

## Intermediate – Value Your Elders

**Aim:** To teach students how valuable communication and contact with their grandparents and elders is.

**Lead-in:** Find out from students whether they're close to any elderly people, e.g., grandparents, great-grandparents, elderly aunts, uncles, or family friends. List the different relationships they suggest on the board. Ask students how old they think these people are approximately and create an age band of the elderly people that your class spends time with.

Get students thinking about the older people in their life and in what ways they help them. For example: Do they give them advice? If so, what? Then ask why elderly people might be good at giving advice (because they've had more experiences).

Finally, encourage students to think of the kinds of things that the elderly might have experienced that the younger generation have not, and create a list of 'interesting experiences from the past' that you would've liked to be there for (e.g., a Beatles concert, horses in the streets, different fashions, wars, etc.). Ask students: *Do you think these experiences make the older generations more or less wise? Why?*

Then ask: *What stages of life have the elderly experienced that you have not experienced yet?* Elicit things like: marriage, going to university, war, losing people they love, making and breaking friendships, having children, going to work, retiring, etc. (The aim of the question is to get students thinking how few stages they have experienced in comparison to elderly people.)

**Choose A Scenario:** Ask students to work in pairs and choose one of the three scenarios (A–C). Explain to students that you would like them to suggest ways in which an elderly person could be helpful to a younger person and what the younger person can offer to the older person. Get students to explain why the younger generation should respect the older generation's advice in these situations. Encourage students to consider the Reflection Point.

**Re lection Point:** Explain to students that although the older generation appears to be different or old-fashioned, it's likely that they have experienced

the same emotions in their life that the students experience, so they know what it feels like when you feel jealous, ashamed, or anxious. They also know how important it is to feel good, proud, or satisfied. It's a good idea to listen to their advice, because they've had many more experiences.

**Class discussion:** Put each pair with another that examined the same scenario. Encourage them to compare the benefits that each person could draw from working together. Ask students: Would you have enjoyed working with an elderly person in situations like these? Did you identify the same benefits?

Now ask students to consider the following questions, then discuss the different opinions that they offer.

- *Is there a difference between the help, support, or advice the elderly can offer and the help young people can offer? Elicit three points for each category.*
- *Who do you think benefits more from the relationships suggested, the younger person or the older person? (Point out to students that it could be equal).*
- *Has reading these situations made you think about the older generation in a different way?*

**Work alone:** Ask students to work alone to choose a second scenario from A–C and follow the same steps as in section 2. Once they've finished, invite volunteers to present the ways in which the two generations can help each other.

**Extension:** Write on the board the following scenarios:

- an argument with a friend
- worrying about something at work or at school
- wanting to do something their parents didn't allow

Encourage students to ask an elderly person respectfully to tell them about a time when they experienced these things. Get students to draw parallels with their own lives and report back to the class.