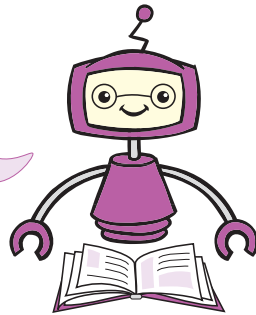


What sustains you?

I'm pretty sustainable — I only shower once a year, my clothes never need washing, and my transport needs are minimal — a simple thought and I arrive somewhere. No feet, and no carbon footprint! Sustainability isn't just about looking after natural resources and the environment, though. It's also about looking after people. Let's have a look at a project in Australia that does just that.



LINKS TO:

Stage 3, Module 10
Learning Object 2: *The career expo*

PRIOR LEARNING:

Stage 2

Module 12 Work Sheet 3: *This is your life*
Work Sheet 2: *Diary days*
Module 5 Work Sheet 6: *Maybe yes ... maybe no*

1 Good comes from adversity

Do you remember the earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan in March 2011? It started as an earthquake that measured 9.0 on the richter scale. The earthquake generated the tsunami, which crossed Japan's east coast and killed thousands of people. It also caused billions of dollars of damage to homes, businesses and infrastructure, such as roads.

The tsunami also damaged some of the nuclear reactors in the area. Not only did the survivors lose people they loved, their homes and livelihoods, they were also exposed to the possibility of radiation poisoning them, the water and the soil.

Although the tsunami was a devastating natural disaster, some of the things that occurred after it are wonderful examples of the way challenges can create great opportunities for humans to show their creativity, strength, and compassion.

As the old saying goes: some people are like teabags; you only know their strength when they are in hot water!

When disaster strikes

Although it's important to remember the terrible consequences of a disaster like the tsunami, it is also important to recognise the good that comes out of them.

During the Victorian bushfires in 2009, a fireman gave a burnt koala a drink of water out of his own water bottle — people all over the world drew hope from that news clip.

After the tsunami in Japan, children from Afghanistan sent a gift pencil to children in Fukushima with the message 'peace is hope'. Children from many Australian schools held fundraisers and folded sets of 1000 cranes to convey their good wishes. In Sydney, a Japanese–Australian person started a group that hosts holidays for Japanese children living in the radiation-affected areas. People in France and Germany offered their homes to anyone in Japan who needed a place to stay. The Indonesian and Chinese governments sent rescue workers, and gave things including medical assistance, supplies and money.

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The mud army

In 2011, Brisbane and many other areas of Queensland were devastated by flood. In Brisbane and its suburbs, in particular, a volunteer 'mud army' came together after the floods to help everyone clean up their homes and businesses. It was hard, dirty, distressing work, but people embraced the opportunity to help out their neighbours.

How do you feel when you read about people helping each other, genuinely caring about each other? Some people say that humans are hard-wired to care about each other (it's called 'biological altruism'). Other people believe that humans *learn* to care about each other.

Let's read about some particular responses to cries for help.

Exercises

Exercise 1

Reading

The following text is a short magazine article about some of the responses to the 2011 tsunami in Japan.

Your first task is simply to read the text, using all the reading strategies you have learnt to date.

After you have read the text, you will be asked to complete some comprehension questions.

Sahabat sejati adalah sahabat dalam susah dan senang

oleh Jenny Rahardjo

Banyak yang telah dilakukan untuk memperbaiki kerusakan parah yang terjadi di bagian timur Jepang akibat tsunami yang terjadi pada bulan Maret 2011.

Namun demikian, beberapa masalah utama masih belum bisa ditangani. Barangkali yang paling serius adalah masalah jatuhnya radioaktif dari reaktor nuklir yang rusak di kota Fukushima. Selain juga menimbulkan dampak serius pada kualitas udara dan air, jatuhnya ini telah meninggalkan capnya yang abadi dalam tanah pertanian yang subur di sekitarnya. Beribu-ribu petani telah diberi tahu bahwa mereka tidak bisa menanam padi di dalam zona larangan yang berjarak 20 km. Petani di luar zona itu — dan pelanggan mereka — menjadi bertanya-tanya juga apakah produksi pertanian mereka aman.

