

The Principle of Oneness

Race Unity



Level Three

ELIMINATING RACIAL PREJUDICE

THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:
COURAGE, LOVE, JUSTICE

... The accomplishment of unity between the colored and whites will be an assurance of the world's peace. Then, racial prejudice, national prejudice, limited patriotism and religious bias will pass away and remain no longer.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Foundations of World Unity*, p. 35

As to racial prejudice, the corrosion of which, for well nigh a century, has bitten into the fibre, and attacked the whole social structure of American society, it should be regarded as constituting the most vital and challenging issue confronting the Bahá’í community at the present stage of its evolution.

Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 28

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To know the Bahá'í writings on racial prejudice and the importance of its elimination.
- To know that the Bahá'í teachings state that there can be no differentiation according to race in the Bahá'í community.
- To become acquainted with the effects of a subconscious sense of superiority, a patronizing attitude towards others.
- To become aware of the influence of racial stereotypes on our beliefs and behaviors.

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Read what the Bahá'í writings have to say about racial prejudice and the importance of its elimination.
- Label racist attitudes and stereotypes in books and the media.
- Use stories and poetry to recognize how superior and patronizing attitudes can hurt others.
- Memorize a prayer from the Bahá'í writings that states there are no differences according to race in the Bahá'í community.



WISDOM OBJECTIVES

- To understand the Guardian's writings on racial prejudice in the United States.
- To understand the ways in which race prejudice damages individuals and society.
- To understand why racial prejudice is the most vital and challenging issue facing the Bahá'í community.

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Explore how scientists have both contributed to the misunderstanding and prejudices of people regarding race, and how scientists are contributing to the knowledge of the essential oneness of humanity. Consider what motivates their research.
- Collect items that have corroded with rust. Use this to explore the meaning of corrosion and connect it to the Guardian's statements about how racial prejudice has corroded American society.
- Collect newspaper cuttings and articles on the contribution of scientists to the understanding of racial prejudice
- Define racial prejudice through word and arts.
- Discuss in groups the Guardian's writings on racial prejudice in *The Advent of Divine Justice*. Ponder and reflect upon why the Guardian addresses the American Bahá'í community concerning this issue. Share findings with the whole class.
- Make a list of things that contribute to peace and a list of things that define racial prejudice.
- Discuss the meanings of vital and challenging, and brainstorm the various contexts in which they can be used, then discuss how these words relate to racial prejudice in the United States.
- Read about historical events in which examples of individual and societal damage caused by race prejudice is illustrated.

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE



SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

- To discern how racial prejudice affects all because of the inherent spiritual and social interdependence of humanity.
- To identify ways that race prejudice prevents America's spiritual growth and progress.
- To recognize one's own role in facing this challenge.
- To perceive the contribution of the Bahá'í teachings and the Bahá'í community to the progress made so far in the elimination of racial prejudice.
- To perceive ways to strive towards complete freedom from racial prejudice in every phase of activity and life.

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Prepare a short drama or dance depicting the ways racism hurts all humanity.
- Find music that reflects the effects of racial prejudice and music that evokes feelings of unity. Draw images that the music evokes.
- Encourage students to reflect on their own behavior and, in small groups, discuss how they can promote unity. Use songs such as *Building Bridges* to encourage this process.
- Identify spiritual and practical ills caused by racial prejudice. Create drama, stories, or dance to show the spiritual and material benefits of unity.
- Plan a model city where the needs of all residents are met. Contrast this vision with photographs of current reality.
- Research stories (through newsreels and *The American Bahá'í*) of individuals and communities promoting racial unity. Create drama or comic strips from these stories.



ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

- To prepare and deliver eloquent presentations on the nature of racial prejudice and its effects on the progress of the individual and society.
- To consult with community groups about their progress toward racial unity.
- To formulate personal goals that will contribute to the elimination of prejudice.

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Set personal goals to work toward the elimination of prejudice on a daily basis.
- Memorize quotations from 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi to be shared at events focusing on the most challenging issue.
- Identify community groups that promote unity. Collaborate on projects or events.
- Initiate activities to promote race unity in the community at large.
- Perform dramas or dances about the effects of racial prejudice on individuals and society.
- Construct a model city where all residents' needs are met.
- Form neighborhood consultative groups (Bahá'ís and others) to address problems of racial prejudice in the neighborhood.

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY: ONE RACE, THE HUMAN RACE

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To become aware of the influence of racial stereotypes on our beliefs and actions

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of science; Use of consultation; Use of memorization and recitation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of Resources Pages 85-86
- Globe (or ball as a substitute)
- Four pieces of colored paper: white, red, black, and yellow
- Large or beautiful candle, and a smaller candle for each student
- Clay, aluminum foil, jar lids, or other material for creating small candle-holders

Advance Preparation: Post the following quotations on chart paper or chalkboard:

O ye discerning ones! Verily, the words which have descended from the heaven of the Will of God are the source of unity and harmony for the world. Close your eyes to racial differences, and welcome all with the light of oneness.

Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 37

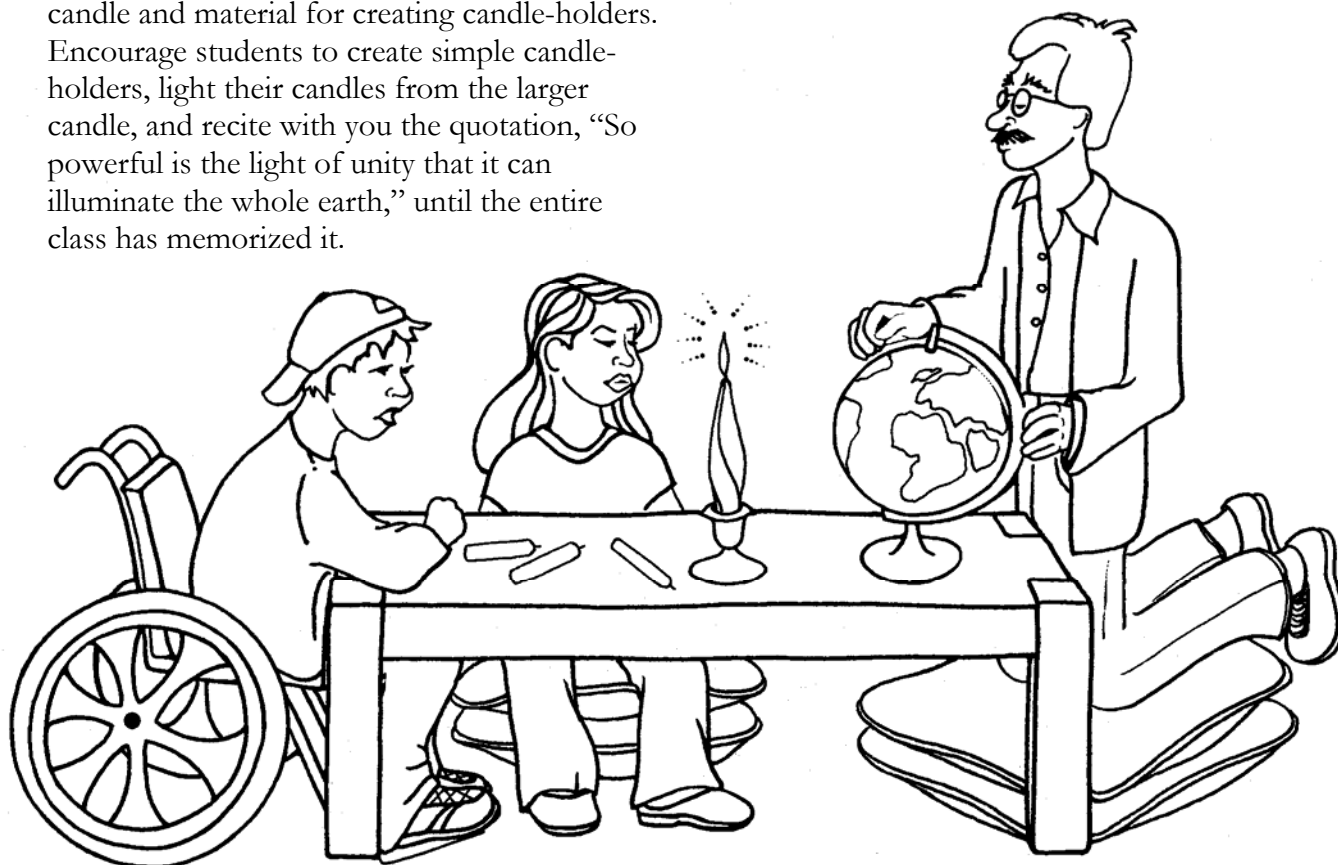
So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 14

1. Welcome students. Invite them to think of a time when they were part of a group, however large or small, that was rich with diversity and happily engaged in a productive activity. This could be at home, school, faith-based activity, youth workshop, sports, or any other occasion. Encourage the students to share their examples and then briefly explore the questions: Have you noticed that joy increases as diversity increases? What is it about “unity in diversity” that seems to make people so happy? Why do you think it is that more and more people are discovering this truth?
2. Distribute copies of Resource Pages 85–86. Read and discuss “A New Way of Seeing Things” with the students. Refer to the globe as you discuss the three maps. Move to the next step before considering the last box, “A New Way of Seeing Racial Distinctions.”
3. Hold up pieces of white, red, yellow and black paper. Ask: Have you ever seen a real person that matched any of these colors? Then read and discuss the box at the bottom of Resource Page 86, as well as Resource Page 87.
4. Acknowledge that although there are many colors for people, there is in reality only one race, the human race. Discuss: If this is true, why do we think of ‘white’ people or ‘black’ people, rather than just ‘people’ people? Where did ‘whites’ and ‘blacks’ come from, anyway? How did ‘whiteness’ get invented?
5. Distribute copies of Resource Pages 88–89. Read through the Insight Panels 1–4 and discuss the questions provided on those pages.

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

6. Refer again to the “New Way of Seeing” Resource Pages. Discuss: How is the mental and spiritual ‘map’ that separates people into races like a world map that over-emphasizes the distance between continents? How do ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s teachings about race create a new ‘map’ of the human family—one that emphasizes the oneness of humanity?
7. Invite students to read aloud the posted quotations at least twice. Discuss the questions: How does “the light of oneness” and “the light of unity” affect the world? What are some examples of the power of Bahá’u’lláh’s words to become a source of unity and harmony? What is Bahá’u’lláh asking us to do?
8. Light the large or beautiful candle. Spin the globe to demonstrate that this light can, indeed, light the whole earth. Invite the students to join you to close your eyes to racial differences, welcome all with the light of oneness, and become part of a process to illuminate the whole earth. Provide each student with a small candle and material for creating candle-holders. Encourage students to create simple candle-holders, light their candles from the larger candle, and recite with you the quotation, “So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth,” until the entire class has memorized it.
9. Discuss the questions: What are some occasions in which we can share this quotation with others? What are some ways that we can include it in our everyday conversations? What are some specific actions we can take to close our eyes to racial differences and welcome all with the light of oneness? Encourage students to each privately select one or more of these actions to complete in the coming week. Remind students that they will have the opportunity to share these experiences with each other at the beginning of the next class.
10. If the group will be completing the following activity at the next session, also suggest that each student bring to class a newspaper or magazine article, advertisement, or printed web-page that includes reference to race or to problems of racial prejudice.



ACTIVITY: THE CORROSION OF RACIAL PREJUDICE

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know the Bahá'í writings on racial prejudice and the importance of its elimination

WISDOM OBJECTIVES: To understand the Guardian's writings on racial prejudice in the United States. To understand the ways in which race prejudice damages individuals and society.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of consultation; Use of independent investigation; Use of science

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- photocopies of Resource Page 90
- 6-volt lantern battery (or standard 9-volt)
- two 1-foot lengths of insulated copper wire
- clear quart glass jar
- water
- 1 cup salt
- electrician's tape
- a glass of pure clean water for each student

Advance Preparation: Encourage each student to bring to class a newspaper or magazine article, advertisement, or printed web-page that includes reference to race or to problems of racial prejudice. The teacher should also bring several examples.

1. Begin the activity by re-reading the quotations posted for the previous activity.
2. Invite the students to share their experiences over the past week striving to "close your eyes to racial differences, and welcome all with the light of oneness." Encourage all for their efforts. Then briefly discuss: How were our experiences the same? How were they different? Did our own family, cultural, or ethnic backgrounds influence our choices or the way others responded to us as we made these efforts?
3. Read aloud the following quotation, then discuss: Why is it important for us to more fully establish the principle of unity in our own hearts? Why is it important for us also to make every effort to change the environment around us?

We cannot segregate the human heart from the environment outside us and say that once one of these is reformed everything will be improved. Man is organic with the world. His inner life moulds the environment and is itself also deeply affected by it. The one acts upon the other and every abiding change in the life of man is the result of these mutual reactions.

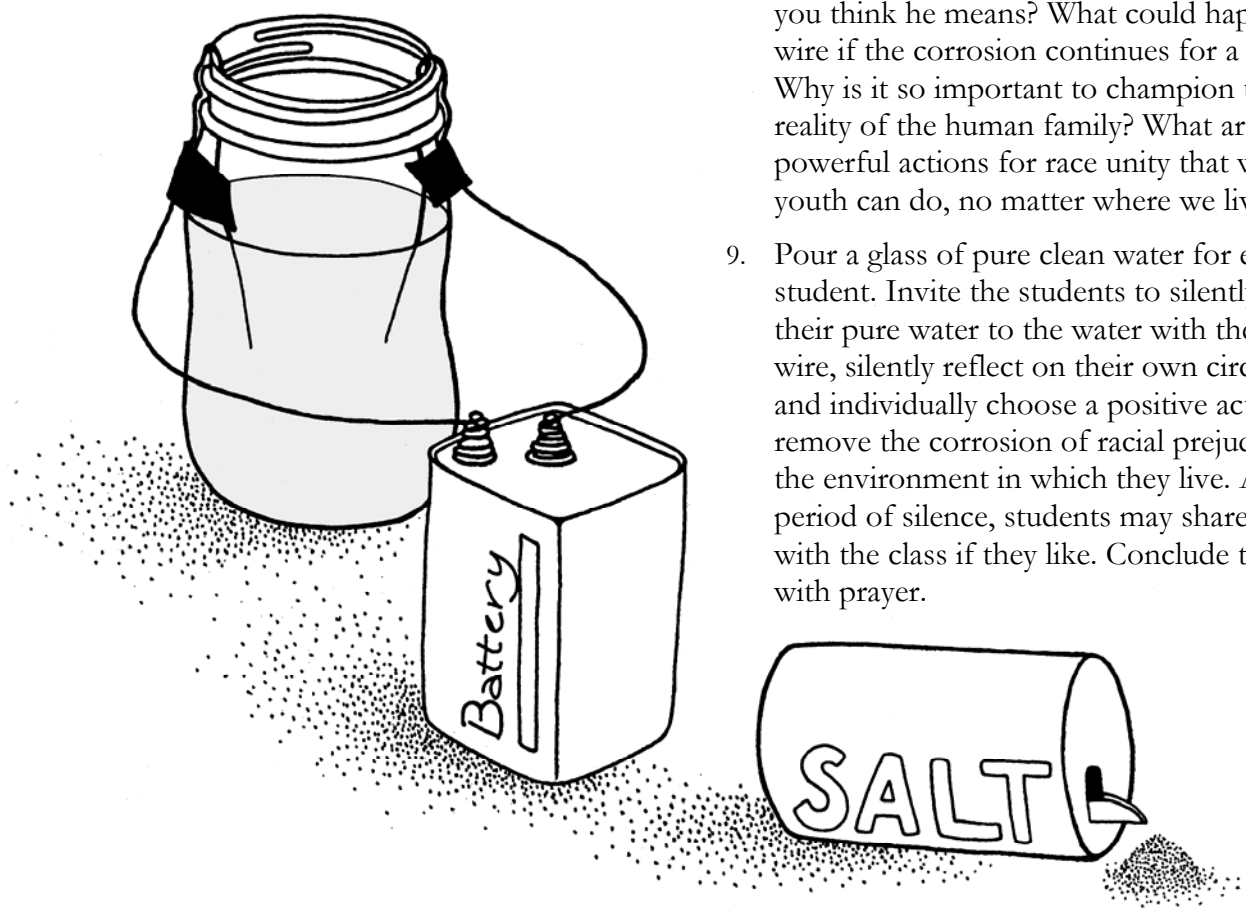
No movement in the world directs its attention upon both these aspects of human life and has full measures for their improvement, save the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. And this is its distinctive feature.

On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, *Compilation of Compilations*, v.1, p. 84

4. Invite students to share their articles, advertisements, or printed web-pages that refer to race or to problems of racial prejudice. Discuss:
 - To what extent do these articles, advertisement, etc. affirm the reality that we are all one race? How do words or images communicate this idea?
 - To what extent do they stress real or imagined differences among people? How is this done? Are the differences used to make one group seem better than another? How do words or images communicate this idea? Are the differences emphasized so much that they are used to 'define' an entire group of people?
 - To what extent do the articles, etc. discuss the very real differences in the social environment that create different experiences for people of different heritage?

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

5. Distribute copies of Resource Page 90. Read aloud the quotation twice. Then discuss: Why is racial prejudice the most vital and challenging issue confronting the Bahá'í community? What are we all asked to do? Why is this so important?
6. Invite students to conduct a science experiment demonstrating corrosion:
 - Strip the insulation off the last 2 inches of both ends of each length of wire.
 - Connect one piece of insulated wire to each terminal of a 6-volt battery. A 9-volt battery will also work well.
 - Fill a quart glass jar about $\frac{3}{4}$ full with water and stir in 1 cup of salt.
 - Insert into this solution the two loose ends of copper wires, at opposite sides of the glass. Use electrician's tape to secure the wires to the side of the glass, keeping them in place.
7. Watch as bubbles of gas appear at one wire and a greenish substance is produced on the other. The electric current splits the dissolved salt into its elements—sodium and chloride (a form of chlorine). Sodium reacts with water, which in turn releases bubbles of hydrogen gas at the negative terminal. Chloride is attracted to the positive wire, where it forms copper chloride, which reacts again to form copper oxide—a greenish substance. In time, copper oxide forms a green scum on the surface of the water near the positive wire.
8. Compare the greenish substance at the positive wire to racial prejudice, “the corrosion of which . . . has bitten into the fiber, and attacked the whole social structure of American society.” Discuss: How is the corrosion on the wire similar to the corrosion of racial prejudice? When Shoghi Effendi says that racial prejudice has bitten into the fiber and attacked the whole social structure of American society, what do you think he means? What could happen to the wire if the corrosion continues for a long time? Why is it so important to champion the true reality of the human family? What are some powerful actions for race unity that we as junior youth can do, no matter where we live?
9. Pour a glass of pure clean water for each student. Invite the students to silently compare their pure water to the water with the corroding wire, silently reflect on their own circumstances, and individually choose a positive action to remove the corrosion of racial prejudice from the environment in which they live. After this period of silence, students may share their plans with the class if they like. Conclude the activity with prayer.



ACTIVITY: CHAMPIONS OF RACE UNITY

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To perceive the contribution of the Bahá'í teachings and the Baha'i community to the progress made so far in the elimination of racial prejudice.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of stories; Use of peer teaching; Use of independent investigation; Use of the arts; Use of reflection

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- photocopies of Resource Pages 91–93 (timeline)



1. Invite students to share their efforts to remove the corrosion of racial prejudice and to champion race unity. Applaud all efforts.
2. Invite students to recall the words of Bahá'u'lláh:

O ye discerning ones! Verily, the words which have descended from the heaven of the Will of God are the source of unity and harmony for the world. Close your eyes to racial differences, and welcome all with the light of oneness.

Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 37

So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 14

3. Then share the following story that illustrates the power of the words of Bahá'u'lláh to bring light to the whole earth, one heart at a time:

**A Story from the Time of Bahá'u'lláh:
Mullá Muhammad-Ridá**

Mullá Muhammad-Ridá became a Bahá'í after reading only one of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets, yet with exceptional courage endured nearly constant suffering to spread the light of Bahá'u'lláh. On one occasion, while in prison, he cared for a suffering fellow prisoner who was a Jew. He said: "Do you see this Jew, how miserable and lonely he is? None of the Muslims ever speak to or associate with him, nor do they let him enter the public bath because they regard him as unclean. And look what dirty, ragged clothing he wears. Now would you not help me to bathe this poor Jew by the side of the prison pool?" He scrubbed and sponged the man's foul body and gave him fresh clothes. The Jew was bewildered. "Are you people angels or human beings?" he asked. Why would someone who was not a Jew care about him? Mullá Ridá said that it was the spirit of love that was in all faiths that caused him to act in such a way. He quoted the Teaching of Bahá'u'lláh: *Consort ye with the peoples of all religions in a spirit of love and fellowship.*

Adapted from Adib Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, v 1, p. 89

4. Provide students with copies of Resource Pages 91–93 (timeline). Explain that they will work in pairs to learn more about the powerful actions that have been inspired by Bahá'u'lláh's words.

