

***We are  
only as  
strong as  
we are  
united,  
as weak  
as we are  
divided.***

***J.K. Rowling***

## **PATH**

### *Building Bridges of Unity*

## **GAINS**

- ➔ *Define and comprehend the concept of unity as a force that brings people together*
- ➔ *Discuss the significance of unity in fostering positive relationships and communities*
- ➔ *Explore and appreciate the richness of diverse backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives*
- ➔ *Understand the importance of finding common ground and understanding different viewpoints*
- ➔ *Discuss the importance of community building and fostering a sense of belonging*
- ➔ *Identify opportunities for collective action to address social challenges*



## SHORT STORY

- 1 The following story is about an old farmer who wanted to give a life lesson to his grandsons. Read the story and answer the questions below.



In the twilight of his life, an elderly farmer sought to impart a profound lesson to his grandsons. Summoning all five of them, he orchestrated a poignant moment. When they came along, the farmer gave each a twig and asked to snap them. They did so almost without an effort. Then, the old man gave a bundle of twigs to the eldest grandson, challenging him to break them.

Despite exerting great effort, the eldest grandson found the task insurmountable. None of the other children could unravel the united twigs either. A gentle smile played on the old farmer's lips, a testament to the success of his plan. "You see," he remarked, "since the twigs were united, none of you could break the bundle.

Standing together in unity shields you from any force that seeks to conquer you. Yet, if you remain divided, vulnerable as the individual twigs you broke initially, adversity can strike."

Pausing for effect, he shared a sincere request with them. "My last wish is for you to always stand united against the challenges of life and lend unwavering support to one another." With these words, he embraced each of his grandchildren, leaving them with a legacy of unity and strength.

- 1 What life lesson does the old farmer teach his grandsons?
- 2 What does the difference between breaking a single twig and the bundle of tied twigs represent?
- 3 What is the main message about unity and togetherness derived from the story?
- 4 What does the farmer say as a last, sincere wish for his grandsons?
- 5 What does the farmer's advice to his children at the end of the story signify?



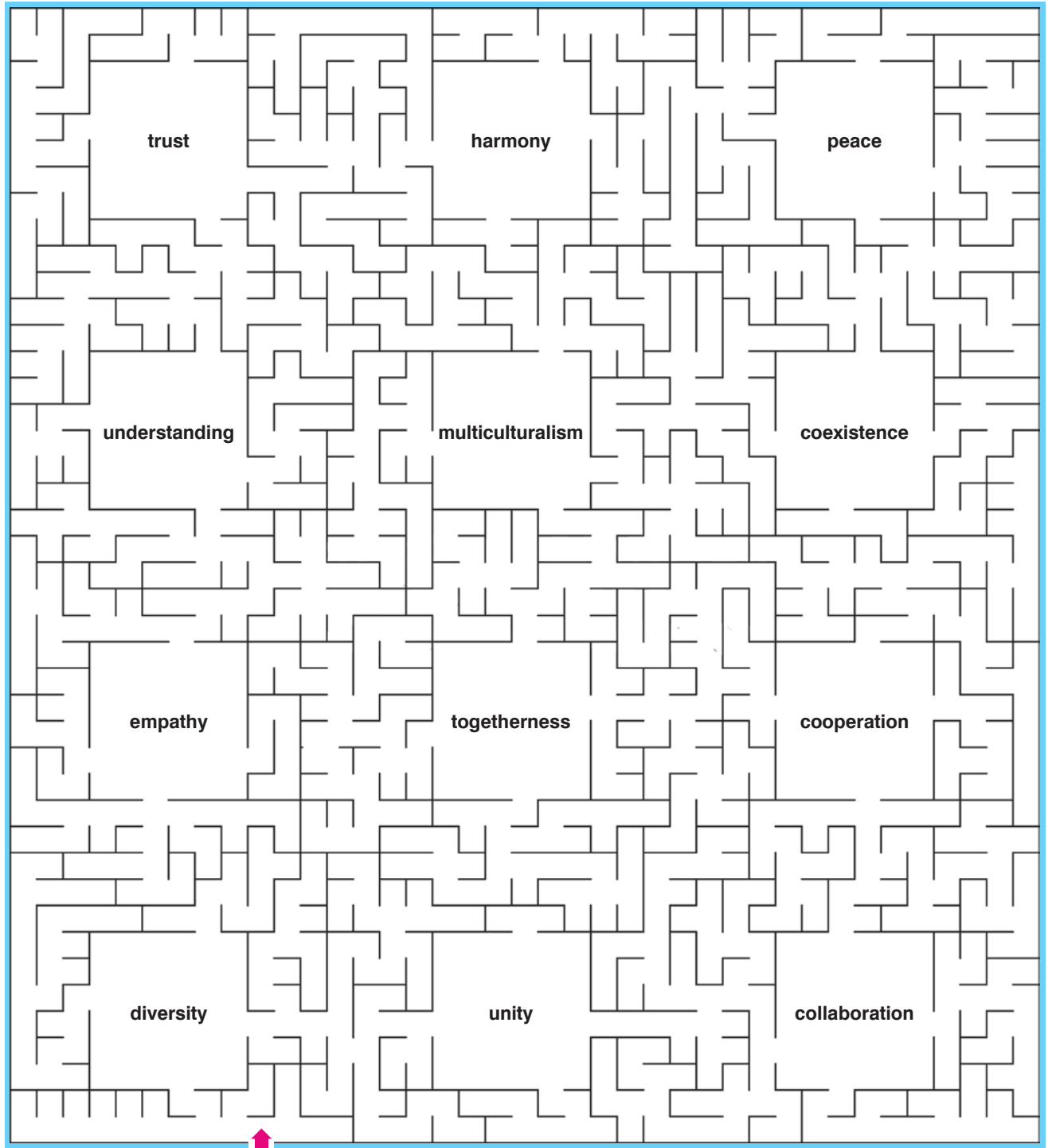
# The Story of 1

Hello friends, have I heard you right that you wish to know who I am and what I am? Yes, you've guessed it right! I am number One. One by itself is just one. But when three ones come together, they make one hundred and eleven. Add one more, and it becomes one thousand one hundred and eleven. I am just one on my own. But when you come together and include me, don't we become so many thousands? Our ancestors said, "Unity is strength." This proverb means that tasks done in unity and togetherness yield better results, and even difficult issues can be easily solved. Let's always be united, shall we?



## DIALOGUE

- 1 This maze includes some words from the following dialogue between Tim and Ken. Starting from the red arrow below, reach them all.





**2** Underline each word found in the maze each time they appear in the dialogue.



**Tim:** I must submit my essay tomorrow but I am short of strong points to support my ideas on the concept of unity. I remember you made a presentation on this topic last semester. Can you help me out to find more ideas?

**Ken:** Of course, Tim! Unity is generally about bringing people together, fostering a sense of togetherness, and promoting cooperation and collaboration. It is also about finding common ground and working towards shared goals in our personal and social relationships.

**Tim:** As far I could find, unity also has the power to transcend differences and create stronger bonds. In personal relationships, it helps build trust, understanding, and support. When people come together, their diverse perspectives and skills can complement each other, leading to original and effective solutions.

**Ken:** Well said, Tim. When people unite around a common cause or purpose, they can start positive change, address social issues, and promote equality and justice. Unity empowers communities to stand up against injustice and work towards a more inclusive and harmonious society.

**Tim:** Unity can also be seen in diversity, Ken. When we embrace and celebrate our differences, and work for inclusivity, we can build a unified society that values and respects everyone's unique contributions. Through unity, we can bridge divides, break down stereotypes, and build a more tolerant and accepting world.

**Ken:** Absolutely, Tim. Unity is not just about agreement, but about finding strength in diversity and developing a sense of belonging for all. It requires open-mindedness, empathy, and a willingness to listen and learn from others. It is all about a shared vision to build a better today and tomorrow.

**Tim:** I see but how does diversity relate to unity? Are they opposites or do they complement each other?

**Ken:** Unity is mostly about being one, single, whole, or the same, Tim. It can also mean harmony, agreement, or continuity without difference or change. Some may say diversity and unity are opposites, thinking that diversity leads to division and conflict, and that unity requires uniformity and total agreement. I think diversity and unity complement each other: Diversity enriches and strengthens unity, and unity respects and celebrates diversity.

**Tim:** Can you explain this some more, Ken?

**Ken:** Diversity makes us unique and interesting as individuals and groups. It allows us to learn from each other, appreciate different perspectives, and grow as humans. Unity makes us connected and interdependent. It allows us to cooperate, collaborate, and achieve common goals. Diversity and unity are both essential for human and social development.

**Tim:** Can you give an example of how diversity and unity work together?

**Ken:** Sure! Multiculturalism can be an example here. It is the coexistence of different cultures in a society, where each culture keeps its distinct identity, values, and practices, while also contributing to the common good of the society. Multiculturalism is a form of diversity and unity, where different cultures are respected and celebrated, and where they also interact and cooperate with each other. It is like the diversity of people, languages, and cultures in a train station, and how they all share the same experience of traveling.

**Tim:** Thank you, Ken. You have helped me so much!

**Ken:** You're welcome, Tim! I'm glad I could help. Good luck with your essay!

### 3 Which word in the maze is not found in the dialogue?

.....

.....

.....

.....

## CONCEPTS

- 1 Match and write the correct definitions of these words or phrases. The words are from the dialogue between Tim and Ken.

prejudice	transcend	bridge divides	unity	coexistence
inclusivity	diversity	discrimination	interdependent	stereotype

1	.....	the state of coming together as one and involving individuals or groups working together and cooperating under a shared purpose.
2	.....	having a wide range of different characteristics, elements, or qualities within a group or society.
3	.....	ensuring that all individuals or groups are given the opportunity to participate, contribute, and feel valued, regardless of their differences or backgrounds.
4	.....	the state of different parts or people relying on one another for support, cooperation, or mutual benefit.
5	.....	go beyond physical or mental limitations, break free from the usual boundaries and have experiences beyond expectations.
6	.....	preconceived opinions or attitudes towards a person or group, typically based on stereotypes or incomplete information, often leading to unfair treatment or discrimination.
7	.....	generalized beliefs or ideas about a particular group of people, often based on prejudice and can spread misconceptions and discrimination.
8	.....	unfair or prejudicial treatment of individuals or groups based on factors such as race, gender, religion, or other characteristics.
9	.....	the state of different groups, cultures, or ideas sharing the same land or society in peace and harmony.
10	.....	overcome differences or gaps between people or groups by fostering understanding, communication, and empathy, promoting unity and cooperation.

- 2 Discover positive and negative notions related to unity and togetherness in the upcoming word search. Positive concept words signify elements that foster unity, while negative concept words denote factors that disrupt harmony among individuals. Color the positive concepts with green, the negative ones with red.

Cooperation	Conflict	Sharing	Peace	Loyalty	Harmony
Teamwork	Prejudice	Discrimination	Interdependent	Love	
Solidarity	Diversity	Chaos	Unity	Selfishness	Favor

B D I V E R S I T Y A Z E F F G I W V  
 R B J K L U G D E F S H N Y R E N A O  
 E R I G S F U T E A M W O R K J T C E  
 F X T Y H J K K L O P L T R E M E X C  
 H A L L A I M L O Y A L T Y X C R V I  
 A B C K R N D O A Z M E L D S F D G D  
 R S U I I J F Z I S W S E W H E E Y U  
 M O S M N U N G T E O L F E A V P I J  
 O L T E G S X V A L V X K X R S E T E  
 N I W Q D T C O N F L I C T I C N F R  
 Y D E U X I B L Z I A Z B L N H D E P  
 W A F N E C H A O S P L Z U G B E D Z  
 K R G I W R R T E H W E O Y F J N C S  
 R I A T L A I X P N I X Q A I N T C R  
 T T I Y J M Z K O E B C R L U M F V T  
 Y Y E K X I N W H S X O Z O X U C V G  
 E O F A V O R T K S P E A C E Y W R B  
 W M A V I G X U I P X I Z Y O E V O L  
 O C O O P E R A T I O N T M D Z F G T  
 V R N L T Q C B T R S R S Q Y R Y P M  
 R T Y W D I S C R I M I N A T I O N X



## POWERFUL WORDS

- 1 Explore various sayings and quotes about unity that encapsulate the idea of joining forces for a shared goal. After reading the quotes, analyze the outcomes of unity versus division and discuss the implications of coming together or remaining apart.

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."  
– Helen Keller

"Where there is unity, there is always victory."  
– Publilius Syrus

"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success."  
– Henry Ford

"Unity is the most important thing on the road to success."  
– Les Brown

"We are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided."  
– J.K. Rowling

- 2 Please carefully read the following quotes and provide your opinion on whether you agree with them or not. Explain your stance by writing a few sentences, detailing the reasons behind your agreement or disagreement with the quote of your choice.

"The reason why the world lacks unity, and lies broken and in heaps, is because man is disunited with himself."  
– Ralph Waldo Emerson

"If civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships-the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together, in the same world at peace."  
– Franklin D. Roosevelt

"Even if a unity of faith is not possible, a unity of love is."  
– Hans Urs von Balthasar

"The world is my country, all mankind are my brethren, and to do good is my religion."  
– Thomas Paine

- 3 In the following text, you will encounter an alternative viewpoint along with its interpretation about unity. Share your understanding and discuss how you can further develop this perspective, enriching it on a societal level by providing examples.

### *Unity, Multiplicity and Diversity*

**Life is a manifestation of unity at the level of multiplicity and a mirror of unity in multiplicity.**

What we see is actually the image of more than a hundred elements. It is possible to initially reduce these elements to a simple element such as hydrogen. Likewise, if seven colors are rotated quickly, white color is seen. Seven colors are diversity, white color is unity. Likewise, when we say five fingers, we express fraction. They become united in one hand and now take on a single name. One hundred trillion cells represent a fraction. All of these are located in one body and are referred to as one thing. Countless stars come to unity in the sky. A tree is made up of different things such as branches, flowers and leaves. All of these attain unity in "fruit." Because all the characteristics of that tree are placed in the seed inside that fruit - as a genetic code. Human is also the fruit of the tree of the universe. A person who evaluates himself in this way does not drown in the abundance of the universe and easily reaches unity.



## REFLECTIONS

- 1** The concept of unity can be understood and measured through various scales, each capturing different aspects of togetherness and cohesion within a group or community. Following, you will learn about the scales that are used to assess unity. Read and write the scales in the blanks in the assessment questionnaire.



## Unity Assessment Questionnaire

### Section 1: .....

- 1.1. How would you rate your own sense of internal unity, which involves harmony and coherence in your thoughts, values, and actions?
- |          |     |          |      |           |
|----------|-----|----------|------|-----------|
| Very Low | Low | Moderate | High | Very High |
|----------|-----|----------|------|-----------|
- 1.2. To what extent do you feel aligned with your personal goals and values?
- |            |          |            |      |            |
|------------|----------|------------|------|------------|
| Not at all | Slightly | Moderately | Very | Completely |
|------------|----------|------------|------|------------|

### Section 2: .....

- 2.1. How would you rate the level of unity within your immediate social circle (family, friends, or team members)?
- |          |     |          |      |           |
|----------|-----|----------|------|-----------|
| Very Low | Low | Moderate | High | Very High |
|----------|-----|----------|------|-----------|
- 2.2. Do you feel a strong sense of communication and mutual understanding within your social circle?
- |            |              |           |       |        |
|------------|--------------|-----------|-------|--------|
| Not at all | Occasionally | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|------------|--------------|-----------|-------|--------|

### Section 3: .....

- 3.1. How connected do you feel to the larger community or organization you belong to?
- |            |          |            |      |           |
|------------|----------|------------|------|-----------|
| Not at all | Slightly | Moderately | Very | Extremely |
|------------|----------|------------|------|-----------|
- 3.2. To what extent do you believe there is collaboration and shared purpose within the community or organization?
- |          |     |          |      |           |
|----------|-----|----------|------|-----------|
| Very Low | Low | Moderate | High | Very High |
|----------|-----|----------|------|-----------|

### Section 4: .....

- 4.1. To what extent do you believe citizens of the nation share a common sense of identity and purpose in your country?
- |            |          |            |      |           |
|------------|----------|------------|------|-----------|
| Not at all | Slightly | Moderately | Very | Extremely |
|------------|----------|------------|------|-----------|
- 4.2. In your opinion, how well does the population of your country collaborate and cooperate across diverse backgrounds, including but not limited to ethnicity, religion, and socio-economic status?
- |           |      |         |      |           |
|-----------|------|---------|------|-----------|
| Very Poor | Poor | Neutral | Good | Very Good |
|-----------|------|---------|------|-----------|



#### Section 5: .....

- 5.1. How important is it for you to celebrate and preserve cultural traditions within your community?  
Not Important at all      Slightly Important      Moderately Important      Very Important      Extremely Important
- 5.2. Do you feel a sense of unity based on shared cultural elements with others in your community?  
Not at all      Occasionally      Sometimes      Often      Always

#### Section 6: .....

- 6.1. To what extent do you believe in the importance of global collaboration to address global challenges?  
Not at all      Slightly      Moderately      Very      Extremely
- 6.2. How connected do you feel to people from different parts of the world?  
Not at all      Slightly      Moderately      Very      Extremely

#### Section 7: .....

- 7.1. How would you rate the level of unity within your workplace or organization?  
Very Low      Low      Moderate      High      Very High
- 7.2. Do you believe there is effective communication and collaboration among colleagues?  
Not at all      Occasionally      Sometimes      Often      Always

#### Section 8: .....

- 8.1. How important is it for you to contribute to social justice and inclusivity within your society?  
Not Important at all      Slightly Important      Moderately Important      Very Important      Extremely Important
- 8.2. To what extent do you feel connected to various social groups within your community?  
Not at all      Slightly      Moderately      Very      Extremely

#### Section 9: .....

- 9.1. How important is political unity for the well-being of your country or region?  
Not Important at all      Slightly Important      Moderately Important      Very Important      Extremely Important
- 9.2. To what extent do you feel aligned with the political values and goals of your country or region?  
Not at all      Slightly      Moderately      Very      Extremely

#### Section 10: .....

- 10.1. How important is religious unity for fostering a sense of community within your religious group?  
Not Important at all      Slightly Important      Moderately Important      Very Important      Extremely Important
- 10.2. To what extent do you feel connected to and supported by members of your religious community?  
Not at all      Slightly      Moderately      Very      Extremely

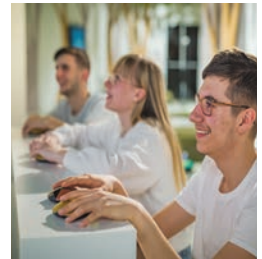
**2** Complete the Unity Assessment Questionnaire in class and analyze the results. Then share them with the class.

**3** What do you believe are the main strengths contributing to unity within your community?

**4** In which areas do you think there is room for improvement to enhance unity?

**5** Take a moment to examine the activities illustrated below. As you place yourself in the role of a participant, consider the expectations you set for your own involvement and the expectations you have for your teammates in these situations. The following questions may help you reflect upon the activities.

- 1 What are your expectations from yourself as a participant?
- 2 What do you expect from your teammates?
- 3 In which activity do you think the importance of unity and solidarity comes to the fore? Why?
- 4 Which one brings more tolerance to the fore? Why?



Divide the students into different groups and let them organize one of the unity projects below.

**“PROJECT WORK”**

## UNITY PROJECTS

### **Community Workshops and Discussions:**

Host seminars or panel discussions on topics that promote understanding and bridge gaps between different groups.

### **Cultural Exchange Events:**

Arrange cultural exchange events where people can share and celebrate their traditions, customs, and cuisines.

### **Volunteer Projects:**

Identify local charities or causes that everyone can support through volunteer efforts.

### **Artistic and Creative Collaborations:**

Organize art exhibitions, performances, or collaborative projects that bring together people with different artistic talents.

### **Sports Tournaments and Events:**

Arrange sports events that encourage friendly competition.

### **Celebration of Milestones:**

Recognize and celebrate important milestones, achievements, and contributions of individuals or groups within the community.

## FURTHER READING

- 1 Read the following text and answer the questions.

### PING PONG DIPLOMACY

During the Cold War era, the United States and the People's Republic of China had virtually no diplomatic relations. The two countries were politically and ideologically in disagreement, with the United States recognizing Taiwan as the legitimate government of China rather than the communist-led People's Republic of China.

In April 1971, an unexpected opportunity for contact and dialogue arose when the U.S. Table Tennis team received an invitation to participate in the 31st World Table Tennis Championships held in Nagoya, Japan. The Chinese team, at the time isolated from international sporting events due to political reasons, was also present at the tournament.

In an unplanned and spontaneous gesture, American player Glenn Cowan boarded the Chinese team's bus by mistake. Rather than removing him, the Chinese player Zhuang Zedong, recognizing the potential for a positive gesture despite tense international relations, had a conversation with Cowan and presented him with a small gift, a silk-screen portrait of the Huangshan Mountains. As many Japanese newspapers covered, Cowan presented Zhuang with a T-shirt with a red, white and blue peace emblem flag and the words "Let It Be," lyrics from a song by The Beatles, on the following day.

This encounter between Cowan and Zhuang Zedong received significant media attention and became a turning point in relations between the two countries. Following this incident, the Chinese government invited the U.S. Table Tennis team to visit China for a series of friendly matches and cultural exchanges.

On April 10, 1971, the American table tennis delegation, including nine players and four officials, stepped across a bridge from Hong Kong to the Chinese mainland, making themselves the first group of Americans to visit the country since the Communist Revolution in 1949. They spent their time between April 11 and 17 playing friendly matches, touring the Great Wall and Summer Palace, and watching a ballet. This visit was widely covered by the media and captured the attention of the world.

The visit of the American table tennis team, along with frequent exchanges, became known as the "Ping Pong Diplomacy." The interactions between the players and officials from both countries helped to break down barriers, build trust, and improve understanding between the United States and China.

The success of the "Ping Pong Diplomacy" played a crucial role in paving the way for broader diplomatic engagement between the two nations. It set the stage for U.S. President Richard Nixon's historic visit to China in February 1972, marking the first visit to China by a U.S. president and a significant step toward normalizing relations between the two countries.

The visit by Nixon helped to ease tensions and led to the Shanghai Communique, a joint statement issued by the United States and China, outlining the principles that would guide their relationship. This landmark event opened the door for increased diplomatic, economic, and cultural exchanges between the two nations, essentially reshaping the geopolitical landscape of the Cold War era. Two months after Richard Nixon's visit, Zhuang Zedong visited the U.S. as the head of a Chinese table-tennis delegation during April 12-30, 1972.

The "Ping Pong Diplomacy" serves as a remarkable example of how sports can rise above political differences, create opportunities for dialogue, and ultimately lead to significant breakthroughs in diplomatic relations. Peace between the United States and the People's Republic of China being the main focus, the "friendship" aspect of the Ping Pong tournaments helped melting the ice. Both teams did not mind who won the matches. The tournaments not only helped to bridge the divide between the United States and China but also had a lasting impact on global politics by starting to improve the relations between the two countries.





**Photo credit:** *Connie Sweeris*

- 1 What event inspired an opportunity for contact and dialogue between the United States and China during the Cold War era?
- 2 How did the Chinese player Zhuang Zedong respond to the unexpected encounter with the American table tennis player Glenn Cowan?
- 3 What is the 'Shanghai Communique'?
- 4 What was the result of the visit of the American table tennis team to China?
- 5 What bigger impact did the "Ping Pong Diplomacy" have on diplomatic relations between the United States and China during the Cold War era?

- 2 Read the statements of the two players who started the Ping Pong Diplomacy and answer the questions that follow as a class.

## Upon his return to the United States, Glenn Cowan spoke to the reporters:



<https://diplomacy.state.gov/ping-pong-diplomacy-historic-1971-u-s-table-tennis-trip-to-china/>

**Photo credit:** Tim Boggan / Cowan and Zhuang exchange gifts.

*"The people are just like us. They are real, they are genuine, they got feeling. I made friends, I made genuine friends, you see. The country is similar to America, but still very different. It's beautiful. They got the Great Wall; they got plains over there. They got an ancient palace, the parks, there are streams, and they got ghosts that haunt; there are all kinds of, you know, animals. The country changes from the south to the north. The people, they have a, a unity."*

## During an interview in 2002 on a Chinese television, Zhuang Zedong talked about the incident:

*"The trip on the bus took 15 minutes, and I hesitated for 10 minutes. I grew up with the slogan 'Down with the American imperialism!' During the Cultural Revolution, the concept of class struggle was extremely rigid and I kept asking myself, 'Is it okay to have anything to do with your No. 1 enemy?'"*

1. What can you say about Cowan's and Zedong's statements?
2. What sentiments or fixed ideas did Cowan and Zedong have for each other's country and people at first?