

Life Principle: CITIZENSHIP Grumble Town

There was once a place called Grumble Town where everyone grumbled and grumbled. In winter, people grumbled that it was too cold. In summer, it was too hot. When it rained, the children groaned because they could not go outside. When the sun came out, they whimpered that they had nothing to do. Parents griped about their children, brothers about sisters, and neighbors about each other. Everybody whined that someone should do something about their problems.

One day an old peddler trudged into town and heard the fussing and sighing and moaning. He put down the basket he was carrying and cried, "People of this fair town! Your fields are ripe with grain, and your orchards are heavy with fruit. Your valleys are watered by deep, wide rivers, and the mountains are covered by thick forests. This place is blessed by opportunity and abundance. Why are you so unhappy? Gather around me. I will show you the way to contentment!" The people looked at the peddler in disbelief. His shirt was tattered and torn. His pants sported patches and his shoes had spouted holes. They laughed to think that someone like him could show them how to be content. But while they snickered, the peddler pulled a long rope from his basket and strung it between two large trees in the town square.

"People of this fair town!" the peddler cried. "Whoever is dissatisfied, write your trouble on a piece of paper. Then bring it and put it in this basket. I will exchange your problem for happiness!" The people swarmed around him. No one hesitated at the chance to be rid of his trouble. Before long, every man, woman, and child in Grumble Town had written a grumble onto a piece of paper and dropped it into the basket.

They all watched as the peddler took each trouble from the basket and hung it on the line. When he was through, troubles fluttered on every inch of the rope, from end to end. Then the peddler directed the people to take the smallest trouble they could find from the magic line. The people of Grumble Town all rushed forward to find the smallest trouble. They hunted and fingered and pondered. Each tried to pick the very smallest trouble. After a time, the magic line was empty.

Behold! Each person held in his hand the very same trouble he had put into the basket. Each one chose his own trouble, thinking it was smallest of any on the line. From that day forward, the people of the fair town were hardly known to groan or grumble. Whenever anyone had the urge to complain or whine, he thought of the peddler and knew his trouble was smaller than most.

[Grumble Town Choice Worksheet](#)

[Grumble Town Lesson Plan](#)

[4x4 Grumble Sheets](#)

Brainstorm Questions

Who? _____

When? _____

Where? _____

What? _____

Why? _____

Critical Thinking - Open-ended Questions

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Moral of the story: _____
