



Teachers Notes - Building Bridges

The lyrics and some of the stories and discussion have been reproduced below. At the end of each lyric are questions designed to create classroom discussion or they can be used for essay topics.

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Discussion/Essay Questions.

Building Bridges has two areas of discussion.

- 1) *Respect as the corner stone of goodwill* - respect of self, family, friends and community.

Question 1: Define the word - *RESPECT*. Why is this important in developing relationships?

- 2) *Disadvantage, alienation, empathy and forgiveness.*

Question 2: Write four separate paragraphs on four different ways that disadvantage - such as homelessness, poverty or mental illness - may affect an individual?

Self Respect & Relationships

(Song) Rachel - Brett Hunt

*It's been many many years since I followed you
In the heat, dust, crowds, and the sweet sweet music
I took bits off myself
I've done it again
Chippin away till there's nothing left but this heart on the table*

*Rachel you know me by now
Rachel you know me by now
Rachel you know me by now*

*We walk this promenade in this money town
When we don't have much at all
Cos I'm not tired of playing a clown
But when were together I don't need
I don't need much at all*

Rachel you know me by now.

The key phrase of this song is: “*Rachel you know me by now*”.

- (a) What does this phrase mean to you?
- (b) What do you believe it is to really know someone?
- (c) What is a relationship?
- (d) What are some of the words that describe a healthy relationship?

Classroom Discussion:

Dialogue – ‘How we build bridges within family; bridges between friends; bridges in your community. Creating a place where you belong’.

Why is the presentation called Building Bridges? Think of an example from your community or school where emotional bridges have been built and, after outlining the events, discuss how it was possible to build these emotional bridges.

Song: Respect – Aretha Franklin

*(Hooo) all I'm asking (hooo) is for a little respect
R-E-S-P-E-C-T find out what it means to me
R-E-S-P-E-C-T, Take care, TCB ohhhh (Sock it to me, etc.)
A little respect oh yeah (Just a little bit)
A little respect (Just a little Bit)*

Respect is an important concept in living a successful life.

- (a) Why is respect important?
- (b) Many people believe they can gain respect from intimidation and fear. Is this true?
- (c) How does it feel to be disrespected?
- (d) Think of an example when you have treated someone with disrespect. Why did you behave in that way?

Debating question: Are we responsible for the less fortunate or should each individual look after themselves?

Life Choices - Festival

Brett tells a story of discovering music and a growing ambition to become an international songwriter. Along the way he discovers the reward for hard work and commitment. The benefits of having healthy relationships both personally and professionally. And the sense of achievement that comes when overcoming the day to day obstacles by harnessing life skills of resilience and self knowledge!

Brett also explores the concept and dangers of substance abuse that came with his lifestyle and using substances to deal with life! He also discusses the consequences of making these choices and how they affected his opportunities.

Essay question: Describe an advertisement for alcohol that you've seen recently.

- (a) Who is the ad targeting?
- (b) What techniques are used to target this market?
- (c) How effective is this ad?

Brett mentions part of his payment was alcohol at his first gig with 'Dangling Fury'.

- (a) How did this experience shape Brett's attitude to alcohol?
- (b) How important is alcohol in everyday Australian life?
- (c) Alcohol may have positive or negative impacts on our health, list a few of these.

Classroom discussion: Is there such a thing as safe use of alcohol?

Brett mentions "*falling off the track*".

- (a) What does Brett mean by this term?
- (b) How did Brett get back on track?
- (c) Was there ever a time you '*fell off the track*'?
- (d) How did that experience shape you?

After the festival Brett reflected on the reaction to his drunken performance:

"I'll never forget the look on their faces till the day I die. You could see what they were thinking; what's he pissed for? He's much better than this".

The choices Brett made at this festival had an impact on those around him.

- (a) What was the reaction of fans, friends and management to Brett's choices!
- (b) How does forgiveness play its part in relationships?
- (c) What are some ways we can help a "mate" who's having problem with drugs and

alcohol.

(Song) I will Survive, Gloria Gaynor

*At first I was afraid
I was petrified
Kept thinking I could never live
Without you by my side
But then I spent so many nights
Thinking how you did me wrong
And I grew strong
And I learned how to get along*

*And so you're back
From outer space
I just walked in to find you here
With that sad look upon your face
I should have changed that stupid lock
I should have made you leave your key
If I had known for just one second
You'd be back to bother me*

*Go on now go walk out the door
Just turn around now
'cause you're not welcome anymore
Weren't you the one who tried to hurt me with goodbye
Did you think I'd crumble
Did you think I'd lay down and die
Oh no, not I
I will survive
Oh as long as I know how to love
I know I'll stay alive
I've got all my life to live
I've got all my love to give
And I'll survive
I will survive (hey hey)*

*It took all the strength I had
Not to fall apart
Kept trying hard to mend
The pieces of my broken heart
And I spent oh so many nights
Just feeling sorry for myself
I used to cry
But now I hold my head up high
And you see me
Somebody new
I'm not that chained up little person
Still in love with you
And so you felt like dropping in
And just expect me to be free
But now I'm saving all my loving
For someone who's loving me*

*Go on now go walk out the door
Just turn around now
'cause you're not welcome anymore
Weren't you the one who tried to break me with goodbye
Did you think I'd crumble
Did you think I'd lay down and die
Oh no, not I
I will survive
Oh as long as I know how to love
I know I'll stay alive
I've got all my life to live
I've got all my love to give
And I'll survive
I will survive (oh)*

...As long as I know how to love I know I will survive...

- (a) What does this lyric mean?
- (b) Why is it important to have meaningful relationships in our lives?
- (c) What are some positives and some of the negatives inherent in love?
- (d) Do we need love to survive in this world?

Conflict Resolution

Brett asks questions about the conflicts we have with those we love?

- (a) Why is conflict inevitable in close relationships?
- (b) Is conflict always a bad thing?
- (c) Why is forgiveness such an important part of conflict?

In the song, *I will survive*, the singer talks about ending an unhealthy relationship and getting on with her life;

“Walk out that door, just turn around now, I don’t want you anymore”.

This process is often called **establishing boundaries**.

Classroom Discussion: What are some of the things that happen in relationships that make boundaries important?

Exercise: Write your own song or poem. Try to affect your readers/listeners on a topic you feel strongly about.

Hilltop Hoods – Stopping All Stations

*He knows nothing but toil, strife and hard yakka,
Pissed at the world for playing wife in a slammer,
This man was never given a life on a damn platter,
So he jumps a train with knife and bandanna
Boys at his back, sleazy, hardened and far,
from gives a... an easy target his mark,
He sees an old man and says “See we’ll part with your hard,
Earned cash or rest in peace we can start with your heart.”*

*Some girl steps not afraid she’s gonna cop it sweet,
and gets decked before she made it even on her feet,
She tries to help him she doesn’t choose to flee the car,
And catches a blow with enough bruise to leave a scar,
She starts fainting, the rooms moving and seeing stars,
Ain’t it amazing how courageous human beings are?*

(Instrumental)

*The old man leaped to her aid and to his horror he’d,
Thrusted his chest into the blade of his robber’s piece,
He grabbed the wallet, dropped the knife as he fled the car,
Concerned about the loss of life he’d never went this far,
What’s done is done, he’d got the prize and he’d spent his half,*

Of two dollars in change and a pension card.(Rpt...)

So Take a ride, cos were stoppin' all stations.

Stopping all Stations explores the perspectives of three different characters.

1. Discuss each characters role in the story.
2. How could each character have behaved differently?
3. The young woman showed great courage in her behaviour but in doing so put herself in harm's way. Was her choice correct? Could she have helped the old man without endangering herself?
4. The mugger in the song is described:
"He's known nothing but toil strife and hard yakka, pissed at the world for playing wife in a slammer"
 - a. What do these lyrics mean?
 - b. How should we judge the mugger?
 - c. Are we responsible for our actions or can we blame our upbringing?
 - d. Should we try to understand and build an emotional bridge to the mugger?
 - e. Can people change?

Individual Case Study - Danny

Brett tells the story of Danny. Because of how Danny looked and behaved Brett thought he was a scary, threatening criminal. After getting to know him Brett soon changed his opinion.

- a. Why was Brett scared of Danny when they first met?
- b. How important is image when people first meet?
- c. Why did Brett's opinion of Danny change?
- d. Have you met someone that you initially did not like or trust and then later realise that you had judged them unfairly?
- e. Have you been ill-judged by someone based on your appearance or image?
- f. Why is it important not to judge by superficial standards?
- g. Why does our opinion of somebody change when we find out more about them?
- h. How does empathy and understanding improve our family, community and society?

Danny's life begins to improve when he is shown **goodwill** by an elderly woman. He begins to believe in himself and to take responsibility for his own betterment and healing.

1. What does Brett mean when he says – 'The power of goodwill'?
2. Why does one person's positive belief have such an effect on Danny?
3. Who benefits from the goodwill shown to Danny? (Think about the people in Danny's life and his community. Who may benefit from his new found belief in self and acceptance of responsibility?)
4. Aside from **goodwill** what other types of behaviour can improve our lives and those around us?
5. Do we have an innate responsibility to help those less fortunate or do we only have a responsibility to look after ourselves and the people we love?

Story to Tell – Brett Hunt

*He hangs around like a tear drop tattoo
Never falling
Forever still
He used to be angry
Once upon a time
Now he doesn't know
Since he crossed the line*

Chorus

*Everybody has a story to tell
Everybody has a dream
Everybody has a story to tell
Everybody has a dream*

*She used to be a dancer in private kind of shows
Lost in the big smoke
But now she knows how it goes
Now she's pouring drinks behind the bar
Like to pretend it's her
As I play this old guitar*

Chorus

*See that old man with a bottle and a frown
Once upon a time he played the big end of town
Now he drinks regret like it's a warm coat
Occupy's his time by bumming smokes*

Chorus

*Everybody has a story to tell
Everybody has a dream
Everybody has a story to tell
Everybody has a dream*

In this song three different characters are experiencing three different stories.

- a) Briefly describe each person's story.
- b) What do they have in common?
- c) What difference does it make to our attitudes toward people when we have heard their story?
- d) Why has Brett written this song and how is he expecting you – *the listener* – to respond?
- e) Discreetly observe a stranger on the train, on a bus, in the street etc... What observations can you make about them?
- f) Among your friends and family what type of different stories do they have to tell?
- g) Do you have your own story to tell?

Ben Harper With My Own Two Hands

Watch this You Tube clip: *With My Own Two Hands – Ben Harper* (Cut & Paste link into browser)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAnlXD9Gaag

*I can change the world
With my own two hands
Make a better place
With my own two hands
Make a kinder place
Oh with my oh with my own two hands
With my own with my own
Two hands
With my own with my own
Two hands*

*I can make peace on earth
With my own two hands
And I can clean up the earth
Lord with my own two hands
And I can reach out to you
Oh with my own two hands
With my own with my own
Two hands
Oh with my own with my own
Two hands
Oh with my own with my own
Two hands
I'm gonna make it a brighter place
I'm gonna make it a safer place
I'm gonna help the human race
With my own with my own
Two hands*

*Now I can hold you
In my own two hands
And I can comfort you
With my own two hands
But you've got to use
Use your own two hands
With your own with your own two hands*

1. What does this song tell us about Ben Harper?
2. What does Ben Harper think he can do?
3. Why does he keep saying – ‘*With my own two hands*’?
4. What effect will this song have on his fans?
5. Why does he change the last two lines of the song to – ‘*Use your own two hands. With your own, with your own two hands*’?

Social Justice Research Question: Interview a person in your school, family or community who has come to Australia from another country. Find out as much as possible about why they left their country, why they came to Australia, how they got here, the treatment they received when they arrived and what they think and feel about their experience. (A documentary style will be helpful here using video, sound recording, photos as well as the written word).