a constellation of stars essential for creating realistic peace. The Constellation of Peace is explained in *Soldiers of Peace* (Chappell, 2017).

The Constellation of Peace

1. The Star of Struggle
2. The Star of Training
3. The Star of Truth
4. The Star of Strategy

To create realistic peace, we must be guided by these four stars (ideals), which represent four features of reality that are largely misunderstood today.

“Liberty, justice, and peace are powerful ideals, but they cannot exist without the ideal of truth. Truth is the ideal that brings liberty, justice, and peace to life. It is the ideal that makes all of our other ideals possible.” – *Soldiers of Peace*