

Session 2

A day in the life



Game Malteser rally

You will need a bag of Maltesers, paper straws, and a dish for each team/person.

Instructions: Divide your group into two teams (or you can do it individually). Draw a start and finish line, and at the finish line place a bowl or saucer for each team. The players must use the straw to 'suck' a Malteser, carry it to the finish line, and place it in the bowl. When they have done this, they return to the start line, and the next player can go. At the end of an agreed length of time, the team/person with the most Maltesers in the dish wins. If they drop the Malteser, or it bounces out of the dish, they must go back to the start and try again.

Activity

Create a timetable for your day. What time do you get up? What time do you leave for school? How do you get there (car, bus, walk)? When do you get home? What chores do you have to do in the house? Is it the same as your friends?

Challenge

Find out which of your friends lives furthest away from your school.

What is it like to be a young person in Nicaragua?

Fifteen-year-old Johaira Herrera tells us a little:

My parents split when I was seven years old, so my mum decided to buy this property here and work in farming. The following months and years were very difficult after she decided to become a coffee farmer, because my mum didn't know anything about coffee. She started with very little, but she had the training and workshops from Soppexcca. We grow what we eat and that makes me feel satisfied, because in El Cua town we had to buy everything we ate and my mum used to work a lot, but now we can spend more time together.

I studied for one year in the main town, but it was very difficult for me to get there because of the transport, and I was always late. So now I study on Saturdays, 7am-3pm. Now I help my mum with all the work in the house and on the farm. This way, I can learn how to work on the farm so when it's time for me to work and to be independent, I will not suffer like my mum who didn't know what to do with the coffee and the other crops.

Now that my mum is in the cocoa project, I need to know about growing chocolate. On my own, I have looked at other ways to learn. I've found some projects from the government related to cocoa, so I hurry and try to get the opportunity to learn more, because once our cocoa is in full production, I need to do something about it. This way, I could become an entrepreneur. I'm really looking forward to it, to have a business and increase our income.

Soppexcca and Christian Aid have helped us with the cocoa by training us with the help of technicians who have visited us, tools, plants, tree saplings and the workshops. All of us in the family were involved with the project. We all know it's very important for the family income.

I have a baby now, too. I am still at school, and my mum looks after the baby. My favourite subject is maths.

As a young person who cares about the environment, I find it a big struggle getting my voice heard as many people only think about money and less about the environment, and I worry about my baby's future.



Marlon Lopez, a Soppexcca technician, says:

In the communities, boys used to leave school at 12 to work on the coffee plantations but, because of Fairtrade and a change in the law, they usually go and work on the coffee plantations at 16, but still leave school at 12 or 13. It really depends if the school is close to their house. Around 12 to 13, girls and boys start looking around to get married, and the average number of children is five or six.

Discussion Does anything surprise you about what you have read? Do you think your life is easier, or harder, than Johaira's? Why do you think that?

Johaira says that she is worried about the impact of climate change on her baby's future. It may not seem that we can do anything about the climate in Nicaragua, but is that right? What changes can we make to our own routine that might make a difference?



Activity

Chocolate Taste Test. Buy some chocolate bars and do a 'blind taste test'. Make sure you include one sample that uses cocoa from Nicaragua (such as Nicaragua Juno 70% from Duffy's Chocolate). Which is your favourite? Make sure the chocolate you buy is all fairly traded, as this makes a big difference to the people who grow it, people like Johaira.

Bible link Matthew 20:1-16 (NRSV)

For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard.

When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went.

When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.'

When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.'

But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?'

So the last will be first, and the first will be last.

Discussion Do you think it is fair that some people have to work so much harder than others? Why do you think Jesus told this parable?

Make a difference

Visit your local supermarket and see which, if any, coffee and chocolate products they sell are Fairtrade registered. If there aren't any, write a letter or email to the manager and ask why there aren't any available. Look at the ingredients listed, and see where they come from. And whenever you eat chocolate or coffee products, remember the work that the farmers and their families put into growing their crop.

I wonder if the next bar of chocolate you eat might have been made from cocoa beans grown on Johaira and her mother's farm?

Prayer

Loving God
There are people all over your world who are struggling.
Our challenges are different, but we know you love us all.
Help us to be safe and to look after the world in which we live.

