Mrs. Swarnamalie, a teacher at Randenigama Perakum Maha Vidyalaya initiated a new venture with the Grade 9 students, in the very first week of the new school term. That was to prepare a monthly wall newspaper for the subject Life Competencies and Citizenship Education. Students had to design this monthly wall newspaper containing articles, creative writing, extracts, photographs etc. according to a theme given by the teacher. It was named as ‘Skillful Thoughts’ and five students were appointed as the Board of Editors of this wall newspaper.

After writing on the blackboard several characteristics which are essential for a quality life, the teacher asked her students to find articles which highlight the ideas written on the board for this month’s newspaper.
According to the instructions of the teacher all the students had submitted their articles after a week. Even the teacher had submitted one article. Some of the articles which were selected by the teacher and the Board of Editors for the wall newspaper are included in this lesson.

**Article 1**

**An Exemplary Scholar**

Rev. Hendiyagala Seelarathana has included a true incident in his book *Lokuma Ugathkama*. This story while illustrating desirable qualities such as simplicity, humility and contentment also shows us clearly the situations that arise from disregarding them.

There was a great scholar in Bengal, India called Ishwara Chandra Widya Sagara who was very popular among the people. From his childhood, this scholar had tried to understand himself.

Climbing the ladder of success step by step, he became the Principal of the same Sanskrit School in which he had studied. Later he became a Supervisor of Sanskrit schools in Bengal.

Even after achieving so much recognition, he did not stop wearing his Bengali national dress which was made of the cheapest white cloth. He travelled third class in trains. He spent most of his salary on the education of clever students who could not afford to pay for their studies and on the illnesses of the poor. He was a kind person in the real sense of the word. He was simple and humble too.

One day he got into a third class compartment of a train to go to a town called ‘Badarwan’ in Calcutta. The train reached that town late in the evening. At the station, this great scholar overheard a young person, who was dressed in western clothes, shouting at the Station Master. The young person who had travelled second class in the train was blaming the Station Master as there was no porter to carry his luggage.

The young person demanded that he should be provided with a porter some how. The Station Master was explaining the fact that there were no porters and even the available porters would not like to carry luggage for a small amount of money at that time of the night.
Meanwhile, the scholar Widya Sagara who approached there told them that he was also going in the same direction and was willing to carry the luggage of the young man. Neither Station Master nor the young person could recognize this scholar.

“Very good, I’ll pay you the full amount. Take this,” said the young person in a very haughty tone. He took the lead giving the old man his luggage. The old scholar started following the young person slowly. When they reached the young man’s destination the old scholar gave the young man the luggage and started to go away. The young man gave the old scholar two fanams. The old person refused the money.

On the following day there was a ceremony to welcome this great scholar, social worker and eloquent speaker, Sir Ishwara Chandra Widya Sagara of Bengal to Badarwan.

The young person mentioned earlier who had arrived in Badarwan by train also went to this meeting, as he wanted to see and listen to this eloquent speaker, great scholar and the renowned social worker.

There this young person realized that the stranger who had carried his luggage the previous day was none other than this great scholar. He was overwhelmed by fear, sorrow and regret.

At night after the ceremony, this young person went to the place where this scholar was lodging and begged his pardon worshiping him very humbly. The scholar told him very kindly, like a father addressing a child that the young man had not committed a wrong which should be forgiven and added that a person does not become great because of his clothes alone, but by doing great things. In the end, he also forgave the young man.

*Extracted by Sumudu Priyangika*
Activity 1

1. Mention two features of his character which help you to understand the simple life style of the scholar Widya Sagara.

2. Mention two instances which highlight the humbleness and friendliness of this scholar.

3. Discuss the positive features of the character of the young person who encountered the scholar.

"If you are good, even God will worship you"

While working towards our advancement we all like to earn recognition from society. The first thing we have to do is to identify the characteristics necessary to improve the quality of our lives. This will contribute greatly to the development of human society too.

