

**TO BECOME FAMILIAR
WITH THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ**

**THE MAJOR TOPICS AND TITLES OF THE
WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ**

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:
PRAYERFULNESS, STUDIOUSNESS, SELF-DISCIPLINE**

The Writings of Bahá’u’lláh and the Master are like vast seas, the deeper you go into them, the more priceless treasures you will find.

Shoghi Effendi, *The Compilation of Compilations*, Vol. 1, p. 213

If you read the utterances of Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá with selflessness and care and concentrate upon them, you will discover truths unknown to you before and will obtain an insight into the problems that had baffled the great thinkers of the world.

Shoghi Effendi, *The Compilation of Compilations*, Vol. 1, p. 205

Shoghi Effendi was very glad to learn that you devote a considerable amount of your time to the study of the teachings. It is absolutely essential for those who desire to spread the movement to be quite familiar with the writings of Bahá’u’lláh and the Master. Without that knowledge we may be spreading our own views and wrongly attributing to them things that are the result of our imaginings.

Written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, *The Light of Divine Guidance*, Vol. 2, pp. 18-19

GOAL: TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

**TOPIC: THE MAJOR TOPICS AND TITLES
OF THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To know the titles of the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá
- To know the main topics addressed in the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá
- To know that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá revealed many prayers, some of which are specifically for children

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Learn some of the prayers revealed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, especially those specifically for children.
- Create opportunities for students to match the titles of works by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá with descriptions of their contents.



WISDOM OBJECTIVES

- To understand the significance and the purpose of the Writings and Prayers of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá
- To grasp the unique style of the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá
- To be able to differentiate between ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s books, tablets, talks and prayers

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Assist students to identify topics that have particular relevance and meaning to their lives, and discuss prayers, talks, tablets or passages from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that pertain to these topics.
- Create sorting or matching games to help students distinguish between books, tablets, talks and prayers.

**TOPIC: THE MAJOR TOPICS AND TITLES
OF THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ**



SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

- To comprehend the great bounty of having the Writings to turn to in order to better understand the Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh
- To recognize the difference between ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s books, tablets, talks and prayers
- To recognize the value of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Writings for one’s own life and how it can better connect one to Bahá’í teachings

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Provide opportunities for students to share incidents from their lives when the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá have offered them guidance or assistance.
- Create sorting or matching games to help distinguish between books, tablets, talks and prayers. Distinguish between the importance and circumstances of the presentation of these different formats.
- Discuss the importance of knowing the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and use visual arts to demonstrate one’s understanding of how the words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá assist us to better see and understand the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh, like a magnifying glass.
- Keep a journal of events and activities in one’s own life that were guided by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Writings and prayers; read the specific passages.



ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

- To employ the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to understand the conditions of the world, and as an assistance in making decisions in one’s life
- To establish a regular habit of reciting and reading the prayers and Tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Read daily from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.
- Memorize passages and prayers from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.
- Prepare selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to recite at a community Feast or Holy Day observance.
- Provide opportunities for students to share with other community members what they have learned about the titles and topics addressed in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Writings.
- At the beginning of each class share a favorite passage or sentence one has recently read from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s writings.
- Prepare a clear plan to read the major works of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá over time.

GOAL: TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

TOPIC: THE MAJOR TOPICS AND TITLES OF THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY: REPORTS ON SELECTED BOOKS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES: To know the titles of the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá; To know the main topics addressed in the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in each book

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To recognize the difference between ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s books, tablets, talks and prayers

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To establish a regular habit of reciting and reading the prayers and tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engage the mind and heart; Study of the Writings; Use of research; Use of science; Peer involvement

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN.

Materials Needed:

As many of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Works as available. A complete listing:

- *A Traveler’s Narrative*
- *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Canada*
- *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London*
- *Bahá’í Prayers*
- *Bahá’í World Faith*
- *The Divine Art of Living*
- *Foundations of World Unity*
- *Memorials of the Faithful*
- *The Mystery of God*
- *Paris Talks*
- *Promulgation of Universal Peace*
- *The Reality of Man*
- *The Secret of Divine Civilization*
- *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*
- *Some Answered Questions*
- *Tablets of the Divine Plan*
- *Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*

1. Set up a display of the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá listed above.
2. In groups of two or three, invite students to choose one title for which they will write a book report. Assure them that they will not be expected to read the entire book, especially if lengthy.
3. Encourage students to read their book’s Introduction, Preface, or jacket cover for a description of what the book is about and details about how it was revealed. (Another source for guidance on what a book is about is the booklet, *The Master Key*, from U.S. Bahá’í Distribution Service.)
4. List the following questions on chart paper, or prepare a form on which children can write in their answers. Then invite the students to present their findings to the class.

Questions for exploration:

- Write a 1- to 2-paragraph summary of the book’s purpose and content: what is it about and why was it written?
- When, where (and to whom, if applicable) was the book originally written?
- Identify what type of book this is:
 - book written by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá
 - collection of His talks given in a specific location
 - collection of tablets (letters)
 - collection of prayers
- Does the book have a Table of Contents? If so, how is the book divided into parts? List some of the main divisions.
- List the number of pages, the publisher and the date(s) published.

TOPIC: THE MAJOR TOPICS AND TITLES OF THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

ACTIVITY: READING ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ’S WRITINGS AT HOME

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To understand the unique style of the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To recognize the value of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Writings for one’s own life and how they can better connect one to Bahá’í teachings

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To establish a regular habit of reciting and reading the prayers and tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engage the mind and heart; Employ the sacred Writings; Use of stories; Use of games

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN. + READING

Materials Needed:

- selected books (see preceding activity) for the students to borrow or student copies of selected books
- nice paper, pens, markers, colored pencils
- small photographs of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

1. In the same groups from the preceding activity, ask the students to choose one section of their book that they feel they could read in one week. Encourage them to utilize the Table of Contents to select a section of particular interest.
 2. Ask students to determine how many pages they will need to read each day in order to complete their section in the allotted time span. Ask students to pledge to each other to accomplish this reading assignment daily.
 3. Instruct students to consult together on these questions following each day’s reading:
 - What understanding have I gained about the Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh?
 - How will ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Words assist me in my daily life?
 4. Invite all children to individually select one passage from the week’s reading section which especially holds meaning for them, and which they feel is a good example of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s style of writing or speaking. Instruct them to copy this passage onto nice paper, in their finest penmanship, and illuminate the page by decorating the borders with artwork and symbols.
 5. At the end of the one-week reading assignment, ask students to bring their illuminated passages to class. In the full group, invite each small group to share the highlights of the daily consultations.
 6. Display students’ illuminated passages and provide time for the children to peruse each others’ selections.
 7. Discuss together: How is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s writing and speaking style different from that of other authors whose works they have read?
- If students are not able to meet together in person each day to discuss that day’s reading, encourage consultation via telephone or e-mail.

GOAL: TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

TOPIC: THE MAJOR TOPICS AND TITLES OF THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

ACTIVITY: CREATE BOOK JACKETS

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES: To know the titles of the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá; To know the main topics addressed in the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engage the mind and heart; Use of art

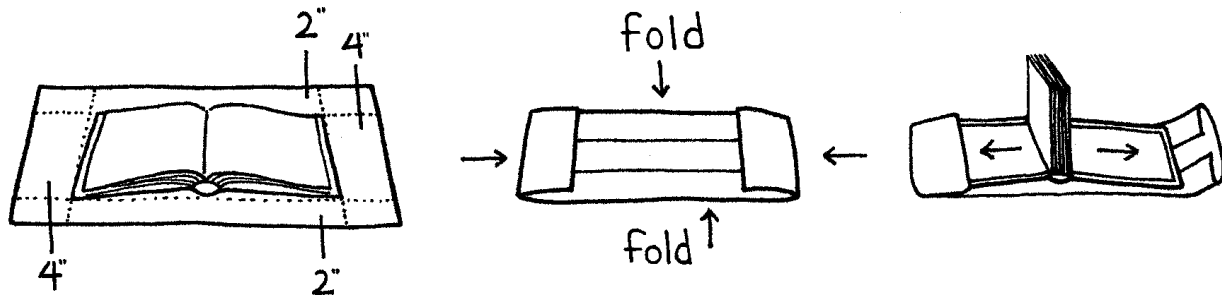
SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN

Materials Needed:

- selected books (see previous activities)
- paper grocery bags, butcher paper or large sheets of construction paper
- rulers, scissors, pencils
- art materials

1. Assign each group of students, designated in the preceding activities, to design and create a book jacket for the book they have been studying. Encourage art designs inspired by the themes within the book. Ask that they write a brief history of when, where, to whom and why this book was written on the inside left flap,

and a brief biography of its Author (‘Abdu’l-Bahá) on the inside right flap. Instruct them to write a brief introduction to the book on the back of the jacket to inspire someone to want to read the book, perhaps including a short quotation. Use the illustrations below to guide the creation of the students’ book jackets.



