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WHAT WILL YOU SAY?

Grades: 5 and up

Time: 10-20 minutes

Materials: Paper and writing utensils for each student

Relevant Subjects: Social Studies, Science, and Language Arts

1. After a program, series of programs, course, or unit in Humane Education, ask students to close their eyes and listen as you recite the following guided visualization aloud to them, using your own words, and modifying for your students as needed.

Visualization:

Imagine that you are very old and at the end of your long life. You are sitting on a park bench, and the air is fresh, clean, and fragrant with flowers. You can hear the sounds of birds and crickets. You are thinking back on your life, remembering when the Earth was in grave danger, when wars, poverty, racism, ecological destruction, animal cruelty, and other forms of injustice and bigotry were commonplace. You smile, realizing that so many problems have been solved, that prejudice is a distant memory, and that people have learned to live harmoniously and sustainably on the Earth. As you are imagining these changes, a child comes up to you and joins you on the bench. This child has learned about the problems the Earth, its people, and animals once faced and turns to you, asking what you did to help make the world so much better. What will you say to this child?

2. Allow students time to fully engage in the visualization and to think about their contribution.

3. Gently ask students to bring their attention back to the classroom and, when they are ready, to open their eyes.

4. Ask the students to write down their experience of the visualization.

5. Have students talk to the person next to them and share what they've written before inviting them to share with the whole class.

Activity from *The Power and Promise of Humane Education*