We have to understand the value of the comforts and facilities we already have and be content with and make our lives and future successful. It is an illusion to think more about the things you do not have than the things you have.

As Rev. S. Mahinda has pointed out in one of his poems,

**English version:** Common to everyone is Poverty and obstruction, Overcome them and Show your skills

**Sinhala version:**

**Tamil version:**

Not only deficiencies, but barriers and restrictions are the common heritage of most people. A contented person can lead a happy and simple life understanding this reality. Then mental distress and frustrations will not occur. We should get used to living a simple life to stabilise this situation.

We all have to experience situations such as sorrow, joy, praise and blame. We should be able to follow the middle path without going to extremes. In this way a person who fosters benevolent qualities will always be friendly to the others.
Most of the great people who have lived in the world have possessed these benevolent features. They became great people because of these great qualities. We should identify such characters and acquire most of these amicable qualities.

Prepared by Nisham Mohommad

Article - 3

Happiness

Everybody likes to be happy. However, genuine happiness is not derived from victory, rewards and praise. Happiness is not a situation which arises from such external things. If we want to sustain our happiness we should have a deep concept and understanding of it.

He who has noble expectations
Will be happy always
He who daily carries out his duties and tasks honestly, efficiently
Will be happy.
Happiness is such
It exists within us

Extracted by Chandima Pushpanalie

Activity II

With the help of your teacher, discuss the ideas expressed in the article above.
Given below is a creation by the Veteran Lyricist Rathna Sri Wijesinghe. It is a dialogue between a snail and a child. It highlights features like contentment and leading a balanced life. Commitment, endeavor and courage are essential for a successful life. This poem illustrates how these qualities can be acquired slowly and steadily rather than hurriedly.

**English version:**

**Child:** Oh snail, Oh snail,  
Can you reach the top of the tree  
Moving so slowly?

**Snail:** Don't you understand child  
This tree did not grow so tall  
In one night

**Child:** This tree has only leaves  
No colourful flowers  
Why waste time on unattractive things

**Snail:** Who can gain beauty in a single day  
Was not the butterfly  
A caterpillar once

**Child:** Even though you plod to the top  
You will have to come down  
disappointed

**Snail:** The day I reach the tree - top  
at my slow pace  
On it colourful flowers will bloom

- Selalihiniyo - Rathna Sri Wijesinghe  
- Extracted by Dinidu Pehasara

*(This is a paraphrase of the original Sinhala Lyric)*
**Sinhala version:**

활동 111

1. Tell the class what you felt on reading this lyric.
2. Explain in your own words the lessons you can learn from this lyric.
An Exemplary Leader

Thisahamy, the late leader of a native tribal group, was a person who led a simple and balanced life and was a role model to society. He was ready to face death in the latter part of his life as a person who had understood the reality of life. Given below is an extract of a speech made by him to his clan a few days before his death.

**English version**

"Don’t cut a single tree in this jungle to make pandals, to have any ceremonies on my death. Do not cause destruction by hanging of flags as well. Do the final rituals according to our tradition. That is the greatest honour you can do for me. If you cut trees from this jungle even for me it will be a great injustice you do to our clan."

Adapted from a newspaper.
By Janaki Ganeshalingam

**Sinhala version**

"මෙම ශෛලිය අති ලැක්වියේ බ්‍රත්‍ය තේත් යන්න නොමැතිය. ඉතිහාසික සිරී සමූහ මෙගම් තන්නක් යන්න. පුරා අතීතිනිත්‍ය පුරා බුදු පතිර තමින්. මොවු නොමැති දැයි මනු මිලේ ඉතිහාසික පුරා වැදගත් කියන්. ඉතිහාසික පුරා විදි යන්න. මොවු දැයි මිලේ ඉතිහාසික පුරා මිලේ.

