



**Core Curriculum for  
Spiritual Education  
and Training**

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# Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth

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*Facilitator Guide*

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**National Bahá'í  
Education Task Force**

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# GUIDELINES FOR CORE CURRICULUM TEACHER TRAINING

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In 1988 the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States initiated development of the Core Curriculum for nationwide use to provide a **comprehensive** and **systematic** Bahá'í education for children and junior youth of all backgrounds. As a result of almost two decades of use, the curriculum currently offers an age-appropriate sequence of study, allowing children to move progressively from one topic to another, and continue their progress if their families relocate to another region.

Regional Training Institutes are responsible for providing the Core Curriculum teacher training. This training process provides a systematic means for multiplying the numbers of trained teachers and thereby multiplying the numbers of classes for children and junior youth well into the future.

**Writings-Based, Community-Focused Learning:** The Core Curriculum engages learners in direct study of the Bahá'í writings, using activities that assist them to internalize the spiritual principles in these writings, and apply them in their own lives and in their service to others. The curriculum includes outreach and service to the community as a whole, and benefits from the engagement of parents, families, teachers, community members, and local institutions.

**Partnership and Collaboration in Service:** The National Education and Schools Office and the National Bahá'í Education Task Force (NBETF) serve as resources for Regional Training Institutes as they implement effective and systematic Core Curriculum teacher training in all regions.

- Regional Training Institutes provide a system of regionalized training for teachers, drawing on the talents of Core Curriculum Teacher Trainers to provide Local Spiritual Assemblies and Bahá'í communities with the human resources they need to multiply Bahá'í classes open to all.
- Teacher Trainers, serving under the auspices of the Regional Training Institutes, regularly update their learning to provide teachers with consistent excellence in training across diverse circumstances, localities, and regions.
- Working through the Education and Schools Office at the Bahá'í National Center, the National Bahá'í Education Task Force collects feedback regarding the use of these materials for effective, systematic education for children and junior youth and teacher training, and carefully adjusts curriculum materials in light of this feedback when reprinting subsequent editions.

**Flexible, Learning-Oriented, and Evolving Curriculum:** The Core Curriculum grows and develops through a process involving the experience of teachers and trainers working at the grassroots, and reflection on what has been learned in the field. The feedback of these collaborators provides a vital component of the process of curriculum development.

**Team Collaboration:** Experience demonstrates that *Core Curriculum Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth* is most effectively provided by two-person teams of Teacher Trainers. Teacher Trainers also provide for the ongoing skill development of teachers by facilitating the sequence of *Core Curriculum Teacher Development Workshops*. Teacher Trainers serve as mentors to the teachers they train, and experienced Teacher Trainers may also serve as mentors to Teacher Trainers who are beginning their service.

Teacher Trainers participate in reflection meetings organized by their Regional Training Institutes for tutors, trainers, and facilitators. A reflective self-report form is included at the end of this Facilitator's Guide that provides an additional tool to focus the reflections of Teacher Trainers about their service. This tool also provides a framework for feedback that is utilized by NBETF in the continuous development of Core Curriculum programs, and should be completed and turned in according to the protocol established by the Regional Training Institute under whose auspices a Teacher Trainer serves. Protocols may vary from one Regional Training Institute to another.

**Initiation and Sponsorship of Trainings:** Teacher Trainers serve within the normal administrative guidelines of their Regional Training Institutes to initiate, conduct, and report their Core Curriculum training of teachers for children and junior youth. Local Spiritual Assemblies and individuals interested in Core Curriculum teacher training may initiate a local training by contacting either the Regional Training Institute coordinator serving their area or a Teacher Trainer they know. Teacher Trainers may generate enthusiasm for training through their contacts in the local community and by encouraging the friends to commit to participation in teacher training. Trainings initiated by Teacher Trainers are considered a regular part of the institute process and reported as such to the Regional Training Institute.

Many Regional Training Institutes appoint a regional Core Curriculum coordinator to coordinate arrangements for Core Curriculum teacher training through such means as [a.] providing direct assistance and support for a teacher training, [b.] facilitating the flow of information and training requests, [c.] sharing community-based learning about children's and junior youth classes with the RTI and NBETF.

**Feedback-Learning Loop:** Curricula and training processes developed by NBETF are both well tested and continuously evolving in light of experience. Usage in real situations provides critical experience with diverse circumstances and populations.

To foster this continuous learning from the grassroots, NBETF utilizes written feedback about Core Curriculum teacher training throughout the United States. This feedback is studied by NBETF and stimulates further refinement of course materials and training processes. In this way, learning from the diverse training experiences across the country benefits all. This systematic feedback loop provides a means for bringing together the active participants using the curriculum as an ongoing reflection group that contributes to the future development of the curriculum. As part of the normal training process, trainers should provide a written report of their training activities according to the protocols established by the Regional Training Institute under whose auspices they serve.

## **Administrative Guidelines for Bahá'í Classes for Children and Junior Youth**

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Among the vital responsibilities of Local Spiritual Assemblies is to establish and support classes and schools to provide Bahá'í education for the children and junior youth within their jurisdiction. Individuals may also initiate Bahá'í classes, which fall within the general sponsorship of Local Spiritual Assemblies in localities where they exist. Assembly sponsorship does not mean that the Assembly assumes active direction or control of individually initiated Bahá'í classes; rather, it ensures that the Assembly is aware of the activity and how it is conducted; that it expresses its support of the activity; and that it assures that the individuals responsible for the activity are capable, trustworthy, and responsible for the safety and well-being of the children and junior youth in these classes. Large intercommunity schools and smaller neighborhood initiatives both fall within the jurisdiction of Local Spiritual Assemblies.

For more information, teachers and Teacher Trainers should become familiar with the National Spiritual Assembly's Child Protection Guidelines, which may be found online at: [http://www.usbnc.org/comm/docs/bnc/oad/2004\\_1210\\_oad\\_DDBCPProtectionChildrenYouth.pdf](http://www.usbnc.org/comm/docs/bnc/oad/2004_1210_oad_DDBCPProtectionChildrenYouth.pdf).

### **Providing the Content and Process of Core Curriculum Teacher Training**

The *Core Curriculum Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth* continuously evolves in light of the experiences of the friends everywhere. Teacher Trainers should be mindful that the training materials will change over time and are responsible for utilizing the most up-to-date materials. Regional Training Institutes and their coordinators will assist Teacher Trainers to stay up-to-date with the *Teacher Training* and the *Teacher Development Workshops*. New materials and training updates are routinely posted on the Core Curriculum website, [www.core-curriculum.org](http://www.core-curriculum.org).

*Core Curriculum Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth* is a 32-hour course consisting of four modules with the following content:

- Modules One and Two systematically demonstrate Core Curriculum training methodology and learning processes, so that teachers gain experience with the instructional methods and learning tools that they will use with children and junior youth before they become responsible for using those methods and tools in their own children's and junior youth classes. These modules also explore the sacred responsibilities of the teacher and the spiritual reality of the child.
- Module Three provides practice using Core Curriculum Lesson Planning Guides and Storybooks for children and junior youth, to understand the systematic nine-year curriculum for children and junior youth. Participants become aware of preschool lessons for young children and begin exploring how to increase their outreach into the community at large.
- Module Four explores ways to foster a vibrant, unified, and writings-based approach of the entire Bahá'í community's attitude towards children, junior youth, and families.

Most communities choose to schedule this course in four 8-hour days, usually over two weekends or four consecutive Saturdays or Sundays. While other delivery formats are possible, many years of experience confirm this type of schedule both for teachers and for communities that are eager to begin their classes for children and junior youth.

*Teacher Development Workshops, Volume One*, responds to the questions of practicing teachers in such areas as outreach and inclusion, addressing students with special needs, setting standards in the classrooms, classroom management, and many more. Additional workshops are anticipated in the future. Teacher Trainers normally provide the ongoing sequence of Teacher Development Workshops on a periodic basis (monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly). Each workshop may be completed within a single 3–4 hour block.

## **ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL TEACHER TRAINING**

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Well-prepared trainers provide the key to the success of this teacher training program. Please consider the following elements for success:

### **Knowledge Through Service**

Ongoing hands-on service in the classroom with children and junior youth using the Core Curriculum Lesson Planning Guides and storybooks is critical to your success as a trainer of teachers. Staying closely involved in Bahá'í education will enhance your ability to meet the needs of the teachers you serve.

### **Planning and Implementation Procedures**

All these gifts and bounties depend upon love for the Beauty of the All-Glorious, and on the blessings in the teachings of the Most High, and the spiritual instructions of the Supreme Concourse, and on ecstasy and ardor and diligent pursuit of whatsoever will redound to the eternal honor of the community of man.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ. *BAHÁ'Í EDUCATION*, REV. ED. 1999, NO. 61

As a Teacher Trainer, you collaborate with Bahá'í institutions (primarily Regional Training Institutes, and also Local Spiritual Assemblies, and/or Auxiliary Board Members) to set up and deliver Teacher Training. Please complete a training report after the completion of each training for teachers or each set of teacher development workshops. Regional Training Institutes serve as the primary venue for Core Curriculum Teacher Training.

- Regional Training Institutes, Local Spiritual Assemblies, Auxiliary Board Members, and others may contact the Education and Schools Office at the Bahá'í National Center, (847) 733-3492, [SCHOOLS@usbnc.org](mailto:SCHOOLS@usbnc.org), if they are not aware of Teacher Trainers in their area.
- Most Regional Training Institutes maintain up-to-date records of teacher training.

### **A Joyous Training Environment**

Create an atmosphere of love, joy, cooperation, and discovery throughout your training. Experience suggests that a range of participants (i.e., 8–16) enables close interaction among the group members, while allowing for a full demonstration of varied methods of group interaction.

### **Creating an Environment for Spiritual Education**

Prepare and maintain a reverential, dignified, and beautiful environment throughout the training. Some possibilities for enhancing the environment are:

- Arrangements of fresh or dried flowers in vases.
- Photographs of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.
- Bowls of potpourri or drops of rose oil.
- Candles, if permitted by hosting facility.
- Soft instrumental music from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Sharing devotions in a separate location from the work area.
- Photographs of great teachers, heroines, and heroes.

The setting need not be elaborate or expensive, but it does need to be clean and orderly and have some elements of beauty. Please clean the space if it isn’t already clean.

Remember that beauty doesn’t require a big budget. This can be done by setting an example of simplicity while at the same time expressing the principle of beauty, a reflection of the Most Great Beauty. Inexpensive or cost-free expressions of beauty include an interesting arrangement of rocks, a bouquet of leaves or wildflowers, simple cloth pieces under a vase or a nicely shaped branch, etc. Please spend some time considering how to add beauty according to your circumstances. It is also nice to refresh the environment daily so that each morning has a fresh and clean beginning, and also to change the decoration at some point during the training.

### **Possible Devotional Activities**

Consider a variety of reverential and inspirational ways to share sacred writings and prayers together. Some possibilities are:

- Share prayers in different languages.
- Listen to prayers and sacred writings recited with music as a background.
- Encourage chanting, singing, and melodious recitation of prayers.
- Share recordings of prayers or passages that have been set to music.
- Encourage incorporating movement, dance, or sign language into the recital of prayers.
- Prepare, in an attractive manner, pre-selected devotional readings for distribution.
- Prepare pre-selected passages on small slips of paper, rolled up and tied with a ribbon; present these on a tray as “special treats.”



## Emphasis on the Sacred Texts

Naught but the celestial potency of the Word of God which ruleth and transcendeth the realities of all things is capable of harmonizing the divergent thoughts, sentiments, ideas and convictions of the children of men.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, *TABLETS OF THE DIVINE PLAN*, REV. ED. 1993, P. 103

The Bahá’í writings are the foundation, the standard, and the inspiration of the Core Curriculum. Therefore, the study of the sacred texts, the writings of the Guardian, and those of the Universal House of Justice is the most essential element of the Core Curriculum Teacher Training. Any content of the training program beyond the actual writings represents the efforts of the National Bahá’í Education Task Force to apply the principles and characteristics of Bahá’í education to the dynamic practice of teaching in light of the experiences of thousands of friends from all around the world.

## Modeling and the Principle of Example

In thy school, instruct thou God’s children in the customs of the Kingdom. Be thou a teacher of love, in a school of unity. Train thou the children of the friends of the Merciful in the rules and ways of His loving-kindness. Tend the young trees of the Abhá Paradise with the welling waters of His grace and peace and joy. Make them flourish under the downpour of His bounty. Strive with all thy powers that the children may stand out and grow fresh, delicate and sweet, like the ideal trees in the gardens of Heaven.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, *BAHÁ’Í EDUCATION*, REV. ED. 1999, NO. 61

Your conduct in the Teacher Training should mirror for prospective teachers the distinctive qualities of a Bahá’í educational process. This will be reflected in the set-up of the physical environment, in your loving attitude toward the friends, and in your appreciation and honoring of the diversity of your participants. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s example and presence should be a constant, conscious, and primary reference throughout.

