

# 1

## A story, a poem and a game

### SESSION AT A GLANCE

#### Story/Discussion

*The Mouse Princess's Wedding*

#### Song

*Blessings on you*

#### Game

*My grandfather's grandfather*

### Preparing for the session

This session introduces the topic 'Our Earth'. Over the next 11 sessions, we will see how the earth came into being and how life started on earth. We will also study the complex variety of life on our planet today and the interconnections that exist between all living and non-living things.

The concept of time comes up again and again in these sessions. We deal with such large periods of time that it is important to first grasp the meaning ourselves, and then convey it to the children in a way that they can understand. For this, the game in this session will be a big help.

While using **Sangati** Kit 1, each child was given a folder to file worksheets and other papers. If your class does not already have these folders, you will have to arrange for these in advance and distribute them at the end of the session. Make sure that your students file the copy of the song (and other materials that they will get in the sessions to come) in their folders. Remind them to bring their folders to class regularly.

You will have to arrange for materials marked with .

### Main ideas

- Since everything has its own purpose and its own place on earth, it is wrong to call any one thing the greatest or the most important.
- The earth gives us everything we need. It is very important to understand this and look after the earth.
- The universe and the earth came into existence many crores of years ago. The evolution of life on earth has also taken crores of years.

### To conduct the session you will need

- Flipchart : *The Mouse Princess's Wedding*
- Copies of the song *Blessings on you* (one copy per child.)
-  Folders (if necessary, one per child).



## Conducting the session

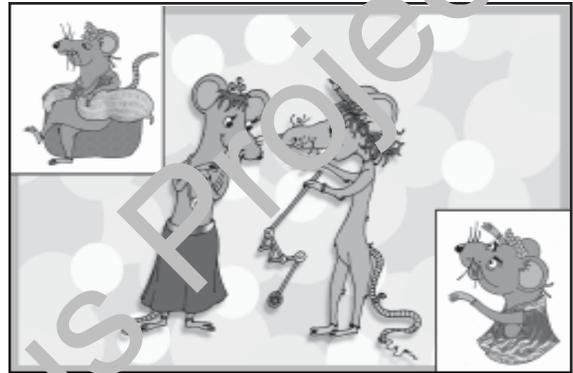
### Activity 1 Story/Discussion

#### The Mouse Princess's Wedding

Tell the following story with the help of the flipchart

#### Frame 1

Once upon a time, there was a mouse. Not an ordinary mouse but the king of all mice! And a very good king he was too - generous and just. His kingdom was full of happy contented mice and his capital was a sight to behold! There were sparkling clean, well-maintained roads, tree lined avenues, flower filled gardens, charming little cottages and impressive mansions!



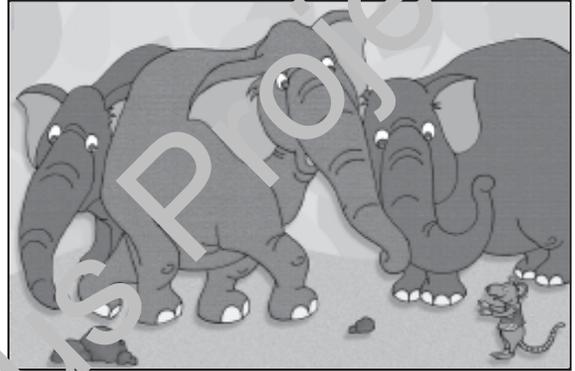
The mouse king had a daughter who was very dear to him. She was his pet. She was his darling, the apple of his eye.... you're getting the point, I hope? What I mean to say is that he would do anything for her. For example, if she were to say - she wouldn't actually, she was too smart to say such a silly thing - but if she were to say: "Papa get me the moon", the dear mouse king would leap towards the sky. If she asked for a pearl necklace, he would dive into the deepest ocean to find the best pearls for his little jewel. He would never refuse her anything. Except for one thing - on the issue of her marriage, he refused to budge.

What happened was this. The mouse princess was in love. There was a mouse she had gone to school with - not a prince or anything like that but a nice sort of chap; he loved inventing new things; he'd spend hours in his laboratory and when he came up with some outrageous, thoroughly useless thing, he'd run to the princess to show it off. He was the mouse for her. She loved his dishevelled hair, his sniffy red nose, his bright eyes behind his oversized glasses! She loved him and wanted to marry him.

"Never!" For the first time ever, the mouse king thundered at his darling daughter. "You, marry that good-for-nothing, runny-nosed junk-collector, never! I'll find you the best! Just you wait and see. I'll get the best, the most impressive bridegroom in the world for my precious princess."