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TOPIC: THE MAJOR TOPICS AND TITLES OF THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

ACTIVITY: HOLD A BOOK FAIR ON ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ’S WRITINGS

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES: To connect an understanding of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s behavior and actions to one’s personal behavior and actions; To recognize how ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s all-encompassing love and patience aid us in bringing freedom and joy into our everyday lives

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To use the knowledge of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s responses in specific situations to guide one’s own behavior and choices in life

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engage the mind and heart; Cooperative learning

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- selected books (see previous activities)

1. Set up a new display of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s books – this time with the books’ new jackets on! If possible, plan for this activity to take place at Feast or another community event.
2. In chronological order of the dates on which the books were revealed, ask each team to verbally present its book, including the members’ reply to the question, “How can this book help someone better understand the Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh?” Ask the students to display their illuminated pages from the previous activity and to describe the significance of that passage in their own lives. How have these words influenced their actions?
3. Encourage individuals to choose a new book by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to study, inspired by their fellow students’ presentations. Encourage the students to also share their new learning with friends, family, and the community.



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TOPIC: THE MAJOR TOPICS AND TITLES OF THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories & Articles:

Brilliant Star:

“Some Plants Grow” May-June 92

“O Ye Loving Mothers” July-August 93

“To the Bahá’ís of the United States and
Canada” Special Edition 94

Tablet of the Heart, God and Me

Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Beloved Master*, pp. 33, 41

Armstrong-Ingram, R. Jackson, *Written in Light,
‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the American Bahá’í
Community 1898-1921*, p. 44

Perkins, Mary, *The Servant of the Glory*, pp. 79-
80, 164-165, 172-173, 189, 267, 272-273,
277, 285, 287-288

Music:

Levine, Matthew, *A Sacrifice to Thee*, “Refresh
and Gladden”

Spiro, Marc and Lesli, *Artists for the Arc*, “Refresh
and Gladden”

Do’A World Music Ensemble, “*Companions of the
Crimson Coloured Ark*, Refresh & Gladden My
Spirit”

The Dawnbreakers, *Glad Tidings*, “Gulrukh-i-
Abhá,” “Ashiq -i-Ruy-i-Bahá”

Ladjamaya *Intone, O My Servant*, “Refresh and
Gladden My Spirit,” “At the Gate of the
Garden”

Miller, Grant Hinden, *Journey*, “Thy Trusted
Servants,” “O Lord Open Thou the Door”

Ataíi, Goli, *Love of Bahá - Prayers of*, all tracks

Baumann, Roya, *Love Setteth the World Aflame*,
“Refresh and Gladden,” “Letter from ‘Abdu’l-
Bahá,” “I Love Thee,” “Open Thou the Door”

Engle, Susan and Marks, Jean, *Loving Hands*, “O
God! Refresh and Gladden My Spirit”

Ward, Nancy, *Melodies from the Sacred Writings*,
“O Thou Who Art Turning Thy Face to God,”

“Love Revealeth,” “Spring Returneth,” “I Am
Thy Servant”

Brown, Michele and others, *Melodies of the
Nightingale*, “Light of Divine Guidance”

Enayati, Irandocht, *Naghmehá - Celestial
Melodies*, “Daste Karam Bogshá,” “In Halq
Bahá,” “Sináy-i-Haq”

Narges, *Narges*, “In Halq Bahá”

Quinn, Lana, *One Step Away*, “Angels in the
World,” “Midnight Prayer,” “Servants of Thy
Threshold”

Davis, Mary *On Wings of Prayer*, “Tablet of
Visitation - ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,” “Prayer for the
Southern States”

To the Glory of God, Eric Dozier & Friends, “O
God, Guide Me”

MacKay, Caroline, *Wings*, “Song for the Departed”

Sims, Bob, *Words of Wisdom*, “Spiritual World,”
“Ask Whatsoever,” “This is the Balance,” “Be
Happy,” “Be Confident”

Poetry:

Brilliant Star: “Oneness Rap” July-August 95

Reference:

Balyuzi, H.M., *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, pp. 197, 482-3,

Townshend, George, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Master*,
pp. 53-66

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Wisdom of the Master, The Spiritual
Teachings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*

Activities:

Brilliant Star:

“No Nobler Deed” July-August 93

“Tablets of the Divine Plan” Special Edition 94

“No Time For Anything Else” November-
December 95

List other favorite resources:

If you find any additional resources, please notify the National Teacher Training Center, or submit your findings to the Educational Materials web site

**TO BECOME FAMILIAR
WITH THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ**

MEMORIALS OF THE FAITHFUL

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:
FAITHFULNESS, JOYFULNESS, OBEDIENCE, REVERENCE**

I adjure them, by the precious blood that flowed in such great profusion, by the lives of the unnumbered saints and heroes who were immolated, by the supreme, the glorious sacrifice of the Prophet-Herald of our Faith, by the tribulations which its Founder, Himself, willingly underwent, so that His Cause might live, His Order might redeem a shattered world and its glory might suffuse the entire planet – I adjure them, as this solemn hour draws nigh, to resolve never to flinch, never to hesitate, never to relax, until each and every objective in the Plans to be proclaimed, at a later date, has been fully consummated.

Shoghi Effendi, Compilations: Crisis and Victory, p. 25

This book by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, translated into English a half century after His passing, was a labor of pure love, both in its remembrance of the faithful ones who expended their lives in the path of Bahá’u’lláh, and to present and future generations of readers. Although in outward form it is a collection of brief biographical sketches, they do not concern the personal transitory aspects of human life. It is the quality of soul, the attributes of spirit, the quintessential humanity and the reflection of the Divine in man that is the focus here.

Memorials of the Faithful, front cover

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE

- To know the names and some of the stories of the heroes and heroines that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá describes in *Memorials of the Faithful*

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Tell or read the stories of some of the heroes and heroines described in *Memorials of the Faithful*.
- Invite students to prepare a collage of people shapes on which are written the names of heroes and heroines in *Memorials of the Faithful*.
- Prepare a short talk on one of the heroes or heroines of this book
- Develop matching games to enable students to identify names with places, events, special gifts and attributes of the early believers.

WISDOM OBJECTIVE

- To understand the significance of the lives of these specific people as they were chosen by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, as examples of devotion, courage, and sacrifice

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Consult about the attributes demonstrated by these specific persons which resulted in their being chosen by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá for inclusion in His Memorials.
- Use music, mime and drama to learn about the lives of these early believers.
- Discuss some of the sacrifices made by the heroes and heroines described in the *Memorials of the Faithful*, and consult about why these people were able to make these sacrifices.
- Prepare dioramas depicting events from the lives of the Faithful.



SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE

- To gain inspiration from the lives of these heroes and heroines

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Invite the students to reflect upon times in their lives when they have wanted to sacrifice something for someone. Share why.
- Encourage students to share about certain people who have been significant in their lives and to explain why these people are significant.
- Explore examples of times when the students may have been significant to someone else (e.g., a younger sibling, a grandparent, a friend).
- Ask the students to consult about how they can sacrifice and show courage in their daily lives.
- Provide opportunities for the students to reflect on how they can apply the attributes of the heroes and heroines of the Faith in their own lives.



ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE

- To gain inspiration from the lives of these heroes and heroines

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY

- Prepare presentations or talks about the early believers based on *Memorials of the Faithful*.

GOAL: TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

TOPIC: *MEMORIALS OF THE FAITHFUL*

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY: INTRODUCE *MEMORIALS OF THE FAITHFUL*

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know the names and some of the stories of the heroes and heroines that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá describes in *Memorials of the Faithful*

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Education directed towards God; Use of multimedia

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 1 HR.

Materials Needed:

- *Memorials of the Faithful*, by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá
- video, “The Hands of the Cause of God,” Vol. 1, if available
- photocopies of Table of Contents, Guide to Persian Pronunciation and Glossary, for each pair of students

1. Present the book to your students by reading aloud the “Proem” by the translator, Marzieh Gail. Provide photocopies of the “Contents” and “Guide to Persian Pronunciation,” from the book. Inspire students with the thought that they will have the opportunity to become familiar with the life and service of one of these blessed souls whom ‘Abdu’l-Bahá chose to memorialize.
2. Show the video, “Hands of the Cause of God” (43 min.), to see glimpses of some of these precious souls described in *Memorials of the Faithful*.

ACTIVITY: RESEARCHING THE STORIES

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know the names and some of the stories of the heroes and heroines that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá describes in *Memorials of the Faithful*

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To understand the significance of the lives of these specific people who were chosen by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as examples of devotion, courage and sacrifice

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To be able to retell stories from *Memorials of the Faithful*

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Education directed towards God; Use of research; Cooperative learning; Use of art

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 1 HR.

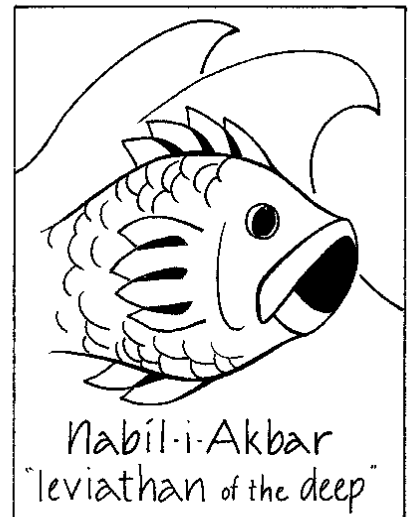
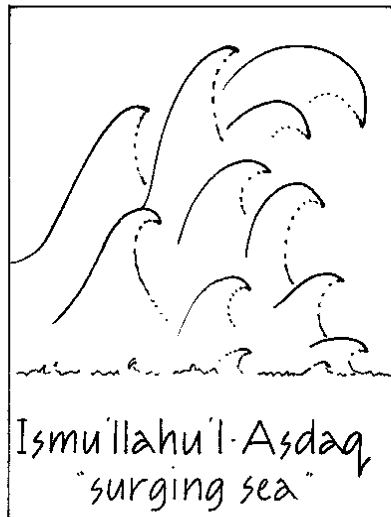
Materials Needed:

- *Memorials of the Faithful*
- photocopies of the sections from *Memorials* used in the preceding activity
- photocopies of selections from *Memorials* highlighting a variety of believers
- writing paper and pens
- dictionaries
- unlined index cards; art materials

1. Provide photocopies of the stories of many of the particularly inspiring individuals listed in the Table of Contents, and perhaps viewed in the video. In pairs, invite students to choose one of these individuals who particularly interests them. Ask that each pair choose someone different. Assist students as needed, using the pronunciation guide as an aid, to learn to say the name of their selected believer correctly.

TOPIC: *MEMORIALS OF THE FAITHFUL*

2. Provide the pairs with a photocopy of their believer’s story, plus a photocopy of the “Glossary” as an aid to their study. Ask that they read the story carefully, stopping to look up unfamiliar words. Be available to assist with comprehension of difficult passages.
 3. Invite the pairs to make a small book with illustrations to retell their story in their own words. Remind the friends not to draw any members of the Holy Family.
 4. Instruct the children to create a card for each individual. Include qualities and attributes that were especially polished in the believer they studied. Include illustrations of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s descriptions of these souls.
- For example, Nabil-i-Akbar, p.#1, is called “a flame of God,” and “he roared out like a leviathan in the deep.” Ismu’lláhu’l-Asdaq, p.#8, “was like a surging sea, a falcon that soared high.” Ask students to illustrate the metaphors they discover on their cards.



GOAL: TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

TOPIC: *MEMORIALS OF THE FAITHFUL*

**ACTIVITY: APPLYING THE SPIRITUAL QUALITIES OF EARLY BELIEVERS
TO PERSONAL TESTS**

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES: To gain inspiration from the lives of these heroes and heroines; To reflect upon the attributes of these heroes and heroines and how one can show the same attributes in one’s life today

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engage the mind and heart; Use of stories; Use of reflection

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 40 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- index cards
- cards from previous activity

1. Use the cards you have made of the believers: Request that the students submit a difficulty or test they or their friends are struggling with, by writing this situation anonymously on an index card.
2. Read each test aloud. For each difficulty, encourage students to suggest which believer from *Memorials of the Faithful* might have had a similar test and which attributes he or she summoned to meet the test.
3. Discuss the question, “How can you apply these qualities to meet your own personal tests?” Provide time for reflection and journaling in response to the consultation.
4. Invite students to write an addition to *Memorials* as if ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was writing the story of their own life and contributions to the Cause.

ACTIVITY: CREATING A LOCAL, CONTEMPORARY *MEMORIALS OF THE FAITHFUL*

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To reflect on the attributes of these heroes and heroines and how one can show the same attributes in one’s life today

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engage the mind and heart; Use of art; Use of research; Use of investigation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 1 HR.

Materials Needed:

- video or audio recording devices (optional)
- index cards
- writing paper and pens

1. Follow the example of both the Beloved Guardian and the Master, who often told stories of heroic deeds they observed in others to inspire the friends to meet the goals before them. See June Thomas’ book, *Planning Progress: Lessons from Shoghi Effendi*, for a description of how the Guardian employed this.
2. Consider contributing to the success of your community’s goals by choosing a local hero or heroine in your community. This could be someone serving in your community today, someone who has since moved away, or someone who was integral to the history of your Bahá’í community, who has passed on. Discuss the impact these friends have had on the growth and development of your community.
3. Inspire the friends to emulate the attributes demonstrated by these persons by recording and telling their histories. The students might like to make video- or audio-tapes of some of the older members in your community, or make cards that tell about their lives of service. You might compile different individuals’ stories and publish a contemporary “Memorials of the Faithful” booklet for your home community.

GOAL: TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

TOPIC: MEMORIALS OF THE FAITHFUL

ACTIVITY: SHARE STORIES FROM MEMORIALS OF THE FAITHFUL WITH THE COMMUNITY

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To be able to retell stories from *Memorials of the Faithful*

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To gain inspiration from the lives of these heroes and heroines

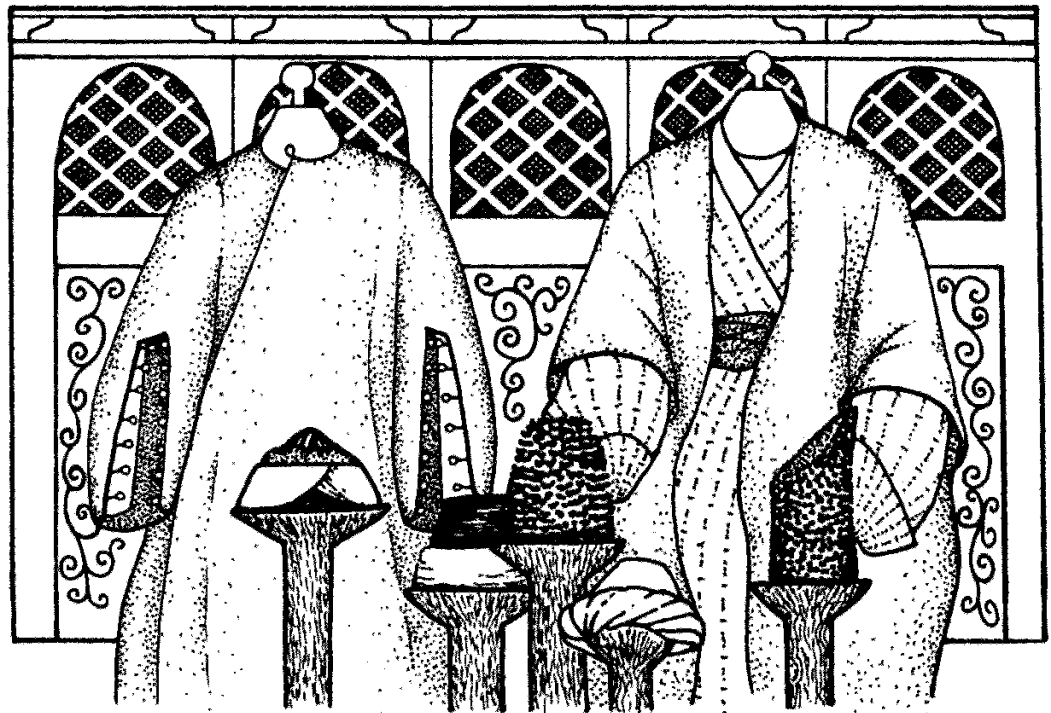
INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engage the mind and heart; Peer teaching; Use of games

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 1 HR.

Materials Needed:

- personal items, vintage clothing
- photocopies of cards made for early believers in previous activity

1. Invite the friends for an evening of sharing stories and inspiration from these heroic early believers. Or, highlight a different believer from *Memorials of the Faithful* at each Nineteen Day Feast.
2. Create an atmosphere to enhance the spiritual environment: Set up a small display of items that might bring your study and talk to life. Gather some personal items that might represent the individuals and the qualities they possessed which resulted in their being chosen by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá for inclusion in *Memorials of the Faithful*.
3. See the following page, “Decorating with Vintage Clothing,” for details of how to create a historic and spiritually uplifting environment. This kind of activity pulls everyone together and speaks to the heart as well as the mind.
4. Display your books and collection of items museum style. Invite your guests to walk through your museum and learn about a different believer at each display, collecting one of the cards you have prepared about that believer at each exhibit.
5. Ask your community newsletter editor for permission to share the story of one of these early believers in each newsletter.



Resource Pages

Museum Display

DECORATING WITH VINTAGE CLOTHING

Ideas for creating a display of items that brings history of the Faith to life:

Materials:

- antique body form
- wooden hangers
- furniture pieces (chest of drawers, chair, vanity table), antique, replica or retro style
- any antique furniture accessories
- old lace pieces or handkerchiefs
- prayer beads and prayer books (old handwritten ones in Persian)
- Persian rugs, antique lamps
- Handwritten letters that you have made to copy the ones a believer might have received
- antique or replica (aged) pictures and frames of various sizes
- choice of vintage clothing including shoes, hats, handbags, gloves

Decorating Suggestions:

Fill up a corner of the room with a display. You might use an antique body form and dress it in a Persian period costume. If you don't have one, consider sewing one. Use books and consultation with older Persian friends to make it as authentic as possible. If the attic is empty of vintage clothing, check in the area for antique stores that carry old clothing or borrow from local theatre costume departments.

To add to a corner, use smaller items on the walls or floor. Drape or layer items on top of the body form to add color. Antique shoes, old handbags, hats, gloves, etc. are ideal to make the character “come alive.”

Suitcases and hatboxes can be opened up to place articles of clothing in or even a container for candles or plants. For an unusual display, try placing vintage hats on top of old wooden factory spools of different heights.

For an English garden style, that might suggest early western believers, try incorporating a garland of silk greenery intertwined through the hat display or around the body form. Flowers cascading from an overturned hat can create a very romantic setting.

Bring in a special piece of furniture, like an antique (or replica) vanity table or chest of drawers, open a few drawers to show off some old handkerchiefs or gloves. Top off a furniture piece with some old lace draped over the edges and add a few family heirloom pictures and pictures of early believers. (If you don't have any pictures, you can photocopy from books and put in old frames.) Talk to the older believers in your community to get ideas of period clothing and items they might have to share.

Create a cozy area with Persian rugs or pillows where small break-out groups can gather around the display you have created for discussions, prayers or tea.

GOAL: TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

TOPIC: *MEMORIALS OF THE FAITHFUL*

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories & Articles:

Brilliant Star:

“Musk-Scented Pen” November-December 97

‘Abdu’l-Bahá *Memorials of the Faithful*

Johnson, Lowell, *Táhirih*

Mehrabi, Jacqueline, *Stories of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, pp. 23-24

Meyers, Zoe, *Children’s Stories from the Dawn-Breakers*

Perkins, Mary, *The Servant of the Glory*, pp. 267-268

Music:

Brilliant Star:

“Táhirih” September-October 91

Avaz, *For the Martyrs*, “Táhirih”

Miller, Grant Hinden, *Journey*, “Jináb-i-Munír”

Video:

“The Hands of the Cause of God,” Vol. 1, by Ramin Khadem and Fred Badiyan, 2000

Poetry:

Herrman, Duane, *Voices From a Borrowed Garden*, “Táhirih Removes the Veil”

Ruhe, David. S, *Robe of Light*, “Poems of Táhirih: A Taste of Her Genius” pp. 193-194

White, Roger, *Another Song, Another Season*, “‘Abdu’l-Ghaffár of Isfahan” p. 7, “The Courier (Shaykh Salman)” p. 58, “At Her Looking Glass (Táhirih)” p. 92, “How Still the Centre,” p. 93

Reference:

Balyuzi, H.M., *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 417

Edge, Clara A., *Táhirih*,

Root, Martha L., *Táhirih the Pure*

List other favorite resources:

If you find any additional resources, please notify the National Teacher Training Center, or submit your findings to the Educational Materials web site.