## Team Facilitators

Experience shows that teams of two teacher trainers provide the most effective *Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth*. In addition, a diverse team of facilitators provides an ideal learning and teaching model for the teachers you serve.

## Hands-On Service to Children and Junior Youth

Your hands-on work with children and junior youth using the Lesson Planning Guides and storybooks is critical to your success as a trainer of teachers for children and junior youth. The teacher’s confidence in your service to them moves to the highest level when they see you in the classroom, sharing their tests and joys, using the same curriculum materials, striving toward the same goals, celebrating success and striving side by side through all difficulties. If it is not possible for you to sustain an ongoing class please create regular opportunities throughout the year for your own interaction with children and junior youth using the Core Curriculum materials.

## *Program Success Factors Checklist*

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- \_\_\_\_\_ My co-facilitator and I consulted with the sponsoring institutions (usually Regional Training Institutes) and received their guidance and support for our plan. We also have sought guidance from the Local Spiritual Assemblies under whose direction the teachers will serve.
- \_\_\_\_\_ We consulted with our Core Curriculum mentor (if applicable).
- \_\_\_\_\_ We consulted with our Auxiliary Board Member and Assistants about increasing readiness in our community.
- \_\_\_\_\_ We have personally invited prospective teachers and interested individuals to participate in the training.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Letters of invitation were sent to surrounding Bahá'í communities, including teachers, education committee members, Local Spiritual Assembly members, and those who plan deepenings and community events.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Follow-up phone calls are made to be sure that friends in the area know about the Teacher Training and schedule.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Books were ordered for each participant (participants' course books; *Foundations for a Spiritual Education*; *Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Volume One storybook*; *Bahá'u'lláh, Level One Lesson Planning Guide*; *Teacher's Spiritual Education Plan*; *Student's Spiritual Education Record*. Alternately, Lesson Planning Guides may also be selected to correspond to the curriculum level and strand the teachers will be using first).
- \_\_\_\_\_ We visited the training location (home or other) and made plans to assure that it is clean, pleasantly fragrant, comfortable, and attractive for the training workshops.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Appropriate arrangements were made for children during the programs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Arrangements were made for refreshments to be served.
- \_\_\_\_\_ We reviewed carefully each module to be offered, noted the schedule and materials needed, and decided who will lead each activity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Supplemental materials were copied or prepared for each participant.
- \_\_\_\_\_ We arranged for music, art supplies, and audio-visuials to create a beautiful atmosphere for presentation of the modules.
- \_\_\_\_\_ We arranged to make Bahá'í prayer books and other Bahá'í holy books available during the workshops.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Our mentor was consulted to help us evaluate and problem-solve during the progress of our work plan (if applicable).
- \_\_\_\_\_ We sought divine assistance for our work with participants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ We reported our service to the Regional Training Institute and shared our feedback about the training materials using the form on pages 58–59.

## Double-Checking Your Preparation

1. Make sure you have all your materials and are well prepared.
2. If a public place can't be found, you can use someone's home. You may also consider hosting the training in your own home.
3. Ask the Regional Training Institute or Local Spiritual Assembly to assist with refreshments if possible. Study circles in the area may also provide this service.
4. Assess if there is a need for childcare and if so, request that a sponsoring institution assist with the necessary arrangements. Study circles may also offer this service. Ask for the help you need. Individuals are often happy to assist.
5. The fee that is assessed to the participants for the classes may cover all or some of the training expenses. Regional Training Institutes have normal policies for handling expenses and providing participant scholarships as needed. Local Spiritual Assemblies or local Bahá'í Schools may also provide scholarships.

Potential costs for each participant might include:

Participant course books	\$ 8.75
<i>Foundations for a Spiritual Education</i>	\$ 9.95
<i>Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Level One Lesson Planning Guide</i> (or alternate Lesson Planning Guide)	\$12.95
<i>Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Volume One Storybook</i> (or alternate Storybook)	\$12.95
<i>Teacher's Spiritual Education Plan</i>	\$ 1.00
<i>Student's Spiritual Education Record</i>	\$ 1.00
Art supplies, candles, assorted items	\$ 2.15
Photocopies of lesson planning template (optional)	\$ 0.25
<i>These Heavenly Children</i> DVD (optional)	\$ 0.00
Total	\$49.00

NOTE: Requesting participants to bring their own scissors, markers, or other art supplies may be a useful cost-saving technique.

Please also consider the cost of any snacks, meals, facility rental, and transportation, if trainers travel to a non-local community.

## Workshop Supplies & Equipment

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The following is a list of suggested supplies and materials to have on hand for use in the training. Share this list with the sponsoring institution to determine what is available and what needs to be purchased or collected.

Materials to be ordered from the Bahá'í Distribution Service: (800) 999-9019, [www.bahai bookstore.com](http://www.bahai bookstore.com); or from the Louhelen Bahá'í School bookstore: (800) 894-9716, [Louhelen@usbnc.org](mailto:Louhelen@usbnc.org)

- \_\_\_ *Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth* course books
- \_\_\_ *Foundations for a Spiritual Education: Research of the Bahá'í Writings*
- \_\_\_ Core Curriculum Lesson Planning Guides
- \_\_\_ Core Curriculum Storybooks
- \_\_\_ Teacher's Spiritual Education Plan
- \_\_\_ Student's Spiritual Education Record
- \_\_\_ *These Heavenly Children* DVD

### For the Facilitators

- \_\_\_ White board & pens or chalkboard & chalk
- \_\_\_ Pad of large chart paper, easel, markers
- \_\_\_ CD/cassette player
- \_\_\_ Small bell or chime (optional)

### For the Environment

- \_\_\_ Recorded music: instrumental, prayers, cultural
- \_\_\_ Throw pillows, floor mats
- \_\_\_ Potpourri, candles, tablecloth
- \_\_\_ TV and VCR, if you plan to show part of a Bahá'í video during your devotions
- \_\_\_ Photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá
- \_\_\_ Boxes of tissue
- \_\_\_ TV or computer and DVD player, if available, for viewing *These Heavenly Children*

### For the Participants

- \_\_\_ Name tags or cardstock for name boards
- \_\_\_ Gift quotations for participants
- \_\_\_ Paints, paint brushes (if available)
- \_\_\_ Ribbon, glitter, beads, feathers (if available)
- \_\_\_ Musical instruments (if available)
- \_\_\_ Construction paper, tissue paper, wrapping paper, writing paper; lined or unlined
- \_\_\_ Containers to hold and display art material
- \_\_\_ Pens, pencils, pencil sharpener
- \_\_\_ Felt markers and crayons
- \_\_\_ Tape: transparent & masking
- \_\_\_ Glue, glue sticks
- \_\_\_ Scissors

### Books

- \_\_\_ *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*
- \_\_\_ *The Hidden Words*
- \_\_\_ *Bahá'í Education*
- \_\_\_ *The Seven Valleys and The Four Valleys*
- \_\_\_ *Paris Talks*
- \_\_\_ *Some Answered Questions*
- \_\_\_ *Prayer books*
- \_\_\_ *Dictionaries*

### Materials to photocopy:

- \_\_\_ Blank lesson planning templates
- \_\_\_ Agendas
- \_\_\_ Maps (to restaurants, park, childcare or overnight facilities)
- \_\_\_ Handouts selected after reviewing the training materials
- \_\_\_ Participant roster

During the course you may decide to copy and distribute additional materials. Plan how this will be done, and identify in advance a person (not taking the training) who can assist in this way.

## **Specific Materials for Each Module**

### **Introduction, Module One**

Welcome gift (a quotation, nicely presented)

Name boards

Poster or large cards with K, W, SP, ES definitions, if desired

Rose Activity: definition of roses, pictures of roses, fresh roses, rose oil or rosewater (if available), rose quotations, small pictures or stickers of roses, small cards and envelopes

Small squares of beeswax

Spiritual Development of the Teacher: pictures cut from magazines of the beauty of nature and of diverse people (optional)

*Foundations for a Spiritual Education: Research of the Bahá'í Writings* books

*Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth* course books

*These Heavenly Children* DVD (optional)

### **Module Two**

“Tree of Life” puzzle pieces OR mirror, cream, dust, window cleaner, and towels

Nature pictures (if nature walk is not possible)

Words of Wisdom, cut apart on pretty paper (optional)

### **Module Three**

Lesson Planning Guides, storybooks, Teacher’s Spiritual Education Plan, Student’s Spiritual Education Record

Blank lesson planning templates

Sample copies of *Brilliant Star* (optional)

Paper for Feedback Notes

Paper for folding “birds”

### **Module Four**

Banner materials (butcher paper or alternative, and art supplies)

Community Web materials: ball of yarn, labels

Tinker toys, pipe cleaners, or other construction materials (optional activity)

Mining the Gems materials: “mountain,” gems, music CD (if desired)

### **Conclusion**

Miscellaneous materials for “Core Curriculum is like \_\_\_” analogies

Evaluation forms (photocopy or ask participants to tear the page from their course books)

Parting gift (a quotation, nicely presented)

## Sample Agenda for Teacher Training

8:00-9:00 Lovingly greet participants, register, serve pastries

### Day One—Introduction and Module One: The Bahá'í Teacher

- 9:00 Welcome, Devotions, Introductions, Name Boards
- 9:45 Historical Overview, Organizational Schema, Course Overview, Journals
- 10:45 Break
- 11:00 Introduction to Module One—Themes and Objectives
- 11:15 Qualities of Bahá'í Teachers  
(‘Abdu’l-Bahá story from H. C. Ives) 20 min. to read/study; 15 min. to process
- 11:50 Role and Station of the Teacher  
An Exploration of the Writings (study in small groups, 30 min.; prepare skit, song, etc., 10 min.; present, 10 min.; process 5 min.)
- 12:45 Lunch
- 1:30 Spiritual Development of the Teacher  
Read/reflect on the quotation, “The aim is this . . .”; identify goal in general terms; select images, if desired
- 1:45 Personal Development writings and Setting Personal Goals within the Curriculum Framework. Individually study the writings as a guide; then construct a personal development plan using K, W, SP, ES (take a full hour to enjoy this key activity)
- 2:45 Process, invite sharing of plans
- 3:15 Memorization Activity and Process (identify other ways to encourage children to memorize)
- 3:35 Break
- 3:50 Summary of Module One: Matching Objectives
- 4:00 Word Splash (10 min. to write; 10 min. to share/compare/process)
- 4:20 True-False Game (play 10 min.; process 10 min.)
- 4:40 Show and Discuss These Heavenly Children video
- 5:10 Personal Study and Preparation (include questions and answers)  
Closing music, devotions, and love
- 5:30 Farewell

## **Day Two—Module Two: The Spiritual Reality of the Child**

9:00 Devotions

9:20 Reflections on Module One; Module Two Themes and Objectives

9:30 Recognizing the Spiritual Reality of the Child

Study writings in small groups, 30 min.; select one quotation (possibly have these cut apart for selection) and create artwork, 20 min.; present and process, 20 min.

10:40 Break

10:55 A Perspective on Human Development

- Understanding Stages of Maturity; read quotations, 5 min.
- Cautions regarding current theories of human development, 10 min.
- Development Patterns (divide into age groups and study appropriate development patterns in the course book and in *Foundations*, 25 min.; groups recombine with a member from each age group and create multi-age session, 30 min.; share results, 20 min.)

12:25 Lunch

1:15 The Process of Spiritual Growth

- Attending to Capacity, Capability, and Interest (read quotations) 10 min.
- Exploring the Process of Transformation through storytelling (Consider moving to a different area to tell the story, using simple props, and inviting the participants to close their books, relax, and enjoy the story; then process the activity, 20 min.)

1:45 The Development of the Soul

2:45 Using The Four Valleys as a Model of Spiritual Growth

As time permits, you also may choose to include the optional activities on p. 78 of the course book

3:30 Lessons Conveyed through Nature (nature walk and search for sample; return at 3:45 to share, having included break time in this; share, 15 min.)

4:15 Facilitating Spiritual Growth

Study writings in three groups for 30 min.; assign group roles as Mentor, Gardener, Doctor to create presentations, 15 min.; present, 10 min.; process, 5 min.