Adapted from a newspaper.
By Janaki Ganeshalingam

**Original**

"என் புறையா விளையாடுங்கள் அதுவும் விளையாடுங்கள் என் மருந்தை விளையாடலாம் என்று கூறினாம். வவுண்டை விளையாடலாம் என்று கூறினா வருவறை. வவுண்டை விளையாடலாம் என்று கூறினா வருவறை. வவுண்டை விளையாடலாம் என்று கூறினா வருவறை. வவுண்டை விளையாடலாம் என்று கூறினா வருவறை. வவுண்டை விளையாடலாம் என்று கூறினா வருவறை.

Adapted from a newspaper.
By Janaki Ganeshalingam

**Tamil version**

"தன் இறக்கத்தில் பார்க்க வந்தே சிறிய விளையாட்டாள் என் மருந்தை விளையாடலாம் என் கூறினா. வவுண்டை விளையாடலாம் என்று கூறினா. வவுண்டை விளையாடலாம் என்று கூறினா. வவுண்டை விளையாடலாம் என்று கூறினா. வவுண்டை விளையாடலாம் என்று கூறினா.

Adapted from a newspaper.
By Janaki Ganeshalingam
To avoid getting lost in today’s competitive world…

We live in a very competitive, rapidly developing world today. In such a world, there are several qualities we should practise to pave the way to success. Identifying the qualities which are essential to adapt to such a life is a unique ability that we should possess.

The competition in the world is based on the development of technology and telecommunication. Maintaining noble human qualities such as friendliness, simplicity, honesty and humility has become a challenge with the importance given to money today. There are people in society who are frustrated and depressed because they have not been able to fulfil their expectations after blindly pursuing their desires. Such people have made their lives futile in various ways. To avoid falling into such a state we should understand the qualities which improve the quality of our life.

Contentment is an essential quality we have to practise in our life. You all must have heard the Sinhala song written by Prof. Sunil Ariyaratne and sung by Visharadha Nanda Malanie, ‘Miriwedi sangalak illa henduwem paa yuga nethi oba dakina thura’ (I was crying for a pair of slippers till I saw you without your legs). According to the message given here we should be determined to be contented with what we have got. If not, we will be faced with situations such as frustration and disgust with life.

Simple living makes our life more meaningful. Further, various addictions and inappropriate habits are developed because of the variety of desires and expectations in people. This becomes prominent through various styles, habits of eating and equipment used in today’s world. We should have the ability to control such situations with proper understanding.

Basically understanding of the differences in people lays a solid foundation for a friendly society. Along with it qualities like honesty, humbleness will be improved. With friendliness, the competition to outdo the others will be lessened to a certain extent. Then Sri Lankans can once again experience a sentiment of a simple, contented lifestyle. The more we can get away from desires and bonds, the happier we can be. Happiness is not something external. It should spring up within us.
Activity IV

1. Pay attention to the facts given below. Conduct a brain-storm session and discuss their influence with the teacher.
   - Blind addiction to fashion.
   - Addiction to processed artificial food.

2. Complete the table below with the unfavourable results of not practising features which improve the quality of life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Results of disregarding these qualities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being happy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being contented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A simple life style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendliness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading a balanced life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary

★ The world has become competitive due to the variety of desires and expectations of people on account of their complex life style.
★ Features which are essential for a quality life such as being happy, contented, simple, friendly and balanced are ignored by people in this competitive atmosphere.
★ We can avoid the problems we have to face in life if we understand and practise the features which are essential for an amicable life.

Assignment 1

Mention the exemplary features in the characters of the people shown below.

Rev. Father Mercelline Jayakody
Doctor E. W. Adhikaram
Red Indian Chief Seattle
Sri Jawaharlal Nheru
Assignment II

1. With the help of your subject teacher appoint a board of editors to start a wall newspaper in your class.

2. Follow the model given below in planning the wall newspaper. Find a theme related to the lesson.

READING CORNER

Teen Talents

Guidance:
Co-ordination:
Board of Editors:

An article from a teacher

Extracted article

Articles by students

A folk song related to the theme

Articles by students

A song related to the theme

Articles by students

Biography of an exemplary character

Several Mottos

Other features