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

5. Organize the teams so that each pair reads one or more decades' points from this chart. Encourage them to refer to the glossary of terms as needed. The teacher may choose to circulate among the teams to provide encouragement and background information. After the teams have had sufficient time to understand their time period, provide each team with one of the stories of Race Unity Champions, Resource Pages 96–103.
6. Provide each team with paper and art supplies and invite the teams to create a visual image to represent the 'light' of racial unity in the heroic actions of the individual and in the decades they studied. How did the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh inspire people to take positive action in the world? Encourage them to plan how they will share their historical overview, story, and image with the group.
7. After all groups have had time to prepare their presentations, invite the teams to share their work in the whole group. Applaud all contributions!
8. Display the visual images in the classroom, then discuss how we each can carry forward this noble heritage as race unity champions. Encourage all to choose a specific heroic action to carry out this week as a race unity champion.

ACTIVITY: BECOMING CHAMPIONS OF RACIAL UNITY

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To perceive ways to strive towards complete freedom from racial prejudice in every aspect of life.

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES: To prepare and deliver eloquent presentations on the nature of racial prejudice and its effects on the progress of the individual and society.
To formulate personal goals that will contribute to the elimination of prejudice.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engaging the mind and heart; Direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of drama

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

Materials Needed:

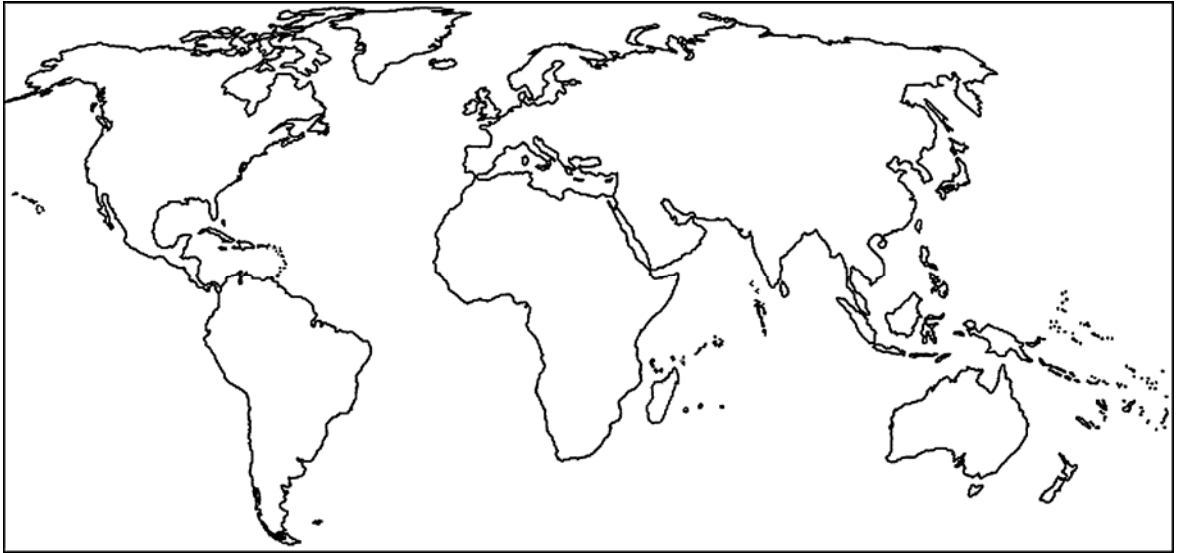
- Copies of Resource Pages 104 and 105

1. Invite students to share their efforts over the past week to champion racial unity. Applaud all efforts! Then, invite the students to reflect carefully on their observations of the positive actions of others over the past week: What have they also noticed other people doing to promote race unity? After a period of reflection, encourage each student to share a positive example of someone championing unity. Briefly discuss: Why is it important for us to notice the positive actions around us? How can we help create a climate of encouragement for these actions?
2. In the whole group, brainstorm a list of everyday situations that need the powerful actions of a race unity champion. Be as specific as possible as you work together to come up with a variety of situations that are part of day-to-day reality during this age of transition.
3. Organize the students into small working groups. Provide each group with a copy of either Resource Page 104 or Resource Page 105. Ask the students to read the quotation carefully and to underline or highlight the action steps we are all called to do.

4. After providing time for this careful study, invite each team to select one of the everyday situations from the list created in step 2 above. Encourage the teams to carefully apply the action steps suggested by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to that situation: What would change? How would it change? What powerful actions by a race unity champion could make a real difference? Then, invite each team to create a simple role-play to demonstrate how the actions suggested by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá can redress that situation and promote unity.
5. Invite the teams to present their role-plays in the whole group. After each presentation encourage the team to point out the words in the quotation that inspired their role-play. Applaud all!
6. Then, while playing quiet music, encourage the students to individually re-read the quotation they studied, reflect on the action steps suggested in the quotation, and select one specific line of action as a champion of racial unity:
 - What is a specific situation in your life where this line of action could make an important difference?
 - What is one definite step—fully within your own power to carry out—that you could take to begin this line of action this week?
 - How will you check back with yourself on your progress?
 - What can you do to sustain your actions over time? Would it help to collaborate with another person?

Students may choose to share their plans with the class, then conclude the activity with prayers for divine assistance.

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

Resource Pages**A New Way of Seeing Things—1**

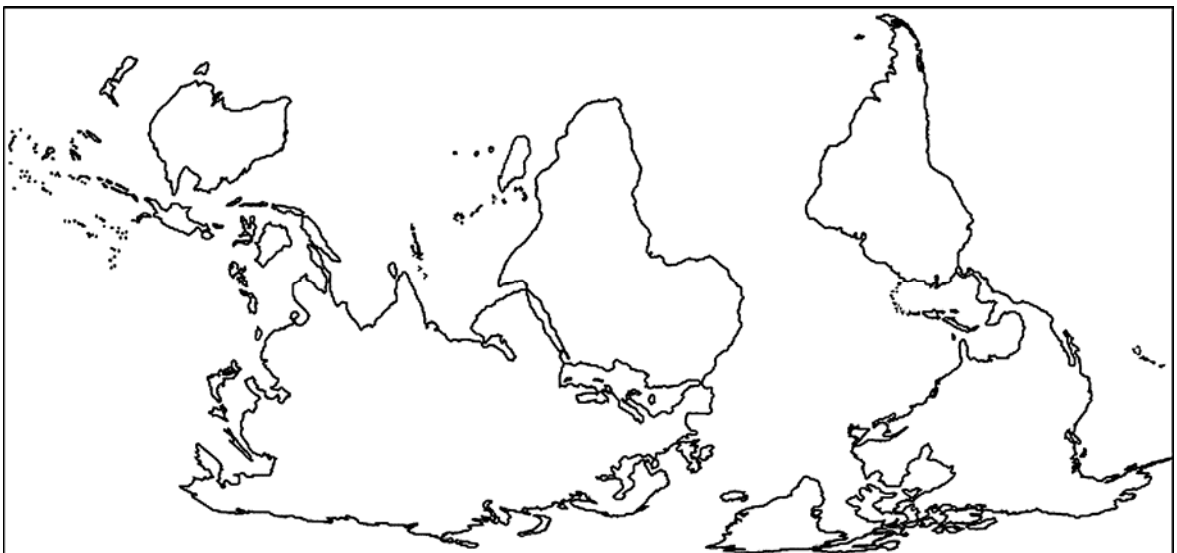
Take a look at the two world maps on this page. Is there something that looks strange about one of the maps?

You might have noticed that one of the maps is ‘upside down’—at least in comparison with the way that maps are usually presented.

Is one way of showing the map more ‘correct’ than the other way? Why or why not?

As you consider these two different ways of presenting the world map, you may want to reflect on the following points:

- Both maps are exact copies of each other.
- There is no ‘right side up’ to planet Earth—there is no ‘up’ or ‘down’ in space.
- The way maps are presented is a choice made by people.
- One map may look more familiar than the other, because we see it more often, but that does not make it more correct.



A New Way of Seeing Things—2

Compare this world map with either of the maps on the previous page. What differences do you notice?

The three maps we have considered all illustrate the problems that arise when we try to ‘force’ the Earth, which is round and floating in space where there is no up or down, onto a flat sheet of paper! It can’t be done! So, whenever map-makers try to make a map of the Earth, they have to ‘create’ a picture of the Earth that doesn’t really exist.

For example, you may notice that the entire continent of Antarctica is missing on all three maps. This is because there is no way to show this continent in these views without seriously distorting it by stretching it or chopping it into pieces.

The first two maps present the continents in a more fragmented view, which emphasizes their separation from each other. The last map presents a more unified view, which emphasizes the connections among the continents. How do the different map formats cause us to see our world differently?



source: http://www.sciences-po.fr/cartographie/cartotheque/cartotheques/fonds_cartes/fonds_planisphere/buck94.gif

A New Way Of Seeing Racial Distinctions

It is common for people to talk about black, white, red, and yellow “races.”

But what if these “races” are really human attempts to create a “map” of the human world that attempts to force the huge reality of Human Oneness into categories? What if the creation and use of “racial” categories actually creates the same sorts of problems that map-makers face when they try to force the round Earth onto a flat piece of paper?

Compare the reality of the globe with the maps. Then compare the reality of the human beings with any of the racial “colors” that people talk about.

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

A New Way of Seeing Things—3

The Bahá'í teachings affirm that there is only one race: the human race.

World order can be founded only on an unshakeable consciousness of the oneness of mankind, a spiritual truth which all the human sciences confirm. Anthropology, physiology, psychology, recognize only one human species, albeit infinitely varied in the secondary aspects of life. Recognition of this truth requires abandonment of prejudice—prejudice of every kind—race, class, colour, creed, nation, sex, degree of material civilization, everything which enables people to consider themselves superior to others.

Universal House of Justice, *The Promise of World Peace*, p. 4

The concept of ‘race’—categories of biologically distinct, genetically separate, groups of human beings—is rejected by the human sciences.

Human populations are not unambiguous, clearly demarcated, biologically distinct groups. Evidence from the analysis of genetics (e.g., DNA) indicates that there is greater variation within racial groups than between them. These facts render any attempt to establish lines of division among biological populations both arbitrary and subjective.

American Anthropological Association, 1998

More than 95–99% of genetic variation occurs within population groups, with only 1–5% of genetic variation occurring between groups.

Source: Noah A. Rosenberg, et. al., “Genetic Structure of Human Populations,” *Science*, v. 298, December 20, 2002, 2981-2985.

All humans living today belong to a single species, *Homo sapiens*, and share a common descent. Although there are differences of opinion regarding how and where different human groups diverged or fused to form new ones from a common ancestral group, all living populations in each of the earth’s geographic areas have evolved from that ancestral group over the same amount of time. Much of the biological variation among populations involves modest degrees of variation in the frequency of shared traits. Human populations have at times been isolated, but have never genetically diverged enough to produce any biological barriers to mating between members of different populations.

Biological differences between human beings reflect both hereditary factors and the influence of natural and social environments. In most cases, these differences are due to the interaction of both. The degree to which environment or heredity affects any particular trait varies greatly.

There is great genetic diversity within all human populations. Pure races, in the sense of genetically homogenous populations, do not exist in the human species today, nor is there any evidence that they have ever existed in the past.

American Association of Physical Anthropologists, 1996

The Creation of the Idea of ‘Race’ in America – Insight Panel #1

Eston Hemings, the son of Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson, was clearly ‘black’ while he was a slave at Monticello. Years later, living in Ohio in 1850 as a free man, Eston was described by a census taker as ‘mulatto.’ A decade later, Eston and his wife had moved to Wisconsin where a census taker listed them as ‘white.’ What is the ‘truth’ about Eston Hemings’s race?

Adapted from the PBS Special Report on Thomas Jefferson, Sally Hemings and Race in America, 2000.
PBS Online web page: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/jefferson/mixed/>

The Creation of the Idea of ‘Race’ in America – Insight Panel #2

Before encountering Europeans, the indigenous peoples of North America didn’t have a name to describe themselves as a group. “They have often asked me, why we call them Indians, Natives, etc.,” wrote the leader of the first English settlement at Providence: “And understanding the reason, they will call themselves Indians in opposition to the English.” At the time of English settlement in America, the indigenous peoples understood themselves as an array of many different groups. The English shared this understanding. None of these groups had a sense of an Indian ‘race.’ Racial identity was based largely on the word ‘Indian’ in contrast to the term ‘English.’

Comment attributed to Roger Williams, cited www.jhu.edu/~igscph/fall95js.htm

The Creation of the Idea of ‘Race’ in America – Insight Panel #3

In 1790, the first population census enumerators were asked to classify non-slave residents as white or ‘other.’ Slaves were counted separately. By 1860, the census requested that residents be classified as white, black, or mulatto. By 1990, there were more than a dozen more racial categories on the census. In practice—both legal and customary—anyone with any known African ancestry was considered African American, while only those without any trace of known African ancestry were called Whites. That is, a person with 15 White ancestors four generations back and a single Negro ancestor at the same remove was reckoned a Negro in the eyes of the law. This was known as the ‘one-drop rule’: One drop of African blood made one an African American, even if there were no discernible African physical features.

But, in an increasingly multi-racial America, identifying oneself by just one category has been difficult. In 1997, the federal government issued “Directive 15” which redefined race once again. After much debate and controversy, the 2000 census allowed citizens to identify themselves by more than one racial classification.

Adapted from the PBS Special Report on Thomas Jefferson, Sally Hemings and Race in America, 2000.
PBS Online source web pages: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/jefferson/mixed/#1>;
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/jefferson/mixed/spickard.html>

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

The Creation of the Idea of 'Race' in American – Insight Panel #4

As 'whiteness' became established as the standard first, for citizenship, and then for other civil rights and economic and social privileges, the struggle to 'become white' or 'pass for white' became a focus for social, political, and economic advancement. In the process of 'becoming white' some people now considered 'white' began their history in America as 'not white'—the Irish being one example. For example, in the mid-1800s an illustration from the American magazine *Harper's Weekly* showed similarities between 'Irish Iberians' and 'Negroes' in contrast to 'superior races' like 'Anglo-Teutonic' or English.

George Bronstein, "Afro-Celtic Connections," *Michigan Today*, March 1996

Carefully read the following quotation, then discuss the questions:

- What is "race" really? Why do people talk about it so much?
- What ways is race "an illusion" and racial prejudice "a superstition, pure and simple"?
- Why is it important to understand that in reality, we are all one race?

All One Race

Concerning the prejudice of race: it is an illusion, a superstition pure and simple! For God created us all of one race. There were no differences in the beginning, for we are all descendants of Adam. In the beginning, also, there were no limits and boundaries between the different lands; no part of the earth belonged more to one people than to another. In the sight of God there is no difference between the various races. Why should man invent such a prejudice? How can we uphold war caused by an illusion?

God has not created men that they should destroy one another. All races, tribes, sects and classes share equally in the Bounty of their Heavenly Father.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 148

THE CORROSION OF RACIAL PREJUDICE

As to racial prejudice, the corrosion of which, for well nigh a century, has bitten into the fibre, and attacked the whole social structure of American society, it should be regarded as constituting the most vital and challenging issue confronting the Bahá'í community at the present stage of its evolution. The ceaseless exertions which this issue of paramount importance calls for, the sacrifices it must impose, the care and vigilance it demands, the moral courage and fortitude it requires, the tact and sympathy it necessitates, invests this problem . . . with an urgency and importance that cannot be over estimated. . . . All . . . must participate in, and lend their assistance, each according to his or her capacity, experience, and opportunities, to the common task of fulfilling the instructions, realizing the hopes, and following the example of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 28

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

A TIMELINE OF U.S. AND BAHÁ'Í ACTIVITY TO ELIMINATE PREJUDICE: A COMPARISON 1900–2000

Adapted from a timeline by Dr. Richard Thomas, Michigan State University

	<u>U. S.</u>	<u>Bahá'í</u>
1900	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early years of “separate but equal” segregation (Jim Crow Era) • Lynching of blacks • Early meetings to promote civil rights • Race Riots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louis G. Gregory learns of Bahá'í Faith and becomes a Bahá'í in 1909 • Washington, D.C. Bahá'í community holds separate meetings for black and white Bahá'ís
1910s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race Riots • Civil Rights organizations formed (NAACP, Urban League) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Abdu’l-Bahá visits America (1912) • ‘Abdu’l-Bahá inspires a white and black Bahá'í to marry
1920s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaigns against lynching • Increasing residential segregation in northern and southern cities • Racial discrimination in jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Abdu’l-Bahá instructs Agnes Parsons to “arrange a convention in Washington for amity between the colored and the white” (1920) • Race amity era in Bahá'í community begins expanding contacts with black and white leaders in race relations field • Decline of interest in race amity (1924) • Sadie Oglesby, black Bahá'í, complains that Bahá'í community is losing black Bahá'ís (1927) • American Bahá'í community starts new stage of “progress toward racial unity” (1927)
1930s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interracial cooperation in labor union movement • Interracial membership of radical political groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “...large proportion of ...active black Bahá'ís in the mid-1930's...recent entrants, from the era of emphasis on racial amity” • More race amity activities • Bahá'í interracial teams tour South (1931-1933) • Interest in promotion of racial unity declines from 1936-1939 • Publication of <i>The Advent of Divine Justice</i> with emphasis on “the most vital and challenging issue” (1939)

GOAL: ELIMINATING RACIAL PREJUDICE

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

U. S.

Bahá'í

1940s	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government orders desegregation of armed forces and defense industries• Race Riots	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Newly established Race Unity Committee begins mobilizing Bahá'í community around “most challenging issue”• <i>Bahá'í News</i> starts publishing articles on racial diversity to educate Bahá'í community• Committee publishes book, <i>Race and Man</i>, which includes Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í references on race (1943)• RUC discontinues (1947)
1950s	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First interracial units of U. S. army deployed on the battlefield (1950)• The Supreme Court <i>Brown Decision</i>• Alabama Bus Boycott (1956)• U.S. marshals and troops enforce enrollment of black students previously all-white school in Little Rock, AR (1957)• Growth of Civil Rights Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Death of Louis Gregory (1951)• Message to All-American Conference from Guardian of Bahá'í Faith on racial issues (1953)• Appointment of Interracial Teaching Committee (1954)• Interracial Teaching Committee reaches out to blacks and Native Americans (1957)
1960s	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increasing residential segregation as Whites move to suburbs• Civil Rights Act of 1964• Voting Rights Act of 1965• Race Riots• Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. (1968)• Black Power Movement gaining influence in black community• Increase of black poverty and social problems in central cities• First Black mayors in major U.S. cities, increasing numbers of Blacks holding political office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuation of Annual Race Amity Day observances• NAACP recognition of American Bahá'í community's work in race relations (1964)• Black Bahá'í voices concerns over racial issues within Bahá'í community

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

U. S.

Bahá'í

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| 1970s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some politicians appeal to racial fears and stereotypes to gain votes • Growing White resistance to affirmative action and efforts at overcoming effects of racism • Race Riots | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large numbers of rural southern blacks join Bahá'í community • American Bahá'í community increasing its racial and ethnic diversity, e.g. Asians • Increase in Iranian Bahá'ís due to persecution of Bahá'ís in Iran |
| 1980s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepening sense of despair among racial minorities • Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. becomes U.S. holiday | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race Unity Committee continues its work • <i>The American Bahá'í</i> continues to publish special sections on racial and ethnic populations in American Bahá'í communities |
| 1990s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rodney King beating results in Race riot in Los Angeles (1992) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models of Racial Unity Conference in Atlanta (1990) • Local race unity programs and activity growing • Joint project “Models of Unity: Racial, Ethnic and Religious” conducted by Human Relations Foundation of Chicago and American NSA (1991) • Core Curriculum begins to emphasize race unity as an important topic for study and action |
| 2000s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confederate flag as symbol of racial oppression becomes major political issue • U.S. Supreme Court affirms that colleges and universities may consider diversity as a factor in admitting students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. National Spiritual Assembly emphasizes racial unity one of the twin themes (with gender equality) of the national Five Year Plan, and assigns goals for championing racial harmony and justice to all Bahá'ís and Bahá'í institutions in the United States. |

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USEFUL TO UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORY OF
RACE RELATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

- **Jim Crow Era**—General term for laws established in the late 19th century to force the continued segregation of Whites from Blacks after the abolition of slavery. These laws prevented Black Americans from using the same facilities as Whites. Separate facilities included schools, restaurants, street cars, health care facilities, and funeral services.
- **Springfield, IL Riot-1908**—This two day slaughter of blacks by whites was triggered by the transfer of a black prisoner accused of rape (who was later cleared of the charges), and motivated by fears of racial equality. The entire Illinois state militia was required to subdue the mob. Innocent people were shot, homes burned, stores looted, and two elderly blacks were mutilated and lynched. An article written about this riot by a Southern white journalist, William E. Walling, motivated white liberals to join forces with blacks in establishing the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).
- **Niagara Movement**—The Niagara Movement, so named because of secret meetings at Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada, was a group of black intellectuals led by W.E.B. Du Bois. Their purpose was to fight racism and discrimination and to establish social, civil, and political rights for Black Americans, as well as to recognize human brotherhood—the oneness of mankind. These goals were expressed in a manifesto written at Niagara Falls. This organization dissipated and merged with white liberals to create the NAACP in 1909.
- **NAACP**—This is the oldest and largest civil rights organization in the United States. Its aim is the “elimination of all barriers to political, educational, social and economic equality.”
- **National Urban League**—The Urban League is an interracial organization whose original purpose was to help Southern Blacks migrating north in finding jobs, homes, and to adjust to urban life.
- **East St. Louis Riot-1917**—One of the worst incidences of racial violence during World War I aimed at Black Americans. Whites attacked blacks because of their employment in factories with government contracts and employment in war industries. Many lynchings occurred and 6,000 blacks were driven from their homes. Forty blacks and eight whites were reported dead.
- **Garvey Movement**—Early in the 20th century W.E.B. Du Bois developed a sophisticated rationale for a Pan-African movement that would join blacks in American and Africa. But not until after 1910 did a mass movement emerge with black nationalism as its central theme. The leader of this new movement, Marcus Garvey, recruited thousands into his Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Its goals included a black nation oriented toward Africa but controlled by black Americans.
- **A. Phillip Randolph**—He was much known as a trade unionist and civil rights leader most active from 1912-1968. His many accomplishments were related to the rights of Black workers. In 1963 he organized the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom for civil rights policies for blacks.
- **The Supreme Court Brown Decision**—Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, decided on May 17, 1954, was one of the most important cases in the history of the U.S. Supreme Court. Linda Brown had been denied admission to an elementary school in Topeka because she was black. The Court declared that “separate education facilities are inherently unequal” and that racial segregation violates the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment.

