

# Ariana and the Wonder Beans

The last academic year was a very unusual one for students and staff alike. It has been a hard time for many and returning to school will also bring its challenges. We hope that by the autumn, all schools will be up and running and back to enjoying being together. If this is the case, our school assembly and further activities are great for whole-school use and to celebrate the school community joining together. However, if circumstances do not allow for 'normal' school reopening, these resources are adaptable for smaller groups or for use online.

## You will need:

- The *Ariana and the Wonder Beans* presentation, downloadable from [caid.org.uk/wonderbeans](https://caid.org.uk/wonderbeans)
- Coffee beans and chocolate (optional).

## Assembly presentation

### Show slide 1.

**Ask pupils about the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. Ask a pupil to retell the story or outline the key points of Jack swapping the family cow for some miraculous beans that grew a giant beanstalk.**

### Show slide 2.

You may remember that, in the story, Jack is on his way to market to sell the cow because his family needed food to eat. We have all been through a very strange few months in lockdown and perhaps there were times when you were unable to buy the food you needed.

### Show slide 3.

Explain that Jack and the Beanstalk is a made-up story, but that today you want to tell the children the true story of Ariana and the Wonder Beans.

### Show slide 4.

Unlike Jack's story, which began with selling a cow to get some beans, Ariana's story starts by having beans already – coffee beans!

Hold up the coffee (if you are using this). **Ask the children if they know anyone who likes coffee.**

### Show slide 5.

This is Arianna. She is five years old and lives with her mum, Angela, and her 15-year-old sister Johaira.

**Show slide 6.**

They live in a village called Santa Rosa, in Nicaragua in South America.

**Show slide 7.**

Angela used to make a living by growing coffee beans, which provided a good income for the family. However, in recent years, the weather in Nicaragua has been unpredictable because of climate change and this has made it harder to grow coffee.

**Show slide 8.**

Angela explained: 'With climate change, the coffee suffers from many diseases and pests. The sun has scorched the coffee beans, we cannot sell them and we're losing more every year because of climate change. When I was a kid, the weather was totally different. It's been changing a lot and we don't know when it's the rainy season or the dry season. There's been days with rain, then days with lots of sun.'

**Show slide 9.**

To solve the problem, Angela and her neighbours, who are also farmers, have joined together to help each other out and, with the support of an organisation called Soppexcca and the charity Christian Aid, they have swapped some of their coffee beans for cocoa beans. Changing the crops that you grow is called diversification.

**Show slide 10.**

The wonder cocoa beans are amazing, not only because they can grow in changing weather conditions but because they are also used to produce chocolate! The beans also have lots of other uses. Hold up the chocolate (if you are using this) . **As the pupils if they like chocolate.**

**Show slide 11.**

The neighbours help each other out. They look after the crops together and share tools and knowledge. This means they can grow a bigger crop and then, at harvest time, they can get a better price for their beans, which enables them to buy food, medicine and clothes.

**Show slide 12.**

Everyone in the community has a part to play in helping the beans grow. Young people, like Ariana's sister Johaira, are trained as youth promoters. They visit the farmers to record their progress and share know-how. It's helped build trust between the generations.

Johaira said: 'Sometimes I feel nervous about telling farmers what they need to do, but as a promoter I feel good and am always learning more. I am fascinated now by the farm and the crops. When I was little, I knew nothing, but you can see the difference with my little sister. She's only five and knows how to collect the coffee beans!'

**Show slide 13.**

Ariana really wants to be a farmer when she grows up: 'When I grow up, I would also like to grow cocoa. I really like cocoa!'

Can you think of a time recently when you worked together with your community, either in school or at home, to help your neighbours? **Ask the pupils to share their thoughts.**

**Show slide 14.**

When ordinary neighbourhoods come together, they can create lasting change. Just like during coronavirus lockdown and just like in Santa Rosa. In times of crisis, love unites us all.

**Show slide 15.**

Around the world, many of our global neighbours living in poverty continue to face difficulties. Love knows no distance. We can all reach out to our global neighbours and help more communities overcome hard times.

**Show slide 16.**

**End your presentation by telling pupils about any further work or fundraising activities you will be doing to support Christian Aid's Autumn Appeal.**

**Church schools might like to end with this prayer**

Dear God,

Thank you for beans that grow, sun that shines, rain that falls,  
and chocolate that is good to eat!

But sometimes, God, there is too much sun or too little rain  
and we know that climate change is making things difficult for many  
people around the world.

Help us to join together in school to help each  
other and our neighbours – nearby and around the world.

Amen

**Taking the theme further with your pupils**

Ariana's story shows us that when communities join together, they can make a big impact on working for good. What will your school do together to help your neighbours and community?

**Your school can help our global neighbours by raising funds to support similar projects to the one run by Soppexcca.**

**£9**

could provide 10 cocoa plants to help a family in Nicaragua start growing a better future.

**£53**

could provide tools to help a family in Nicaragua grow and harvest life-changing cocoa plants.

## Fundraising ideas

The autumn term is likely to be unusual for everyone and some of your tried and tested fundraising activities may not be possible. Here are a few ideas that can be adapted as appropriate to your own setting and current guidelines. These can be done in bubbles or even at home.

- As many schools will have missed out on their normal summer sports days, why not hold an autumn sponsored sports event within your bubbles? Set up stations or checkpoints around your playground and field that represent the different aspects of the cocoa-growing process (working with neighbours, planting the seeds, looking after the crops, harvesting, going to market). Pupils then either just pass each station as they do laps of the designated area or they stop and do some form of exercise at each one (eg, planting the seeds – star jumps; working with neighbours – kicking a ball to each other, etc).
- What sponsored bean challenges can your pupils devise? A bean bag balance? Juggling beans? Guess how many jelly beans in a jar? This could also be a virtual challenge at home for anyone not back in school.
- Contact your local coffee shop or garden centre to see if they will support your fundraising efforts by displaying some information or pictures from your pupils about Ariana’s story and inviting customers to donate.
- Grow some seeds, look after the plants and watch them grow. Find more about diversification and perhaps try growing something unusual.
- Have a non-uniform Bean Day in school with bean-related activities, beans for lunch and a bean-o-meter for donations for wearing non-uniform. How high can your school make the bean-o-meter grow?

## Ideas for further classroom learning

- Grow some seeds, look after the plants and watch them grow. Find out more about diversification and perhaps try growing something unusual.
- Visit [caid.org.uk/schools](https://caid.org.uk/schools) for a wealth of other assemblies and schools resources about the climate, food and being an active citizen.
- Find out more about chocolate production by playing the Chocolate Trade Game: [caid.org.uk/chocolategame](https://caid.org.uk/chocolategame)