### Frame 2

Saying this he stormed out of the palace but then stopped to ponder. Where would he find such a bridegroom? Who was the best in the world? The most impressive? The most powerful?



Just then a herd of elephants went past him. His eyes shone. He leapt up and ran towards the leader of the elephants. "My lord" he said, bowing low. "I have a beautiful daughter. I want the best bridegroom for her. You are the most powerful, the biggest of all animals. Who would be better for my daughter than you? Will you do her the honour of marrying her?" Elephant shook his head. Flapping his huge ears, he said "My friend you are mistaken. I am not the biggest animal in the world. The whale in the ocean is much bigger than I am. He is more worthy of your daughter. You should ask Whale."

### Frame 3

Eagerly the mouse king ran towards the sea. He spoke to the whale king who had just come up for air. "WWWWhat ddddddid you say?" spluttered Whale when he heard the mouse's request. "Did you call me the biggest, the most powerful? Well you are mistaken."



I'm not the most powerful. In fact, I'm nothing without this water. I can't even live for five minutes out of it. Water is certainly more powerful than I."

#### Frame 4

The mouse turned towards the water and asked if he would marry the mouse princess. The sound of Water's laughter rippled over the ocean. "What me, the most powerful? You must be joking! Did you not know that the sun's rays heat me up and turn me into vapour? I just disappear in front of the sun. He is the most powerful. Why don't you ask Sun to marry your daughter?"



#### Frame 5

The mouse king trotted off towards the horizon and caught up with the sun just as he was setting for the day. Sun smiled and said, "I wish I could help but I am not the most powerful. Look, how the cloud covers my face and hides me behind him. All my radiance, all my energy just fades away when Cloud is near. He is the most powerful." The mouse king scanned the sky. Sure enough, there was the huge dark cloud that the sun was so afraid of. Mouse King heaved a sigh of relief. His search was at an end - nothing could be bigger than this cloud.



"Oh no!" thundered Cloud "I am not good enough for your daughter. How can I be when I'm not even master of my own movements? A small gust of wind can blow me away in a jiffy. Wind is infinitely more powerful than me."

**Frame 6**

Just then a gust of wind huffed and puffed the cloud away. The mouse king ran with the wind. A difficult thing to do, you will agree, so he was panting as he made his request.



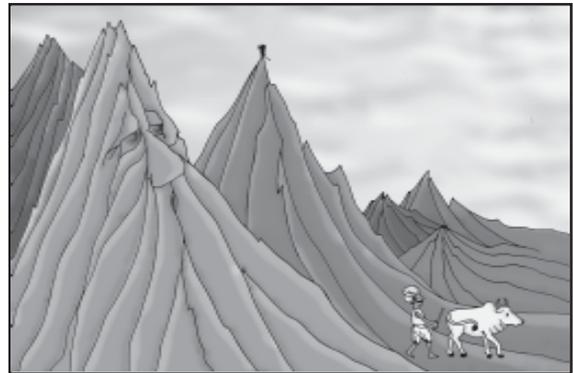
"No, no, no, no, no, a thousand times no!" said Wind. "Who told you that I am the most powerful in the world? Do you know what my job is? Blowing all over the world. Do you know why I can hardly do my job? Because of Mountain. He stands in my path and there is nothing I can do to make him budge. I fail completely when confronted by him. Wouldn't you say that he is more powerful than I?"

**Frame 7**

But the mouse king was surprised by the mountain's answer to his request.

Mountain said, in a deep resonant rumble, "Oh my dear friend, I wish I could help you but alas I'm not what you are looking for.

I'm certainly not the most powerful. Look at me. My sides have been eaten away to make man's roads. My feet are covered with his fields. Man seems to be more, much more powerful than me. Why don't you ask him?"

**Frame 8**

Sure enough, at the foot of the mountain, Man was tilling his fields. As soon as he saw the mouse king coming towards him, he began to run. Mouse king could not understand why Man so afraid of him and shouted out his request to him. Man stopped in his tracks, turned an

astonished face towards the Mouse King and squeaked, "You call me the most powerful? You, who reduce my labour to naught? You, who eat your way through my crop! You frighten my wife and send my children hungry to bed! You are more powerful than me. Any day, any way, you are the greatest! Oh my lord, spare my crop, let my children eat well for once!"



As Man blabbered on, the Mouse King clapped a hand to his brow. "Oh! How stupid I have been! Why did I not realise what has been under my nose all this while? What will my darling daughter think of me?" So saying, he rushed home.

Stop the story at this point and ask the children the following questions.

- What did the mouse king suddenly realise?
- Is there any answer to the question "Who is the greatest?"
- "Everything is connected" - do you think the story tells us this? How?
- What do you think the mouse king finally decided about his daughter's marriage?

## Activity 2

### Song

*Blessings on you!*

Tell the children that the mouse king married his darling daughter to the red-nosed, dishevelled-haired inventor she loved so much. You can describe the wedding in some detail. Also say that Elephant, Water, Wind, Cloud, Sun and Mountain were guests at the wedding. The Whale could not leave the ocean but sent his best wishes! Ask the children to imagine what gifts these guests would have given the bride and groom.

Then sing the song about the gifts and blessings that the mouse princess got from the guests. Give each child a copy of the song so that those who would like to may sing along with you.

The song ends with a special guest, Dhartimata, who brings a very unique gift for the newly-weds. This introduces the theme of Kit 2, and must therefore be given appropriate importance.

*Blessings on you !*

### पृथ्वी का आशीर्वाद

( धुन: इचक दाना बिचक दाना ...)

चूहे राजा की बिटिया की धूम-धाम से शादी है  
 सीधा-सादा, भोला-भाला चूहा उसका दूल्हा है - शादी है ...  
 हाथी मियाँ, पानी चाचा, बादल भैया, पर्वत अंकल  
 देखो तो बाराती आये, ढेर सारे तोहफे ले कर  
 सब से प्यारा तोहफ़ा ले कर धरती मैया आयी है । शादी है ...  
 माँ का तोहफ़ा सीख अनोखी - सब है एक जमान  
 इक दूजे का साथ निभाएँ तो जीजा आसन  
 कुदरत से जो देन मिली है उसकी रक्षा करानी है ॥ शादी है ...  
 सब से प्यारा तोहफ़ा ले कर धरती मैया आयी है - शादी है ॥



Sum up the activity by making the following points.

Like the Mouse Princess, all of us too have been blessed with the gifts of the earth. All of us get everything we need from the earth. We are all her children. In this kit therefore, we are going to learn about our earth and all her wonders.

### Activity 3 Game

*My Grandfather's  
Grandfather*

Introduce the game by asking the class, how old they think our Mother Earth is. After they have had a chance to guess, tell them that the earth was born about 450 crore years ago.

This is a very long time ago and children, even adults, find it difficult to imagine such a distant age. The game that follows helps us to understand the long period of time involved.

Introduce the activity by making the following statement.

When we talk about olden times we say 'in my grandfather's time'. Now, suppose 'grandfather's time' was 100 years ago. Then 'grandfather's grandfather's time' would be 200 years ago, and 'grandfather's grandfather's grandfather's time' would be 300 years ago.

Now get the children to say 'grandfather's grandfather's grandfather's ...' for one whole minute. (You can time it with your watch). Chant along with them to set up a rhythm. Replace some grandfather's with 'grandmother's' too, to make the chant more enjoyable. At the end of a minute, ask the children whether they are tired. Also, ask them how much time they think they have covered.

Tell them that at the end of the minute, they have gone back only 6000 years. Now ask them whether they could keep up the chant for five minutes and if they would like to do so. If they agree, you can actually try it. At the end of five minutes, tell them that they have gone back 30,000 years, which is a very long period of time but nothing compared to the age of our earth.

Now ask the children how long they think they would have to keep up the chant to count 450 crore years.

After the children have offered their guesses, tell them that we would have to say "grandfather's grandmother's grandfather's grandfather's ..." continuously, day and night, without stopping or pausing for breath for almost 500 days, that is, continuously for one and a half years to go back to the time the earth was born! That is how old our earth is and that that is how far back we will be going in the next few sessions when we discuss the story of our earth.

Conclude the session by distributing the folders if children do not already have them. Tell the class that they should decorate their folders, keep them carefully and bring them to every session. Make sure that your students file the copy of the song (and other materials that they will get in the sessions to come) in their folders.

Tell them that in the next session they will hear stories about the birth of our earth.

पृथ्वी का आशीर्वाद  
Blessings on you !

(धुन : इचक दाना बिचक दाना ...)

चूहे राजा की बिटिया की धूम-धाम से शादी है  
सीधा-सादा, भोला-भाला चूहा उसका दूल्हा है - शादी है ॥  
हाथी मियाँ, पानी चाचा, बादल भैया, पर्वत अंकल  
देखो तो बाराती आये, ढेर सारे तोहफ़े लेकर  
सबसे प्यारा तोहफ़ा लेकर धरती मैया आयी है ॥ शादी है ...  
माँ का तोहफ़ा सीख अनोखी - सब हैं एक समान  
इक दूजे का साथ निभायें तो जीना आसान  
कुदरत से जो देन मिली है उसकी रक्षा करनी है ॥ शादी है ...  
सबसे प्यारा तोहफ़ा लेकर धरती मैया आयी है - शादी है ॥