Petani di seluruh dunia sudah biasa kalau harus bekerja dengan apa pun yang diberikan oleh Ibu Pertiwi. Tapi serangkaian panen yang gagal biasanya diikuti oleh paling tidak beberapa panen yang berhasil. Tidak begitu untuk petani di Fukushima. Petani di daerah itu diberi tahu bahwa akan makan waktu paling tidak 30 tahun (beberapa pakar bahkan mengatakan 300 tahun!) sebelum tanah menjadi sehat untuk ditanami kembali. Memang merupakan sebuah keadaan yang mengerikan

untuk sebuah negara yang sangat tergantung pada produksi beras domestiknya.

Kemudian datang orang dari Queensland. Tali 'persaudaraan' yang resmi telah terjalin di antara kota besar dan kecil and sekolah di Queensland dan kota besar dan kecil dan sekolah di Jepang sejak awal tahun 1980an. Beribu-ribu orang yang dihubungkan oleh tali persaudaraan ini tahu dan mengerti satu sama lain sedikit lebih baik karena adanya jalur hubungan ini. Jadi, waktu banjir yang menghancurkan itu menyerang Queensland pada tahun 2011, jutaan dolar disumbangkan oleh pemerintah Jepang untuk membantu membersihkan dan membangun kembali teman dan mitra dagangnya ini.

Dengan demikian, pantas saja kalau tali persaudaraan antara kota Townsville dan Iwaki (sebuah kota di Prefektur Fukushima) menyediakan sebuah kesempatan bagi 'saudara' yang lebih muda dan lebih kecil untuk membantu 'saudara'nya yang lebih tua dan lebih besar ketika dia membutuhkan pertolongan.

Salah satu cara praktis yang menjadi bentuk tanggapan dari Queensland terhadap tsunami tahun 2011 itu adalah

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dengan mengadakan uji-coba penelitian penanaman padi. Daerah seluas 0,7 hektar di sebelah selatan Townsville ditanami oleh petani dari Iwaki, dengan menggunakan metode penanaman padi tradisional.

Kemampuan untuk menanam sebidang tanah yang kecil ini menghubungkan kembali Fukushima dengan kehidupan dan dengan kesempatan-kesempatan yang ada di masa depan. Tidak saja dia tidak lagi sendirian, dia sekarang memiliki seseorang yang menemani dalam perjalanannya menuju pemulihan.

Situasi yang rumit; permohonan yang sederhana; tanggapan yang sederhana. Langkah-langkah sederhana yang memungkinkan hubungan ini berlanjut tanpa adanya resiko gagal atau hancur. Kebanyakan fokus negara-negara di dunia sekarang ini adalah pada kesinambungan perekonomian dan lingkungan sementara mereka menghadapi berbagai kesempatan dan tantangan — tampaknya banyak manfaat yang juga bisa dicapai dari usaha menyinambungkan tali persaudaraan.

Reading comprehension

First, let's have a look at how well you understood the text.

1.1 What are the main ideas in the text? Summarise, in English, the main ideas from each paragraph.

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 2

Paragraph 3

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Paragraph 4

Paragraph 5

Paragraph 6

Paragraph 7:

1.2 Were there particular words or phrases you found difficult to understand? What strategies did you use to understand these words or phrases, or to understand the text as a whole, despite not being sure what some words meant?

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1.3 When (approximately) did 'sister' relationships start between Japanese and Queensland schools, cities and towns?

1.4 When will it be possible for Fukushima farmers to grow rice again?

1.5 Do you think the relationship between Japan and Queensland is a sustainable one? What contributes to the sustainability of something?

1.6 How do you think the actions of Queensland (people and government) and the Japanese (people and government) helped foster their relationship?

Exercise 2

Let's think a little more deeply about the ideas and possibilities raised in the article you have read.

The article has the title 'Sahabat sejati adalah sahabat dalam susah dan senang', which means 'A friend in need is a friend indeed'. This is a well-known proverb, which dates from around the third century BC.

2.1 There are various ways to interpret this saying. Write at least two different ways it could be interpreted, or ways you have heard it used.

2.2 Why do you think the author has chosen this as the title of the article? Of the many meanings of the proverb, which one (or ones) do you think they are calling on?

2.3 Have you ever been a 'friend in need' or a 'friend indeed' (or even a friend in deed!)? Give details of an action or actions you have performed for someone else when they were having difficulties.

2.4 In the situation you described in your answer to Exercise 2.3, do you think that the offer of help that you made would have been different if the people or persons in need were from Indonesia? Give reasons for your answer.