5:15 Summary of Module Two

- Scavenger Hunt in partners, as a whole group, or groups of three, 5 min.
- Present summary of the key points of Introduction and Modules One and Two
- Allow time for each person to share reflections about Modules One and Two
- Invite participants to engage in personal study, preparation for Modules Three and Four
- Closing prayers (Words of Wisdom)

5:30 Love and Farewell

### **Day Three—Module Three: Teaching through the Use of the Core Curriculum Materials**

- 9:00 Devotions; Introduction to Module Three—Themes and Objectives
- 9:25 Spiritual Education Content: Deciding What to Teach, pp. 91–93
- 9:45 The Core Curriculum Scope and Sequence; Selecting the Strands; Identifying Goals, Topics, and Objectives in the Strands, pp. 94–100
- 10:05 The Process: How to Teach the Content, and How Students Will Learn It
- 10:20 Integrating Content and Process with the Diverse Capacities, Capabilities, and Interests of Learners
- 10:30 Choosing the Appropriate Learning Activities for Your Students
- 10:50 Break
- 11:05 Presentation of the Core Curriculum Lesson Planning Guide and Storybook
- Music and story about Bahá'u'lláh
  - Present Curriculum Lesson Planning Guide and Storybook
  - Explain layout in books
  - Quiet reflection time to look
- 11:25 Format of the Lesson Planning Guides
- 11:45 Using the Core Curriculum Lesson Planning Guides and Storybooks
- 12:30 Lunch
- 1:15 Planning Continues
- 2:30 Instructional Methods and Learning Tools Checklist
- 3:00 Practice Teaching—Feedback and Support
- 4:00 Processing and Self-Assessment
- Share reflections from the work session, such as the benefit of working with a partner, the time it takes to construct good lessons, how this process illustrates the noble station of teachers, and what was learned about tendencies to use certain learning tools, etc. (This period of self-assessment and reflection can summarize much of the training.)
- 4:20 Evaluating Learning
- 4:35 Systematic Use of the Scope and Sequence
- 5:00 Making Use of Available Resources (Can be good time to ask if group plans to meet again to share lessons or have on-going relationship as resource for each other)
- 5:10 Summary of Module Three: Building Lessons, Taking Flight
- 5:30 Devotions, Parting Love



## **Day Four—Module Four: The Child Development Centered Community**

- 9:00 Devotions, Welcome Back, Review of Previous Modules  
Introduction to Module Four— Themes and Objectives
- 9:30 Assisting Children to Fulfill Their Destiny Before God
- 10:00 Banners Proclaiming the Children of the Kingdom (assign this to groups, create “banners” or posters or parade floats 15 min.; then enact the “parade”)
- 10:20 Break
- 10:30 The Child Development Centered Community
- 10:45 Major Features of the Child Development Centered Community
- 11:00 The Community Web
- 11:30 Construct a Model of the Child Development Centered Community (optional)
- 12:00 Children’s Classes Open to All
- 12:30 Lunch
- 1:15 Exploring and Applying Roles and Responsibilities
- 2:45 From Here to There: Vision to Reality
- 3:05 Break
- 3:20 Appreciating and Celebrating Diversity in the Classroom and the Community
- 3:50 Summary of Module Four: Mining Gems
- 4:50 Concluding the Training (please briefly review all four modules)
- 5:10 Evaluations; Distribute rosters of participants as evaluations are completed
- 5:20 Ongoing Personal Development
- 5:30 Devotions and Parting Love

## SPECIFIC ACTIVITY NOTES FOR FACILITATORS OF TEACHER TRAINING

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### Introduction, Module One

Activities and Suggested Times		Materials Needed
Welcome, Devotions, and Introductions	45 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome gift: a quotation, nicely presented</li> </ul>
Historical Overview of the Development of the Core Curriculum	10 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name boards</li> </ul>
The Organizational Schema; The Core Curriculum Learning Framework: The Rose Activity	60 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poster or large cards with K, W, SP, ES definitions</li> </ul>
Overview of the Teacher Training	10 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rose Activity: definition of roses, pictures of roses, fresh roses, rose oil or rosewater (if available), rose quotations, small pictures or stickers of roses, small cards and envelopes</li> </ul>
Personal Journals	10 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small squares of beeswax</li> </ul>
Module One Themes and Objectives	10 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spiritual Development of the Teacher: pictures cut from magazines of the beauty of nature and of diverse people (optional)</li> </ul>
Qualities of Bahá'í Teachers: Learning from the Example of 'Abdu'l-Bahá	45 min.	
Role and Station of the Teacher: An Exploration of the Bahá'í Writings	60 min.	
Spiritual Development of the Teacher: Spiritual Growth Plan	15 min.	
Personal Development Plan	60 min.	
Memorization of the Creative Word: Spiritual Development of the Teacher	20 min.	
Summary of Module One: Evaluating Learning	45 min.	
These Heavenly Children Video and Discussion	30 min.	
Personal Study and Preparation for Module Two; Closing Devotions	20 min.	

### *Welcome, Devotions, and Introductions*

#### **Introduction, pp. 12–13**

You may wish to offer a nicely prepared gift quotation to welcome the teachers as they arrive.

Please begin the session with beautiful uplifting devotions, including music.

Invite each member of the pair to interview the other, learning about each other's work and aspirations in the area of spiritual education, and what each hopes to gain from this teacher training. Invite them to look for a special spiritual quality in their partner.

Other questions you might pose as part of this activity are:

What is the special gift or blessing represented by your community?

How did you become a Bahá'í?  
Describe your family.  
What is your current involvement in spiritual education?  
What is the most fun you've ever had?  
Why is it so important to educate children and youth?  
What makes you laugh?  
What is a special bounty given you by Bahá'u'lláh?  
How would you define beautiful?  
What could you not live without?

### **Name Cards, p. 13**

Provide your participants with heavy paper or card stock (approximately 8 1/2" x 11"). From these they will make name cards which can stand up on a table and can be read from across the room.

Instruct them to fold the card in half, crease and open it. Then ask them to fold both ends in to meet at folded line and crease these folds. If you open the paper, you'll have three creases, like this:



Create a three-dimensional triangular prism using the folds, like this:



Invite participants to write their name, as they wish to be addressed, on one side of their name card. Present the art supplies and invite them to decorate their name card as well. Explain that this can be an ongoing art project throughout the training, adding more decoration to their name card to express their hopes and aspirations for the spiritual education of children and junior youth.

### **Course Books, p. 13**

If small squares of beeswax or modeling clay are available, provide each participant with a small piece of beeswax or clay. Use this analogy for the Core Curriculum training process and its materials—especially the Course Book. Like the beeswax, if it is not used it will remain stiff and unworkable. Through this training, the book will become yours personally.

Distribute the books, *Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth* and *Foundations for a Spiritual Education*.

Explain that we will return to the beeswax or clay throughout the training. Encourage the participants to apply patience and love to their piece of wax or clay throughout the training, and see how it becomes transformed!

Clay is readily available. Beeswax is available from craft stores, beekeepers, through the internet (search for “modeling beeswax”), or the Louhelen Bahá’í School bookstore: (800) 894-9716, or email [Louhelen@usbnc.org](mailto:Louhelen@usbnc.org). If you keep the wax at room temperature or warm it slightly it will be malleable.

## *The Core Curriculum Learning Framework: The Rose Activity*

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### Introduction, pp. 17–18

#### Materials Needed:

- Pictures of roses
- Vase with real roses
- Tray with rose petals
- Optional: rose water sweets
- Blank cards, envelopes
- Rose stickers, stamps, and other decorative items

1. Ask the participants to close their course books as you suggest:  
“Let’s begin this training with a gift—a gift of roses. But imagine for a moment that you do not speak the English language and you do not know the word ‘rose.’ Let’s begin at the beginning and explore the concept of the rose together.”

Alternately, you may suggest: “Let’s begin this training with a gift—a gift that we won’t name yet. First, let’s explore it together.”

2. “Let’s check the dictionary definition and read it aloud:  
Noun: any of a genus of usually prickly, often climbing shrubs with divided leaves and bright, often fragrant flowers. (*Merriam Webster’s Desk Dictionary*)

“Based on this definition alone, what do we now **know** about our gift?”

3. Examine some pictures of roses.

Ask: “What do these pictures add to our **knowledge**?”

4. Bring out a vase of real roses and take a moment to observe their beauty.
5. Pass a tray of fresh rose petals around the room—encourage participants to take one, feel and smell the rose petals, but keep them intact.

Ask: “How has your **understanding** increased?”

6. *Optional:* if available, enjoy some rose water sweets. Ask: “What further understanding is gained?”
7. “So far we have explored some of the **physical** aspects of our gift, but we can also explore something of its **spiritual** potential.”

Play soft music in the background and invite participants to open their course books to the page of quotations “The Rose,” p. 18 in their course books. Invite the participants to read the quotations aloud.

8. Discuss: “How is the image of this gift used in the writings of Bahá’u’lláh, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and Shoghi Effendi? What concepts are illustrated? What spiritual qualities are brought to light?”
9. Suggest that we might also **share** this gift with others. Invite the participants to think of a person—a relative, friend, or acquaintance—who might need a message of love and warmth. Using the blank cards, rose stickers, and rose pictures provided, invite them to write a loving note to that person, decorate it as they like, and perhaps include one of the quotations as well as the rose petal. You may offer to mail the cards for the participants if they are sealed and addressed.

## ***Spiritual Development of the Teacher: Spiritual Growth Plan***

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### **Module One, pp. 29–31**

Consider having available a collection of pictures cut from magazines that include a variety of images from nature and diverse, appealing pictures of people. Invite participation to select one picture that represents them today and another picture that represents their increased capability for service after achieving their goals.

Debrief the “Spiritual Growth Plan” by re-introducing the learning model:

- You can do this by thinking of a circle on the chart paper or chalkboard with points in the four directions. Don’t draw the circle at first. Simply write K or Knowledge at the “east” point and explain that the learning process can begin anywhere but always includes knowledge (explain—not read—the definition here).
- Then draw an arc to the “south” point and write Wisdom, then explain wisdom.
- Draw an arc to the “west” point, write Spiritual Perception and explain spiritual perception.
- Draw an arc to the “north” point, write and explain Eloquent Speech.
- Then continue arcs within and outside the circle in the form of a spiral and explain that this is a cycle of learning, that our words and deeds of service (eloquent speech) always lead to new knowledge—we learn from our service, we observe the results and that starts us on the next cycle of learning.

This usually takes 3–4 minutes.

Mention that this is not a linear process: we can start anywhere and we don’t necessarily always go in the same order. And there are other ways to describe the learning process or the process of spiritual development. No need for a long discussion; the point of this little discussion is to continue building their KNOWLEDGE base of the learning model.

Explain that the Core Curriculum learning model is one option (of many) for describing the process of spiritual development, that it is a very useful and practical model used with success in many parts of the world for over 15 years, and will become comfortable and familiar with use. The next activity provides an opportunity to practice using it.

## ***Memorization of the Creative Word: Spiritual Development of the Teacher***

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### **Module One, p. 34**

Choose in advance a method of memorization, and prepare any special materials needed, such as music, visual symbols, or index cards with words written on them.

## *Summary of Module One: Evaluating Learning*

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### **Module One, pp. 35–38**

1. You might want to prepare photocopies of these pages in advance, to give participants an opportunity to work without their books.
2. If using the True-False game in your summary activities, be prepared. Have a list of summary statements, and be ready to explain why they are true or false.

#### **Sample of summary statements:**

- Children need to be instructed only in the rules of His loving-kindness.
- Youth need to be tended with grace, peace, and joy.
- Instruction includes methods in the development of the spiritual nature of the child.
- Character development is the exclusive responsibility of the parent.
- Education is the dispensable foundation of all human excellence.
- Teachers should struggle unceasingly to affect others.
- The Bahá'í writings instruct male teachers to be modest, even-tempered, and forbearing.
- Teachers of good conduct should offer instruction of the sciences and arts.
- Teachers should be well grounded in such disciplines as psychology and the science of pedagogy.
- The teacher, but not his or her system of teaching, plays the most important role in the scheme of human life.
- Righteous men of learning should be treated with deference.

## Module Two

Activities and Suggested Times		Materials Needed
Devotions	15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome gift: a quotation, nicely presented</li> </ul>
Introduction to Module Two	10 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Foundations</i> books</li> </ul>
Module Two Themes and Objectives	10 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Tree of Life” puzzle pieces OR mirror, cream, dust, window cleaner, and towels</li> </ul>
Recognizing the Spiritual Reality of the Child	70 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nature pictures (in case nature walk is not practical)</li> </ul>
A Perspective on Human Development: Understanding Stages of Maturity	90 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Words of Wisdom, cut apart on pretty paper</li> </ul>
The Process of Spiritual Growth: Attending to Capacity, Capability, and Interest; Exploring the Process of Transformation	30 min.	
The Development of the Soul	60 min.	
Using The Four Valleys as a Model of Spiritual Growth	45 min.	
Lessons of Spiritual Growth Conveyed through Nature; Optional Activities: The Process of Spiritual Growth	45 min.	
Facilitating Spiritual Growth: The Teacher as Gardener, Mentor, and Doctor	60 min.	
Scavenger Hunt: Summary of Module Two; Personal Study and Preparation for Module Three; Group Memorization of Words of Wisdom: Optional Activity; Closing Devotions	15 min.	

### *Recognizing the Spiritual Reality of the Child*

#### Module Two, pp. 45–47

An alternative method of distributing selections of writings to be studied in the whole group is to have a tray or basket that contains the quotations cut apart or perhaps mounted on pretty paper. Then have participants select one or two slips of paper, “gems” from the writings, to study or read aloud.

### *Exploring the Process of Transformation*

#### Module Two, pp. 55–57



Prepare and practice your storytelling in advance. Use the story in the participant book or select another story that effectively communicates a process of spiritual transformation. It is important that the story be one that will allow you to model expressive storytelling skills. In making your selection, consider:

- a. How well the story demonstrates the process of spiritual growth and transformation.
- b. The length of the story relative to time available.
- c. Using a story from a culture other than that of your primary audience.

Consider using music and other multi-sensory media to create the atmosphere for the story.

Some additional sources for stories in this activity include:

- The increasing number of Core Curriculum storybooks includes many transformation stories. Some examples include *Bahá'u'lláh, Volume One*: “Song of the Silver-Tongued Nightingale;” “Thank You, Isfandiyar.” *Bahá'u'lláh, Volume Two*: “Not in My Class;” “Changing the Heart.” *Bahá'u'lláh, Volume Three*: “The Promise;” “Once Poor, Once Wealthy.”
- “Jumping Mouse” from *Seven Arrows*, by Hyemeyohsts Storm; Ballantine Books.  
Jumping Mouse is a Native American story symbolic of transformation, in which the mouse discovers his true self and becomes an eagle. Jumping Mouse is a metaphor for the human being struggling to discover the source and end of his inner yearning for oneness with the universe. (Another version of this story entitled “Great Wolf and Little Mouse Sister” appears in the book, *Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth*.)
- *Clementine and the Cage*, by Wendy Heller; Kalimát Press.  
This story is about a canary, who despite the taunts of other birds in the pet shop, tries to develop her capacities to sing and fly, confident that there is more to life than her cage. The story can be told with the use of props including origami cranes, a feather on the windowsill, and a drawing of a pet shop window on the chalk board.
- *Badí*, by Kamal Ma’ani; published in Thailand.  
A simple, beautifully illustrated version of the true story from the early days of our Faith of Badí, the young man with whom Bahá'u'lláh entrusted His message to the Shah. This is a story of suffering, sacrifice and martyrdom, as well as personal transformation.

## *The Development of the Soul*

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Module Two, pp. 58–71

### **The Tree of Life**

**In advance**, prepare a large puzzle: draw or paint a picture of a glowing candle or a tree with many branches and roots), then cut up into puzzle pieces equal to the number of readings handed out.

Give each group one piece of the puzzle. Ask all groups to write their answers to the focus questions briefly on the back of their piece (give 15 min.).

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When the groups come back, invite them to stand or sit in a circle as the groups read their answers and place their pieces on the floor in the middle of the circle with the answer side up on another large poster board on the floor.

Show the friends how the pieces are all in disarray, just as information and our understanding is, at this point, in bits and pieces and in disarray. Have three or four volunteers go to the middle of the circle and put the puzzle together using only the sides they wrote on. Once the puzzle is ready, put a third piece of poster board on top of it and, with help of couple of people, flip it over with the puzzle in between the two unmarked poster boards. Remove the top board to reveal the painting of the candle or tree. Use the analogy of the picture and explain how cooperation, consultation, and patience helped us clarify our understanding and put the whole picture together.

### The Mirror of the Soul

On a table in the front of the room have a candle, a mirror, and a bowl of jewelry (or other material goods) with the mirror in the middle. Hidden off to the side have a container of facial cream or Vaseline, a bowl of dust or dirt, some window cleaner and three good-sized paper towels.

After the groups share the results of their consultation, ask the whole group: based on our reading of these passages on the development of the soul, what do the candle, the mirror, and the soul stand for? (The mirror stands for the soul, the candle stands for spiritual realm, and the bowl of jewels stands for the material world.)

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Now demonstrate how the mirror can reflect each side and how the progress of the soul is to turn the mirror of the soul from the material world (the bowl of jewels) to the spiritual world (the candle).

Ask the participants: does the mirror of the soul always reflect the spiritual world? (no, it may be veiled). Smear some cream or Vaseline on the mirror to show a “veil” on the mirror and how it cannot clearly reflect the light of the candle.

Then ask: what are some things in life that can cover the soul to take away even more from the reflection? (lying, backbiting, selfishness, injustice . . .). As they list these things, sprinkle dust over the cream on the mirror to cover the whole mirror and show how it can no longer reflect the candle.

Ask the friends: is this dust-covered soul dead and of no use, or can it be changed? How can it be changed? As the participants name the possibilities (prayer, service, sacrifice, teaching the faith, humility . . .), spray the window cleaner on the dust-covered mirror and let it drip but do not wipe yet. Show how the dust is somewhat cleaned but not completely. Now start using the paper towels one at the time to clean the mirror and show how (1) love, (2) patience, and (3) justice should be used in the process of applying the cure to uncover the mirror of the soul. Once again the soul is clean and reflects the candle.

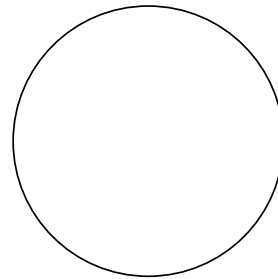
Finally, ask the participants if this process is a one-time occurrence in the life of each soul, or if it is an ongoing process. (We must continually uncover the dust as it covers our souls.)

## *Using The Four Valleys as a Model of Spiritual Growth*

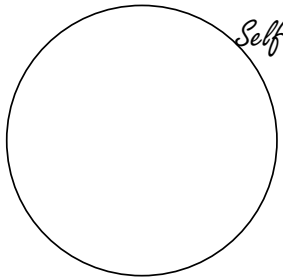
### **Module Two, pp. 72–76**

This activity enhances participant understanding of the Core Curriculum learning model.

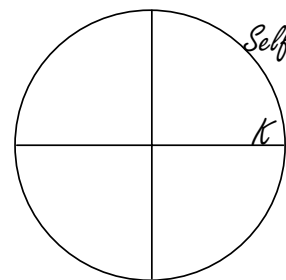
1. Conduct steps 1 and 2 of the jigsaw activity as described in the course book. (Optional: If desired, you may incorporate the activity in the course book on page 78, “Creating Models for Spiritual Growth,” as a way for participants to express their understanding of the flow of The Four Valleys. If you choose to add model-building, you may invite the groups to share their models in the whole group during step 3 of the activity.)
2. When you reconvene the group (step 3 of the activity), provide the following overview as one possibility for using our emerging understanding of this mystical work in a very practical way—to enhance our understanding of the Core Curriculum learning model—while recognizing that Bahá’u’lláh’s creative Words may be understood in many ways and applied to many different circumstances.
3. While participants observe your actions, draw a circle on chart paper or chalk board. Mention that learning can be understood as a cyclic journey through The Four Valleys.



4. Write “S” or “Self” in the upper right quadrant of the paper, outside the circle. Observe that learning begins with the “self” of the learner. Whatever new learning we offer our students, we begin with the learner’s “self” as it has already developed. It is for this reason that teachers think deeply about the students in the class, strive to understand the capacities, capabilities, and interests of those specific human souls, and begin the lesson by engaging those capacities, capabilities, and interests. This can be accomplished by asking questions that call on learners to consider their own prior knowledge, insights, or experiences, or by other means.

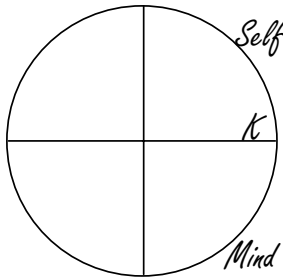


5. Draw lines to divide the circle into quadrants, and write “K” or “Knowledge” on the line that intersects with the right-hand edge of the circle. Observe that as we engage the self of the learner in the discovery process, one important goal of learning is to increase knowledge.

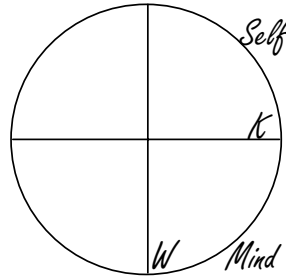


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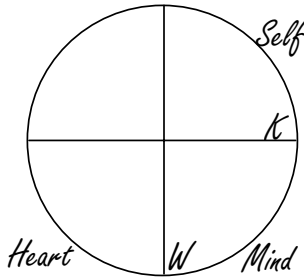
6. Write “M” or “Mind” on the lower right quadrant of the paper, outside the circle.



Note that as the learner begins to gain new knowledge, we engage the learner’s mind, and the learning goal is wisdom, so that the learner understands the meaning and purpose of this knowledge. Then, write “W” or “Wisdom” at the bottom of the circle.

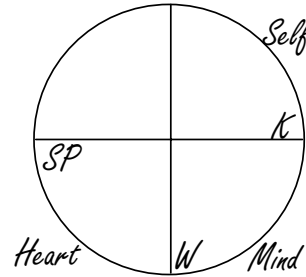


7. Write “H” or “Heart” on the lower left quadrant of the paper,

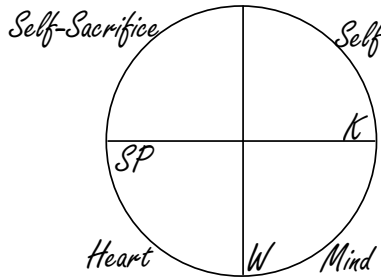


outside the circle. Note that as the learner begins to gain wisdom or a deep understanding of this knowledge, the learner’s heart becomes fully engaged in the learning process, for “neither the reign of reason is sufficient nor the authority of self.” Spiritual perception is required to “see . . . inner reality” as “this realm is not to be pictured in words.”

Then, add “SP” or “Spiritual Perception” to the left of the circle. The learner begins to see the spiritual reality of the world, and to see new possibilities for service to the world in light of this spiritual reality.

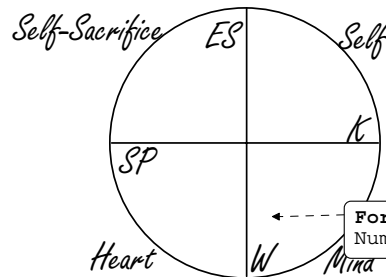


8. Write “SS” or “Self-Sacrifice” on the upper left quadrant of the paper, outside the circle. Note that any service requires an element of the self-sacrifice or the “self-effacement” mentioned in the Fourth Valley. And of course, the service itself—service through good deeds or good words that draw others closer to truth—



represents the eloquent speech component of the Core Curriculum learning model.

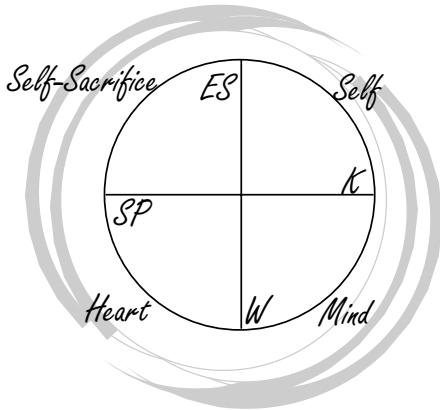
Then write “ES” or “Eloquent Speech” at the top of the circle.



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9. Finally, note that we are constantly engaged in the learning cycle, and that any service to others engages the self and stimulates a need for new knowledge.



Draw a spiral around the circle to indicate the ongoing cycle of learning. Then, invite comments and observations from the friends. Listen attentively and affirm all contributions to the discussion. These notes are offered simply as one possible way for a teacher to learn from this mystical writing of Bahá'u'lláh.

### *Lessons of Spiritual Growth Conveyed through Nature*

#### **Module Two, p. 77**

While playing soft music in the background, read aloud Persian Hidden Word No. 29 several times with great feeling. You may also choose to use the music of the human voice, either live or recorded. This passage is set to music and is available on CD or cassette: “Selections from the Bahá’í Writings” by Paul Parrish.

#### **Alternative:**

If you cannot go on a walk, you may want to use a nature video, or observe nature through a window, or have a selection of nature pictures cut from magazines.

#### **Reporting:**

Other examples that are symbolic of spiritual growth include:

- Flower petals—represent unity, as in the unity of an integrated personality.
- Embryo—represents the potentiality of an idea or of a person to grow and produce fruits.
- Seed pod—similar to the above.

### *Facilitating Spiritual Growth: The Teacher as Gardener, Mentor, and Doctor*

#### **Module Two, p. 79**

For this activity, some trainers find it useful to have special props on hand to assist participants in their roles as “gardeners,” “doctors,” or “mentors.”

Note: a mentor is a wise or trusted counselor. Mentors often assist youth to learn the ways of adulthood, choose a profession, or become successful in their chosen path of service to the community. Mentors also may be assigned to assist new employees to become successful on the job.

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## Module Three

Activities and Suggested Times		Materials Needed
Devotions	15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lesson Planning Guides, storybooks, Teacher's Spiritual Education Plan, Student's Spiritual Education Record</li> </ul>
Introduction to Module Three	5 min.	
Module Three Themes and Objectives	5 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blank lesson planning templates</li> </ul>
Spiritual Education Content: Deciding What to Teach (pp. 91–93)	20 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sample copies of Brilliant Star (optional)</li> </ul>
The Core Curriculum Scope and Sequence; Identifying the Goals, Topics, and Objectives in the Strands (pp. 94–100)	20 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paper for Feedback Notes</li> <li>Paper for folding “birds”</li> </ul>
The Process: Deciding How to Teach the Content, and How Students Will Learn It; Integrating Content & Process with the Diverse Capacities, Capabilities, and Interests of Learners (pp. 101–03)	25 min.	
Choosing the Most Appropriate Learning Activities for Your Students (pp. 104–05)	20 min.	
Presentation of the Core Curriculum Materials (p. 106)	20 min.	
Format of the Core Curriculum Lesson Planning Guides (p. 107)	20 min.	
Using the Core Curriculum Lesson Planning Guides and Storybooks; Practices Teaching—Feedback and Support; Processing and Self-Assessment (pp. 108–120)	120 min.	
Evaluating Learning	15 min.	
Systematic Use of the Scope and Sequence: A Continuum of Learning	25 min.	
Making Use of Available Resources	10 min.	
Summary of Module Three: Building Lessons, Taking Flight; Devotions	20 min.	

### *Spiritual Education Content: Deciding What to Teach*

#### **Module Three, pp. 91–93**

Many trainers have found in this section that encouraging the participants to verbally repeat, several times, the essential elements of the Core Curriculum content can greatly assist with comprehension. For example:

“What are the three ‘Strands’ of the curriculum?”

“What are the major themes of the Central Figures Strand?”

“The goal, ‘To Develop a Deep Love for Bahá’u’lláh,’ is in what Level? What Theme? What Strand?”

## *The Process: Deciding How to Teach the Content, and How Students Will Learn It*

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### Module Three, pp. 101–02

Participants will need their copies of *Foundations for a Spiritual Education*.

Ask participants to read the **bold** headings only. The facilitators will read the short quotation or quotations from the course book, pp. 115–16, following each bold heading read by a participant.

## *Presentation of the Core Curriculum Materials*

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### Module Three, p. 106

#### **Binding the Hearts to Bahá'u'lláh**

Some trainers actually prepare a separate room for this activity.

- Play some beautiful meditative music to set the mood before you begin the story. Read “The Story of ‘Abdu'l-Vahháb” from *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh*, Vol. Two, pages 86–87. Carefully pronounce the name “Vahháb” so that participants do not hear it as “Abdu'l-Bahá.”  
Alternatively, if your group will use the Oneness strand for its practice teaching exercise, you may read the story “Journey Across a Desert” in *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh*, Vol. One.
- Some trainers have found that telling the story in a dramatic fashion, with one of the trainers portraying a character while the other narrates, can be very effective. Of course, we never portray the Central Figures of the Faith, or the Holy Family.
- Give time for quiet reflection after the music and story.
- Consider preparing, in advance, the curriculum materials as gifts wrapped in ribbon.
- **Present the *Bahá'u'lláh*, Volume One, storybook and the *Bahá'u'lláh Lesson Planning Guide*, Level One, in a reverent way.** Provide time for the participants to become acquainted with the books.

Remember to make the presentation of course materials seem very important through the storytelling activity. Once again, this presentation can be *very simple* and very beautiful. Simplicity can be more effective than an elaborate presentation. The goal is to draw out the spiritual qualities of beauty, spirituality, and service to show the importance of using these tools for the systematic spiritual education of children and junior youth, the most powerful means that Bahá'u'lláh has given us for the spiritual transformation of the planet.

NOTE: Depending on the makeup of your community and the structure of the Bahá'í school, some teachers may receive Level Two or Level Three of the Lesson Planning Guide. If the teachers' first classes will focus on outreach to the community at large, it is also possible to present the Oneness Lesson Planning Guides so that teachers develop the lessons they will actually be using with children in the near future. Please take this into account when ordering materials for training.

## *Format of the Core Curriculum Lesson Planning Guides*

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### **Module Three, p. 107**

Make certain that everyone has an understanding of the format and layout of the lesson planning guides before proceeding to the next activity.

## *Using the Core Curriculum Lesson Planning Guides and Storybooks*

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### **Module Three, pp. 108–18**

In your groups, identify the following:

- Similarities between the Lesson Planning Guide and the Storybook.  
(Note: they should identify that both books are organized according to the same Topics. For example, the first Topic in the Lesson Planning Guide is “Prayers and Meditations” and the first chapter of stories in the storybook is “Prayers and Meditations.”)
- Unique features in the Storybook.  
(Note: they should identify that there are two or three stories per Topic, one or two Selections from the Bahá’í writings per Topic, Questions for Reflection and Discussion, and a Glossary.)

### **Lesson Planning Guidelines, pp. 108–09**

If participants wonder why they are to identify four objectives but plan activities to teach only two objectives, the explanation is this:

1. In an instructional setting it is necessary to provide instructions that everyone can successfully follow.
2. The Lesson Planning Guides are designed to foster the creativity of teachers in designing dynamic lesson plans. A detailed sample activity is not provided for every objective of every topic in the curriculum. Participants need to have identified enough objectives to enable them to have a choice of sample activities.

NOTE: Please build the confidence of the teachers by inviting them to choose two **sample** activities for this practice lesson. After gaining experience with sample activities, they will be ready to develop their own detailed activity plans from the suggested activities. This skill is practiced again in the Teacher Development Workshops. Naturally, teachers who prefer to develop **suggested** activities should do so.

### **Lesson Planning**

Offer assistance in planning or locating resources for the practice lesson—we are here to help! Circulate among the participants to provide encouragement and answer questions on a regular basis.



### **Alternative Lesson Planning Tool, p. 113**

Some participants may be more familiar or comfortable with the circular diagram on page 113 of their course book. If this is the case, encourage them to use this as an additional tool in their lesson planning.

*Allow approximately 1 and 1/2 hours for planning, peer sharing, and refinement. Success with this key activity will assure teacher success with Core Curriculum materials in the classroom.*

### ***Practice Teaching—Feedback and Support***

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#### **Module Three, p. 119**

Prepare in advance “Feedback Notes” that observers can use to write feedback notes to their “teachers,” using the template on page 119 of the course book, if desired. Standard letter-size paper cut into quarters does the job nicely.

Depending on group size, presentation alternatives can include a whole group presentation, or participants may divide into two groups (each with a facilitator) and present in the smaller group.

### ***Systematic Use of the Scope and Sequence: A Continuum of Learning***

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#### **Module Three, p. 122**

Explain to the participants that the Goals and Topics, listed in a sequential fashion, are designed to assist communities to develop detailed, multi-year curriculum plans. The order in which Strands and Themes are addressed will vary from place to place, depending on the unique circumstances of each community.

## *Summary of Module Three: Building Lessons, Taking Flight*

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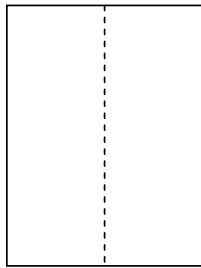
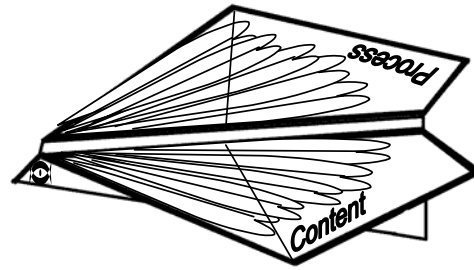
### Module Three, pp. 125–26

1. Play some upbeat music in the background as you lead this activity. It is important that the flight activity (summary of Module 3) feel celebratory and *fun*, not like another task. Keep it light! It is also okay to read only the first paragraph of the House of Justice letter to introduce this activity, as the other paragraphs are studied in Module 4.
2. Invite creativity in making paper birds; you may use the instructions on the following page for creating a paper airplane to look like a bird, or fold an origami bird, or choose a method of your own. You may also consider making a few copies of the instruction page so that participants can refer to it. It will be important to make a model bird **in advance** so that you are comfortable demonstrating the folds.
3. Ask participants to think of complementary concepts they have learned in this training that have given them the ability to “fly.” Cheerfully affirm all answers, including such simple responses as “left” and “right” as complementary elements. You could also give some sample pairs, and then prompt responses by providing the first half of a fairly obvious pair. Invite them to write the results of their reflection on the wings of their birds. Some examples include:

<u>Process</u>	and	<u>Content</u>
<u>Training</u>	and	<u>Course Materials</u>
<u>Student</u>	and	<u>Teacher</u>
<u>Teacher</u>	and	<u>Parent</u>

4. With these two wings, your bird will fly. And as your bird takes flight the implementation of the Core Curriculum will allow you to assist the children to reach “a divine nest in the Heavenly Kingdom. . . .”
5. After reading the closing quotation aloud, invite the participants to share with the rest of the group what is written on each of the wings of their birds. Finally, make your birds soar from one side of the room to your fellow participants on the other side. (It CAN be done!)  
  
Congratulate one another for completing Module Three with joy and love.
6. Remind participants to bring their copies of their book *Foundations for a Spiritual Education* to use during Module Four.

**Instructions for creating a bird from the Rapier Airplane design**



1. First take a rectangular (8 1/2" by 11") sheet of paper and fold down the center dotted line in FIG. 1, opening it out again afterwards.

FIG. 1

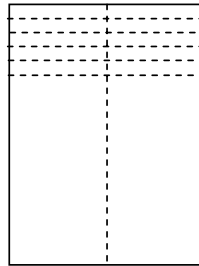


FIG. 2

2. Take the first 1 cm (1/2") of the rectangular sheet and fold it up along the top dotted line in FIG. 2.

3. Fold the flap again, back and forth, 5 or 6 times in this concertina fashion until the paper is closer to a square as in FIG. 3a. This should give a heavy and thick front lip.

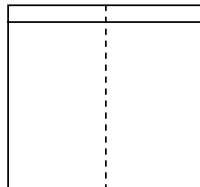


FIG. 3a

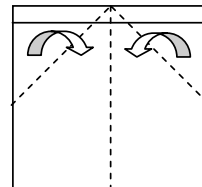
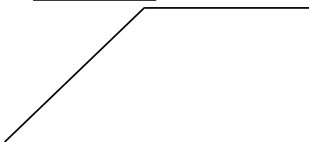


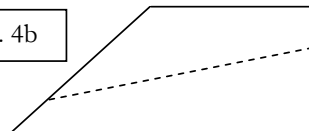
FIG. 3b

FIG. 4a



4. Now fold along the two dotted lines in FIG. 3b bringing the top edges into the center line and fold along the center line to give FIG. 4a as a side view.

FIG. 4b



5. Fold the wings down along the dotted line on either side of the center, as in FIG. 4b. Now the plane should look like the diagram at the top of the page. Decorate the plane with feather designs and eyes, and fly your "bird."

The rapier paper airplane flies fast and true indoors exactly where you want it to go.

Just hold it about 1/4 of its length from the nose tip and throw it overarm quite gently.

Airplane Designs From Alex's Paper Airplanes, <http://www.paperairplanes.co.uk/planes.html>.

## Module Four, Conclusion

Activities and Suggested Times		Materials Needed
Devotions	15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Banner materials: butcher paper or alternative, and art supplies</li> <li>• Community Web materials: ball of yarn, labels</li> <li>• Tinker toys or other construction materials</li> <li>• Mining the Gems materials: "mountain," gems, Red Grammar CD (if available)</li> <li>• Miscellaneous materials for "Core Curriculum is like ___" analogies</li> <li>• Evaluation forms</li> <li>• Parting gift: a quotation, nicely presented</li> <li>• <i>Foundations</i> books</li> </ul>
Introduction to Module Four	10 min.	
Module Four Themes and Learning Objectives	10 min.	
Assisting Children to Fulfill Their Destiny before God	30 min.	
Banners Proclaiming the Children of the Kingdom: Optional Activity	20 min.	
The Child Development Centered Community	30 min.	
The Community Web	30 min.	
Constructing a Model of the Child Development Centered Community: Optional Activity	30 min.	
Children's Classes Open to All	30 min.	
Exploring and Applying Roles and Responsibilities: Jigsaw Activity	90 min.	
From Here to There: Vision to Reality	20 min.	
Appreciating and Celebrating Diversity in the Classroom and the Community	30 min.	
Summary of Module Four: Mining the Gems	60 min.	
Concluding the Training	20 min.	
Evaluation of the Training; Ongoing Personal Development; Devotions	20 min.	

### *Banners Proclaiming the Children of the Kingdom: Optional Activity*

#### Module Four, p. 134

If you elect to do this optional activity, have available some appropriate paper with which to make your banners, like a roll of butcher paper.

### *The Child Development Centered Community*

#### Module Four, pp. 135–38

Take time to establish a common vision of the child development centered community by discussing what its major features will be. Discern the differences between child indulgence and child development, by brainstorming lists of what it is and what it is not.

List comments on the board as they are suggested.

A possible list might look like this:

**What It Is:**

- child or day care center
- child is included in all aspects of the community
- inward and outward manifestation of oneness of mankind
- a real community
- vehicle for interactive personal and global transformation
- has impact on all community, administrative & family activities
- values and supports marriage and family life

**What It Is Not:**

- child centered
- child indulgence
- child controlled
- a replacement for the LSA
- a replacement for the community

## *The Community Web*

### Module Four, p. 139

1. Play Community Web to illustrate the interdependency of all community members. You will need a large ball of yarn and labels for each player to wear designating them as one of the following.

<u>Youth</u>	<u>Community Member</u>
<u>Child</u>	<u>Seeker</u>
<u>Schools Committee Member</u>	<u>RTI Area Coordinator</u>
<u>LSA Member</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
<u>Assistant to Auxiliary Board</u>	<u>Parent</u>
<u>Junior Youth</u>	<u>Child</u>

If you have more than nine players, duplicate identities are fine.

2. Stand in a circle. The first person holds the end of the yarn, identifies herself and states how she would like to work with someone else in the community for the education of children. For example, "I am a member of the Assembly. We would like to sponsor a conference for the junior youth in our district. I would like to meet with Julie, one of our area's junior youth, to consult on meaningful topics for the conference." Then she uses her free hand to toss the ball of yarn across the circle to another member, who is wearing the "junior youth" label. That person then chooses to work with someone and explains why in a similar manner.

Caution players not to wrap yarn around a finger, as this can become painful as game progresses. Remind everyone to keep the connecting lines of yarn fairly taut.

3. As the game continues, a complex web is built. Participants can feel the interconnectedness of each other and the strength that results from a unified community. Notice that even the tension is bonding.
4. Discuss the implications of our roles and responsibilities and the effect of our behavior on the growth and development of the children, youth, and the community:

How do these roles interconnect to assist the children and youth in fulfilling their destinies?

What are the implications of these interconnections for the community's welfare and growth?

How is the community strengthened by the participation of all its members in the spiritual education process?

#### **Additional, Optional Community Web Steps**

- While holding the completed web, add a new ball of yarn with a contrasting color. Flip over your name tags. The reverse side displays an identifying element such as, "likes to bake," "is from a Muslim background," "is an artist," "is known for kindness," etc. This time the foundation phrase is *As a teacher I would pick \_\_\_\_\_ to help a child learn \_\_\_\_\_*. Toss the ball of yarn in the same manner as before.
- When the web is complete, you may introduce an element of disunity, such as backbiting, lack of support for the fund, disobedience, and unwillingness to work together. As the element is introduced one person releases her hold on the yarn. Instruct each person who could feel this release let go of his or her strand one by one until the web is in complete disarray. Discuss how every element in community life affects every other element. Discuss ways to restore our connections with each other.

#### ***Construct a Model of the Child Development Centered Community: Optional Activity***

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**Module Four, p. 140**

Have available a method of model construction such as Tinker Toys<sup>®</sup>, pipe cleaners, or toothpicks and marshmallows.

#### ***Exploring and Applying Roles and Responsibilities: Jigsaw Activity***

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**Module Four, p. 144–45**

Note that the quantity of text is not the same for all groups. The parents have quotations for parents, fathers, and mothers, and may choose to read a few quotations from all three of these sets rather than focus exclusively on any one of them.

## *Summary of Module Four: Mining the Gems*

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### Module Four, p. 148

Prepare in advance:

- A “mountain” on which to hang the gems. This can be a large cardboard cutout shape, a drawing on chart paper, or an easel covered by a cloth. Be creative!
- Colorful, pre-cut paper “gems.” Prepare three or four gems for each participant. You may choose to cut a different shape or colored gem for each group.
- Attach the gems to the mountain in an appropriate, non-destructive way, such as with masking tape.
- You might want to have a CD available to assist the group to sing a song together such as “I Think You’re Wonderful” (Red Grammer, *Teaching Peace*), “Digging for Diamonds” (Red Grammer, *Hello World*), or simply sing “Alláh’u’Abhá.”

## ***Concluding the Training***

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### **Module Four, p. 149**

Before the group synectics activity, provide a brief summary of the entire course. Briefly mention the main points or themes addressed in the introduction and modules 1, 2, 3, and 4. Then move into the activity.

This activity uses a process called “group synectics” as an enjoyable way to bring both closure to this topic and to summarize our understanding of the Core Curriculum for the spiritual education of children and junior youth.

Pass a basket of diverse objects, at least one for every participant, around the room. Invite each participant to choose one item. Then, going around the room, ask each one to use his or her object to complete the sentence:

“The Core Curriculum is like a \_\_\_\_\_(object)  
in that it \_\_\_\_\_.”

### **Alternate Method**

As a group, think of examples of four everyday common objects, one of which is mechanical (e.g., egg whisk, bicycle). Draw a rough diagram of each object on the board or on chart paper.

Divide into four small groups.

Using the objects drawn, each group will brainstorm in two minutes as many examples as possible to complete the following sentence:

“The Core Curriculum is like a \_\_\_\_\_(object)  
in that it \_\_\_\_\_.”

Record your brainstorm results.

Share the results of your brainstorming with the other groups.

## ***Evaluation of the Training and Ongoing Personal Development***

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### **Module Four, pp. 149–53**

Kindly report this Core Curriculum Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth following the reporting procedures put in place by your Regional Training Institute. Also collect participant evaluations, complete the Training Report Form on pp. 57–58 of this Facilitator Guide, and share them with the National Bahá’í Education Task Force.

These forms are available online at [www.core-curriculum.org/ttm.html](http://www.core-curriculum.org/ttm.html) if you prefer to download them.

You may consider offering the participants a beautifully prepared gift quotation to acknowledge the successful completion of this course as part of or following your closing devotions.



## **SERVING AS A CORE CURRICULUM TEACHER TRAINER**

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### **Definition of Core Curriculum Teacher Trainers**

Core Curriculum Teacher Trainers are those who have successfully completed the two-part Core Curriculum Teacher Trainer Training according to Regional Training Institute processes. Teacher Trainers serve to strengthen the teachers' unique role in spiritual education through the enhancement of their station, qualities, knowledge, and skills.

### **Distinctive Characteristics of Bahá'í Education**

Among the Bahá'í principles and characteristics that are integral to this training are:

- Reliance upon God through prayer and a spiritual attitude.
- Use of the Creative Word as a foundation for learning.
- Significance of meditation and reflection in the learning process.
- Use of memorization.
- Use of consultation to develop true understanding.
- The relationship of diversity to the growth of the individual, to creativity, and to the unity of the group (ethnicity, gender, personality, learning style, capacity, experience, knowledge).
- Teaching the Faith in word and deed as the ultimate outcome of spiritual education.
- Service to humanity as a primary purpose of education.
- Respect for each person's unique contribution to the learning process.
- Excellence in all things as a standard for all Bahá'í activity.
- Genuine love and recognition of each person's spiritual reality.
- Recognition of parents as primary educators of the children.
- Use of the arts to deepen spiritual perception and richness of the learning experience.

### **The Learning Experience**

The training has been designed so that the participants actively engage in their own learning. Consultation and interactive learning activities form an integral part of the training experience. As a trainer, you will be modeling and utilizing a variety of learning tools and instructional methods as described in the Bahá'í writings, as well as considering a wide array of different learning modalities. Among these are direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings, including memorization of the writings, experiential learning activities, creative expression, and use of music. The arts are fully incorporated into the learning process as a means to deepen understanding and apply knowledge.

### **Conscious Knowledge**

Throughout the training the facilitators engage the participants in processing activities to assist them to identify the spiritual and educational principles and practices being modeled and taught. This conscious knowledge enables participants to consider how they can apply these same principles and practices in their own teaching.

## Journal Work

The journal provides a powerful tool to assist participants in directing their spiritual development process. It offers:

- Time to reflect and process the events, new concepts, and activities in the training.
- A place to record ideas, insights, questions, and concerns.
- A place to recognize understanding, consider past events, and engage in self-evaluation.
- A place to describe aspirations and future action steps.

Participants in the training are encouraged to use the journal to record their thoughts, feelings, visions and fantasy, questions, themes, patterns, memories, mood, personal goals, and progress. The journal is most effective when it is used on a regular basis. Questions or prompts for journal reflections are suggested throughout the course book.

## Resources

Collaborating with other educators and making use of available resources is an important part of the implementation process for the Core Curriculum. While participants are introduced to selected Core Curriculum Lesson Planning Guides and Storybooks as resources for planning their children's classes, it is useful to have additional resources on hand for the participants to see. It is also helpful to be familiar with online resources such as the national Bahá'í education website, [www.education.usbnc.org](http://www.education.usbnc.org), and *Brilliant Star* magazine, to encourage teachers to develop their own resources and activities.

## Instructional Methods

A variety of instructional methods are suggested throughout the training course book. A key responsibility of Teacher Trainers is to maintain a diversity of methodologies as a model for the teachers in their own work with the children. Listed below are a number of ways to diversify the activities in your training.

### Methods for Creating Working Groups

- Table Groups. Those people already sitting together may form a group.
- Counting Off. Decide how many groups you need, ask participants to count off (1, 2, 3 . . . or A, B, C . . .)
- Thematic. Invite participants to gather in designated spots in the room according to themes, such as "everyone whose favorite color is red," or, ". . . who has visited another continent." Let those who fit more than one category fill in where needed for group size.
- Seat Markers. During a break, place small objects (such as paper clips, pennies, rocks) at each place. When it is time to divide into groups draw attention to the object and form groups accordingly.
- Sounding Off. Pass out or leave small pictures or names of animals at each seat. At a signal, all participants begin making the noise of and/or acting out their animal, trying to locate their group members.

- **Scavenger Hunt.** Give out slips of paper with instructions like, “Find three people with the same color shoes as you,” or, “Find one person who first heard Bahá’u’lláh’s Name before you did and one person who first heard Bahá’u’lláh’s Name after you first heard it,” and form groups with the results.

**Group Sharing**

Once the groups have been formed and been given their tasks, you will be asking them to share the results of their consultations and/or work with the whole group at a designated time. There are a number of ways to achieve this. Use a variety in your training. Examples include:

- **Verbal Reporting.** One or more speakers or all members of the group simply tell the large group their results. Major points may be listed on chart paper by one of the facilitators (hint: alternate colors of pen for each statement).
- **Visual Arts.** Invite all groups to create a visual art piece (drawing, painting, diagram, sculpture, construction, etc.) that expresses their findings. They may verbally explain their creation.
- **Performing Art.** Ask that all groups express their findings through dance, drama, role-play, music, song, or other performance. Some verbal explanation may accompany the piece.

**Group Learning: ‘Jigsaw’ as a group learning method**

Jigsaw works best when there are at least eight participants in the training and there is a large body of material to be read and understood by the group. Jigsaw is a cooperative learning strategy. It is a relatively simple technique designed to increase group interdependence and to increase students’ sense of responsibility for their learning. The idea is for each member of a leading team to become an expert on one part of the material. Once the “experts” have grasped the material they teach it to the others in their team.

**Organizing a Jigsaw**

*Before the Training Session:*

- Once you know how many teachers will be attending the training, divide the material into anywhere between 3–6 parts.
- Assign the participants into heterogeneous teams, i.e., insure a balance of gender, experience, and ethnicity. For example, with 20 participants, you may decide to have five teams, each comprising four participants (potential “experts”).
- Decide how you will assess the success of the learning (i.e. evaluate the learning through quizzes, games, or presentations).

TEAMS	Team A	Team B	Team C	Team D	Team E
Experts	2.....	2.....	2.....	2.....	2.....
	3.....	3.....	3.....	3.....	3.....
	4.....	4.....	4.....	4.....	4.....

*At the Training Session:*

Step 1: Assign teams.

Step 2: Invite teams to choose a name for their group.

Step 3: Plan a short inclusion activity to create a sense of interdependence—prayers, a get acquainted activity, or team-building game—depending on the time you have.

Step 4: Assign each team member a number according to the number of sections into which you have divided the material. If you have divided it into four parts, then number the members of each team 1–4.

Step 5: Give section 1 of the divided material to “expert” 1, section 2 to “expert” 2, and so on. This means that no person in each team has all the material; each person has a part of it.

Step 6: Team members then leave their teams and form “expert groups.” The task of the “expert” group is to read the material, grasp its content, consult on its meaning, and decide on clever ways to teach it to other team members.

Step 7: All “experts” (now greater experts than before!) return to their respective teams and teach the material in their section to the rest of their team.

Step 8: Assess the team learning. Combine the scores to give a group score. You may, or may not, choose to reward the teams that demonstrate successful learning.

## **Prepare! Practical Considerations**

### **Site Considerations**

Core Curriculum Teacher Trainings have been held in places as diverse as homes, Bahá'í centers, colleges, hotels, rustic conference centers, and pre-schools. There are a number of factors to consider, in consultation with the sponsoring institution:

**Space:** Avoid being cramped! You'll need adequate room for:

- Tables and chairs arranged to facilitate consultation and note-taking.
- Room for small group break-out work, for presentations, for stretching and movement activities, and for fellowship and visiting.
- Comfortable reception and registration area.
- Meditation, prayer, or quiet study area.
- Space for doing messy crafts (including appropriate floor space and covering).
- Storage area for teaching supplies, coats, and luggage.
- Outdoor area with convenient access to yard, park, garden, or woods for the nature walk in Module Two as well as for fresh air and sunshine anytime!
- Childcare classrooms if children will be attending.
- A place for snacks or even a dining area if you will be including meals as part of your program.

All of the above can be creatively arranged in a large hall, by dividing areas with furniture or rugs.

It is ideal to have tables with chairs for each person. If the room is too small or there aren't enough tables, arrange the chairs as nicely as possible and place whatever tables there are to the side so people can take their work there, or work on the floor, as necessary.

**Aesthetics:** If the facility doesn't lend itself to a reverential, inspirational training, choose another or work to make it so!

**Acoustics:** To facilitate both presentations and group consultation, acoustics need to be good. Also check for excessive noise from traffic, heat and air systems, or other groups of people. Use consultation to address any difficulties and come up with the best solution for your circumstances.

**Accommodations:** Arrangements for overnight guests may be necessary.

**Food:** Check into the facility's policies pertaining to food service. Ideally you will have beverages such as water, tea, coffee, or juice available and easily accessible all day. Meals can be on-site in a separate area from the training classroom. If meals are off-site, adjust the agenda to allow extra time. Some options for meals are an outdoor picnic (bring-your-own or sponsor-provided), nearby restaurants, on-site kitchen with volunteer staff, or meals catered by the local community.

## Setting Up Arts, Crafts, and Music Resources

Identify a special area in your training facility for arts, crafts, and musical supplies. These materials should be available throughout the training for the friends to express themselves and their ideas. Encourage the friends to make creative use of these supplies.

Please make use of a variety of inexpensive, readily available materials for art. Is it not necessary to spend a lot of money to inspire creativity. Materials from nature such as sticks, pinecones, pressed flowers, string, pretty rocks, etc., make excellent supplies for art activities. You may also invite participants to bring scissors, markers, crayons, etc., from home to use during the training.

Teacher Trainers are encouraged to draw on the resources of the community to assure that sufficient materials are available for the training.

## Visual Aids

You may choose to use some visual aids during your training. Some suggestions are:

- Use an overhead projector. Copy centers can make transparencies for you from pages in the course book.
- Copy the graphic onto transparency film; project it onto the wall adjusting the distance of your overhead projector until you have the desired size; tape a piece of poster board on the wall at the point of projection; trace the image with a pencil or pen.

- Make posters from enlargements. Some copy centers are equipped to make poster size enlargements from an 8 1/2" x 11" original. You may also wish to protect posters you've made by having them laminated or covering them with clear contact paper yourself.
- Make your own beautiful posters using calligraphy and color!
- Some posters/overheads you may wish to prepare for use as visual aids are:
  - The organizing quotation, "Then so much as capacity and capability allow. . . ."
  - Definitions for knowledge, wisdom, spiritual perception, and eloquent speech.
  - From Strand to Activities (Module Three, page 105).
  - Child Development Centered Community (Module Four, Figure 1).
  - The suggested journal prompt.
  - The theme and objectives for each module.

## Personnel

Community members can assist by serving in the following capacities:

- Receptionist(s), hosts, guides, or servers.
- Treasurer or designated assistant for payments and receipts.
- People to help cook, set up, run errands, clean up.

Involve everyone in your community—encourage children to participate!

## Other Considerations

Provide if possible:

- Childcare—determine needs and provide for quality care (on-site or off-site).
- Photographer for candid and group pictures.
- Transportation to/from site for those using public conveyances (arrange for shuttling to secondary sites as needed, e.g., nature walk).

## Scheduling Considerations

The teacher training consists of four 8-hour class sessions. This minimum 32-hour training has been implemented in a variety of ways: over a four-day period, over two or four weekends, or over a longer period of time. Flexibility has been purposely built into the training implementation to allow communities to adapt the schedule to their unique situations. Sufficient time between sessions needs to be allowed for participants to carry out assignments and to reflect on the writings they have studied. Precise organization of each training session will be determined through consultation between the training facilitators, participants, and the sponsoring institution.

## Breaks, Time for Reflection, Fellowship, and Devotions

- To give you flexibility in modifying your agenda to fit your training sessions, breaks are not scripted into this Facilitator Guide. In your advance planning, schedule lunches and breaks where they seem appropriate. One possibility for break scheduling is found in the sample agenda on pp. 14–17 of this Facilitator Guide: a 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. schedule, including breaks, is suggested for Module One, and a 9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m. schedule, also with breaks, is suggested for Modules Two, Three, and Four. Please note that the suggested activity times at the beginning of each module do not include break time.
- Plan to open and close all sessions with devotions and to set an example by encouraging the use of memorized devotions and music.
- Provide sufficient time also for fellowship and consultation. Part of the joy and excitement of the training is the opportunity to share with other Bahá'ís working in the field of education.

## Involving Children

Bearing in mind the concept of the *child development centered community*, and considering the intense nature of the teacher training sessions, there are a number of possible approaches for the inclusion of the children of the participants at their trainings:

- Some choose to request that no children attend so that participants are free to devote all their attention to the new learning, study, consultation, and reflections involved in the teacher training course.
- In one instance, the sponsoring Local Spiritual Assembly was so affected by the importance of the Core Curriculum that they personally cared for all the children of the participants in their homes to relieve them of those cares during the training.
- Some trainers with smaller groups have been more comfortable to have children present in the room, quietly interacting with their parents and with each other, with breaks planned according to the children's needs. (One team conducted all training sessions with a facilitator's two-year-old present.)
- In some instances, sponsoring institutions choose to plan and provide childcare and/or classes during the training—either at the same site, or at a nearby location.
- In one area, where a previous Core Curriculum Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth had been given, teachers from the prior training were asked to prepare the children's classes at subsequent trainings. These programs were then offered as living examples, “laboratories,” of the spiritual education process.
- Children may also become connected to their parents' and their community's new work by being of service to the training. Prior to the training, they may be engaged in cleaning, set-up of the physical environment, collating and assembling notebooks and handouts, and sending out confirmations and other mail. During the training session, activities may include: host/hostess or registrar duties; passing out handouts; keeping art supply and work area neat; preparation and serving of food; or care of infants or younger children. Afterwards they may assist with clean-up and packing of supplies and materials.

- An organic, “hands-on” element can be infused into a teacher training by actively incorporating children into some portions of the sessions. If there are children’s classes or childcare provided on-site, you may arrange for the children to join the adult sessions from time to time. In order for this to be successful, you will need to adhere to your agenda for coordination of times. Teachers should prepare children for their part in the training session, including knowing where they will go when they enter the room and in what type of activity they will be engaged. If the children perceive the importance of their role in the teacher training, and are prepared as if they were going to meet ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, this will have an impact on their behavior and manners as they join and interact with the adults. The needs of individual children must be considered, including those who may not separate well from their parent, or who may have behavior difficulties. For minimal confusion, portions of the training involving children should be scheduled just prior to or immediately following a break.

Overall, the inclusion of children has been a high point at trainings in which this has occurred. Working in groups with children has afforded participants “hands-on” experience with activities they will replicate in their own communities. It brings the “theory” of the training in touch with the “reality,” our children. The children become connected with the new work on which their parents and their community are embarking.

Points to consider: be sure children aren’t being used as ‘props’ but as true participants in an educative process; watch to ensure that participants are not compromising their own learning by over-simplification or generalization for the children’s sake; see that the whole group takes on the responsibility of incorporating the children, so that some parents aren’t over-burdened. Successful inclusion of children has occurred during the portions of the teacher training described below. You might choose to involve children in some of these activities at your training:

#### **All Modules**

- Devotions: Children will enjoy preparing for a reverent sharing of prayers, readings, and music.

#### **Module One**

- Role and Station of the Teacher. Invite the children to watch the creative presentations in which groups share their findings on the roles and responsibilities of the teachers. They can be asked to share their understanding of what they have observed.
- Memorization of the Creative Word. Children and adults can learn this skill together.

#### **Module Two**

- Recognizing the Spiritual Reality of the Child. If participants will be preparing visual art to share their discoveries, children may be a part of each group, both during the consultative process and the artistic sharing.
- Exploring the Process of Transformation. Children will enjoy sharing this experience.
- Lessons of Spiritual Growth Conveyed through Nature. Children can enjoy listening to and reading The Hidden Words, and may pair up with an adult for the nature walk.



### **Module Three**

- Presentation of the Core Curriculum Materials. Children may listen to the story about Bahá'u'lláh and may participate in the reverential presentation of the Core Curriculum Lesson Planning Guides and Storybooks.

### **Module Four**

- Assisting Children to Fulfill Their Destiny before God. They may assist with the planning and/or preparation and presentation of the parade or banner activities. Some find it advantageous to have the adults consult together for a few minutes to plan the presentation, and then let the children participate in the implementation. Others prefer to include the children in the planning phase as well.
- The Child Development Centered Community. Older children may enjoy participation in the presentation of the house diagram and discussion of what “child development centered community” means.
- The Community Web. Children enjoy this activity.
- Exploring and Applying Roles and Responsibilities. Older children who are aware of various roles in the Bahá'í community might participate in this activity.
- Summary of Module Four: Mining the Gems. Children with adequate language skills may be a part of the small groups, describing qualities of each member.

### **Participation and Registration**

All participants need to be registered in advance, and attend all four modules in order to complete their Core Curriculum Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth.

**Sample Training Invitation Letter**  
**from the Sponsoring Regional Training Institute or Local Spiritual Assembly to**  
**Neighboring Assemblies, Auxiliary Board Members, and Assistants**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

To \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Friends,

We are happy to announce that our [*Regional Training Institute or Local Spiritual Assembly*] has scheduled a Core Curriculum Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth on [*date and time*] at [*place*]. This workshop, designed to foster the skills of teachers of children and junior youth, has been designated as a branch course of the main sequence of institute courses and developed under the direction of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States.

Our [*Regional Training Institute or Local Spiritual Assembly*] invites you to recommend those who teach, or who aspire to teach children and junior youth, to participate in this teacher training. Additionally, because the guidance of the Bahá'í writings applies to education for youth and adults, any community member who teaches, plans deepenings, prepares learning experiences for new and veteran believers, or serves on an education committee, may cherish this study opportunity. Because the Master has set high standards for those engaged in this important undertaking, we encourage men, women, or mature youth to aspire to the qualifications suggested by the Master.

*“ . . . teachers who are pure and sanctified, distinguished for their high standards of conduct and general excellence and strong faith, educators with a thorough knowledge of science and arts.”*

*Bahá'í Education, p. 25*

Topics covered during the training sessions will include:

- The station, standards, and responsibilities of the teacher.
- The spiritual reality of children and how to facilitate their spiritual growth.
- Fostering a child development centered community.
- Using Core Curriculum Lesson Planning Guides and Storybooks for the spiritual education of children and junior youth.

The cost for all sessions, the compilation *Foundations for a Spiritual Education*, materials for lesson planning and practice teaching, and teacher training course book is \$\_\_\_\_\_. We respectfully request that all participants attend all sessions in the training program.