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

- **Alabama Bus Boycott**—Rosa Parks’ refusal to sit in the back of the public bus sparked the 381-day bus boycott that led to a 1956 Supreme Court order outlawing discriminatory practices on Montgomery, Alabama, buses.
- **Governor Orval Faubus**—The governor called in the Arkansas National Guard to prevent the nine students known as “The Little Rock Nine” admittance to Central High School and made an alliance with segregationists in the state so that he would be re-elected. “From the chair of the highest office of the state of Arkansas, Governor Orval Faubus delivered the infamous words, ‘Blood will run in the streets’ if Negro pupils should attempt to enter Central High School.” President Eisenhower made a decision to send in the National Guard to keep the peace, escort the students to school, and assure the safety of the Little Rock Nine.
- **Civil Rights Act of 1964**—It is considered the most far-reaching legislation in the country since the Reconstruction Era. The act eliminated the arbitrary application of a different standard of black voters by biased registrars, outlawed the exclusion of blacks from restaurants, hotels, theaters, and other public accommodations. It guaranteed blacks access to all public facilities such as parks, stadiums, and swimming pools, provided for the federal government to give financial aid to all schools in the process of desegregation, prohibited the use of federal funds to maintain or operate educational institutions or programs that practiced discrimination, as well as prohibiting discrimination by employers and unions.
- **Voting Rights Act of 1965**—Although the Civil Rights Act was designed to strengthen the vote of blacks, this didn’t happen directly. Violence and agitation continued in areas where people would try to register to vote. White southerners conceived other ways to keep blacks from voting. In March 1965 Martin Luther King, Jr., led a march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, to dramatize the voting issue. Civil rights workers prompted Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This helped legislate more clearly what had to be done.
- **Assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**—The assassination of Dr. King occurred on April 4, 1968, while he was speaking from a hotel room balcony in Memphis, Tennessee. Still today there are speculations as to who was really responsible for the assassination. James Earl Ray took responsibility for his assassination, although today there seems to be some controversy over the facts in this case. Dr. King’s life was devoted to creating equal opportunity for everyone through non-violent means and had come to Memphis to assist in a garbage workers’ strike.
- **Black Power Movement**—The Black Power Movement was a very strong movement in the 1960s and 1970s asking black people to stand up and regain their power. “What was needed was for black people to gain control over their lives, economically, socially, and politically, so that they would no longer have to submit to the institutions of a racist, white world.” The movement is associated with the need to regain a sense of control, to reclaim its history and to demand a sense of identity. African Americans wanted to define themselves and their relationship with society under their own terms, and not that of the white power struggle. Feelings of powerlessness tends to rob a people of their humanity, and this was an attempt to take back power. For years the press has had negative connotations associated with the Black Power Movement. If you look closely you will see that this movement was not about putting anyone else down, but rather was about uplifting a people.

A Race Unity Champion: Louis G. Gregory

Louis Gregory gave himself fully to the wish of 'Abdu'l-Bahá that he devote his talents and energies to the encouragement of racial harmony. As one of the early African-American Bahá'ís, Louis Gregory had known first hand the oppressive and constraining limits that racism places on minds, hearts, and human possibilities.

The spirit with which he tirelessly worked for brotherhood and peace, is well-expressed in his own words in the following story he related to a the National Bahá'í Convention in 1926:

Just a few months ago I was in far away Florida [where] I was invited to join a group of workers going out to visit a country school. Our car got stuck and we worked fruitlessly an hour and a half, in the rain, to dislodge that machine. By-and-by a truck driven by two white working men came by. Not knowing what would happen, we called upon them for assistance. They came to our aid and the four men, two white and two black, made a tremendous effort, but we were still unsuccessful. . . .

They were prevailed upon to make another effort and this time the ladies and the small boy joined us, so the entire party, composed of youth and age, black and white, men and women, all made an effort and this time we were victorious. We shook hands, across the color line, our friends bade us good-bye and we started once more on our way. The most interesting part of the story is this, it seems to me: We had not gone a distance of more than what would be covered by two or three of your city blocks before we came upon our two white friends and this time they were stuck in the mire. We were very happy because we had the opportunity to return their kindness.

Adapted from Gayle Morrison, To Move the World: Louis G. Gregory and the Advancement of Racial Unity in America, pp. 320-21

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

A Race Unity Champion: Lua Getsinger

Lua Getsinger's pilgrimage in 1898 was as part of a group of pilgrims from the United States and Europe—the first group of 'Western' pilgrims to visit the Bahá'í Holy Places in Palestine. Several of those early Bahá'í pilgrims were there because Lua had taught them the Faith. Lua was an enthusiastic and courageous teacher of the Cause. She would crisscross the United States and travel the world, proclaiming Bahá'u'lláh's message of love and unity to people from all walks of life. It is particularly memorable that among that first group of Western pilgrims was Mr. Robert Turner, the first African-American Bahá'í, who had learned of the Faith from Lua.

While Lua was visiting Mrs. Phoebe Hearst, prominent wife of a U.S. senator, Mrs. Hearst had shown great interest in the Bahá'í Teachings. As Lua sat sipping tea with Mrs. Hearst, in her elegant mansion, Lua noticed that Mrs. Hearst's butler, Robert Turner, was also very attentive to what she was saying about the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Lua took pains to include him in the conversation, and he, too, embraced the Bahá'í Faith. That Robert Turner also met 'Abdu'l-Bahá as a pilgrim in 1898, side-by-side with Lua and the other pilgrims, enjoying the same wonderful experience, is one small, but important, example of Lua's wonderful service to the cause of human love, respect, and unity.

Race Unity Champions: An Early 'Freedom Walk' in the South

In 1932, two Bahá'ís, one black and one white, traveled together as friends and equals in the South. Despite the segregationist climate of the time, the plan was to assume that there was no prejudice against this very reasonable relationship. The object was to spread the Bahá'í Message of oneness and racial harmony both by word and example. One was gifted as a singer, the other as a public speaker. The two were received with courtesy, hospitality and joy in a dozen or so colleges and universities they visited. As guests in many homes they formed real friendships.

They also encountered the prejudice of the old order. In a restaurant, which both had entered to buy some sandwiches, the owner commanded the black Bahá'í to take off his hat, because whites were present. The black Bahá'í paid no attention. The proprietor of the restaurant repeated his command. The white Bahá'í lost his patience and said, "This man has his hat on. I have my hat on. Why should he take his hat off?"

The owner replied, "We do not permit colored people in here, unless they remove their hats."

The white Bahá'í responded that his companion was a cultured and highly gifted man with a splendid character, and it made no difference that he was a Negro.

Adapted from Star of the West, v. 23, pp. 30-31

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

Race Unity Champions: Recognizing the Contributions of Blacks

In 1932, the National Bahá'í Committee for Racial Amity and the New York Bahá'í Spiritual Assembly joined together to honor the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the New York Urban League. The Bahá'ís hosted a dinner in honor of these organizations in a prominent New York hotel.

A white Bahá'í woman who was a generous patron of black efforts in the 'field of letters' shared the hosting duties with Louis G. Gregory, a distinguished black Bahá'í who had carried the Bahá'í teachings of oneness and racial harmony from 'Akká to rural groups across the South and to urban areas both north and south.

The welcoming address was an assurance to all that the Bahá'ís had met to honor two great organizations working for racial progress. Stressing how much the Bahá'ís admired the work of these organizations for racial amity, the white hostess declared that ever since 1844, the date of its origin, the leaders of the Bahá'í religion had stood against oppression and admonished its followers to disregard race differences.

Adapted from Star of the West, v. 23, p. 46

Race Unity Champions: Counselor Magdalene Carney

Dr. Magdalene M. Carney taught in elementary and secondary schools in Nashville for 15 years, completing her tenure there as chairman of the English department at Cameron High School. In 1969 she coordinated a successful desegregation program in the Canton, Mississippi, school system while serving as a classroom teacher and chairman of the English department at Rogers High School.

During that time Dr. Carney, who became a Bahá'í in 1962, was a leader, as a member of the National Teaching Committee and later secretary of the Deep South Committee, in mass-teaching efforts that led to the enrollment in the Faith of thousands of people in the southern states from Virginia and North and South Carolina to Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana.

She received the Ford Fellowship in 1972 and was awarded her doctorate degree in 1977. Children were very important to Magdalene Carney. Among her special interests were teacher training and the role of ideals in human development, and she worked with early childhood development programs in Suffield, Connecticut; Hampden, Maine; and the Appalachian region of Ohio.

Dr. Carney was the author of a number of books and articles on education including *Teaching: Issues, Perspectives and Definitions* (1974), "Teaching Competence: An ANISA Definition" in *The Constructive Triangle* (1975), and (with Susan Theroux) *Family Life and Child Rearing Practices Among Black Americans: A Review of the Research Literature* (1977).

Dr. Carney served from 1970-83 as a member of the U.S. National Spiritual Assembly, serving as the National Assembly's assistant secretary beginning in 1978, a position in which she served until appointed a Counselor member of the International Teaching Center by the Universal House of Justice in May 1983. As a member of the International Teaching Center she helped coordinate, stimulate and direct the work of five Continental Boards of Counselors in promoting the spiritual, intellectual and social development of Bahá'í communities all over the world.

Dr. Carney died in Haifa, Israel when she was 61 years old. Her last formal appearance in the United States was as presenter of the Louis Gregory Institute's Peace Award during Peace Fest 1991 to the Rev. Antoine Campbell.

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

Race Unity Champions: Calling All Colors

In the early 1990s, there was serious racial tension in the Conway, South Carolina area. In 1992, the suspension of a black football player at Conway High School raised tensions to an even higher pitch. The situation grew ugly and irrational, dividing the community in an unprecedented way. Improvement in the situation seemed impossible.

In an effort to do something positive, nine-year-old Bahá'í, Anisa Kintz, a student at South Conway Elementary School, visited college officials at Coastal Carolina University. The university was hosting an inter-racial dialogue program and Anisa made the suggestion that children should have been included in such a conference. "After all," she said, "children are the future and new attitudes should start with us." Anisa was very aware of the racial issues in her school and community and was convinced that the real answer lay in reaching out to young minds before racist attitudes became rooted. She was encouraged by her mother, who was working then at the university.

Anisa's idea was for a race awareness conference exclusively for children. The event that occurred was organized by children and young people were responsible for it in every way possible. It was truly a case of young people arising to lift up the banner of inter-racial understanding and harmony by taking things into their own hands. What Kintz and her classmates accomplished, called "Calling All Colors: A Race Unity Conference," was successful beyond anyone's imaginations at the beginning. Calling All Colors programs now exist across the country and are continuing to change hearts and minds in the spirit that Anisa Kintz envisioned.

Race Unity Champions: Unity through Music

Marvin “Doc” Holladay, one of the most noted jazz musicians of the 20th century, embraced the Bahá’í Faith in 1963. In his autobiography, “Life on the Fence,” Holladay recounts the way that race played a powerful role in his feeling of living his life “on the fence.”

Although Doc was a white youth growing up in a segregated midwestern town, he found appreciation for his interest in jazz only in the black community. A sensitive musician of Euro-American background, Holladay found a warm embrace within the African-American community where he grew up—even as he also experienced the prejudice of his parents towards his African-American friends.

Jazz music appealed to Doc Holladay because it was born of, and expressed a beautiful fusion of Africa and America, so to speak, bringing together the spiritual energy of both continents and cultural heritages. Doc’s appreciation for this musical fusion affected his own playing and also resulted in his Ph.D. study of African music and its impact on African-American music and jazz.

This same spirit of unity in diversity is also what strongly attracted Holladay to the teachings of the Bahá’í Faith. Being a Bahá’í gave voice to spiritual principles that strengthened Doc as a musical ambassador of unity trying to live a principled life in a world troubled by racial prejudice.

The bittersweet experience of Doc’s commitment to live his life in the service of racial unity is suggested by a time when he and a black friend walked out of a restaurant that did not admit blacks. Holladay and his friend then went to a black restaurant where the cook treated him strangely because he was white. Because of what his friend looked like, he couldn’t go one place; and because of what Doc looked like, he couldn’t go another place. So, together, they both felt the presence of a fence they had to deal with. “There are a lot of us that sit on that fence,” Doc says.

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

Race Unity Champions: June Manning Thomas

June Manning Thomas was among a dozen black students integrating Orangeburg (S.C.) High School. Through seventh grade, Thomas had attended a lab school at South Carolina State University. Her parents were committed to education—her father was president of Claflin University, and her mother taught math there. Her parents' lawsuit had opened the doors of Orangeburg High to black students for the first time.

In 1964, Thomas attended a summer freedom school to prepare her for her role in bringing about racial justice. Even with this training and the support of her parents, a life facing daily hatred was hard for a 14-year-old to handle. It took a daily act of courage to get out of bed and go to school each day.

The first day of school in 10th grade found June riding to school in a police car. Arriving at school that day, June got out of the police car and walked into a high school that seemed eerily empty—as everyone ostracized them. For three years, not one person offered a friendly word, but rather nastiness was the rule. Rude shoves in the halls, insults, racial slurs, and continuing discrimination in school activities were the daily reality.

For those three years, June held fast to three reassurances: the white Northern teachers of the freedom school, white friends from a summer program at Furman University, and white members of the Bahá'í Faith who hugged her in greeting. Those images strengthened her to persevere.

A National Merit scholar recruited by prestigious Northern universities, Thomas chose instead to attend Furman. In 1967, she and 10 other black students followed Joseph Vaughn, the first black student to attend Furman. The turbulent times of this critical period in the Civil Rights movement continued to affect Thomas's outlook and action. In the wake of the Orangeburg Massacre in 1968, when 27 students were wounded and three killed in a racial conflict surrounding efforts to desegregate Orangeburg's only bowling alley, Thomas and Vaughn organized a protest. Members of Furman's chapter of the Southern Student Organizing Committee continued to protest and work for racial justice and Thomas continued to deepen in her commitment to advancing the racial justice and harmony. Today, she is a professor of urban and regional planning at Michigan State University and writes about race and urban development.

An active Bahá'í, June Thomas's courage in standing up for justice during her teen years illustrates the sources of lasting, permanent social change. She weeps when she remembers her teen years. "I've had cause to consider the permanent effects," she says. "It was one of the things I'm proudest of. I didn't leave; I stuck it out." She adds, "The integration of public schools was seen as the beginning of the end—and thank God, they were right."

Adapted from: <http://www.thestateonline.com/civilrights/day3/civilrights04.php>



Becoming Champions of Racial Unity

I ask you, is not fellowship and brotherhood preferable to enmity and hatred in society and community? The answer is self-evident. Love and fellowship are absolutely needful to win the good pleasure of God, which is the goal of all human attainment. We must be united. We must love each other. We must ever praise each other. We must bestow commendation upon all people, thus removing the discord and hatred which have caused alienation amongst men. Otherwise, the conditions of the past will continue, praising ourselves and condemning others; religious wars will have no end, and religious prejudice, the prime cause of this havoc and tribulation, will increase. This must be abandoned, and the way to do it is to investigate the reality which underlies all the religions. This underlying reality is the love of humanity. For God is one and humanity is one, and the only creed of the Prophets is love and unity.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 410

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE



Becoming Champions of Racial Unity

In this world we are influenced by two sentiments, Joy and Pain.

Joy gives us wings! In times of joy our strength is more vital, our intellect keener, and our understanding less clouded. We seem better able to cope with the world and to find our sphere of usefulness. But when sadness visits us we become weak, our strength leaves us, our comprehension is dim and our intelligence veiled. The actualities of life seem to elude our grasp, the eyes of our spirits fail to discover the sacred mysteries, and we become even as dead beings.

There is no human being untouched by these two influences; but all the sorrow and the grief that exist come from the world of matter—the spiritual world bestows only the joy!

If we suffer it is the outcome of material things, and all the trials and troubles come from this world of illusion.

For instance, a merchant may lose his trade and depression ensues. A workman is dismissed and starvation stares him in the face. A farmer has a bad harvest, anxiety fills his mind. A man builds a house which is burnt to the ground and he is straightway homeless, ruined, and in despair.

All these examples are to show you that the trials which beset our every step, all our sorrow, pain, shame and grief, are born in the world of matter; whereas the spiritual Kingdom never causes sadness. A man living with his thoughts in this Kingdom knows perpetual joy. The ills all flesh is heir to do not pass him by, but they only touch the surface of his life, the depths are calm and serene.

Today, humanity is bowed down with trouble, sorrow and grief, no one escapes; the world is wet with tears; but, thank God, the remedy is at our doors. Let us turn our hearts away from the world of matter and live in the spiritual world! It alone can give us freedom! If we are hemmed in by difficulties we have only to call upon God, and by His great Mercy we shall be helped.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 109

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories & Articles:

Brilliant Star: “The Fruits of One Tree,” “What If?” “Beyond Zebras,” “What’s In Your Skin? Melanin!,”
“The Black Rose,” “The Fruits of One Tree,” Jul/Aug 99
“Louis G. Gregory” Jul/Aug 98
“New Bonds of Unity” Sp Ed 96
“What’s Happened in America?” May/Jun 94
“Youth & Children for the Dream” Jan/Feb 93
“Race Unity Walk,” “What Is Racism,” “Ruby,” “Ellsworth Blackwell,” “Race Unity Picnic”
Nov/Dec 91

Breneman, Anne, *Like Unto Pure Gold, the Story of Louis Gregory*

Newman, Winifred Barnum, *The Secret in the Garden*

Lee, Anthony, *The Black Rose*

A few of the many resources on the history of racial unity in the U.S.:

Curry, Barbara K. and Brodie, James Michael, *Sweet Words So Brave, the Story of African American Literature*

Fox, Paula, *The Slave Dancer*

Haskins, Jim, *Get on Board, the Story of the Underground Railroad*

Haskins, James, *The Day Martin Luther King Jr. Was Shot: A Photo History of the Civil Rights Movement*

Lester, Julius, *To Be a Slave*

McGill, Alice, *In the Hollow of Your Hand, Slave Lullabies*

McKissack, Patricia and McKissack, Frederick, *Sojourner Truth – Ain’t I a Woman?*

McKissack, Patricia and McKissack, Frederick, *Black Hands, White Sails, the Story of African-American Whalers*

McKissack, Patricia C., *Color Me Dark, the Diary of Nellie Lee Love, the Great Migration North, 1919*, (“Dear America” series)

Myers, Walter Dean, *The Journal of Biddy Owens, The Negro Leagues, 1948* (“My Name is America” series)

Paulsen, Gary, *Nightjohn*

Wilson, Camilla, *Rosa Parks, From the Back of the Bus to the Front of a Movement*

Zeinert, Karen, *The Amistad Slave Revolt and American Abolition*

Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

Brilliant Star Color and Memorize (unity), Special Edition 99

Activities:

Brilliant Star: “What Do You Say” Jan/Feb 05

“Let’s All Get Along Together Pudding,” “Same and Different,” Jul/Aug 99

“Have a Centennial Fair,” “Make a Prejudice-Free Mural” May/Jun 94

“Race Unity Ribbons” Mar/Apr 93

“Customs of the Kingdom” Nov/Dec 93

TOPIC: THE MOST VITAL AND CHALLENGING ISSUE

Music:

We Laugh and We Pray: 16th Annual Black Men's Gathering
Done Made My Vow: 17th Annual Black Men's Gathering
Our Spirits Rejoice: 18th Annual Babá'í Black Men's Gathering, 2004
Remembering, Black Men's Gathering in Africa
Davis, Mary, *Take Me Up*, "He's Just a Man to Me"
Dozier, Eric + One Human Family, *My Prayer! My Praise!*
Engle, Susan & Marks, Jean, *Loving Hands*, "Mankind is One"
First Commandment Gospel Singers, *Live in Toronto: First Commandment Gospel Singers*
First Commandment Gospel Singers, *We Have Come to Praise Him*
Grammer, Red, *Artists for the Arc*, "One Family"
Down the Do-Re-Mi, "Brothers and Sisters"
Teaching Peace, "Listen"
Munro, Gordi, *Unity in Diversity*, "Unity in Diversity"
New Creation, "Let All Associate"
Uno Mundo, *Hand in Hand*, "I Have a Dream"
VanManans, *Healthy People, Healthy Planet*, "Building Bridges"

Games:

Brilliant Star: "Union and Harmony Balance Game" SpEd 97

Poetry:

Brilliant Star "One Family," "Two" Sep/Oct 97
"Dream Dance" Nov/Dec 97
White, Roger, *Another Song, Another Season*, "Louis G. Gregory"

Videos:

The Power of Race Unity
Calling All Colors
Eyes on the Prize

Other favorite resources:

Reference:

Brilliant Star: "Racial Unity: Making It a Reality for the Baha'í Family" Nov/Dec 91
Effendi, Shoghi, Advent of Divine Justice
Rutstein, Nathan, Healing Racism in America
Taylor, Bonnie J., compiled by, The Power of Unity: Beyond Prejudice and Racism
Graf, Rudolf F., *Safe and Simple Electrical Experiments*
Matthews, Gary L., *Racial Healing in the Babá'í Faith*
National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'í of the United States, *Vision of Race Unity, The: America's Most Challenging Issue*

If you find any additional resources, please notify the National Children's Education and Research Center, or submit your findings to the Educational Materials web site.

ELIMINATING RACIAL PREJUDICE

SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:
LOVE, PERSEVERANCE, COURAGE**

Therefore strive earnestly and put forth the greatest endeavor toward the accomplishment of this fellowship and the cementing of this bond of brotherhood between you. Such an attainment is not possible without will and effort on the part of each.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Foundations of World Unity*, p. 35

Let them call to mind, fearlessly and determinedly, the example and conduct of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá while in their midst. Let them remember His courage, His genuine love, His informal and indiscriminating fellowship, His contempt for and impatience of criticism, tempered by His tact and wisdom. Let them revive and perpetuate the memory of those unforgettable and historic episodes and occasions on which He so strikingly demonstrated His keen sense of justice, His spontaneous sympathy for the down trodden, His ever-abiding sense of the oneness of the human race, His overflowing love for its members, and His displeasure with those who dared to flout His wishes, to deride His methods, to challenge His principles, or to nullify His acts.

Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 29

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To know the obligations of both “races” as specified in the writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi.
- To know that both “races” have attitudes to overcome and responsibilities to enact before racial unity can be achieved.
- To become familiar with the people in Bahá’í history who developed the qualities that enabled them to work towards their responsibilities to bring about racial unity.

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Tell children stories about those in Bahá’í history who have striven to change their attitudes about race and have worked for racial unity.
- Read pages 33–34 of *Advent of Divine Justice* (p. 40 of pocket-size edition): “Let the white . . . glorious destiny.” List specific qualities necessary for the elimination of negative attitudes and the specific responsibilities of each race as described by Shoghi Effendi.



WISDOM OBJECTIVES

- To gain insight into the spiritual qualities referred to in *Advent of Divine Justice* that are necessary to bring about the elimination of racial prejudice: sacrifice, moral courage and fortitude, tact and sympathy, humility, care, and vigilance.
- To gain a deeper understanding of the positive accomplishments of those within the Bahá’í community regarding this issue.
- To understand the obligation of both races to meet the challenges of racial prejudice and the necessity not to wait for the initiative to be taken by one race or the other.

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Make a chart displaying those qualities necessary to bring about racial unity. Research the Bahá’í writings for deeper insight into these qualities. Read stories about those people who have these qualities.
- Use seeds to represent spiritual qualities, sprout and plant them. Record important data and remind children to take great care of them. Compare this to the individual needing daily vigilance and spiritual and physical sustenance for growth and development towards maturity.
- Have students play games about meeting half way. Demonstrate that to accomplish a goal all parties should contribute their share.
- Study and discuss the spiritual qualities demonstrated in the accomplishments of the Bahá’í community regarding racial unity, such as the life of Louis Gregory, race unity conferences, the youth workshop activities, and Calling All Colors conferences.

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED



SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

- To recognize that the challenge of overcoming race prejudice is a spiritual one and that racial unity cannot be achieved in haste, nor without ceaseless exertion on one's own part.
- To discern the spiritual qualities it is necessary to acquire in order to fulfill one's responsibilities to eliminate racial prejudice.
- To recognize the necessity of patience, tact, and wisdom, as well as deliberate, persistent, and prayerful effort in all one's actions.
- To discern the importance of cultivating the quality of humility in achieving racial unity.

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Form cooperative groups and use the jigsaw method to have students read and study the directives given to us by Shoghi Effendi in *Advent of Divine Justice*. Then have students list their individual obligations and responsibilities and share these with a partner of different racial backgrounds.
- Have students keep a journal that records their own challenges and feelings as they experience specific incidents in their own life and witness those in their community and nation.
- Choose a hero or heroine to learn about their work for race unity and use prose to describe the qualities observed in this person and how one plans to follow in their footsteps regarding their attitude and behavior.
- Use some plants for experiments: wisdom—too much water, not enough water, too much sun, no sun; tact—loud music, quiet music, touching gently, touching roughly; persistent effort—tend plants regularly. Compare this to acquiring these qualities as individuals and their application to the elimination of prejudice in our lives.



ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

- To formulate and implement plans to achieve mutual understanding, make genuine friendships, and maintain sustained cooperation between people of other "races."
- To become involved with people of good will outside of the Bahá'í community who are working to achieve greater understanding and cooperation between the "races."

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Invite representatives of groups promoting racial unity to have presentations with the students so that they can become more fully aware of other efforts (especially with children or junior youth) within the community.
- Have students visit a group or plan an event or workshop with another group committed to bringing about racial unity.
- Have students prepare plans of actions for achieving personal goals to build relationships with peoples of other races.

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY: EXPLORING *THE ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE*

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES: To know the obligations of both “races” as specified in the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. To know that both “races” have attitudes to overcome and responsibilities to enact before racial unity can be achieved.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engage the mind and heart; Direct use of Bahá’í sacred writings; Use of the arts; Use of consultation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Copy of the video tribute to Dr. H. Elsie Austin (18 minutes) on the U.S. Bahá’í Newsreel, Winter 2005, and video player, if available. Alternately you may use Resource Page 123.
- Display copy of *The Advent of Divine Justice*
- Student copies of Resource Pages 124–26
- Highlighter pens, paper, and pencils
- Student journals or blank paper for writing

1. Welcome students and invite them to reflect a moment and consider the power of unity. Thinking about their own actions, and the actions of others, what have they noticed recently about the power of unity? What have they done or seen recently that shows the positive power of unity? Applaud all.
2. Acknowledge that it is the heroic efforts of individuals that make positive change in the world. Dr. H. Elsie Austin demonstrated this positive power all her life. If available, view the 20-minute video tribute to Dr. Austin. Alternately, you may share an example of her heroism on Resource Page 123. Briefly discuss the story or video: What did Dr. Austin do? What would happen if more and more of us spoke up about the truth?
3. Explain that Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith, wrote a letter to the Bahá’ís in America in 1938 to help us all understand how to promote God’s cause in our lives and in the world. Display a copy of *The Advent of Divine Justice* as you explain that the class will study a very important part of the letter that explains what we need to do to overcome racial prejudice and promote unity.
4. Present each student with a copy of Resource Pages 124–26, selections from *The Advent of Divine Justice*.
5. In the whole group, invite student volunteers to read through the entire document, one paragraph at a time, to get an overview of the content. After each paragraph invite one or more students to share their understanding of that paragraph. Refer to dictionaries or use consultation to understand the meaning of new words. Discuss: Why do you think that Shoghi Effendi wrote this important message to the American Bahá’ís? Why do you think it is important to study it today?
6. Explain that the next few activities will explore this important selection from *The Advent of Divine Justice* more closely and to do so, it will be a great help to learn more from our own experiences. In a sharing circle, invite each person to respond to as many of the following questions as your time permits:
 - Please tell us about your grandparents or great-grandparents: Where were they from? What languages did they speak? What is their ethnic or cultural background? What spiritual qualities do you think they contributed to your family?

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

- Have you experienced racism personally? How have you seen it practiced? How has it affected you or people you know?
 - You've probably seen examples of racial prejudice from family members, friends, or other people. How do you think people learn prejudice? How do you feel when you see it? How do you react?
 - Do you have friends from diverse ethnic or cultural groups? If not, why? If so, how did you become friends?
 - As we know, Bahá'u'lláh tells us to close our eyes to racial differences and welcome all with the light of oneness. Why is friendship with all people so important? Why is it also fun?
 - What is one new thing that you learned in our class today?
7. Encourage students to discuss some of these same questions in their families or friends and to share highpoints of these conversations at the next class. Challenge students to also bring one interesting question about race to the next class.

JIGSAW ACTIVITY: STUDYING *THE ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE*

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES: To know the obligations of both “races” as specified in the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. To know that both “races” have attitudes to overcome and responsibilities to enact before racial unity can be achieved.

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To discern the spiritual qualities it is necessary to acquire in order to fulfill one’s responsibilities to eliminate racial prejudice.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá’í sacred writings; Use of questioning and peer teaching; Use of consultation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Students’ photocopies of Resource Pages 124–26
- Chart paper and markers
- Writing journals or blank paper, pens or pencils
- Diverse pictures of nature, people, etc. cut from magazines

1. Invite students to share highlights of their conversations with others about race and ethnicity. Acknowledge all efforts. Also invite students to share their interesting questions about race. Record these questions on chart paper and post for future reference.
2. Organize the class into small groups to study closely selected paragraphs of *The Advent of Divine Justice*. Each group member will later be responsible for sharing the group’s work with other students from other groups. There should be an equal number of people in each of these small study groups, to the extent possible.
3. After assigning specific paragraphs to each study group, ask the groups to complete the following assignments for their designated paragraphs.

Explain that this work will be necessary for them to teach others in the class.

Paragraph 1—Highlight, underline, or list the spiritual qualities and actions needed by all.

Paragraph 2—Highlight, underline, or list the spiritual qualities and actions demonstrated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

Paragraph 3—Highlight, underline, or list the actions required of Bahá’í communities.

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

Paragraph 4—Highlight, underline, or list the actions required, and when and where to do them.

Paragraphs 5—Highlight, underline, or list brief selections (no more than 30 words each) from words of Bahá'u'lláh.

Paragraph 6a—Highlight, underline, or list brief selections (no more than 30 words each) from words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Paragraph 6b—Highlight, underline, or list brief selections (no more than 30 words each) from words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Paragraphs 7 and 8—Highlight, underline, or list 3 sets of responsibilities:

- Responsibilities of both whites and blacks
 - Responsibilities especially of whites
 - Responsibilities especially of blacks
4. When the study groups complete their work, gather the class as a whole. Then form new groups of students so that each of these new groups includes at least one member from each of the previous study groups. In their new groups, ask the students to take turns sharing the work of their previous study groups.
 5. Reconvene as a full group. Discuss: What new insights did you gain from your study? What attracted your attention about the spiritual qualities or actions mentioned in the text? Did our study help us answer any of the interesting questions we brought to class today? If so, how?
 6. Continue the discussion: How many of us are right-handed? How many are left-handed? If one arm is stronger than the other, and we want both arms to work equally, what should we do? How can this example help us understand the need to give priority to the minority when individuals are equally qualified for a particular task?
 7. Play quiet music while you invite individual students to select one picture from a set of pictures previously cut from magazines.
 8. Invite the students to share their pictures in the whole group and briefly say why they chose their pictures.
 9. Encourage students to continue their conversations about race with friends and family members. Consider asking a friend: What do you think would help remove racial prejudice and promote race unity in our community? Please plan to share highlights of these conversations at the next class.
 10. Invite students to individually re-read a favorite paragraph from their resource pages. Encourage them to reflect deeply on those powerful words and then choose a specific action that they can take to promote race unity this week.

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

ACTIVITY: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES OF RACE UNITY CHAMPIONS

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To gain insight into the spiritual qualities referred to in *The Advent of Divine Justice* that are necessary to bring about the elimination of racial prejudice from study of the Bahá'í writings: sacrifice, moral courage and fortitude, tact and sympathy, humility, care and vigilance.

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To discern the spiritual qualities it is necessary to acquire in order to fulfill one's responsibilities to eliminate racial prejudice.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of peer teaching; Use of memorization and recitation; Use of stories; Use of creativity and the arts

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, if available
- Students' copies of Resource Pages 124–26 (Selections from *The Advent of Divine Justice*)
- One copy of each story on Resource Pages 46–48 and 96–103 for student readers
- Chart paper and markers or chalkboard and chalk
- Reference copies of the Hidden Words
- Nice paper or cardstock for quotations and pens or markers
- Pre-cut strips of colored paper, glue, scissors, and other supplies as desired

1. Invite students to share highlights of their efforts as race unity champions over the past week: What conversations have they had with others and what did they learn from those conversations about race? What have been the results of their actions? What additional insights have they gained?
2. Remind students that in *The Advent of Divine Justice*, Shoghi Effendi encourages us to “call to mind . . . the example and conduct of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá.” If available, call attention to a photograph of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá and explain that we have many stories of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá's actions that show us how to carry these beautiful teachings into reality and action. Invite those who recall favorite stories about ‘Abdu'l-Bahá's actions for race unity to share their stories with the class. Then, read aloud the following brief anecdote.

There were two other meetings to address on April 24, 1912, and the third, in the evening, was at the home of Mrs. Andrew J. Dyer. Both whites and blacks had gathered in appreciable numbers. ‘Abdu'l-Bahá was greatly fatigued and disinclined to talk at length. But noticing the impressive harmony of the two races in that assemblage, He was particularly moved to speak. . . .

“A meeting such as this seems like a beautiful cluster of precious jewels—pearls, rubies, diamonds, and sapphires. . . .”

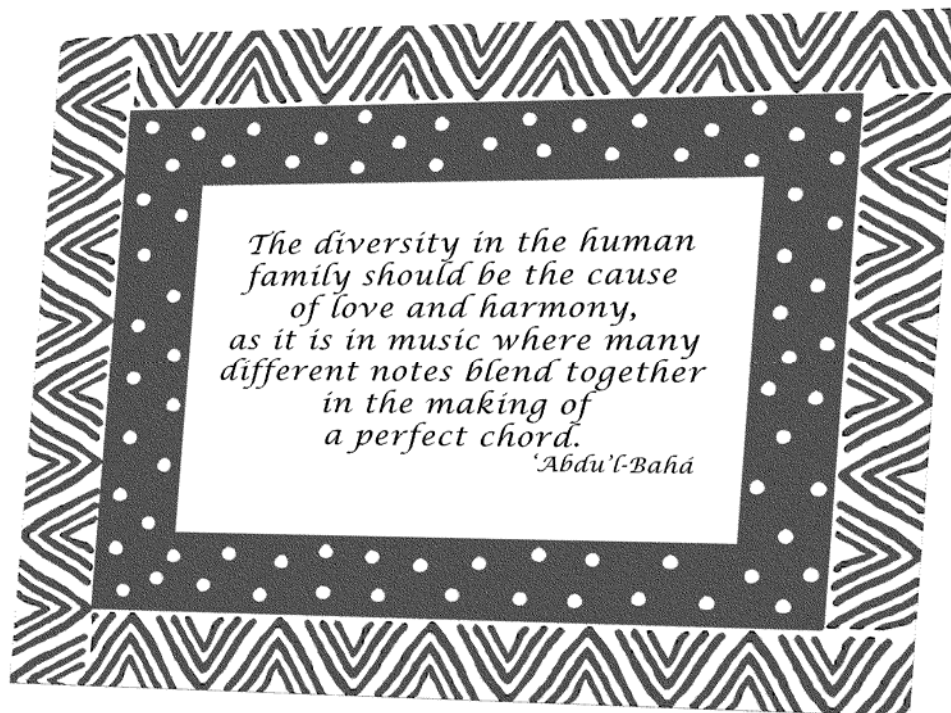
‘Abdu'l-Bahá had still another engagement that night. He was wonderfully exhilarated.

Adapted from *‘Abdu'l-Bahá*, pp. 182–83

3. Ask students to turn again to their Resource Pages 124–26 (Selections from *The Advent of Divine Justice*). Working in teams of two, assign the students responsibility to review designated paragraphs. Ask the teams to identify and call out the spiritual qualities or virtues identified in these paragraphs. List these qualities on chart paper where all can see.

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

4. Then, provide each team with one or more of the stories on Resource Pages 46–48 and 96–103. Ask the team to review the story and identify the spiritual quality or qualities illustrated either by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá or by a race unity champion in that story. Invite teams to share the results of their work in the whole group.
5. Encourage individuals to each select one of these spiritual qualities to cultivate in their own hearts, minds, and actions. In the whole group, brainstorm strategies for developing these spiritual qualities.
6. Then, suggest that each individual quietly re-read the story illustrating that quality and then look in paragraphs 5 and 6 of their Selections from *The Advent of Divine Justice* or in The Hidden Words to find a quotation that describes this quality. Invite students to write one action step on the back of their quotation pages that they plan to take to develop this quality.
7. Using their best handwriting and the art materials provided, encourage students to carefully copy the quotation onto nice paper or cardstock.
8. Then, invite students to use the pre-cut strips of colored paper to create a frame for their quotations by connecting them to one another around and overlapping the quotation paper. Keeping in mind the importance of the frame for directing attention to the quotation without overpowering it, students may also choose to further decorate the frame by cutting smaller pieces of paper and arranging them in an interesting pattern on the frame.
9. While the glue is drying, encourage small teams of students to work together to memorize their quotations. They may also practice re-telling their selected stories to each other.
10. Conclude the activity by inviting students to recite their memorized quotations or re-tell their stories. Encourage students to display their quotations where they will see them regularly as a reminder of their goal. Encourage them to share their quotations and story with another person this week and to continue their heroic actions to promote racial unity in their words and in their actions.



TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

ACTIVITY: A FRIEND TO ALL PEOPLE

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To recognize that the challenge of overcoming race prejudice is a spiritual one and that racial unity cannot be achieved in haste, nor without ceaseless exertion on one's own part.

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To formulate and implement plans to achieve mutual understanding, make genuine friendships, and maintain sustained cooperation with people of other 'races'.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Engaging the mind and heart; Use of consultation; Use of meditation and reflection

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- copies of Resource Pages 127–129

1. Invite students to share their victories and challenges as race unity champions over the past week. Invite students to encourage each other and to warmly acknowledge all efforts. Briefly discuss: How does it help us to have this opportunity to encourage each other as we all strive to promote race unity in our words and in our actions?
2. Distribute copies of Resource Page 127. Read the quotations aloud and discuss the questions: What does it mean to be inwardly and outwardly united? Is that unity easy to achieve? Can we think of examples of times when we wanted to do one thing but actually found ourselves doing something else? Why do we think that the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh place so much emphasis on uniting our inner selves and our outward actions? What is the relationship between the unity of our thoughts and our actions and our power to promote unity in the world?
3. Ask students to individually reflect on their own lives and select a specific memory of a time when, by the grace of God, they found themselves taking action or speaking up even when it was difficult. This could be a situation promoting race unity or it could be any other circumstance in which they noticed that their outward actions accurately expressed their innermost thoughts and feelings. If students seem to have difficulty thinking of a specific example from their own lives, suggest: Think of a time when your inner and outer reality seemed more united than usual. Or if there were such a time, what might it be?
4. After providing time for individual reflection, organize students into teams of two to share their memories with each other. Encourage students to listen carefully as they take turns sharing their memories with each other. Allow about 5 minutes for this pair sharing.
5. Reconvene the whole group. Invite students to share highlights from their conversations with the whole group if they like. Encourage students to notice that the quotations on Resource Page 127 emphasize that God's purpose is to change the world by helping us to change ourselves. Invite students to reflect on their own experiences with changing themselves and then to discuss: What have we noticed about the changes we choose to make in our own lives—are they always quick and easy? Are there certain types of change that seem especially difficult? Why? What types of changes seem to happen suddenly? What types of changes take place gradually?

6. Invite students to think of examples of changing their minds about something, where an idea that first seemed ‘stupid’ or ‘untrue’ or ‘impossible’, later seemed to make a lot more sense. If desired, the teacher might wish to offer some ‘starter’ examples, such as:
 - Learning through various levels—beginner through advanced—in a discipline such as math, music, language, sports, or dance?
 - Developing a spiritual quality through study, prayer, planning, and action.
 - Moving into and becoming comfortable with a new town, culture, or school.
 - Learning that gossip or rumors were not true.
 - Coming to understand and appreciate a person who, when we first met, was difficult to understand.
 - Coming to see the wisdom in the decisions that someone made which did not make sense at first.
7. Discuss several examples: What caused the change? How did it happen? Did some of the examples include gaining more information, or trying new experiences, or learning from a different perspective?
8. Distribute copies of Resource Page 128. Ask students to identify the two different possibilities for each image, such as:

duck—rabbit

straight parallel lines—curved lines

lines of equal length—lines of unequal length

flat one-dimensional image—three-dimensional image

bird—rabbit
9. Explain that these famous illusions demonstrate that the same reality can appear to be different things. Notice that people frequently find one image easier to see than the other. Discuss: Are people ‘dumb’ or ‘bad’ if they can’t see both images at first? Why not? How can learning to ‘see’ these dual-image illusions help us to appreciate the challenge to unite both our inward selves and our outward actions? How can they also help us learn to compare our own current level of development with where we want to be?
10. In the whole group, discuss the following questions:
 - What are some of the important lessons we’ve learned from our study of selected passages from *The Advent of Divine Justice*?
 - What are some organizations in our community—religious groups, service clubs, civic groups, and others—that are working for some of these same ideals? What are these groups doing? How could we find out more about them? Could we join them for some activities, invite them to some of ours, or work together in some way?
 - Thinking about our friends and families, our schools, clubs, sports, and other activities, what movement do we see toward race unity? Can we help strengthen some things that are already happening?
 - What are some actions that we can take individually to make genuine friendships with people from other backgrounds or ‘races’? What can we do to learn more about other people? What can we do to promote friendship and understanding among all people? How can we address real issues of racial prejudice that we see?
11. After this period of discussion, play quiet background music while students make their own action plans by writing answers to the questions on Resource Page 129. Consider having a selection of books about race unity available for browsing as some students may complete their plans while others are still writing. Circulate to provide encouragement or assistance as needed. The teacher should also complete an action plan.
12. After all students have completed their plans, invite them to share some of their ideas in the whole group if they like. Conclude the activity with prayers for assistance.

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

ACTIVITY: CREATE A GAME: THE PATH TO RACIAL UNITY

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES: To know the obligations of both races as specified in the writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. To know that both races have attitudes to overcome and responsibilities to enact before racial unity can be achieved.

WISDOM OBJECTIVES: To gain insight into the spiritual qualities referred to in *The Advent of Divine Justice* that are necessary to bring about the elimination of racial prejudice from study of the Baha’i writings: sacrifice, moral courage and fortitude, tact and sympathy, humility, care and vigilance. To understand the obligation of both races to meet the challenges of racial prejudice and the necessity not to wait for the initiative to be taken by one race or the other.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá’í sacred writings; Involve service to humanity; Play and use of manipulatives; Use of creativity and the arts

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Chart paper or chalkboard
- Sample board games, with game board, instruction cards, etc.
- Index cards or cards cut from posterboard: 4 different colors
 - Color A: 78 cards
 - Color B: 16 cards
 - Color C: 8 cards
 - Color D: 15 cards
 - Alternately, if you clearly label each card with words, stickers, or colored makers, you may use cards of a single color
- Photocopies of Resource Pages 130–144
- Pens, paper, and markers
- Scissors and glue
- Stickers (optional)
- Lamination or clear adhesive paper (optional)

1. Invite students to share their efforts to promote race unity, including any memorized quotations. Celebrate all steps toward these goals.
2. Recall Shoghi Effendi’s statement in *The Advent of Divine Justice* that the path to race unity is “a long and thorny road, beset with pitfalls.” Then, invite students to work together to create a game to help all people learn the steps to race unity. This will be a cooperative game, on a life-size game board set up in a large room or outdoor area. The game pieces will be the players themselves who will practice walking the path to racial unity. Note that this game is for 2–10 players. If larger groups will be playing, you may choose to take turns playing or create more than one game.
3. In the whole group, plan the game board—the path that players will travel on the floor or ground. Display several commercially made board games, and identify the path from Start to Finish for each game. Note that an interesting game may have twists and turns, short-cuts, places to avoid, etc. Select a plan to modify or create your own plan inspired by these examples. Sketch your plan for a game board on chart paper.
4. Explain that the class will create game cards based on instructions in *The Advent of Divine Justice*, using the colored index cards. Each color will represent a different type of instruction and direct the players to move forwards or backwards, lose a turn, take an extra turn, etc.

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

5. List the colors of your cards and their categories on chart paper for easy reference. For example, you could use:

GREEN: Responsibilities of Both Blacks and Whites (78 cards)

BLUE: Responsibilities Especially for Whites (16 cards)

YELLOW: Responsibilities Especially for Blacks (8 cards)

PURPLE: Race Unity Champions (15 cards)

Alternately, if you clearly label each card type, you may use a single color for all cards.

6. Assign students to cut out the instruction cards on Resource Pages 131–144 and glue them to the index cards. They may also decorate these cards, if desired.

7. Alternately, students may create their own cards from the lists they created in their “study groups” for *The Advent of Divine Justice* (the activity on page 113).

- They will use these lists to create the instructions for the 3 types of *Responsibility* game cards.
- Since the game uses so many of *Responsibilities of Both Blacks and Whites* (green) cards, students may use a statement from the lists in either a positive or negative way. Consider making about 30–40% of these cards negative—it is, after all, a “thorny road, beset with pitfalls.” Use the *Inspiring Quotations* only for positive cards, and the *Warning Quotations* only for negative cards, to preserve the wording of the quotations. See examples of these cards on Resource Pages 131–42.
- Prepare the cards by writing PROGRESS! or INSPIRATION! (positive), or PITFALL! or WARNING! (negative) at the top of the card. Below this, write the guidance or quotation from the responsibility lists. At the bottom of each card, write the action to be

taken, such as “Move Ahead 1” (positive) or “Miss 1 Turn” (negative). Refer to the sample cards on Resource Pages as desired.

- Assign students to make cards from specific parts of the lists, so that text is not duplicated on cards.
- Create cards for the *Race Unity Champions* by writing instructions to read one of the seven stories of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá or one of the eight stories of race unity champions, identify a spiritual quality demonstrated in the story, and then move forward with the help of that spiritual quality. See the sample cards on Resource Page 143–44.

Consider laminating the cards or covering them with clear adhesive paper, so that they may be used many times without getting damaged.

8. After making the game cards, review the rules for playing the game. As time permits you may choose to practice setting up the game according to the instructions in the next activity.
9. Decide how to celebrate completing the game at the Finish. You could simply play the game in class and use a more elaborate set-up as part of a Friendship Day event as discussed in the next topic (page 155 of this Lesson Planning Guide), OR you could invite guests for this activity without making it part of a Friendship Day event.
10. Whether as part of Friendship Day or as a stand-alone event, consider having players move to an adjacent, “surprise” room as they complete the path, which is specially decorated to celebrate race unity. This area might have multi-colored balloons, flowers, posters and photographs of diverse humanity, etc. This area may also have upbeat, welcoming music and refreshments to celebrate completion of the game. Use your imagination!

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

ACTIVITY: SETTING UP THE “PATH TO RACE UNITY” GAME

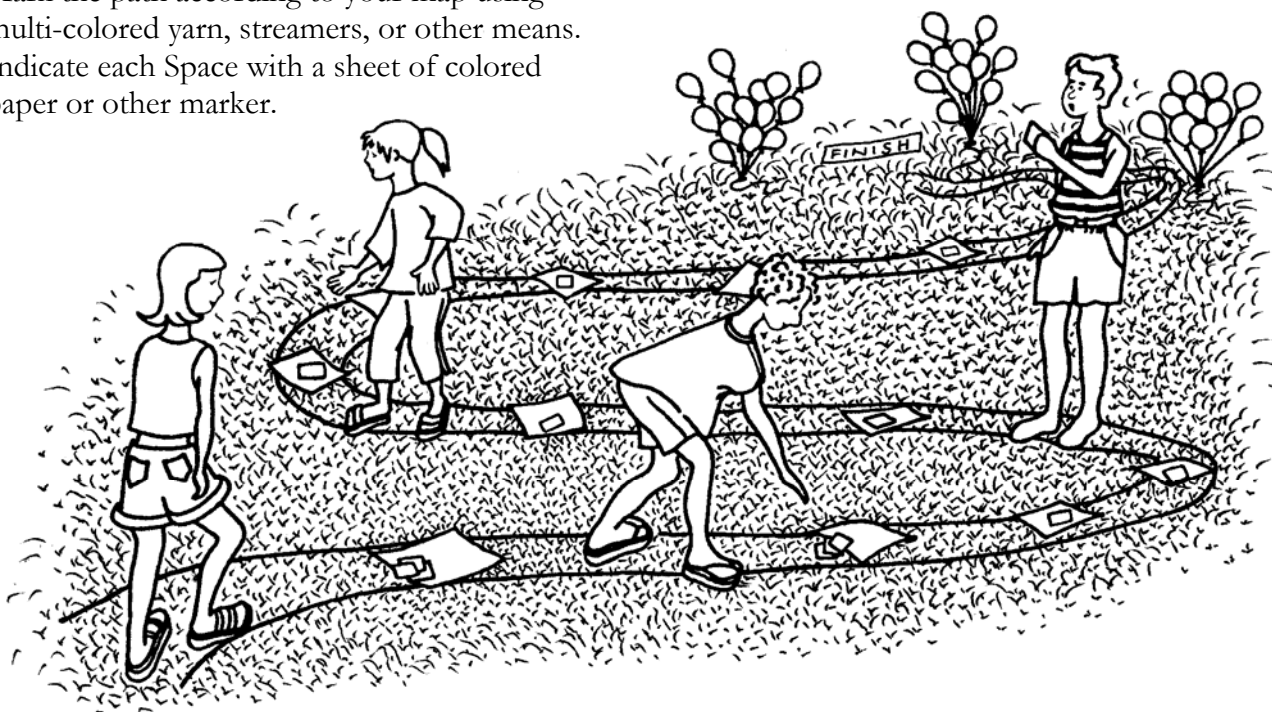
SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To discern the importance of cultivating the quality of humility in achieving racial unity.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Service to humanity; Use of creativity

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Sketched map of game board from the previous activity
 - Large open area, indoors or out
 - 20–30 yards of multi-colored yarn, streamers, or other means to mark a path
 - 35 sheets of colored construction paper, to indicate ‘spaces’ along the path
 - Several sets of game dice
 - Optional: balloons, flowers, photographs of diverse humanity, multi-cultural music, refreshments, gift quotation cards for invited guests
- Allow about 30 minutes to set up the game before beginning to play.
 - Clear adequate indoor or outdoor space to play the game. Use the map created in the previous activity to set up the game-board. Identify and mark the Start and Finish areas. Allow room near Start for players waiting to take their turns and near Finish for players can congregate as they complete the game. Allow about 35 Spaces along the path from Start to Finish.
 - Mark the path according to your map using multi-colored yarn, streamers, or other means. Indicate each Space with a sheet of colored paper or other marker.
 - Place cards along the path as follows:
 - Mix or shuffle all the cards—all colors, including both positive and negative cards. Stack 3–4 cards on each space along the path.
 - Place the Inspiring Stories Resource Pages in two locations along the path where they will be easily accessible. One set will be stories about ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The other set includes the stories of race unity champions.



ACTIVITY: PLAYING THE “PATH TO RACE UNITY” GAME

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES: To recognize that the challenge of overcoming race prejudice is a spiritual one and that race unity cannot be achieved in haste, nor without ceaseless exertion on one’s own part. To recognize the necessity of patience, tact, wisdom and deliberate, persistent and prayerful effort in all one’s actions.

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To formulate and implement plans to achieve mutual understanding, make genuine friendships, and maintain sustained cooperation with people of other ‘races’.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá’í sacred writings; Use of play and manipulatives; Service to humanity; Use of creativity

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- prepared game path, with optional festive Finish, as described in the previous activity

1. Welcome your friends and guests, and invite them to listen attentively to the game instructions. Give an overview of the game: Tell participants that this game represents steps outlined by Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith, to assist us to address the most vital and challenging issue facing us today: achieving racial unity!

2. Explain that this is a cooperative game. No one can reach Finish until everyone reaches Finish. Then all will celebrate together!

3. **To begin the game:**

- Each person rolls the dice to see who goes first. The lowest number rolled goes first, to remember the importance of humility in this endeavor. Then the next lowest, then the next lowest, and so on. All players take their positions at Start.

To move forward:

- Each player moves in turn. For each turn, the player rolls the dice, moves forward that many spaces, picks up the top card in the stack, reads it aloud, returns it to the bottom of the stack, and follows its directions. The next player takes the dice, rolls, and moves as directed.

To win the game:

- No player may Finish until all players Finish. When a player can’t go any further without reaching Finish, the player may choose to “sacrifice” for one or more other players. For as many spaces BACKWARD on the path as that player chooses to go, he or she may designate that another player may move that many spaces FORWARD. The game continues until all players are able to link arms and reach Finish together. Then, celebrate your unity!
4. Any questions? If not, start playing—and if so, perhaps start playing anyway—and have fun as you figure out any special circumstances you didn’t anticipate!
5. Celebrate the successful completion of the game with refreshments, music and fellowship.
6. If you have invited guests, or are including this game in your Friendship Day activities (see p. 155), consider presenting each participant with the gift of a beautifully printed quotation on racial unity from the Bahá’í writings. Make copies of Resource Pages 124–26 (Selections from *The Advent of Divine Justice*) available for guests who wish to learn more. Be prepared to teach interested individuals about the Bahá’í Faith and the goal of race unity.

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

Resource Pages

Dr. H. Elsie Austin

When she was just a girl, Elsie Austin (1908-2004) bravely stood up for justice and truth, and she never stopped doing so throughout her long life.



One of only two African-American children in her Cincinnati classroom, Elsie pointed out errors in a textbook that denigrated the role of Africans in world history.

Elsie then told her class about the many contributions made by Africans in producing works of great beauty from bronze, gold, and ivory.

“There was an electric silence,” she said many years later. She recalled that her teacher had then agreed with her and described to the class the contributions made to the world by African-Americans.

Elsie Austin gained her initial motivation to stand up for principle from the example and teachings of her brave forebears such as her great-grandmother, who refused to be intimidated by the racist terror perpetrated against her by the Ku Klux Klan in her home state of Alabama.

Dr. Austin recorded a series of firsts in the secular community. She was the first African-American woman to graduate from the University of Cincinnati’s College of Law and the first to be appointed assistant attorney-general of the State of Ohio.

After a legal career with several federal government agencies, she spent a decade in Africa as a Foreign Service officer, working in cultural and educational programs sponsored by the United States Information Agency, and initiating the first women’s activities program of that organization in Africa.

In a 1998 lecture Dr. Austin said that Bahá’ís constitute a unique world community, one that is operating in every part of the world where there is tension, violence, and hatred.

“We are making serious effort to pry human beings away from their alienating traditions, their comfortable ignorance, and their prejudice—but we must try harder.”

“After all, the battle we face is essentially a spiritual battle to transform the souls and spirits of human beings, to empower them to express love and justice, and to develop a unity of conscience.”



Bahá’í World News Service, <http://news.bahai.org/story.cfm?storyid=338>
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Selections from *The Advent of Divine Justice*

1. As to racial prejudice, the corrosion of which, for well-nigh a century, has bitten into the fiber, and attacked the whole social structure of American society, it should be regarded as constituting the most vital and challenging issue confronting the Bahá'í community at the present stage of its evolution. The ceaseless exertions which this issue of paramount importance calls for, the sacrifices it must impose, the care and vigilance it demands, the moral courage and fortitude it requires, the tact and sympathy it necessitates, invest this problem . . . with an urgency and importance that cannot be overestimated. White and Negro, high and low, young and old, whether newly converted to the Faith or not, all who stand identified with it must participate. . . .
2. Let them call to mind, fearlessly and determinedly, the example and conduct of 'Abdu'l-Bahá while in their midst. Let them remember His courage, His genuine love, His informal and indiscriminating fellowship, His contempt for and impatience of criticism, tempered by His tact and wisdom. Let them revive . . . the memory of those . . . occasions on which He so strikingly demonstrated His keen sense of justice, His spontaneous sympathy for the downtrodden, His ever-abiding sense of the oneness of the human race, His overflowing love for its members, and His displeasure with those who dared to flout His wishes. . . .
3. To discriminate against any race . . . is a flagrant violation of the spirit that animates the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. . . . If any discrimination is at all to be tolerated, it should be a discrimination not against, but rather in favor of the minority, be it racial or otherwise. . . . Every organized community enlisted under the banner of Bahá'u'lláh should . . . nurture, encourage, and safeguard every minority belonging to any faith, race, class, or nation within it. . . . When an equal number of ballots have been cast in an election, or where the qualifications for any office are balanced as between the various races, faiths or nationalities within the community, priority should unhesitatingly be accorded the party representing the minority. . . . It should be the duty of every Bahá'í community so to arrange its affairs that in cases where individuals belonging to the divers minority elements within it are already qualified and fulfill the necessary requirements, Bahá'í representative institutions . . . may have represented on them as many of these divers elements, racial or otherwise, as possible.
4. Freedom from racial prejudice, in any of its forms, should . . . be adopted as the watchword of the entire body of the American believers, in whichever state they reside, in whatever circles they move, whatever their age, traditions, tastes, and habits. It should be consistently demonstrated in every phase of their activity and life, whether in the Bahá'í community or outside it, in public or in private, formally as well as informally, individually as well as in their official capacity as organized groups, committees and Assemblies. It should be deliberately cultivated . . . in their homes, their business offices, their schools and colleges, their social parties and recreation grounds, their Bahá'í meetings, conferences, conventions, summer schools and Assemblies. . . .

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

5. “O ye discerning ones!” Bahá’u’lláh has written, “Verily, the words which have descended from the heaven of the Will of God are the source of unity and harmony for the world. Close your eyes to racial differences, and welcome all with the light of oneness.” “We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations,” He proclaims, “. . . that all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled.” “Bahá’u’lláh hath said,” writes ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, “that the various races of humankind lend a composite harmony and beauty of color to the whole. Let all associate, therefore, in this great human garden even as flowers grow and blend together side by side without discord or disagreement between them.” “Bahá’u’lláh,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá moreover has said, “once compared the colored people to the black pupil of the eye surrounded by the white. In this black pupil is seen the reflection of that which is before it, and through it the light of the spirit shineth forth.”

- 6a. “God,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Himself declares, “maketh no distinction between the white and the black. If the hearts are pure both are acceptable unto Him. God is no respecter of persons on account of either color or race. All colors are acceptable unto Him, be they white, black, or yellow. Inasmuch as all were created in the image of God, we must bring ourselves to realize that all embody divine possibilities.” “In the estimation of God,” He states, “all men are equal.” . . . “The diversity in the human family,” He claims, “should be the cause of love and harmony, as it is in music where many different notes blend together in the making of a perfect chord.” “If you meet,” is His admonition, “those of a different race and color from yourself, do not mistrust them, and withdraw yourself into your shell of conventionality, but rather be glad and show them kindness.” “In the world of being,” He testifies, “the meeting is blessed when the white and colored races meet together with infinite spiritual love and heavenly harmony.” . . .

- 6b. “Strive earnestly,” [‘Abdu’l-Bahá] again exhorts both races, “and put forth your greatest endeavor toward the accomplishment of this fellowship and the cementing of this bond of brotherhood between you. Such an attainment is not possible without will and effort on the part of each; from one, expressions of gratitude and appreciation; from the other, kindness and recognition of equality. Each one should endeavor to develop and assist the other toward mutual advancement. . . . Love and unity will be fostered between you, thereby bringing about the oneness of mankind. For the accomplishment of unity between the colored and white will be an assurance of the world’s peace.” “I hope,” He thus addresses members of the white race, “that ye may cause that downtrodden race to become glorious, and to be joined with the white race, to serve the world of man with the utmost sincerity, faithfulness, love, and purity. This opposition, enmity, and prejudice among the white race and the colored cannot be effaced except through faith, assurance, and the teachings of the Blessed Beauty.” “This question of the union of the white and the black is very important,” He warns, “for if it is not realized, ere long great difficulties will arise, and harmful results will follow.” “If this matter remaineth without change,” is yet another warning, “enmity will be increased day by day, and the final result will be hardship and may end in bloodshed.”

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

7. A tremendous effort is required by both races if their outlook, their manners, and conduct are to reflect, in this darkened age, the spirit and teachings of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. . . .
8. Let the white make a supreme effort in their resolve to contribute their share to the solution of this problem, to abandon once for all their usually inherent and at times subconscious sense of superiority, to correct their tendency towards revealing a patronizing attitude towards the members of the other race, to persuade them through their intimate, spontaneous and informal association with them of the genuineness of their friendship and the sincerity of their intentions, and to master their impatience of any lack of responsiveness on the part of a people who have received, for so long a period, such grievous and slow-healing wounds. Let the Negroes, through a corresponding effort on their part, show by every means in their power the warmth of their response, their readiness to forget the past, and their ability to wipe out every trace of suspicion that may still linger in their hearts and minds. Let neither think that the solution of so vast a problem is a matter that exclusively concerns the other. Let neither think that such a problem can either easily or immediately be resolved. Let neither think that they can wait confidently for the solution of this problem until the initiative has been taken, and the favorable circumstances created, by agencies that stand outside the orbit of their Faith. Let neither think that anything short of genuine love, extreme patience, true humility, consummate tact, sound initiative, mature wisdom, and deliberate, persistent, and prayerful effort, can succeed in blotting out the stain which this patent evil has left on the fair name of their common country. Let them rather believe, and be firmly convinced, that on their mutual understanding, their amity, and sustained cooperation, must depend, more than on any other force or organization operating outside the circle of their Faith, the deflection of that dangerous course so greatly feared by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and the materialization of the hopes He cherished for their joint contribution to the fulfillment of that country's glorious destiny.

Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, pp. 33–39

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

Uniting Our Inner Selves and Outward Actions

They who are the people of God have no ambition except to revive the world, to ennoble its life, and regenerate its peoples. Truthfulness and good-will have, at all times, marked their relations with all men. Their outward conduct is but a reflection of their inward life, and their inward life a mirror of their outward conduct.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 270-71

Transforming Our Inner Selves and Outward Actions

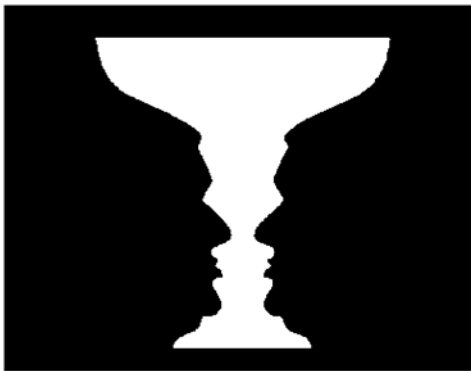
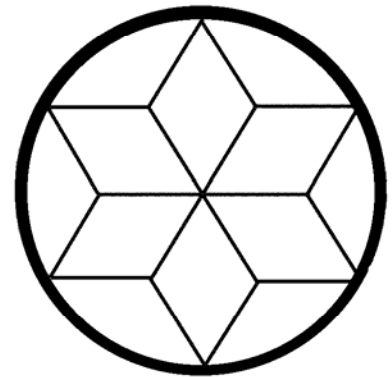
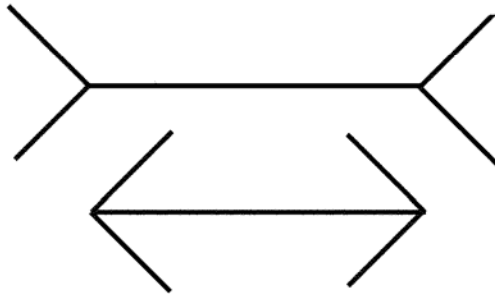
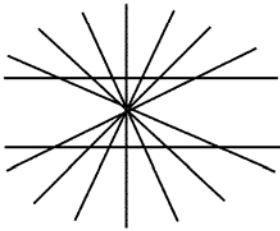
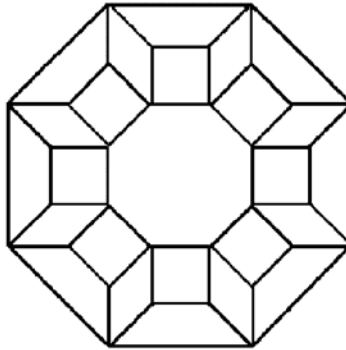
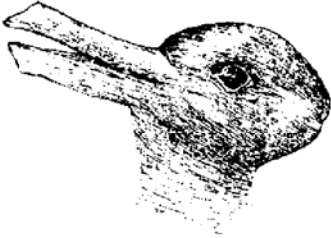
. . . Is not the object of every Revelation to effect a transformation in the whole character of mankind, a transformation that shall manifest itself both outwardly and inwardly, that shall affect both its inner life and external conditions?

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 240

Uniting Our Inner Selves and Outward Actions to Transform the World

One thing and only one thing will unfailingly and alone secure the undoubted triumph of this sacred Cause, namely, the extent to which our own inner life and private character mirror forth in their manifold aspects the splendor of those eternal principles proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh.

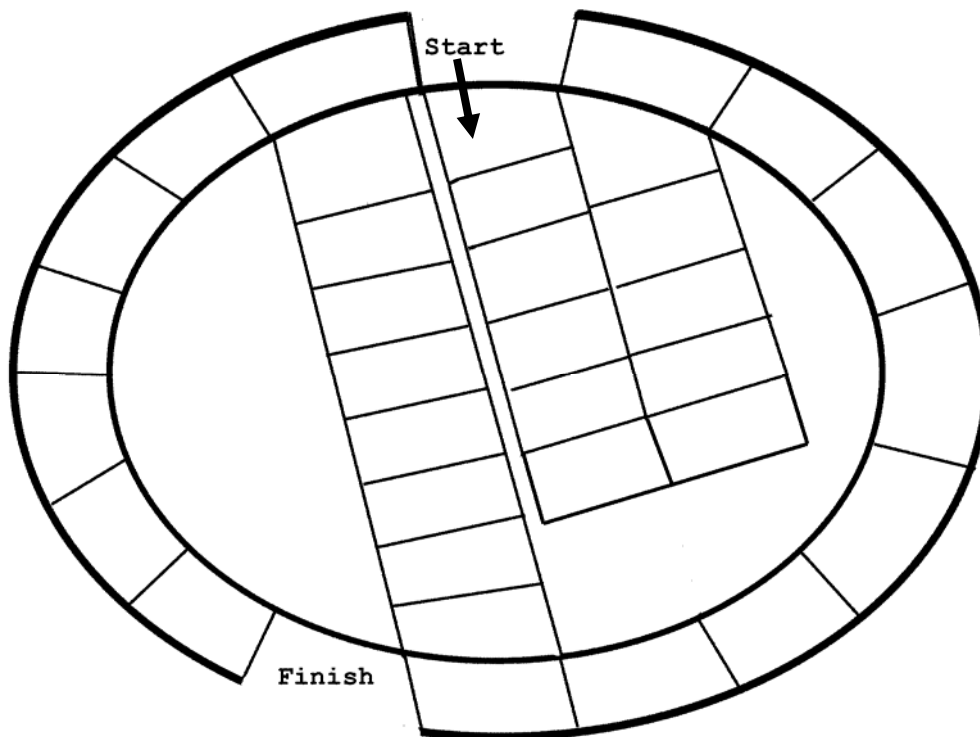
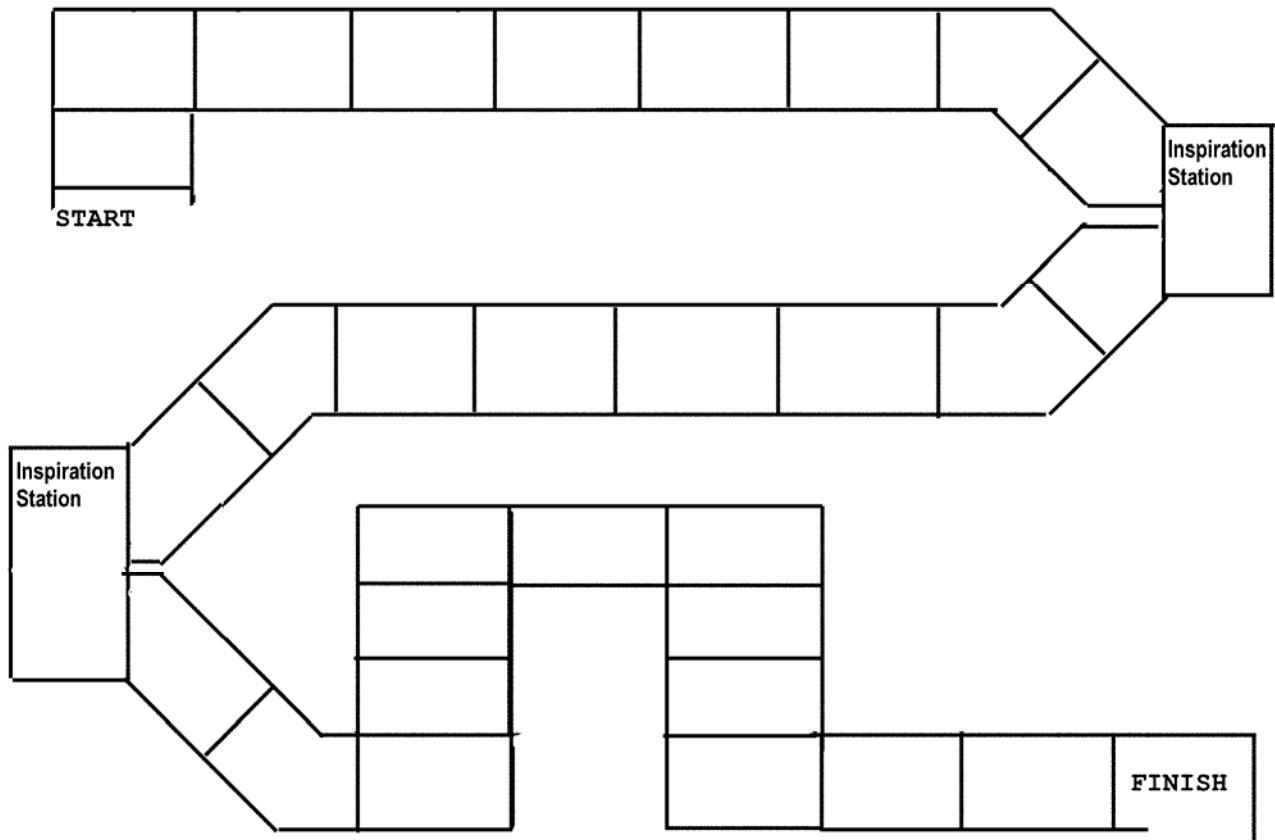
Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í Administration*, p. 66



These illusions and others are widely available on the internet. One site is <http://members.lycos.co.uk/brisray/optill/oind.htm>

1. What is one important fact that I have learned in this class about the need for race unity?
2. What do I understand about the importance of spiritual qualities in a race unity champion?
3. What progress have I noticed in myself as I work to develop my selected quality? How does it help me to set specific goals and then to call myself to account each day? If I encounter a pitfall, what do I need to do to move forward again?
4. How specifically can I make stronger friendships with people from 'races' or backgrounds other than mine? What will I do? When and where will I do it? With whom? Do I need to ask a parent or other adult for permission or help with transportation? How will I check my progress? What will I do to celebrate our new or stronger friendship?

Sample Game Boards



TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

Game Cards

RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOTH BLACKS AND WHITES

PROGRESS AND PITFALLS (57)

Green Cards

<p>RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL</p> <p>PROGRESS!</p> <p>You used “ceaseless exertions”!</p> <p>MOVE AHEAD 1</p>	<p>RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL</p> <p>PROGRESS!</p> <p>You made personal sacrifices to foster racial unity.</p> <p>MOVE AHEAD 2</p>	<p>RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL</p> <p>PITFALL!</p> <p>You missed an opportunity to display moral courage and fortitude.</p> <p>GO BACK 1</p>
<p>RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL</p> <p>PROGRESS!</p> <p>You practiced tact and felt sympathy for the trials of others.</p> <p>MOVE AHEAD 2</p>	<p>RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL</p> <p>PROGRESS!</p> <p>You brought to reality one of the hopes of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.</p> <p>MOVE AHEAD 1</p>	<p>RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL</p> <p>PITFALL!</p> <p>Oops! You forgot to follow the example of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.</p> <p>GO BACK 1</p>
<p>RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL</p> <p>PROGRESS!</p> <p>You displayed courage.</p> <p>MOVE AHEAD 1</p>	<p>RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL</p> <p>PROGRESS!</p> <p>You welcomed a stranger with genuine love.</p> <p>MOVE AHEAD 2</p>	<p>RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL</p> <p>PITFALL!</p> <p>You were critical of members of another race.</p> <p>GO BACK 2</p>

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You approached a sensitive situation with tact and wisdom.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You demonstrated spontaneous sympathy for the down-trodden.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

You discriminated against someone of another race.

GO BACK 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You demonstrate an ever-abiding sense of oneness of the human race.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

Your community has division in its ranks based on race.

GO BACK 2
AND
LOSE A TURN

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

In a work group, you went along with differentiation of class, creed, or color.

GO BACK 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You continue to develop mature wisdom.

TAKE AN EXTRA TURN

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You've adopted freedom from racial prejudice as a watchword.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

You've demonstrated freedom from racial prejudice in public, but not in private.

GO BACK 2
AND LOSE A TURN

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You demonstrate freedom from racial prejudice formally and informally.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You deliberately cultivate freedom from racial prejudice in every-day opportunities at school!

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

You missed an opportunity to cultivate freedom from racial prejudice at a party.

GO BACK 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You uphold freedom from racial prejudice as the policy of the National Spiritual Assembly.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You make tremendous effort to reflect the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh in your outlook, manners and conduct.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

In the school lunch room you missed an opportunity to welcome and encourage intermixture of races.

GO BACK 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You work to tear down barriers that now divide races.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

Recalling your Bahá'í classes, you call to mind the warnings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

You dismiss warnings of "dire consequences" if the situation is not definitely remedied.

GO BACK 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You continue to develop “consummate tact.”

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

In a discussion at school, you say we cannot wait for others to solve the problem.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

You decide to wait for conditions to become more favorable.

GO BACK 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You continue to develop genuine love for someone of another race.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You think you understand the meaning of “true humility.”

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

You tell a friend you think the problem could be easily resolved “if only *they* would do *their* part.”

GO BACK 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

When a difficulty arose, some wanted to give up, but you recognized the need for “sustained cooperation.”

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You continue to make deliberate, persistent, prayerful efforts.

TAKE AN EXTRA TURN

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

You tell a friend you don’t really see the need for amity with other races.

GO BACK 2

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You practice care and vigilance in your interactions with others.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You study and follow the instructions of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

Your committee did not favor someone of a minority race when votes were tied.

GO BACK 3

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

When asked to intervene in a dispute, you demonstrate a keen sense of justice.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

A seeker is attracted by your “over-flowing love for members of the human race.”

TAKE AN EXTRA TURN

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

You went along with differentiation due to public opinion.

GO BACK 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You demonstrate freedom from racial prejudice individually and in your role as a committee chair.

TAKE AN EXTRA TURN

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You cultivate freedom from racial prejudice in devotional meetings, conferences, and Bahá’í classes.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

While a classmate talked about “racial superiority,” you just listened rather than “cast away” that false doctrine.

GO BACK 2
AND
LOSE A TURN

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

You have forgotten to call to mind the example of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá!

GO BACK 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You invited a family of another race to your house for “informal fellowship.”

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

Your community failed to stimulate, encourage and afford opportunity to minorities.

GO BACK 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

Your community maximized diversity as much as possible on its Assembly and committees.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

Your community makes efforts to inspire and encourage minorities.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

You demonstrated attachment to racial prejudice within and outside the Bahá’í community.

LOSE A TURN

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You endeavor night and day to fulfill your particular responsibilities.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

Because you’ve seen it work in your community, you’re firmly convinced of the need for mutual understanding.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

You tell a friend you think the solution to problems between races solely concerns the other race.

GO BACK 2

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You demonstrate
extreme patience.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PROGRESS!

You demonstrate
sound initiative.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

PITFALL!

You're waiting for others
to take the initiative.

GO BACK 1

RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOTH BLACKS AND WHITES
WARNING QUOTATIONS (2)
Green Cards

WARNING!

"This question of the union of
the white and the black is very
important, for if it is not
realized, ere long great
difficulties will arise, and
harmful results will follow."
~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá

ALL PLAYERS MOVE BACK 2

WARNING!

"If this matter remaineth
without change, enmity will be
increased day by day, and the
final result will be hardship and
may end in bloodshed."
~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá

ALL PLAYERS MOVE BACK 2

RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOTH BLACKS AND WHITES

INSPIRATION QUOTATIONS (19)

Green Cards

Continued on next two pages

INSPIRATION!

"...the accomplishment of
unity between the colored
and white will be an
assurance of the world's
peace." ~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá

ALL PLAYERS
MOVE FORWARD 1

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOTH BLACKS AND WHITES INSPIRATION QUOTATIONS (19)

Green Cards

INSPIRATION!

“Close your eyes to racial differences, and welcome all with the light of oneness.”
~ Bahá’u’lláh

CHOOSE 1 PLAYER TO
MOVE FORWARD 1

INSPIRATION!

“We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations...that differences of race be annulled.” ~ Bahá’u’lláh

ALL PLAYERS
MOVE FORWARD 1

INSPIRATION!

“God is no respecter of persons on account of either color or race. All colors are acceptable unto Him, be they white, black, or yellow.” ~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

CHOOSE 1 PLAYER TO
MOVE FORWARD 1

INSPIRATION!

“...The various races of human kind lend a composite harmony and beauty of color to the whole.” ~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

TRADE PLACES WITH THE
PERSON BEHIND YOU

INSPIRATION!

“Let all associate...in this great human flower garden even as flowers grow and blend together side by side without discord or disagreement between them.”
~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

INVITE 2 OTHER PLAYERS
TO SWITCH PLACES

INSPIRATION!

“In the estimation of God, all men are equal. There is no distinction of color; all are one in the color and beauty of servitude to Him.”
~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

ALL PLAYERS SAY ONE ACTION
THAT WILL PROMOTE UNITY.
ALL MOVE FORWARD 1.

INSPIRATION!

“Bahá’u’lláh once compared the colored people to the black pupil of the eye...through it the light of the spirit shineth forth.”
~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

CHOOSE 1 PLAYER TO
MOVE FORWARD 1

INSPIRATION!

“God maketh no distinctions between the white and the black. If the hearts are pure both are acceptable unto Him.” ~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

TRADE PLACES WITH THE
PERSON BEHIND YOU

INSPIRATION!

“Color is not important; the heart is all-important. It mattereth not what the exterior may be if the heart is pure and white within.”
~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

CHOOSE 1 PLAYER TO
MOVE FORWARD 1

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

INSPIRATION!

“God doth not behold differences of hue and complexion. He looketh at the hearts.” ~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

CHOOSE 1 PLAYER TO
MOVE FORWARD 1

INSPIRATION!

“In origin and intention of creation mankind is one. Distinctions of race and color have arisen afterward.” ~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

ALL MOVE FORWARD 1

INSPIRATION!

“One of the important questions which affect the unity and the solidarity of mankind is the fellowship and equality of the white and colored races.” ~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

TRADE PLACES WITH THE
PERSON BEHIND YOU

INSPIRATION!

“This variety in forms and coloring which is manifest in all the kingdoms is according to creative Wisdom and hath a divine purpose.”
~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

ANSWER THE QUESTION:
WHY IS VARIETY GOOD?
THEN MOVE FORWARD 1

INSPIRATION!

“The diversity in the human family should be the cause of love and harmony, as it is in music where many different notes blend together in the making of a perfect chord.”
~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

NAME TWO DIVERSITIES IN THE
HUMAN FAMILY.
THEN MOVE FORWARD 1

INSPIRATION!

“If you meet those of a different race and color from yourself...be glad and show them kindness.”
~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

SAY 1 WAY TO SHOW KINDNESS.
THEN MOVE FORWARD 1

INSPIRATION!

“In the world of being, the meeting is blessed when the white and colored races meet together with infinite spiritual love and heavenly harmony.” ~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

INVITE 1 PLAYER TO
MOVE FORWARD 1

INSPIRATION!

“When a gathering of these two races is brought about, that assemblage will become the magnet of the Concourse on high...”
~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

ALL MOVE FORWARD 1

INSPIRATION!

“Love and unity will be fostered between you, thereby bringing about the oneness of mankind.”
~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

TRADE PLACES WITH
A PERSON BEHIND YOU

RESPONSIBILITIES OF WHITES

Blue Progress Cards (8)

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PROGRESS!

You make
a supreme effort.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PROGRESS!

You contribute your
share to the solution.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PROGRESS!

You conquer your
subconscious sense of
superiority.

TAKE AN EXTRA TURN

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PROGRESS!

You have corrected your
tendency to reveal a
patronizing attitude
towards members of the
black race.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PROGRESS!

You seize opportunities
to engage in intimate,
spontaneous, and
informal association
with blacks.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PROGRESS!

You have developed
genuine friendship
with blacks.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PROGRESS!

Your sincere intentions
towards blacks helps
alleviate “lingering
suspicions.”

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PROGRESS!

You continue efforts
despite a lack of
responsiveness on the
part of people who have
received such grievous
wounds.

TAKE AN EXTRA TURN

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

RESPONSIBILITIES OF WHITES

Blue Pitfall Cards (8)

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PITFALL!

Your half-hearted efforts
are far from “supreme.”

LOSE A TURN

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PITFALL!

You cling to your
subconscious sense of
superiority.

MOVE BACK 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PITFALL!

You avoid genuine
friendship with blacks.

MOVE BACK 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PITFALL!

You are still revealing a
patronizing attitude
towards members of the
black race.

MOVE BACK 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PITFALL!

You avoid opportunities
to engage in intimate,
spontaneous, and
informal association
with blacks.

MOVE BACK 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PITFALL!

You fail to contribute
your share to the
solution.

MOVE BACK 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PITFALL!

Your intentions towards
achieving amity with
blacks don't seem
sincere.

MOVE BACK 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF WHITES

PITFALL!

You choose to give up
due to a lack of
responsiveness on the
part of people who have
received such grievous
wounds.

MOVE BACK 2

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

RESPONSIBILITIES OF BLACKS

Yellow Cards (8)

RESPONSIBILITY OF BLACKS

PROGRESS!

You correspond efforts
with those of whites.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF BLACKS

PROGRESS!

You show a warm
response to the
efforts of whites to offer
friendship.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF BLACKS

PROGRESS!

You're able to wipe out
lingering suspicions.

MOVE AHEAD 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF BLACKS

PROGRESS!

You demonstrate a
readiness to forget
the past.

MOVE AHEAD 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF BLACKS

PITFALL!

You don't show any
warmth in your response
to efforts made by
members
of the white race to offer
friendship.

MOVE BACK 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF BLACKS

PITFALL!

You feel that you don't
need to make an effort
for race unity.

MOVE BACK 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF BLACKS

PITFALL!

You continue to dwell on
the transgressions
of the past.

MOVE BACK 1

RESPONSIBILITY OF BLACKS

PITFALL!

You're having trouble
wiping out lingering
suspicions.

MOVE BACK 1

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

Inspirational Stories—Purple Cards (15)

These cards refer players to the stories in the Lesson Planning Guide, pp. 46–48 and pp.96–103

The Example of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Race Unity Champion

Find the next story about ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and read it aloud for all to enjoy. Take inspiration from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s example. Ask the group: What spiritual qualities does ‘Abdu’l-Bahá demonstrate in this story? You and another player of your choice may then MOVE AHEAD 3 SPACES

Race Unity Champions

Find the next profile of a Race Unity Champion and read it aloud for all to enjoy. Take inspiration from this champion. Ask the group: What is one spiritual quality this champion demonstrates? Then invite one player of your choice to MOVE AHEAD 1 SPACE.

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TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories & Articles:

Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Beloved Master*, pp. 54-56 ("The Black Rose"), p. 71 ("Unity of Mankind")

Balyuzi, H.M., *'Abdu'l-Bahá*, pp. 181-182 (gathering of blacks and whites), pp. 194-195 (speaking at Howard Colby Ives' church), p. 368 (household staff), p. 398 (prejudiced missionaries)

Breneman, Anne, *Like Pure Gold, the Story of Louis G. Gregory*

Brilliant Star:

"A New Culture" Jan/Feb 05

"Diving Courtesy" Nov/Dec 03

"The Color of Jellybeans," "Star Kids: More Fun With Friends," "Shooting Star" Nov/Dec 01

"Words Can Heal," "What Do You Say?" Mar/Apr 02

"The Birthday Party," "Layli Miller Bashir" Jan/Feb 00

"The Fruits of One Tree," "What If?" "Shining Lamps" Jul/Aug 99

"First Prejudice-Free Generation," "One Person's Actions," "My Life As It Relates to Oneness,"

"The Most Great Gardener" Mar/Apr 95

"Just Open the Door" May/June 95

"Nina's Teaching Trip" Mar/Apr 94

"Saving Stars," "Kids of the Kingdom Speak Out!" "Kids of the Kingdom Set Goals!" Sep/Oct 94

"White/Black" Mar/Apr 93

"What Is Racism," "Ruby," "Ellsworth Blackwell" Nov/Dec 91

"Servant Game" May/June 96

"Apostles of Bahá'u'lláh in Action" SpEd 94

Ives, Howard Colby, *Portals to Freedom*, pp. 63-67 ("The Black Rose")

LaCroix-Hopson, Eliane, *'Abdu'l-Bahá in New York, the City of the Covenant*, p. 59 ("Encounters with Children"), p. 71 ("The Day of the Covenant")

Ruhe-Schoen, Janet, *A Love Which Does Not Wait*

Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

Love Flows from Every Color, A Coloring Book

Brilliant Star:

"Anyone whose heart is pure . . ." Nov/Dec 03

"Reconcile their differences . . ." Jul/Aug 03

"Consort with the followers . . ." Sep/Oct 02

"Make us as waves . . ." Sep/Oct 01

"Changing Hate to Love" Mar/Apr 95

"Bahá'is Together" Nov/Dec 91

GOAL: ELIMINATING RACIAL PREJUDICE

TOPIC: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES NEEDED

Activities:

Brilliant Star:

- “Diversity Challenge,” “What Do You Say?” “Take the Plunge” Jan/Feb 05
- “Neighbors Unite!” Jul/Aug 04
- “My Mission: Become a Champion” Jan/Apr 04
- “Listen with Love” Nov/Dec 03
- “Search for the Good,” “Overflowing with Love” Sep/Oct 02
- “My Bahá’í Journal” Jul/Aug 02
- “What Do You Say?” Nov/Dec 01
- “Ruhi Corner” Jul/Aug 01
- “Nothing is Too Much Trouble . . .,” “A Love Feareth Nothing,” “Communicating with Love,” “The Power of Super You!” Jan/Feb 01
- “Plan to Take Action!” Sep/Oct 94
- “Ten Thousand to One” Nov/Dec 94
- “Power of Attraction” May/Jun 95
- “Together We Can Make It Through” SpEd 95

Music:

- Bahá’í Gospel Choir, *We Have Come to Sing Praises*, “We Have Come to Sing Praises,” “In this Day Bahá’u’lláh”
- Dozier, Eric, *To the Glory of God*, “Vanguard of the Dawning”
- Price, Tom, with various artists, *Lift Up Your Voices & Sing, Vol. 1*, “Look at Me, Follow Me,” “Soldiers in God’s Army,” Vol.2, “Bahá’u’lláh’s Getting Us Ready for that Great Day,” Vol.3 “We Are One”
- Shropshire, Lucy, *This is Faith*, “Come Together World,” “Vision,” “Only Love”
- Uno Mondo, *Hand in Hand*, “I Have a Dream”

Brilliant Star:

- “Mankind Is One” May/Jun 04
- “Love is the Secret” Jul/Aug 03
- “Virtues Rap” Sep/Oct 99
- “The Backbiting Song” Jan/Feb 97
- “We Are All One” Jul/Aug 96
- “We Have Come to Sing Praises” Mar/Apr 96
- “Sing Out the Glory” Sep/Oct 94
- “Peace and Unity” Nov/Dec 91

Games:

Brilliant Star:

- “Josie Detects Diversity” Jan/Feb 05
- “Giving Game” May/Jun 04
- “Truly Trustworthy Game” Sep/Oct 02

Poetry:

- Brilliant Star:* “A House in Lome/Division in Africa” Mar/Apr 96

Videos:

- Power of Race Unity*
- Calling All Colors*

Other favorite resources:

- If you find any additional resources, please notify the National Children’s Education and Research Center, or submit your findings to the Educational Materials web site.

ELIMINATING RACIAL PREJUDICE

PROMISED OUTCOMES

SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:
LOVE, JUSTICE, COURAGE, SERVICE

Love and unity will be fostered between you, thereby bringing about the oneness of mankind.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Foundations of World Unity*, p. 35

Exert yourselves; your mission is unspeakably glorious. Should success crown your enterprise, America will assuredly evolve into a center from which waves of spiritual power will emanate, and the throne of the Kingdom of God will, in the plentitude of its majesty and glory, be firmly established.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, p. 79

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To become aware of the destiny of America through systematic and careful reading of the writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, specifically *The Tablets of the Divine Plan* and *The Advent of Divine Justice*.
- To know that when the races of America unite in true fellowship and accord the light of the oneness of humanity will shine throughout the world.

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Use science and art to show how the example of the American people in overcoming racial prejudices will illuminate the whole world.
- Sing songs such as *This Little Light of Mine* and list ways in which the light of our actions can illuminate the earth.
- Read *Tablets of the Divine Plan* and talk about the relationship between the elimination of racial prejudice in America and the peace and progress of the whole world.
- Read *The Advent of Divine Justice*.



WISDOM OBJECTIVES

- To gain a deep understanding of the vision of the future world described by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as the outcome of the elimination of racial prejudice.
- To understand, through study of the Bahá’í writings, the fact that God will show infinite grace upon those who strive to eliminate racial prejudice and bring about racial unity.

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Have students read about and discuss the results of achieving racial unity as described by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 265.
- Have students create a mural depicting the images from the above extract.
- Illustrate passages from the Bahá’í writings that present for the world the promised outcomes of the elimination of racial prejudice.
- Have students experience the meaning of “showering graces” referred to by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 24. Have balloons inflated with small paper items inside (stars, moons, hearts with words like guidance and protection). Holding the balloon over a student, pop it and watch the shower of graces.



SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

- To discern the spiritual station of those who have arisen, and those who will arise, to accomplish this task.
- To discern the indispensability of this work for the faith and the bounties that accrue for those who strive in this field.

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Have students read and discuss “The companions . . . of the world . . .” from *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 19 (p. 23, pocket-size edition). Engage the students in a baking activity to illustrate this extract using yeast to raise the dough.
- Have students consult in groups and delineate the steps that can be taken in their neighborhoods to eliminate racial prejudice and brainstorm the outcomes of such efforts.
- Have students envision themselves as free from racial prejudice and then write a story with themselves as the main character or draw a representation of this state.



ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

- To share with others, from the writings in their pure form, the Bahá’í vision of the promised outcomes of freedom from racial prejudice.
- To demonstrate confidence and assurance of ultimate victory in overcoming and eliminating racial prejudices and the true unification of humanity.

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Assist students to prepare displays, present plays, musical and dance performances in celebration of the vision of a world free of prejudices and on a path to peace.
- Have students develop action plans for themselves and their communities. After each step has been taken, have students consult about their accomplishments, obstacles and outcomes.
- Have students present speeches in which they express their confidence in the power of divine assistance and the promised outcomes occurring as the result of the elimination of racial prejudice.

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY: BANNERS OF LIGHT

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know that when the races of America unite in true fellowship and accord the light of the oneness of humanity will shine throughout the world.

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To gain a deeper understanding of the vision of the future world described by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as the outcome of the elimination of racial prejudice.

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To share with others, from the writings in their pure form, the Bahá’í vision of the promised outcomes of freedom from racial prejudice.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engage the mind and heart; Direct use of Bahá’í sacred writings; Use of stories; Use of meditation and reflection; Use of memorization and recitation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Globe or map, such as on the inside cover of the Bahá’u’lláh storybooks
- Song, “Soon Will All that Dwell on Earth” (see Resource Page 163)
- The Central Figures: Bahá’u’lláh, vol. 3, Core Curriculum storybook (optional)
- Copies of Resource Page 157
- Pencils and blank paper

1. Introduce, briefly, the story of Bahá’u’lláh’s exiles, for those unfamiliar with Bahá’í history. Locate the route of His exiles on a globe or map. Invite students to now imagine the final stage of Bahá’u’lláh’s last exile, crossing the Mediterranean Sea to Israel and the prison-city of Akká.
2. Invite students to close their eyes, focus their attention on your words, and imagine themselves in Adrianople, in 1868, when Bahá’u’lláh and His companions received news of yet another unjust exile. Using either the following text or “The Last Exile,” pp. 57–61 in the Core Curriculum storybook, *The Central Figures: Bahá’u’lláh*, vol. 3, read or re-tell the story slowly, pausing to allow time for students to visualize the scenes: What would it be like to be there at that time?

Bahá’u’lláh told us, “This journey will be unlike any of the previous journeys.” He said that we were free to “depart to whatever place” we pleased, “and be preserved from tests” or we would find ourselves “unable to leave.”

But, no one leaves. . . . We’re herded onto a crowded steamer bound for the prison-city of ‘Aká, in Israel. . . .

We have no time to buy food for the journey—only a little stale bread and cheese from some friends. . . . We’re worn out and anxious. . . . We’re seasick—but there’s no room to lie down and the smell is horrible. . . .

As we approach ‘Aká we’re all so weak . . . so ill . . . all 70 of us. . . . It is very, very hot—the last day of August . . . the sun blazes down . . . no shade anywhere . . . not even the slightest breeze . . . hour after miserable hour of burning sun. . . . We arrive so prostrated by heat and sickness that we must be carried ashore. . . . ‘Abdu’l-Bahá insists the ladies be carried in chairs—even in these conditions He shows respect and consideration.

GOAL: ELIMINATING RACIAL PREJUDICE
TOPIC: PROMISED OUTCOMES

As we pass through the narrow sea gate, the heavy wooden door swings shut behind us . . . and we face a crowd of idle onlookers, gathered to stare . . . and mock. . . . Surrounded by shouts and curses, we're led through the bazaar, through crowded streets . . . then up long stairs into the bleak and forbidding citadel. . . . A foul smell greets our nostrils—so foul that some of us faint. . . .

We enter a hot, sultry room, guarded by ten soldiers. . . . No water to drink except a brackish, disgusting pool in the courtyard. . . . We beg, children cry . . . still no water . . . only a small amount of rice for everyone to share somehow.

But what did Bahá'u'lláh see as we approached the city . . . as the sun beat down and the people yelled . . . and the stench was unbearable? He wrote: "Upon Our arrival We were welcomed with banners of light, whereupon the Voice of the Spirit cried out saying: 'Soon will all that dwell on earth be enlisted under these banners.'" . . . Imagine . . . banners of light!

3. Begin singing the song, "Soon Will All that Dwell on Earth." (see Resource Guide page 163.) Invite students to begin to sing with you as they gradually open their eyes.
4. Discuss: Although a Prisoner, Bahá'u'lláh was welcomed to the Most Great Prison with banners of light and the promise that all that dwell on earth would choose to follow these teachings. What would it feel like to be among that little band of persecuted followers? We know that Bahá'u'lláh came to unite the entire human family, that He desires "but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations." How close are we to that promise today? What progress have we seen? How have we noticed our efforts to live by His teachings making a difference? What restores our courage and confidence when we begin to feel tired?
5. Acknowledge that millions of people all over the earth are working to promote these same teachings—teachings that bring happiness to all people.
6. Distribute copies of Resource Page 157. Notice that the quotations are from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Who was among the exiles that arrived that dreadful August day in the Most Great Prison. Explain that the light of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's life of service changed hatred into real love. Many years later, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was free to travel in Africa, Europe, and America where He shared these teachings with all people. Today we share them with others.
7. Read the quotations aloud together twice and then discuss: What is the true reality of race? Do we ignore differences or celebrate them? How can race unity promote world peace? How do we know that our work to promote race unity is pleasing to God—have we experienced divine confirmations ourselves?
8. Encourage students to work in pairs or small teams to select a portion of one of these quotations to memorize. Ask each team to identify from the following options the method they'll use for this memorization:
 - In the whole group, recite aloud until all have memorized the passage.
 - Set the passage to music.
 - Write the passage on a chalkboard. While reciting aloud, erase a few words each time the passage is recited, until all words are erased.
 - Use movement to mime phrases.
 - Write each word on an index card. Lay the cards on a table. Read the passage many times, gradually removing cards as you read.
9. After allowing time to work, invite teams to recite their passages for the whole group. Applaud all. Encourage students to continue practicing their quotation and to share it with at least one other person before the next class.

ACTIVITY: CREATE BANNERS OF LIGHT

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To gain a deeper understanding of the vision of the future world described by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as the outcome of the elimination of racial prejudice.

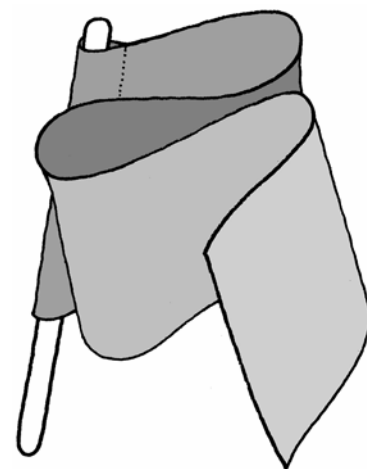
INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá’í sacred writings; Use of creativity and the arts

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Lengths of soft, light-colored cloths (consider cutting strips of old bed sheets): one for each pair or small team of students
- Art supplies: fabric paints, glitter glue, fabric glue, sequins, permanent markers
- Broomsticks, long sturdy dowels, or slim branches: one for each banner
- Staple gun and staples
- Copies of Resource Page 157 (previous activity)

1. Invite students to recite memorized passages from the Bahá’í writings on the bounties of race unity. Encourage them to describe how they shared these passages with others and their other initiatives to promote race unity and friendship among all people.
2. Explain that we have the opportunity to represent the beautiful future of humanity in a visual form as “banners of light” inspired by Bahá’u’lláh’s words as He entered the prison city of ‘Akká. Suggest that we’ll have the opportunity to display them and to use them to teach others the truth of these beautiful principles.
3. Invite students to work in small teams to create banners, using the lengths of cloth and art supplies provided. Encourage them to re-read the quotations on Resource Page 157 or to draw on other quotations related to this topic, to select a portion of a quotation as well as a visual image from the quotation. They may also choose to incorporate other representations of a unified world.
4. Encourage students to work cooperatively and to do their very best work to represent the beauty of the promised world of unity, peace, and justice.
5. Attach completed banners to branches, dowels, or broomsticks with a staple gun. Or, sew hems and slide the sticks through them.
6. Consider how you might display the banners: Could you use them to beautify the environment and proclaim the message of race unity during an upcoming Friendship Day (see p. 155). Would you ultimately want to display them in your classroom, Bahá’í center, or give them as gifts to your school, a nursing home, or other place? Or would you prefer to take turns displaying your banners in your bedrooms as conversation starters with other friends. Further consultation about the use of these banners is included in the activity p. 155.
7. If appropriate to your plans for the ultimate use of the banners, move to an open space where students may practice waving their banners in choreographed motion.
8. Conclude the activity by discussing how each member of the class can continue upholding the principle of race unity and sharing it with others during the coming week. Encourage them also to look for positive actions in others and to find ways to support those positive actions in their friends.



ACTIVITY: LOUIS AND LOUISE GREGORY AND GIFTS OF A PREJUDICE-FREE WORLD

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To gain a deep understanding of the vision of the future world described by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as the outcome of the elimination of racial prejudice.

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To discern the indispensability of this work and the bounties that accrue for those who strive in this field.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá’í sacred writings; Engaging the mind and heart; Use of stories; Use of creativity and the arts

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Students’ items from home
- Student copies of Resource Page 158
- Blank paper and pens or pencils

Advance Preparation:

Encourage students to bring 2–3 items to class that are important to them. The teacher should bring items also.

1. Invite students to share the results of their efforts to live according to the principle of race unity, teach it to others, and encourage others in their positive actions. Acknowledge all efforts.
2. Then, invite students to show the items they brought to class and explain a little about each item. What do the items express? How do they hint at the person’s spiritual qualities?
3. After all students and the teacher have shared their items, discuss: What would happen to our class if each of us could only share our items and ourselves with a few of us—the few that traditions from the past say should be our friends? How would we feel if our spiritual qualities were invisible except to those few—and this was for our whole lives?
4. Re-affirm that the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh help us build a world where all people acknowledge the spiritual reality of all people and the entire world benefits from the gifts of all. Distribute copies of Resource Page 158. Read the quotations aloud carefully, then discuss the questions at the top of the page.
5. Next, share the story of Louis and Louise Gregory, who were encouraged to marry by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in 1912. At this time in the United States marriage between blacks and whites was nearly universally frowned upon, illegal in twenty-five states, and grounds for violence in many places. In spite of this poisonous atmosphere, three days after the wedding, Louis Gregory wrote the account provided on Resource Page 159.
6. After reading aloud the story of Louis and Louise Gregory, invite the students to imagine that they have the honor to be at the wedding of Louis and Louise Gregory. Encourage them to write a short story, letter, or poem to express their own feelings of delight on that occasion.
7. Circulate among the students to provide encouragement or write your own piece while the students work. Then invite all to share their writing with the rest of the class. Applaud all. Consultation about the use of these student pieces is included in the activity on p. 155.
8. Discuss: What are some ways to share these ideas with others, including our own families? How else can we promote a prejudice-free world this week?

ACTIVITY: CREATE CEREAL BOX DISPLAYS

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate confidence and assurance of ultimate victory in overcoming and eliminating racial prejudices and the true unification of humanity.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Involve service to humanity; Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of science; Use of creativity and the arts.

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Chart paper and markers or chalkboard and chalk
 - A selection of cereal boxes of different sizes and shapes
 - Copies of Resource Pages 160–61
 - Blank paper or cardstock
 - Art supplies such as markers, colored paper, old magazines for cutting pictures of diverse people, glue, scissors, etc.
 - Access to a computer or library books on topics of race (optional)
1. Invite students to share highlights of their work to promote race unity over the past week. Acknowledge all.
 2. Explain that one of our important duties as race unity champions is to teach these ideas to others. Invite students to think carefully about the most important ideas they've learned about race unity in this class and then discuss: What do we feel is most important for young children to know about race unity? List ideas on chart paper or chalkboard.
 3. Suggest that one way to help children learn these important ideas is to create “cereal box panels” on the theme “The Beautifully Diverse Future of America.” These panels will replace the commercial content of cereal boxes with positive powerful truths to read while eating breakfast!
 4. Show the cereal boxes and notice the sorts of images and information on the boxes.
 5. Invite students to plan their displays:
 - Review favorite quotations from the many Resource Pages in this Lesson Planning Guide.
 - Ask students to read aloud or recite from memory specific quotations to highlight for children.
 - Then distribute copies of the InfoCenters on Resource Pages 160–61.
 - Read them aloud in the whole group, briefly discuss the meaning of the facts presented and then ask the students to name specific facts they plan to include on their Cereal Box Panels.
 - Students may also include their poems, stories, letters written for the previous activity, or other information as they like.
 - Briefly discuss: How can we present facts in a way that children will understand? Record your ideas on chart paper.

GOAL: ELIMINATING RACIAL PREJUDICE
TOPIC: PROMISED OUTCOMES

6. Work with students to create inspiring, uplifting information panels to fit on the backs and sides of standard cereal boxes. Encourage each student to create one or more panels to give to the children at an upcoming Friendship Day, 19-Day Feast, or other event. Encourage students to be as creative as they wish to make the Cereal Box Panels interesting, attractive, and eye-catching! They may present short quotations, facts, charts, designs, photographs cut from magazines, photographs of actual community members, or other ideas in a form that will appeal to the children they know. The goal is to illustrate the beauty of unity in diversity, present accurate information, and share one or more short quotations.
7. Allow time for students to work. Encourage students to share their completed panels with each other as they complete their work. Encourage those who finish early to offer assistance to others or to help clean up the work area.
8. Conclude the activity by encouraging students to continue their active promotion of race unity during the coming week. Additional consultation about the presentation of Cereal Box Panels is included in the activity below.

ACTIVITY: PLAN AND HOST A FRIENDSHIP DAY

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES: To share with others, from the writings in their pure form, the Bahá'í vision of the promised outcomes of freedom from racial prejudice. To demonstrate confidence and assurance of ultimate victory in overcoming and eliminating racial prejudices and the true unification of humanity.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Involve service to humanity; Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of consultation; Use of science; Use of creativity and the arts; Use of stories; Use of music; Use of play

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN. PREPARATION PLUS FRIENDSHIP DAY ACTIVITY

Materials Needed:

Select from the following possibilities

- Students' banners (Activity, p. 152)
- Students' letters, stories, or poems (Activity, p. 153)
- Students' cereal box panels (Activity, p. 154)
- Copies of Bahá'í writings (perhaps favorite Resource Pages from this Lesson Planning Guide)
- Prepared song, "Soon Will All that Dwell on Earth"
- Games or activities created previously (perhaps Activities on pages 57, 80, 117, 119, etc.)
- Book of cooperative games for reference

Advance Preparation: The teacher may decide to make some of the decisions for Friendship Day in advance. If so, simply provide that information at the beginning of the consultation.

1. Invite students to share the results of their efforts to promote race unity over the past week. Applaud all efforts!
2. Explain that the purpose of this activity is to plan a Friendship Day to help children learn about race unity, to attract their hearts to the beauty of race unity, and to inspire them to take simple actions in their own lives to promote race unity. In the whole group, discuss the

following questions and record answers on chart paper or chalkboard. After this overall group discussion, you may choose to rehearse some elements of the program or divide into working groups to carry out specific tasks:

- Who is Friendship Day for? Do we want to plan our Friendship Day for the children in the younger Bahá'í classes? Do we want to invite their families? Can we find a way to increase the diversity of our group? What size group do we feel will be most effective?
 - Think about the children we'll be inviting: What are their ages, their talents, their interests? How can we make them happy while also helping them to learn?
 - How will we invite people—personal invitations to individuals, formal invitations to groups, written invitations to families, announcements at the 19-Day Feast and other gatherings, a newsletter or other means?
 - Based on our own study of race unity, what do we feel will be most effective in attracting the hearts of children? Do we want to include music, games, quotations, storytelling, some of our own writing?
 - Would we like to welcome our guests by inviting them to enter as we hold up and wave the banners we made, while we also sing “Soon Will All that Dwell on Earth”? Would we like to then carry the banners to the front of the room or other designated place to display for the rest of the event?
 - Would we like to have a reader retell the story or use the guided imagery of Bahá'u'lláh's arrival in 'Akká to show the power of God to change spiritual darkness into light? Would we like to invite them to join us in singing “Soon Will All that Dwell on Earth” at the conclusion of the story?
 - Which Bahá'í writings would we like to share? Would we like to include other songs? Would we like to share the poem by Langston Hughes on Resource Page 162?
 - Would we like to share the story of Louis and Louise Gregory as well as our own writing about that event? Would we like also to share stories of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá or of other race unity champions?
 - What could we ask the children to do to promote race unity in their own lives?
 - How would we like to explain and present the gift of Cereal Box Panels?
 - Are there cooperative games we'd like to play with the children? Would we also want to involve their families?
 - Would we like to play the Race Unity Game created on p. 119?
 - Would we like to serve refreshments? If so, what would we like to serve and how would we like to serve it?
3. After completing your planning, re-confirm any action steps to be taken between class and the Friendship Day itself.
 4. Arrive early to set up the space. Host the event and then gather students to celebrate their success, briefly assess what worked especially well, and note what ideas they have for making future events even better.
 5. Encourage students to display their banners at home or the other locations they have chosen, and to share the banners' meaning with others. Encourage them to use their banners as a reminder of their role in bringing about the oneness of humanity and the establishment of peace on earth, and of the promise of divine assistance for all these actions.

Resource Pages

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ’S JOY AT THE MULTIRACIAL FUTURE

This is a beautiful assembly. I am very happy that white and black are together. This is the cause of my happiness, for you all are the servants of one God and, therefore, brothers, sisters, mothers and fathers. In the sight of God there is no distinction between whites and blacks; all are as one. Anyone whose heart is pure is dear to God—whether white or black, red or yellow. Among the animals colors exist. The doves are white, black, red, blue; but notwithstanding this diversity of color they flock together in unity, happiness and fellowship, making no distinction among themselves, for they are all doves. Man is intelligent and thoughtful, endowed with powers of mind. Why, then, should he be influenced by distinction of color or race, since all belong to one human family?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 425-26

A meeting such as this seems like a beautiful cluster of precious jewels—pearls, rubies, diamonds, sapphires. It is a source of joy and delight. Whatever is conducive to the unity of the world of mankind is most acceptable and praiseworthy; whatever is the cause of discord and disunion is saddening and deplorable. Consider the significance of unity and harmony.

. . . In the clustered jewels of the races may the blacks be as sapphires and rubies and the whites as diamonds and pearls. The composite beauty of humanity will be witnessed in their unity and blending. How glorious the spectacle of real unity among mankind! How conducive to peace, confidence and happiness if races and nations were united in fellowship and accord! The Prophets of God were sent into the world upon this mission of unity and agreement: that these long-separated sheep might flock together. When the sheep separate, they are exposed to danger, but in a flock and under protection of the shepherd they are safe from the attack of all ferocious enemies.

When the racial elements of the American nation unite in actual fellowship and accord, the lights of the oneness of humanity will shine, the day of eternal glory and bliss will dawn, the spirit of God encompass, and the divine favors descend. Under the leadership and training of God, the real Shepherd, all will be protected and preserved. He will lead them in green pastures of happiness and sustenance, and they will attain to the real goal of existence. This is the blessing and benefit of unity; this is the outcome of love. This is the sign of the Most Great Peace; this is the star of the oneness of the human world. Consider how blessed this condition will be. I pray for you and ask the confirmation and assistance of God in your behalf.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 56-57

Gifts of a Prejudice-Free World

Focus Questions:

How does the capacity to 'see with our own eyes' help us see the capacities, talents, and qualities of another person with justice?

How can investigating reality without prejudice help us reach true knowledge?

Why do you think 'Abdu'l-Bahá says that marriage between black and white is 'a great service to humanity'?

Why is it so important for us to be able to see without prejudice when the time comes to select a marriage partner?

O Son of Spirit!

The best beloved of all things in My sight is Justice; turn not away therefrom if thou desirest Me, and neglect it not that I may confide in thee. By its aid thou shalt see with thine own eyes and not through the eyes of others, and shalt know of thine own knowledge and not through the knowledge of thy neighbor. Ponder this in thy heart; how it behooveth thee to be. Verily justice is My gift to thee and the sign of My loving-kindness. Set it then before thine eyes.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Arabic Hidden Words* #2

In this day man must investigate reality impartially and without prejudice in order to reach the true knowledge and conclusions.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 75

Imitations and prejudices which have held men apart have been discarded, and the reality of religion envelops them in a perfect unity. When reality envelops the soul of man, love is possible.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 234

Colors are phenomenal, but the realities of men are essence. When there exists unity of the essence what power has the phenomenal? When the light of reality is shining what power has the darkness of the unreal? If it be possible, gather together these two races, black and white, into one Assembly, and put such love into their hearts that they shall not only unite but even intermarry. Be sure that the result of this will abolish differences and disputes between black and white. Moreover, by the Will of God, may it be so. This is a great service to humanity.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 359

Bahá'í marriage is the commitment of the two parties one to the other, and their mutual attachment of mind and heart. Each must, however, exercise the utmost care to become thoroughly acquainted with the character of the other, that the binding covenant between them may be a tie that will endure forever. Their purpose must be this: to become loving companions and comrades and at one with each other for time and eternity. . . .

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 118

The heart is important. If the heart is pure, white or black or any color makes no difference. God does not look at colors; He looks at the hearts. He whose heart is pure is better. He whose character is better is more pleasing.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 44

The Marriage of Louis and Louise Gregory

Some weeks ago, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, who has watched over Louise and me with the tender solicitude of a loving father, sent me a Message directing me to use the utmost judgment in order to avoid criticism in regard to our approaching Marriage. With me “the utmost judgment” was prayer for Divine Guidance, in which Louise heartily joined me. Our prayers have been heard and answered and we are very happy. Every matter connected with the event went off without friction, although some things were quite difficult.

On last Friday at noon, at the residence of Rev. Everard W. Daniel, just nine persons were present, including the minister and his wife, the bride and groom. After the ceremony of the Church of England was completed, the groom said, “Verily we are content with the Will of God.” And the bride responded, “Verily we are satisfied with the Desire of God” [the Bahá’í marriage vows as they were then translated]. Then Mr. McNutt read the Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on marriage. Mr. Braithwaite followed, reading a Tablet revealed to the groom three years ago of which the following is an extract: “I hope that thou mayest become the herald of the Kingdom, become the means by which the white and colored people shall close their eyes to racial differences, and behold the reality of humanity.” Mrs. Botay closed with the Tablet of Bahá’u’lláh, Protection. Then the wedding party repaired to the wedding breakfast. In this small company were represented Christian and Jew, Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís, the white and colored races, England and America, and the three Bahá’í assemblies of New York, Philadelphia and Washington.

During the ceremony there was a light rainfall. This, Mrs. Nourse says, was a Bahá’í sign, the Bounty of God. After the ceremony the skies cleared, the sun shone and everything and everybody seemed to be happy. The same afternoon we arrived here [in Atlantic City] on our honeymoon. We find ourselves very harmonious and very happy.

There are some believers here in Atlantic City who are very much alive. . . . Bahá’í meetings [held here] welcome alike white and colored people. . . . We shall have more than one meeting here this week, for the friends of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá like to put each other to work for the Cause.

Gayle Morrison, *To Move the World: Louis G. Gregory and the Advancement of Racial Unity in America*, pp. 66-69

INFOCENTER: THE SCIENCE OF SKIN COLOR VARIATION

Skin color variation occurs because:

- People have different levels of exposure to sunshine over thousands of years.
- Melanin—the brown pigment in the skin of all people—acts as a natural sunscreen. When generations of people live with more sunlight they gradually get darker skin.
- Humans most likely evolved first in the tropics. As people moved into colder regions with less sunlight, human skin became lighter to allow enough sunlight to penetrate the skin to produce vitamin D.
- Skin color is a ‘balance’ between having enough melanin to protect against intense sunlight and allowing enough sunlight in to create vitamin D.
- Why are some ‘northern people’ not pale—such as Alaskan Indians? They have not lived in northern regions for extremely long periods of time and their traditional diet is rich in seafood, which contains plenty of vitamin D.
- Popular ideas of ‘race’ are inaccurate. The richness and beauty of human diversity is spread among all people. For example, dark brown skin evolved in Africa, southern Asia, Australia, New Guinea, Pacific islands, and in the Americas.
- Skin color includes more diversity than the amount of melanin. What other diversities have you noticed? Scientists are still studying the beauty of human diversity. There’s still a lot to learn!

Useful resources include:

Blake Edgar, “Why Skin Comes in Colors,” *California Wild*, Winter 2000, California Academy of Sciences;
<http://www.calacademy.org/calwild/winter2000/html/horizons.html>

Nina G. Jablonski and George Chaplin, “Skin Deep,” *Scientific American*, October 2002; web version at <http://suse-www.stanford.edu/~wosb/SkinDeep.pdf>

Saadia Iqbal, “A New Light on Skin Color,” National Geographic On-Line, http://magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0211/feature2/online_extra.html; Joel L. Swerdlow, “Unmasking Skin,” National Geographic magazine, November 2002

Gina Kirchweger, “The Biology of Skin Color: Black and White,” *Discover*, v. 22:2 (February 2001)
http://www.discover.com/feb_01/featbiology.html

Mount Palomar Observatory, “Modern Human Variation: An Introduction to Contemporary Human Biological Diversity,” <http://anthro.palomar.edu/vary>

“Nature, Origin, and Variation of Human Pigmentation,” *Journal of Black Studies*, v. 26, n. 1, Sept. 1995, pp. 36-61

GOAL: ELIMINATING RACIAL PREJUDICE
TOPIC: PROMISED OUTCOMES

INFOCENTER: THE MULTIRACIAL HISTORY AND FUTURE OF AMERICA

“The worst crisis we face today is not in our cities or neighborhoods, but in our minds. We have grown up with a fixed idea of what and who America is, and how race relations in this nation work. We live by two assumptions: that race is a black and white issue, and that America is a white society. Neither has ever been strictly true, and today these ideas are rapidly becoming obsolete.” – Farai Chideya, *The Color of Our Future*, p. 5

African-Americans, European-Americans, and American Indians have been in contact since the first Europeans and Africans arrived. According to current estimates:

- The US “white” population has about 5% African genes, 3% Indian.
- US “blacks” have about 20% European genes, 3% Indian.
- American Indians have about 30% European, 5% African genes.

The population of the United States continues to grow more diverse:

- In 1970 minority groups and Hispanics represented 16% of the population.
- By 1998 this share had increased to 27%.
- By 2050 it is likely that over 50% will be non-white or Hispanic.

Diversity Among Youth:

In 2000, the population of Hispanic, Black, American Indian, or Asian youth between the ages of 15-19 made up 34% of the U.S. population, doubling since 1980.

Multiracial Marriage:

In 1960 there were roughly 149,000 ‘interracial’ married couples in the United States. By 1990 that number had increased to nearly 1.5 million.

Multiracial Children:

In 1970 there were less than ½ million children in ‘interracial’ families. In 1990 there were roughly 2 million children in these families. And these numbers don’t include intermarriages involving Latinos, because the census treats ‘Hispanic’ as an ethnic (not racial) category.

Useful resources include:

Statistical Abstract of the United States, “Resident Population by Age and Race Tables”

<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/statistical-abstract-us.html>

Steve Sailer, “Analysis: White Prof Finds He’s Not,” United Press International On-line, May 8, 2002; <http://www.upi.com/view.cfm?StoryID=15042002-084051-5356r>

“The United States Population in Transition,” from *Changing America*, A Report of the Council of Economic Advisers for the President’s Initiative on Race, September 1998; web version:

<http://w3.access.gpo.gov/eop/ca/pdfs/ch2.pdf>

Farai Chideya, *The Color of Our Future*. New York: William Morrow, 1998.

Gregory Rodriguez, “Forging a New Vision of America’s Melting Pot,” *New York Times*, February 11, 2001; web version:

<http://www.newamerica.net/index.cfm?pg=article&pubID=28>

The Kids in School with Me

By Langston Hughes

When I studied my A-B-C's
And learned arithmetic,
I also learned in public school
What makes America tick:
The kid in front
And the kid behind
And the kid across the aisle,
The Italian kid
And the Polish kid
And the girl with the Irish smile,
The colored kid
And the Spanish kid
And the Russian kid my size,
The Jewish kid
And the Grecian kid
And the girl with the Chinese eyes—
We were a regular Noah's ark,
Every race beneath the sun,
But our motto for graduation was:
One for All and All for One!
The kid in front
And the kid behind
And the kid across from me—
Just American kids together
The kids in school with me.

Source: http://www.literacyrules.com/Weekly_Poem/bylangstonhughes.htm

GOAL: ELIMINATING RACIAL PREJUDICE
TOPIC: PROMISED OUTCOMES

ACTIVITY: A GUIDED IMAGERY OF BAHÁ'U'LLAH'S ARRIVAL IN 'AKKA

Soon Will All That Dwell on Earth

(Echo Song)

Words: Bahá'u'lláh
(*God Passes By*, p. 184)

**Observe hold during echo.*

Soon will all that dwell on earth be en-list-ed un-der these

ban-ners. Yá Ba - há - 'u'l - Ab - há, Yá Ba - há - 'u'l - Ab -

há, Yá Ba - há - 'u'l - Ab - há, Yá Ba - há - 'u'l - Ab -

há,

Reprinted from "Sing Along," a compilation of the District Teaching Committee of Southern California, District 3, 1989

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories & Articles:

Brilliant Star: “United Nations: A Step Towards Unity” Jan/Feb 00

“How Large Is Your Family?” Jan/Feb 94

“My Dream for America,” “A Letter to Ourselves from 2044” Sep/Oct 94

“On to the Future” May/Jun 94

“What Is Racism” Nov/Dec 91

Stories about Bahá'u'lláh's Arrival in 'Akká:

Brilliant Star: “Healthy Water in the Most Great Prison” Sep/Oct 00

Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Blessed Beauty, Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 67–72

Balyuzi, H.M., *Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 53–55

Effendi, Shoghi, *God Passes By*, pp. 182–184

Perkins, Mary, *Day of Glory, the Life of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 128–133

Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

Love Flows from Every Color: A Coloring Book

Brilliant Star: “Spiritual Conquest of the Planet,” “He Is God! O ye Apostles . . .” Sp Ed 94

“Prayer by ‘Abdu'l-Bahá” Jan/Feb 92

“In the beginning, there were no limits” Jan/Feb 91

Activities:

Brilliant Star: “A Time Machine for Your Future” Sep/Oct 94, Sp Ed 94

Music:

Grammer, Red, *Happy Ayyám-í-Há*, “Brothers and Sisters”

Grammer, Red, *Teaching Peace*, “Teaching Peace,” “Listen”

Lenz, Jack, with various artists, *Encore*, “New World Comin’”

Price, Tom, with various artists, *Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, Vol.1*, “Nightingale of Paradise,” “Have You Heard of Bahá'u'lláh,” “God Is One,” *Vol.2*, “Bahá'u'lláh's Getting Us Ready for that Great Day,” “We Will Have One World,”

“World Citizens,” *Vol.3*, “We Are One,” “One Planet, One People, Please”

Sears, William with Seals and Crofts and others, *Lote Tree*, “One Planet, One People, Please”

Shropshire, Lucy, *This Is Faith*, “Come Together World,” “Vision”

Wright, Susan Lewis, *Bird*, “In This Day Bahá'u'lláh”

Brilliant Star: “Peace and Unity” Nov/Dec 91

Drama:

Brilliant Star: “The Marhaba News” Mar/Apr 95

Videos:

Lasting Remembrances: Second Baha'i World Congress

The Power of Race Unity

Calling All Colors

Calling All Colors, the Quilts

Other favorite resources:

If you find any additional resources, please notify the National Children's Education and Research Center, or submit your findings to the Educational Materials web site.