

2016 International Essay Contest for Young People

【Children's Category – 3rd Prize】

The Magic Question (Original)

Anghel Maria

(Age 9, Romania)

Ever since we were very little, we, children, used to look around us and keep asking the same question: “Why? “. All we had to do was ask and, somehow, by magic, true and wise answers were coming, first from our parents, then from our teachers. That’s how our problems and concerns were solved.

In my country, Romania, we spend most of our time in school where we learn everything we need to know to become educated people. Educated people are kind and generous and they work for the benefit of others.

Unfortunately, I’ve seen on TV news about children who don’t have enough food, who live in war areas or in much polluted areas. Their mothers were holding them tight in their arms and were crying with them and their fathers were carrying guns. Nothing seemed to work for them and I don’t think they could go to school.

So I asked the same question again, but this time the answers weren’t magical anymore. They were full of sadness: disadvantaged geographical area, fight for resources, religious conflicts, all very hard for me to understand. What surprised me even more was the fact that in all these answers there was no solution for any of the problems. I didn’t know why, but it was very clear for me that the magic question had suddenly lost its power.

Something must be done! We can’t leave things like that!

After a lot of thinking, I knew how I could help. I just needed all my friends to help me build up a team and to start a project to transform the planet into a better place for all its inhabitants. Every one of us should gather many colleagues and friends and together we must protect the environment, reduce its pollution, recycle and not waste natural resources. That’s how our side of the planet will provide resources for disadvantaged areas.

Still, to persuade people to stop fighting each other I needed more help. I talked to my parents and I realized that there is a great connection between people and their kind and noble actions, and that this connection implies love, friendship and understanding. Sadly, it is difficult to share this all over the world. Again the magic question "Why?" brought the solution: to improve yourself and the ones around you. It will take a lot of will and commitment to do this, but, in time, will help spreading the improvement all over the planet, changing other things too.

Now, I know what we have to do! And I think that school plays a key role in helping us achieve that.

We already use books and computers to discover new information, to acquire new skills and understand new facts.

I think that organizing field trips will increase our knowledge and understanding of a subject and will add realism to the topic of study. Also, integrating us in working groups or teams will improve our communication skills and will help us understand and accept others' points of view.

The curriculum should also include religion, where all the major religions of the world must be explained and the differences and similarities between them must be taught; and we will become more understanding with each other.

Education for health is also very important. Children must know how to eat healthy, how to give first aid to someone and that they need to help, not to harm other human beings or animals.

To find the harmony between physical and mental growth, sport classes should include Aikido – a Japanese form of self-defence martial art that does not hurt the opponent, which develops the coordination of mind and body.

Also, art will help children understand each other and will give them an opening towards new ways of seeing the world.

This project is a really big challenge for all of us, but I think that it will have more and more followers all over the world.

I also think that is very important to continue asking ourselves "Why?" even when we are grown-ups and we are capable of doing the best in everything, because we will become better people just by searching for the answers.