We anticipate that this will be a very rich experience and look forward to your response and our joint venture in this important and timely core activity of the Bahá'í community. Should you have any questions regarding the training, please contact [*trainers' names and phone numbers*] who will be happy to answer your questions. You may also visit the Core Curriculum website, [www.core-curriculum.org](http://www.core-curriculum.org).

Please send or phone registration requests or recommended names by [*date*] to [*contact person's name, phone number and address*].

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

## *Sample Registration Confirmation*

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We are pleased to confirm your registration!  
Core Curriculum for Spiritual Education  
Training for Teachers of Children and Junior Youth  
November 6-7, 20-21



*Registration:* Saturday, November 6 8:00–9:00 a.m. (continental breakfast served)  
*Schedule:* Saturday, November 6 9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.  
Sunday, November 7 9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.  
Saturday, November 20 9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.  
Sunday, November 21 9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

*Location:* Anywhere Bahá'í Center  
99 Unity Lane, Covenant City, USA  
Phone (909) 919-9999

*Directions:* From Highway 9, take the . . .

*Cost:* \$\_\_\_\_ per person, includes:  
Instructional materials for all sessions and lunch each day  
  
Registration fee of \$\_\_\_\_, payable by [date] to [Institutional address, phone]

*What to Bring:* Prayer book, pen or pencil, sweater or jacket, favorite art supplies to share, a smile

*What to Wear:* Comfortable clothes for sitting and moderate activity (nature walk on Sunday)

*Who to Contact:* If you need overnight hospitality or additional information, please call either Mary Friend, (909) 999-0919, or John Helper, (909) 919-9191

*Kindly inform us immediately if you are unable to attend all sessions so that your place may be offered to another participant.*

## Cultural Appreciation

The training environment is created through physical surroundings and material preparations that reflect love and appreciation for the individual teachers' capacities, capabilities, and cultural diversity.

The following examples illustrate strategies to bridge cultural differences:

- Ask: Perhaps one of the best ways to learn about the needs, hopes, and interests of the people we're with is simply to ask them what they think and listen carefully to their responses. It is also important to observe participant responses and invite their questions and comments as the course unfolds.
- Working in pairs: If close interaction with the opposite sex is culturally inappropriate and the activity suggests working in pairs, direct friends to choose male-male and female-female partners or arrange pairs in advance to quietly accommodate this need.
- Language use: Some individuals enjoy reading quotations in English, while others do not. During the first part of the training invite volunteers to read rather than assigning readers. Please carefully observe the group you are serving. Routinely invite individuals to "pass" if they prefer not to read; if possible, organize working groups so that at least one able reader is in each group. Alternatively you may memorize the first quotation for an activity and focus the activity on deep exploration of that one quotation.
- Time: Please be mindful that different groups require more or less time for study depending on such factors as group size, reading ease, familiarity with the Faith, and possibly cultural factors. Consult with the group and adjust the schedule if necessary so that:
  - Participants engage thoroughly with the Word of God with both mind and heart.
  - There is a feeling of dynamic energetic movement in the training without rushing or feeling stressed.
- Recognition of individuals: For those who find public recognition of individual attributes immodest, try setting the stage by sharing that every attribute is a gift from God. Avoid directing praise to selected individuals: "Praise without distinction." Note that God's gifts allow His attributes to shine forth within the community.
- Any activity that uses posters or two-dimensional art expression: Some friends come from backgrounds that seldom use two-dimensional, paper art for expression. Clarify that visual artwork may be three-dimensional, using a wide range of materials for creation.
- Avoiding materialism: The Core Curriculum *is not* about equipment or supplies, although it strives to use them well. Core Curriculum *is* about the interaction of the Word of God with the human spirit in a way that engages the mind and heart to mobilize participation to transform the world. Please assess the local environment and make creative use of the materials that will be available to the teachers you train.
- Music throughout the training: Diverse music—and lots of music—enhances any environment. Some favorites include:
  - *Amame* by Leonor Dély y Millero Congo.
  - Any of the many *Black Men's Gathering* albums.
  - "Dastam Begir" (any version, such as Music of the World Congress) when considering the Example of the Master.

- *Esengo Na Mboka Haija* by Congo Youth Choir.
- *Keepers of the Dream* by Kevin Locke.
- *Louhelen: Fruits of the Spirit* compilation album.
- *Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh* by Zheng Fei Hong.
- *The Santour* by Kiu Haghighi.
- *Sounds of the World*, music from the World Center Terrace Dedications.
- *We Have come to Sing Praises*, “In this Day Bahá'u'lláh” by the Bahá'í Gospel Choir at the conclusion of a session.

There are many choices to explore!

## Situations Beyond the Scope of the Core Curriculum Program

While the role of the Teacher Trainers is one of profound service to Bahá'í institutions, families, and the community, sometimes situations can arise that are beyond the scope of the Core Curriculum Teacher Training program. Based on what you already know, consider situations that might be beyond the scope of this program. Some examples include abuse, deeply emotional issues, legal matters, etc.

What can you do should such a situation arise? How could you prepare for such situations?

For example, if a participant is emotionally overcome by a particularly moving activity, one trainer could assist by stepping out of the room with the participant to listen and show love, while the other continues the workshop.

In some instances, be prepared to refer the situation to a Bahá'í institution such as the Local Spiritual Assembly, an Auxiliary Board Member or an Assistant.

Consider the following story as analogy:

There once was a village hospital which every day saw a consistent stream of bloodied, battered people coming with the same injuries. The doctors and nurses were so busy patching people up they had no time to investigate the cause. Finally a youthful, inquisitive soul investigated and found that a commonly used footpath passed a dangerous cliff, and many people were falling off this cliff. The village people then built a fence, and the problem was solved.

As Teacher Trainers, we know there are lots of injured people among us; there are others trained to treat the injured. We are the youthful, inquisitive souls, uniting our communities to work for change.

## Academic Credit for Core Curriculum Service

University credit at the graduate or undergraduate level may be earned for your participation in online Character Education and Community Development courses, which are based on the Core Curriculum framework, and for your service in your local community as a Teacher Trainer. Draw on professional resources for teachers to enhance your effectiveness at the local level through a combination of face-to-face learning and internet resources. Visit [www.louhelen.org/cecd](http://www.louhelen.org/cecd) or contact Dr. Rick Johnson at Louhelen Bahá'í School ([Louhelen@usbnc.org](mailto:Louhelen@usbnc.org), (810) 653-5033) for more information about this exciting opportunity.

## *Teacher Trainers: Moving to Action*

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Work in pairs, preferably with your co-trainer:

**Purpose:** Prepare to offer Core Curriculum Teacher Training Program.

1. Considering your community situation, plan the action steps you will take for implementing the Core Curriculum Teacher Training program when you return home.
2. Keeping in mind the needs, hopes, and plans of your community or cluster, please use your Facilitator Guide to carefully plan:
  - How will you assist your community to build a unified vision of the importance of training teachers? How will you encourage community participation? Will you use personal invitations or other means to build excitement about the course?
  - When will you meet with your area coordinator for your Regional Training Institute, the Local Spiritual Assembly, and/or your Auxiliary Board Member or Assistant? How will you share with them the Core Curriculum process? What preparations will you need to make? When and how will you collaborate with others to offer this training for teachers?
  - When and where will you conduct the training? What resources will you need? Who can help you?
  - How will you know you have been successful? When will you report to your Regional Training Institute and share your feedback with the National Bahá'í Education Task Force?
3. Be prepared to share your plans either orally, in written form, or through role-playing with the larger group, who will then help you to finalize your plans.
4. Reconvene as a whole group and share your work plans. Ask the group to help:
  - a) Identify the strengths of your planning.
  - b) Anticipate some of the obstacles and bounties you might expect.
  - c) Make suggestions for refining the plan.
  - d) Encourage you in your service.

What adjustments, if any, need to be made to the work plans?

## *Working with Bahá'í Institutions*

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Among the greatest of all services that can possibly be rendered by man to Almighty God is the education and training of children. . . .

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

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Teacher Trainers should thank, inform, and collaborate with Regional Training Institutes and other institutions, including Local Spiritual Assemblies, to offer the Core Curriculum Teacher Training program. Teacher Trainer procedures may include:

1. Partners schedule a meeting with their sponsoring institution or institutional representative such as the Regional Training Institute area coordinator.
2. Partners pray for guidance, review objectives and appropriate materials, consulting with area coordinators and more experienced teacher trainers as needed.
3. Share information about the teacher training program, including content, training time, and who might participate. Create a vision of the contributions of the children of the Kingdom, Bahá'ís and others, to the creation of a new civilization.
4. Demonstrate training methods in your presentations: focus on relevant passages from the Bahá'í sacred writings; use prayer and music to help create the desired atmosphere; emphasize the importance of diversity and consultation; honor the sponsoring institution's role.
5. Review specific needs, requirements, costs, timetables, etc. Provide sample schedules for your sponsoring institution and whatever you think might be helpful to you and to them.
6. Decide who will be responsible for invitations, logistics, etc. Determine a specific date for confirming names, addresses, and phone numbers of participants.
7. Work within normal Regional Training Institute procedures to conduct Core Curriculum teacher training. If you are working with a Local Spiritual Assembly, obtain a firm commitment for sponsorship of the training. Be certain that the nature and extent of the required support is understood. Ask institutional sponsors to assume responsibility for as much of the communications as possible. At the same time, you will find that your own investment in personally inviting and confirming participation builds eager anticipation and firm commitment for the training.
8. Provide a report following the workshop, thanking the institution for sponsorship and showering them with love for their service to the community. Kindly also share your course evaluations with the National Bahá'í Education Task Force.

## COLLABORATING WITH OTHER CORE CURRICULUM FACILITATORS

Identify other Core Curriculum Facilitators in your area. Coordinate your efforts!

Nearby Teacher Trainers:

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone:\_\_\_\_\_ Email:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone:\_\_\_\_\_ Email:\_\_\_\_\_

Other individuals trained to facilitate Core Curriculum courses such as nearby Equality Facilitators, Fundamental Verities Facilitators, Marriage and Family Life Facilitators, Race Unity Facilitators, Spiritual Parenting Facilitators, Youth Empowerment Facilitators:

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone:\_\_\_\_\_ Email:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone:\_\_\_\_\_ Email:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone:\_\_\_\_\_ Email:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone:\_\_\_\_\_ Email:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone:\_\_\_\_\_ Email:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone:\_\_\_\_\_ Email:\_\_\_\_\_

1. Schedule a consultation with the facilitators. Discuss areas of common work, potential linkages in parent-teacher relationships, community life, spiritual meetings, teaching and service projects, development of children's potential as teachers and servants of the Cause, and readiness of the community.
2. Develop strategies for collaboration and a process for obtaining the sponsoring institution's approval and support.
3. Keep your institute coordinators, Core Curriculum mentor, and the National Bahá'í Education Task Force informed! Share news of your community's progress toward child development centered communities.



## TRAINING REPORT

Please report this training according to normal Regional Training Institute procedures.

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### FEEDBACK FOR CORE CURRICULUM TEACHER TRAINING

Trainers are requested to photocopy this form, complete it, and send it to:

*National Bahá'í Education Task Force,*

*Office of Education and Schools at the Bahá'í National Center, 1233 Central St., Evanston, IL 60201*

within two weeks of the completion of the teacher training.

Email feedback prepared using this format is welcome at [SCHOOLS@usbnc.org](mailto:SCHOOLS@usbnc.org).

Please also enclose a roster of participants and a summary or copy of their evaluations.

### TRAINERS

Names \_\_\_\_\_

Addresses \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Numbers \_\_\_\_\_

### LOGISTICS

Sponsoring Institution \_\_\_\_\_ Location of Training \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Training \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of Participants \_\_\_\_\_ Number Completing All Modules \_\_\_\_\_

Heritage:

<input type="checkbox"/> African American	<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic	<input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Islands
<input type="checkbox"/> European American	<input type="checkbox"/> Interracial	<input type="checkbox"/> Persian
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Auxiliary Board Members Present \_\_\_\_\_

Assistants to the Auxiliary Boards \_\_\_\_\_

Institute Coordinators \_\_\_\_\_

### EVALUATION

1. Did you follow the procedures outlined?

2. What were the highlights of the training program for you and for the participants?

3. What problems did you encounter, if any?

4. How far did you achieve the goals of each module?

5. What provisions were established by the sponsoring institution for:  
Follow-through on teachers' plans made during the training?

Continued support by providing Teacher Development Workshops?

Networking and mutual support among teachers?

Initiating new Bahá'í classes?

Outreach to new children, junior youth, and their parents?

Continuous improvement of Bahá'í classes in the local community?

6. Further comments:

