

Lesson Planning Guide

Central Figures

Bahá'u'lláh

Level One

Second Edition



Acknowledgments

The creation of this Lesson Planning Guide was an evolutionary process, over two years in the making, incorporating and building upon work done previously with the Core Curriculum strand booklets and the Core Curriculum Learning Activities booklets, with ideas and lesson plans contributed by Bahá'í teachers throughout North America. We are deeply grateful for these loving and highly competent friends and co-workers for their skillful, expert, invaluable and varied contributions: Marilyn Lindsley, Karen Olin Parrish, Cheryll Schuette, Mary Firdawsi, Kate Johnson, Kathy Penn, Fawn Johnston and many teacher trainers and advisors throughout the U.S.

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National Bahá'í Education Task Force, March 2003



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Core Curriculum for Spiritual Education of Children and Junior Youth

Introduction

“Strain every nerve to acquire both inner and outer perfections, for the fruit of the human tree hath ever been and will ever be perfections both within and without. It is not desirable that a man be left without knowledge or skills, for he is then but a barren tree. Then, so much as capacity and capability allow, ye needs must deck the tree of being with fruits such as *knowledge, wisdom, spiritual perception, and eloquent speech.*”

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, *BAHÁ'Í EDUCATION*

This brief quotation from the writings of Bahá'u'lláh inspires the learning model for the Core Curriculum. For the purposes of the Core Curriculum, these terms may be explained in the following way:

Knowledge

To become informed of the Sacred writings on a spiritual principle;

Wisdom

To gain deeper understanding of a spiritual principle;

Spiritual Perception

To reflect on the application of a spiritual principle learned;

Eloquent Speech

To articulate or demonstrate the spiritual principle learned.

This learning model engages the volition of the learner by appealing to varied capacities, capabilities, and interests. The Bahá'í writings compiled in the book, *Foundations for a Spiritual Education*, guide the ongoing development of the curriculum. These writings outline the purpose, process, content, outcomes, and organizational principles for a spiritual education curriculum open to all.

The Content of the Curriculum

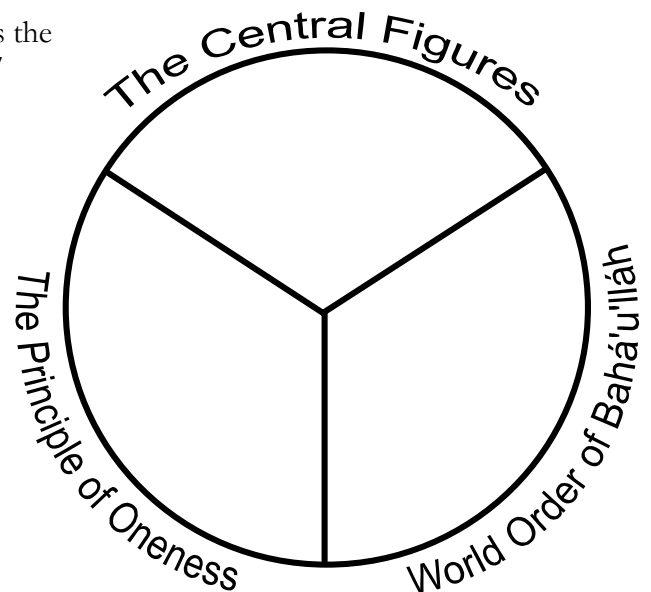
The source for the “strands” and themes in the curriculum is the Bahá'í sacred writings, referenced in *Foundations for a Spiritual Education*. The term “strand” provides the image of a combination of interrelated threads that, woven together, create a beautiful tapestry of spiritual education.

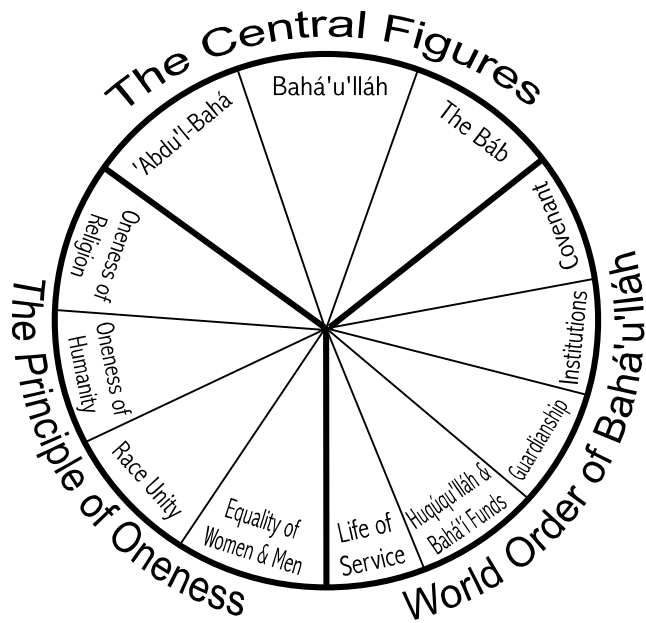
“That which is of paramount importance for the children, that which must precede all else, is to teach them the oneness of God and the Laws of God.”

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, *BAHÁ'Í EDUCATION*

Following this exhortation of Bahá'u'lláh, the content of the Core Curriculum is organized into three strands, or major categories of study:

- The **Central Figures** of the Faith
- The **Principle of Oneness**
- The **World Order of Bahá'u'lláh**





Themes of Study

Each strand has several themes:

The Central Figures includes “The Báb,” “Bahá’u’lláh,” and “‘Abdu’l-Bahá.”

The Principle of Oneness includes “The Oneness of Religion,” “The Oneness of Humanity,” “Race Unity,” and “The Equality of Women and Men.”

The World Order of Bahá’u’lláh includes “The Covenant,” “The Institutions of the Faith,” “The Guardianship,” “Huqúqu’lláh and the Bahá’í Funds,” and “A Life of Service.”

Instructional Methods and Learning Tools

A wide variety of Instructional Methods and Learning Tools are also described in the Bahá’í writings, including such diverse approaches to learning as individual study, group consultation, and use of all the arts and sciences. Within each theme, specific goals and topics systematically guide the learner to increasingly deeper levels of knowledge, understanding, spiritual insight, and action.

Lesson Planning Guides and Storybooks

An effective spiritual education process must not only systematically proceed through the entire curriculum, but also engage the hearts and minds of learners to result in active lives of service to God and humanity. These detailed Lesson Planning Guides provide teachers with learning objectives and fully-developed sample activities utilizing the arts, sciences, crafts, and other learning methods suggested in the writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. A growing collection of illustrated children’s storybooks enhances the lessons being taught.

Training of Children’s Teachers

A system of careful training and hands-on practice supports teachers to become fully adept at using these materials to teach children and junior youth. The Core Curriculum Teacher Training Program systematically builds the skills to use Lesson Planning Guides and Core Curriculum Storybooks with children. The initial 32-hour training program includes:

Module One: The Bahá’í Teacher ~ Station, Role, Qualities and Preparation

Module Two: The Spiritual Reality of the Child

Module Three: Teaching through Use of the Core Curriculum Strands

Module Four: Beyond the Classroom ~ The Child Development Centered Community

Following this initial period of training, an ongoing series of Teacher Development Workshops assists teachers continue to develop their skills in classroom management; storytelling; attending to each student’s capacity, capability and interest; and provides additional practice adapting lessons to local circumstances.

We warmly invite you to participate in ongoing spiritual education and training for yourself, the teacher.

An Integrated and Comprehensive Community Approach

The spiritual education of children and junior youth includes an active role for teachers, parents, institutions, and every member of the community. Core Curriculum Training Programs encourage communities to invest their time and resources in the spiritual education of children and junior youth, described by the Universal House of Justice as “the most precious treasure a community can possess.”

In addition to providing a spiritual education program for children and training for teachers, the Core Curriculum offers training for youth empowerment, parenting, marriage and family life, race unity, equality, and a sequence of courses addressing the fundamental verities of the Bahá’í Faith.

For more information about the Core Curriculum Teacher Training program, additional classroom materials for teachers, and storybooks for children, please contact the National Teacher Training Center at Louhelen Bahá’í School, 3208 S. State Rd., Davison, MI 48423; phone (810) 653-5033, or email nttc@usbnc.org. Please also share the Lesson Plans you create. You are ever in our hearts.

With loving Bahá’í greetings,
The National Bahá’í Education Task Force

Lesson Planning Guide

Central Figures

'Bahá'u'lláh



Level One

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USING THIS LESSON PLANNING GUIDE

This Lesson Planning Guide provides a learning framework and detailed sample activities for the study of the pivotal principle of oneness. An overview of the entire content of the Core Curriculum is provided in the Core Curriculum Scope and Sequence, pages 84-87.

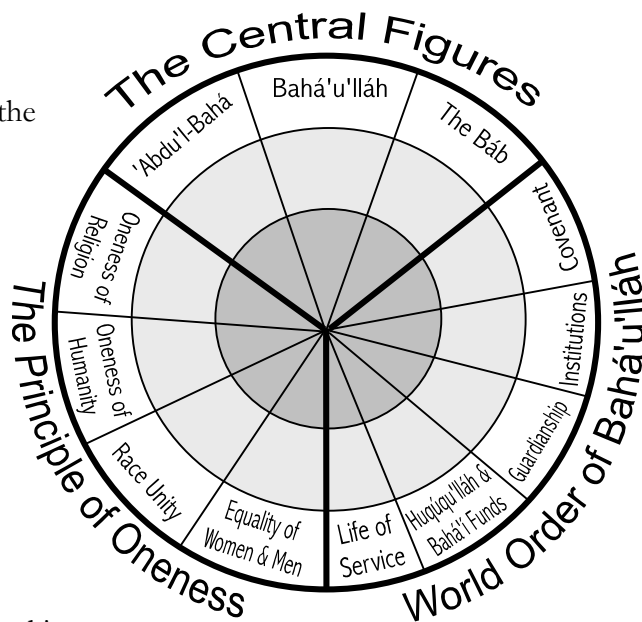
Three Levels of Study

The Core Curriculum provides three levels of study. All of the themes of study are organized into a nine-year sequential curriculum for children and junior youth, ages 6 to 14:

- Level One, for children aged 6-8,
- Level Two, for children 9-11,
- Level Three, for junior youth 12-14.

These three levels of study may be adapted to meet the needs of learners of all ages and varied backgrounds. In a growing community, this flexibility enables beginning learners to start with the concepts of Level One, using age-appropriate activities.

The spiritual education of each learner is carefully documented in a comprehensive Spiritual Education Plan.



Structure and Organization

This lesson planning guide includes the **Goals** and **Topics** for *The Central Figures* theme: *Bahá'u'lláh*, *Level One*.

Goals and Topics

- The Scope and Sequence of the Core Curriculum consists of a series of **goals** within each of the strands. These goals might be thought of as units of study.
 - A number of **topics** are then suggested for each goal.
 - As outlined in the Table of Contents, the goals for *Bahá'u'lláh* – *Level One* are “To Develop a Deep Love for Bahá'u'lláh,” “To Understand the Station of Bahá'u'lláh,” “To Know Significant Events in the Life and Ministry of Bahá'u'lláh,” and “To Understand the Principles and Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.” These same goals may also appear in Level Two and Level Three of the *Bahá'u'lláh* strand, but the topics will be different than those in Level One.

Learning Objectives and Learning Activities

- At the beginning of each topic in the lesson planning guide you will find a list of learning **objectives** for each component of the learning framework – Knowledge, Wisdom, Spiritual Perception, and Eloquent Speech.
- Objectives are followed by suggested learning **activities**.
- You may use these suggested activities when planning your lessons, or create additional activities using the Core Curriculum Instructional Methods and Learning Tools listed in the Appendix, pages 81-83. (For more information about Instructional Methods and Learning Tools, see *Foundations for a Spiritual Education*, pages 152-68.)

Sample Activities

- Following the listing of Objectives and Suggested Activities, you will find a series of **sample activities** created by experienced teachers of the Core Curriculum.
- Each activity is designed to achieve one or more learning objectives.
- Activities are designed to use a variety of Instructional Methods and Learning Tools, to address the varied capacities and capabilities of diverse learners.
- A lesson may consist of only a few, or many activities, depending on the time available for your classes and the capabilities of your students.
- A complete lesson includes activities that address objectives from all four components of the Core Curriculum Learning Framework – Knowledge, Wisdom, Spiritual Perception, and Eloquent Speech.
- Using the Lesson Planning Template located in the Appendix, pages 78-80, you can create lessons that will engage the interest, curiosity, and attention of your students, increase their knowledge, and build their skills of service.

Core Curriculum Storybooks

- Whenever possible, activities include the use of stories, memory verses and illustrations from the Core Curriculum Storybook series. The Lesson Planning Guide draws upon *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Volume One*.

Additional Resources

- At the end of each topic in this guide you will find a list of additional published resources that relate to that topic. In some cases stories, pictures, or other materials have been included for your convenience.

Appendix

- At the end of this Lesson Planning Guide is an appendix, containing a Lesson Planning Template, a Checklist of Instructional Methods and Learning Tools, the Core Curriculum Scope and Sequence, reference information, and sources for additional information and training opportunities.

We encourage you to include activities within your lesson to address all four components of the learning model. When all four components of the learning model are addressed, students internalize their knowledge and are able to translate their understanding into action.

Through the lessons you create, learners contribute their part to building the Kingdom of God on earth.

“...the little children must needs be aware in their very heart and soul that Bahá’í is not just a name but a truth. Every child must be trained in the things of the spirit, so that he may embody all the virtues and become a source of glory to the Cause of God. Otherwise, the mere word ‘Bahá’í’, if it yield no fruit will come to nothing.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá