


LETTER TAPORI

N°455

Tapori brings together groups of children who, through games, activities, and moments of reflection, discover that they can be actors of change, helping to make the world a fairer place. Together, they learn how to make sure no one is left out.

RESPECT

APRIL - MAY - JUNE 2026

A large, vibrant yellow globe with a textured, wavy surface is the central focus. Several children of diverse ethnicities and ages are depicted in various playful poses around and on the globe. Some are jumping, some are running, and others are sitting or standing. The background is a light, hazy blue sky. The word 'RESPECT' is written in large, bold, black capital letters in the upper right corner of the globe area.

In Tapori groups in different countries, children have worked in past years on an "Alphabet against Injustice". Tapori children searched for words that show there are many ways to stand up against injustice. To succeed in getting our societies to change for the better, it is essential to work together with others.

Now, we want to explore each word more deeply, so children can share what each word means to them. We begin with the word respect. In a world that divides us, how can we learn that every person has a fundamental right to respect?

Our Tapori group doesn't really have a name. People call us **Fuente Arenosa**, which is the name of the area we live in. Our apartments are built around a square. There are two iron gates that lead into the square. These gates are always open. People have tried to close them before and even to put security guards there to stop people coming in. They said it was to protect us. But a lot of the adults said it was more about locking people in and controlling them. In the end, one way or another, people in the neighbourhood always find a way to keep the gates open.

Almost all the Tapori children, both girls and boys, live in the same neighbourhood, but not all of them are from here, or at least they don't feel like they are. Some of the children were born here, but their parents come from another country. Some of them feel Spanish, while others feel they belong to their family's country. Others were born here, and so were their parents and they feel Spanish and they have another identity. They are Spanish *Gitanos*.

Being so different should be a good thing, but most of the time, it causes problems. When we get angry, or when things don't go the way we want, we sometimes use these differences to hurt each other, to point out what makes us different as if it were something bad. We're always on the defensive, and we hurt each other with words. And we try to defend ourselves with words that hurt. Sometimes we even end up fighting.



In Tapori, it's sometimes hard to play as a group because insults can start very quickly: "dirty Arab"; "you're just a lousy gypsy"; "racist". We keep repeating what we say to each other when we're playing outside, or what we hear in the school playground.

One day, when we were in Tapori, things weren't going very well. We couldn't really do anything together, so we just stopped. Marta, one member of the Tapori team, said we couldn't continue like that. She asked us why we come to Tapori and what we want our group to be like. At first, lots of us just said we didn't know, and that it didn't really matter. Then Ivan said he comes because he feels respected, and that's why he likes to come. But right then, it didn't feel like we were respecting each other. Ivan said again that he does feel respected, even if he can't really explain why. So the team leaders said that over the next few days we should all talk about what respect means to us.



WHAT IS RESPECT?

Tapori groups are all very different. The girls and boys who take part come from many different cultural and social situations. Some have indigenous roots, others belong to different ethnic groups in Africa, some have arrived with their families from other countries. And there are those who were born where they live today. This diversity is a big part of the group's life.

With this in mind, we invite each child to share a moment when they felt respected, and another moment where they did not feel respected. This helps create a space where everyone's voice can be heard, and where everyone can share their experience.

We can also think together about this question: Is respect the opposite of hate? Respect helps us understand that our differences do not have to divide us. If anything, they can actually be a real opportunity and a strength, as they help us learn from each other and live better together.

What does respect mean for each Tapori child?

Please don't forget to share with us what the children in your group say.

