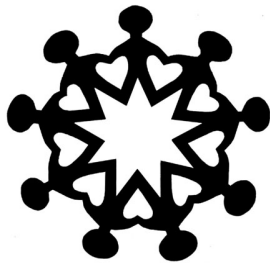


Oneness

Equality of Women and Men



Level One

EQUALITY AND HOW IT DIFFERS FROM BEING THE SAME

HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE

SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:
LOVE, FAIRNESS, UNDERSTANDING

Women and men have been and will always be equal in the sight of God. The Dawning-Place of the Light of God sheddeth its radiance upon all with the same effulgence. Verily God created women for men, and men for women. The most beloved of people before God are the most steadfast and those who have surpassed others in their love for God, exalted be His glory....

Bahá'u'lláh, Compilation of Compilations, vol. II, p. 379

In the eyes of the Creator all His children are equal; His goodness is poured forth on all.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 138

TOPIC: HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To know that different parts of the same thing each carry their own equal role and value even though they are very different in structure and form
- To know that objects that are very different in many respects can carry out either the same function or complementary functions of equal value
- To become familiar with the Bahá'í writings on equality in general

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Explain how things can look different and have the same value, i.e., knives and forks.
- Explain how all things are made up of parts and each part plays a significant role, i.e., different parts of a car.
- Explain how different items can carry the same or equal function and value such as apples and oranges. Also how food satisfies hunger and water satisfies thirst and both are important for survival.



WISDOM OBJECTIVES

- To understand the impossibility of items functioning without all parts contributing to the whole
- To understand that various parts of the universe have to function in harmony with each other for the world to exist
- To understand that this harmony of parts is a necessity for survival of all the parts individually and collectively

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Demonstrate how, in a car, unless all parts are working the car cannot function.
- Demonstrate how the functioning of various parts of nature, e.g., rain and sunshine, have to work in coordination, not independently.
- Demonstrate how the successful functioning of one part benefits itself as well as the whole – using any machine.

TOPIC: HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE



SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

- To reflect on equality and harmony within one's own body
- To perceive the contributing value of each organ to the functioning of one's own body as a whole

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Invite the students to reflect on all parts of their own body and how their structure and form may vary.
- Encourage students to learn the functions of each part and its role in the functioning of their body.
- Invite the students to imagine their body parts working but not in harmony with each other.
- Develop a drama on either the human body or a machine that is based on these ideas. This can also be done with pieces of music and choir with various instruments and types of voices.



ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

- To be able to correctly demonstrate the concept of equality
- To be able to demonstrate understanding of how different things can be equal in value or function

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Invite students to bring in objects from their own lives and take turns demonstrating the concepts of equal, same and different.
- Exhibit the artwork of students that demonstrates these concepts.
- Perform drama or music projects.

TOPIC: HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY: DIFFERENT AND COMPLEMENTARY

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know that objects that are very different in many respects can carry out either the same function or complementary functions of equal value

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Education directed toward recognition of God; Use of science and nature; Use of questioning

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Plant (outdoors if possible)
- Water
- Soil

1. Invite the students to go outside with you to observe a plant. Alternately, you may bring a potted plant to class. While observing the plant outdoors or indoors near a window, discuss: How does the sun help the plant?
2. Invite the students to touch the soil around the plant and ask: How does soil help the plant?
3. Water the plant and ask: How does water help the plant?
4. Encourage the students to share what they know about the importance of the sun, soil, and water to the growth and development of the plant. Assist them to explain that the soil and the water carry out complementary functions that are equally important to the growth of the plant – each is necessary for growth. Assist the students to explain the paramount necessity of the sun to all life.

5. Carefully read twice and then discuss the meaning of these words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá:

...this endless creation carrieth out its functions in perfect order, every separate part of it performing its own task with complete reliability...

‘Abdu’l-Bahá,
Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, pp. 48-49

6. Then encourage the students to think of as many answers as they can to the following questions:
 - What are some other examples of equal parts contributing to make a perfect whole?
 - Why do you think that God made many different parts to the world?
 - Why do you think that God made people different from each other?
 - Why are differences important and good?

TOPIC: HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE

ACTIVITY: EQUALITY AND HARMONY

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To reflect on equality and harmony within one's body

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct study of the Bahá'í Sacred Writings;
Use of reflection; Use of science and nature

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Variety of art supplies

1. Read aloud and discuss the meaning of the following quotation:

It is obvious that all created things are connected one to another by a linkage complete and perfect, even, for example, as are the members of the human body.... The foot and the step, for example, are connected to the ear and the eye; the eye must look ahead before the step is taken. The ear must hear before the eye will carefully observe. And whatever member of the human body is deficient, produceth a deficiency in the other members. The brain is connected with the heart and stomach, the lungs are connected with all the members. So is it with the other members of the body.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá,
Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 48

2. Encourage the students to think about their own bodies and one at a time, use their own bodies to demonstrate and then explain the principles of equality and harmony. Some examples could include: two eyes to see; two hands working together; arms and legs creating a balanced movement in walking; arms and legs in a cartwheel; nose and mouth contributing to the sense of taste; using both mind and heart to make decisions.

3. Discuss again: Why are differences important and good? Why must each part of the body be strong for the body to work perfectly?

4. Then read aloud the following quotation at least three times:

The world of humanity has two wings—one is women and the other men. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. Should one wing remain weak, flight is impossible.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá,
Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 302

5. Pause between each reading asking students to think about the meaning of the passage.
6. Then invite volunteers to share their understanding of what the passage means.
7. Discuss the question: How could we express the principles of equality and harmony through art?
8. After exploring this question, provide students with a variety of art supplies and invite them to create a piece of art that expresses equality and harmony.
9. Display the students' artwork at a community function or teaching event.

TOPIC: HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE

ACTIVITY: TWO WINGS MEMORIZATION

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To become familiar with the Bahá'í Writings on equality

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í Sacred Writings; Use of memorization

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Dry erase markers
- Copy of the quotation on nice paper for each student, Resource Page 126

1. Explain that the prophets of God tell us through their writings how to harmonize our actions. Explain that in the Bahá'í writings we find many important passages that help us to understand the meaning of the word 'equality.' Read the following quotation aloud and encourage the students to explain what it means. Remind them that this quotation was used to guide our understanding of equality in the previous activity.
 2. Explain that this time we will be memorizing the quotation. In the large group, assist the students to memorize this verse: Write the verse on the chalkboard, leaving space between the lines. Encourage the students to think of visual symbols to represent some of the key words, as shown. Draw these symbols above the appropriate words. Recite the verse over and over in the whole group, gradually erasing the words that are associated with symbols. Then slowly, one by one, erase the remaining words while the whole group continues to repeat the verse. By the time all of the words have been removed, the entire group will have memorized the passage. Invite students to recite the verse individually if they like. Conclude by once again reciting the verse in the whole group.
 3. To celebrate the successful memorization, present each student with copy of the passage on nice paper. Encourage them to share this passage with others and to incorporate these important ideas in their own lives.



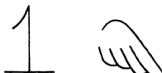
The world of humanity has two wings -



one is women and the other men.



Not until both wings are equally developed



can the bird fly. Should one wing



remain weak, flight is impossible.

TOPIC: HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE

ACTIVITY: NEEDS ALL PARTS TO FUNCTION

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To understand the impossibility of items functioning without all parts contributing to the whole

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Use of science; Use of manipulatives; Use of questioning; Use of reflection

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- One or more flashlights

1. Invite the students to describe the function of the flashlight.
2. Invite students to turn the flashlight on and off to demonstrate its function.
3. Discuss how well it works to accomplish its function.
4. Encourage students to identify the parts of the flashlight: Case, lens, batteries, and bulb.
5. As the teacher dismantles the flashlight, identify each part and invite the students to describe the function of that part.
6. Invite volunteers to explain why it is impossible for the dismantled flashlight to function!
7. Encourage the insight that all parts must work together for the flashlight to function.
8. Explain that these same principles apply to us. We all must work together for human civilization to function properly.
9. Read aloud the following quotation, slowly and carefully:

...look into this endless universe: a universal power inevitably existeth, which encompasseth all, directing and regulating all the parts of this infinite creation; and were it not for this Director, this Co-ordinator, the universe would be flawed and deficient. It would be even as a madman; whereas ye can see that this endless creation carrieth out its functions in perfect order, every separate part of it performing its own task with complete reliability, nor is there any flaw to be found in all its workings. Thus it is clear that a Universal Power existeth, directing and regulating this infinite universe.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá,
Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 48

10. Invite the students to silently reflect: What is the Universal Power that regulates the universe?
11. After a short period of silence, invite the students to turn to one other person in the class and share their reflections with each other.
12. Invite them to share these ideas with a parent, a younger sibling, or another person after class.

TOPIC: HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE

ACTIVITY: WORKING IN HARMONY

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To understand that various parts of the universe must function in harmony with each other and in collaboration for the world to move forward

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Use of science; Use of consultation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

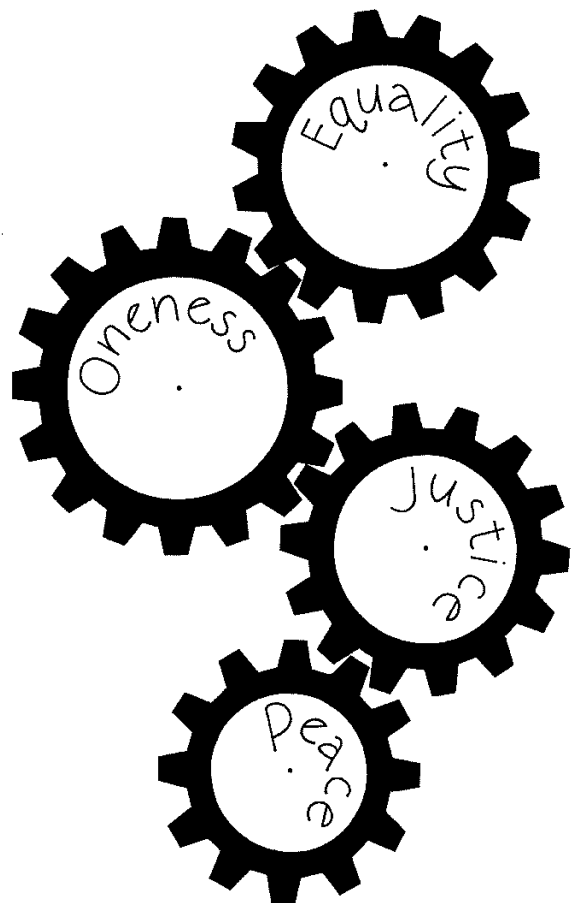
Materials Needed:

- Simple gear mechanisms described below
- Brass fasteners or other pins described below
- Sturdy cardboard or other surface described below

Advance preparation:

Invite students to bring to class any items from home that involve visible gear systems. Bicycles, clocks and children's toys are simple examples. Prepare and test one or more of the gear systems described below, so that the demonstration will work smoothly with students.

1. Remind the class that the principle of the oneness of humanity is the pivotal principle of Bahá'u'lláh. Demonstrate the meaning of the word 'pivot,' then invite the students to brainstorm important teachings related to the principle of oneness, such as, equality of all people, equality of women and men, race unity, oneness of religion, elimination of prejudice, etc. Discuss: How do these principles relate to each other?
2. After exploring these concepts with students with students, explain that we will work as a group to demonstrate how these important principles work together.
3. If students have brought gear systems from home, invite them to show them to the class.
4. Discuss with the students how the gear systems work. Point out how the interlocking parts make the entire system move as one.
5. Using any or all of the three kinds of gear systems suggested below, demonstrate how they work, then encourage the students to create their own gear systems, assisting as needed:



TOPIC: HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE

- **Oreo® cookie gears.** Use Oreo® cookies as simple gears.
 - **Cardboard gears.** Use the gear patterns which are provided (Resource Page 127) to make gears from cardboard. Provide photocopies the gear patterns provided. Encourage the students to glue the copies onto cardboard. Remind the students to be careful as they cut the gears. The more care they take to cut the gears, the better the gears will turn.
 - **Corrugated cardboard gears.** Use round plastic lids from food cans (coffee cans, potato chip cans, juice cans, etc.). Cut strips of corrugated cardboard to glue around the rim of the plastic lid.
 - **For all of these gear systems:** Insert nails, brass fasteners, or strong stick pins through the center of the gear to fasten it to cardboard, foam board, or other backing. Position the gears so that they turn against each other.
6. After the models are complete, label the different gears with different Bahá'í teachings. Place the following passage on the largest gear:
- The principle of the Oneness of Mankind—the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh revolve...
- Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 42
7. Discuss the questions: Why is the oneness of humanity the principle around which all other principles revolve? Why are oneness, equality, and harmony necessary to the happiness of humankind? In what ways are the little gears
- equal to the big ones? In what ways are all people equal to each other?
8. Once the gear systems are complete, labeled and operating properly, investigate the following questions with the students:
- When you turn any one of the gears, what do the other gears do? Why? If we think of each gear as a spiritual principle or moral virtue, what do you think happens when we make efforts to apply a spiritual principle?
 - If you change the direction of motion in one gear, what happens to the other gears in the system? What does this tell us about the effect of NOT trying to apply spiritual teachings?
 - Without getting so energetic that the gear system breaks, invite several students to move all the gears in unison. That is, have each person move one gear in cooperation with the others who are also moving only one gear. The students should find that the gear system moves more easily when all of them are moving the different gears cooperatively. What does this tell us about working together to apply spiritual principles?
 - How can we work together promote the principles of equality, harmony, and oneness in our lives at school?
 - What one action will we promise to take this week to promote equality and oneness?

TOPIC: HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE

ACTIVITY: EQUALITY IN ACTION

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate understanding of how different things can be equal in value or function

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Use of consultation; Use of performance

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN.

1. Read the following words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, discussing each word and phrase to assure that the students understanding the meaning of this passage:

It is obvious that all created things are connected one to another by a linkage complete and perfect, even for example, as are the members of the human body... And each one of these members hath its own special function.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá,
Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 48
2. Divide the students into teams of three or more. Invite each team to think of an important machine that has moving parts and can be used to demonstrate the principles of equality, harmony, and oneness. Encourage each team to make a model of this machine, using their own bodies to represent the moving parts.
3. After providing time for preparation, invite each team to demonstrate their model of an important machine to the whole group.
4. Then invite other teams to guess the name of this machine. If necessary, allow the group demonstrating their model to give hints, so that each machine is accurately guessed.
5. After each team has demonstrated their machine, encourage the students to briefly describe how each machine correctly demonstrates the principles of equality, harmony, and oneness.

TOPIC: HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE

ACTIVITY: ACTIONS TO PROMOTE EQUALITY

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To express the principle of equality through our actions

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Use of consultation; Use of reflection

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Small cards with envelopes
- Pens or pencils
- Decorative stickers

1. Share the following words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá:

In the eyes of the Creator all His children are equal....

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 138

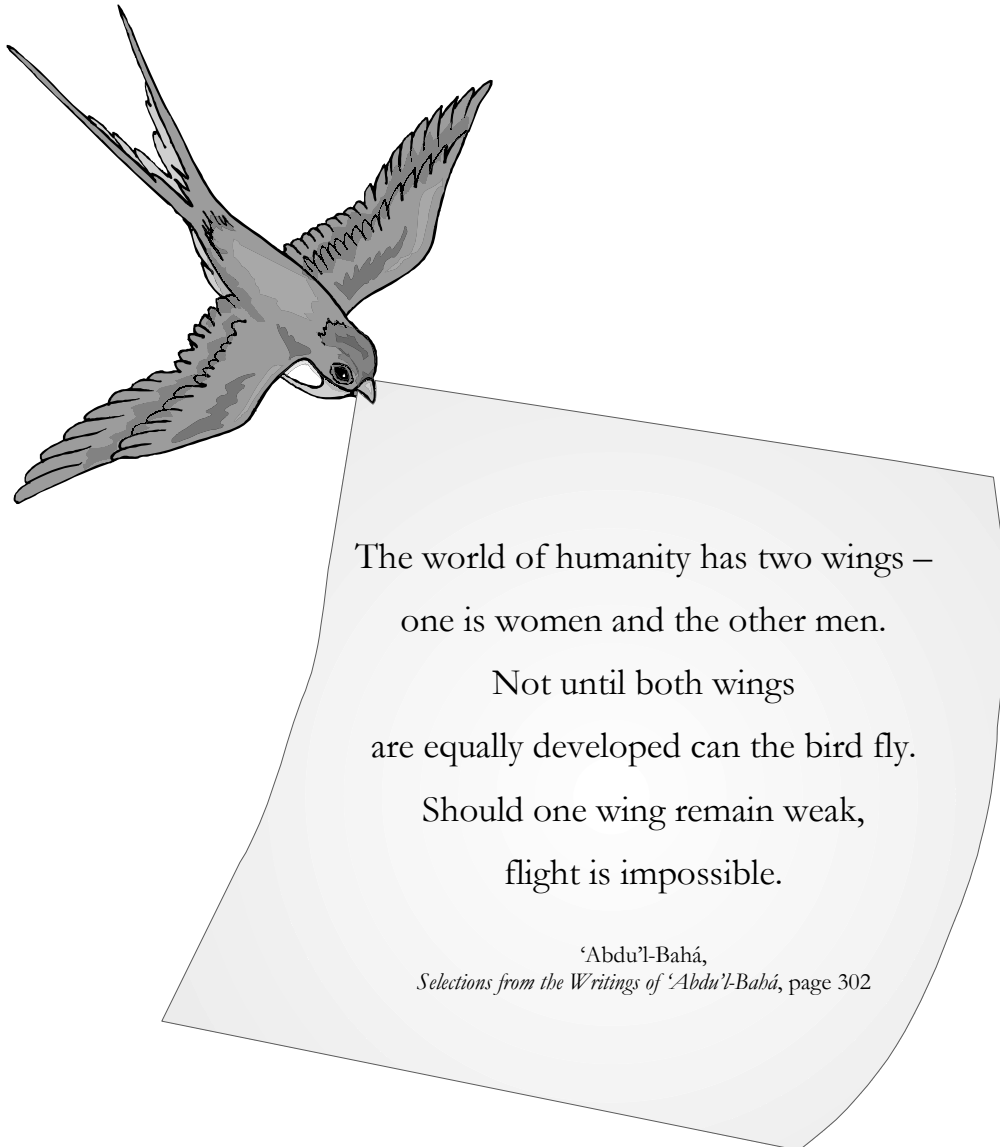
2. Encourage the students to think of examples of people that they know who show through their actions that they understand the principle of equality. Invite them to share examples of these actions, by telling the story of the good deeds they have seen.
3. Brainstorm the sorts of actions that we can take at home and at school, with our families and our friends, to demonstrate that we know that, “in the eyes of the Creator all His children are equal.” Encourage them to copy these words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on the front of their cards.
4. Encourage the students to choose one small action to express the principle of equality in their own lives.
5. Assist students to write this action inside their cards and to place the cards in their envelopes.
6. Provide each student with one or more stickers. Encourage them to save their stickers safely in the envelope with their cards. Invite them to decorate their cards with the stickers after they have completed their actions.

GOAL: EQUALITY AND HOW IT DIFFERS FROM BEING THE SAME

TOPIC: HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE

Resource Pages

TWO WINGS MEMORIZATION



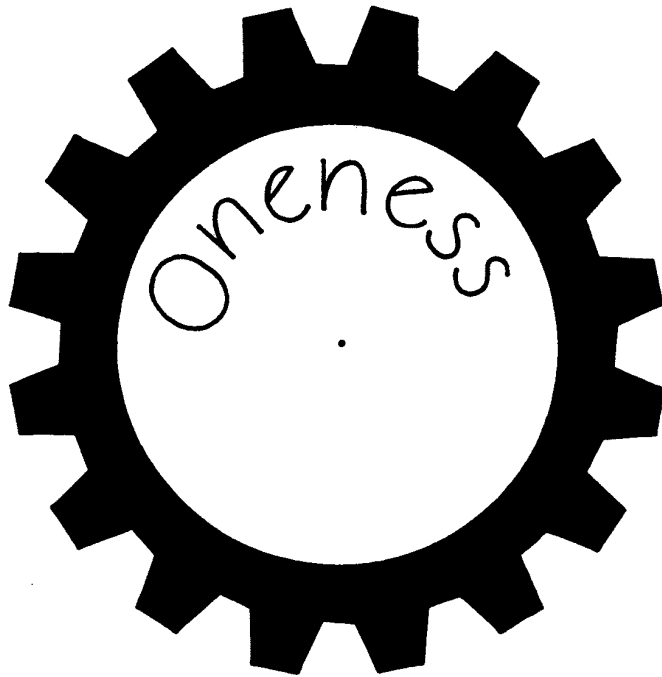
The world of humanity has two wings –
one is women and the other men.

Not until both wings
are equally developed can the bird fly.

Should one wing remain weak,
flight is impossible.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá,
Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, page 302

TOPIC: HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE
BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE



GOAL: EQUALITY AND HOW IT DIFFERS FROM BEING THE SAME

TOPIC: HOW ITEMS CAN BE EQUAL IN VALUE AND IMPORTANCE BUT NOT IN APPEARANCE

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories & Articles:

Herald of the South, Jul 1994, “Men and Women – How Different Are We?” Jul 1998, “Women and Equality – What Makes Women Equal”

Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

The Garden of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 77

Activities:

Brilliant Star: “Same and Different” JA 99

Music:

Brilliant Star: “Equal but Not the Same” MA 99

Engle, Susan, *Come and Sing*, “Equality Song”

Grammer, Red, *Hello World*, “We’re All in this Together”

Lenz, Cameron, and Sheper, *We Are Bahá'is*, “My Hand”

Games:

Brilliant Star: “The Same Game” SE 95

Videos:

Two Wings

Other favorite resources:

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 131-132

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 74-77, 108, 133-137, 174-175, 280-284, 374-375, 394-395, 455

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

THE EQUALITY OF MEN AND WOMEN IN THE FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY

ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS, WIVES AND HUSBANDS

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:
LOVE, JUSTICE, OBEDIENCE**

...It is enjoined upon the father and mother, as a duty, to strive with all effort to train the daughters and the son, to nurse them from the breast of knowledge and to rear them in the bosom of sciences and arts.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 127

...Although the mother is the first educator of the child, and the most important formative influence in his development, the father also has the responsibility of educating his children...Similarly, although the primary responsibility for supporting the family financially is placed upon the husband, this does not by any means imply that the place of the woman is confined to the home.

The Universal House of Justice, The Compilation of Compilations, vol. I, pp. 415-416

**TOPIC: ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS,
WIVES AND HUSBANDS**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To understand the Bahá'í writings on the various roles of wives and husbands, mothers and fathers

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- In pairs, invite students to find specific quotations on the roles of wives, husbands, mothers and fathers and record them in their notebooks.
- In pairs, encourage students to choose a passage to memorize.



WISDOM OBJECTIVES

- To gain a deeper understanding of family roles and responsibilities
- To understand how this new view of family would be a strong foundation for the betterment of human civilization

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Encourage students to form small groups and discuss the contrast of families as they exist today with those effected by the teachings and how the new system of family would change human civilization.
- Invite students in small groups develop either drawing murals or sculptures or skits that illustrate their understanding of the changes in family roles based on the writings and its role in the development of human civilization.

TOPIC: ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS, WIVES AND HUSBANDS



SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

- To reflect on one's own role in the family
- To perceive how one's contributions to one's own family also contribute to the process of transforming humanity

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Encourage students to create an artistic representation of themselves in the family role that reflects the writings.
- Invite students to develop a group dance or movement piece that reflects each of their roles in the realization of this new concept of family.



ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

- To demonstrate one's knowledge of the writings on this topic
- To be able to communicate one's understanding of the family to others

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Provide an opportunity for students to recite their memorized prayers and share their artwork in this area.
- Encourage each student to plan an activity they may do to teach these principles in their school.

TOPIC: ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS, WIVES AND HUSBANDS

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY: FAMILY ROLES

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know the Bahá'í Writings on the roles of wives and husbands, fathers and mothers

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of the Bahá'í Sacred Writings, Use of memorization and recitation

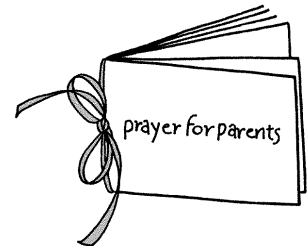
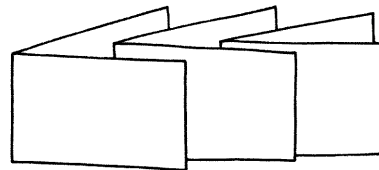
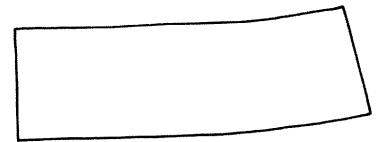
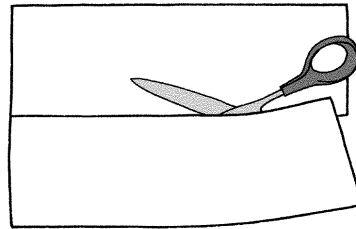
SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- A copy of Resource Page 138 for each student
- 1½ sheets of typing paper for each student, cut in half lengthwise, and folded into a little book
- Pretty ribbon or yarn
- Scissors for each student
- Crayons and/or markers
- Glue

Advance Preparation:

Prepare a sample book to use as a demonstration to the students, as described below.



1. Provide each student with a copy of Resource Page 138. Invite the students to follow along as you read each of the three passages, slowly and clearly. Discuss the meaning of selected words and phrases to assure that the meaning of each passage is clearly understood by each student.
2. Re-read the passage about fathers. Invite the students to silently reflect about their own fathers or a person that feels like a father to them. Encourage them to remember specific examples of their fathers – or the friend who feels like a father – fulfilling these instructions of Bahá'u'lláh. Invite students to share these happy memories in the whole group if they like. Please pay careful attention to the group, show loving acceptance to all students, mindful that not all children have happy memories to share.
3. Repeat step 2 with the passage about mothers, again showering each student with loving acceptance.
4. Encourage the students to reflect on the bounty and importance of having a special prayer that they can say for their parents. Show the demonstration book and invite the students to create their own books as a way to memorize and regularly recite this prayer for parents.
5. Provide the students with the materials to create the little books as illustrated above.
6. Invite the students to either copy the prayer for parents in their best handwriting, or to carefully cut out the prayer line by line and glue each line onto a page of the book.
7. Invite the students to create simple illustrations to help them remember the words on each page.

TOPIC: ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS, WIVES AND HUSBANDS

8. Encourage them to write or glue the words “Prayer for Parents” on the cover of their books, and then decorate the covers.
9. Finally, tie ribbon or yarn around the center of the folded book, to hold it together.
10. Once the book is completed, encourage the students to work in pairs to read the phrases to each other until they have memorized the prayer. Encourage them to recite the prayer daily for their parents.

ACTIVITY: EQUAL BUT NOT THE SAME

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To gain a deeper understanding of family roles and responsibilities

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engaging the mind and heart; Use of music

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 15 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- “Equal but not the Same” song sheet, Resource Page 137

1. Read aloud, sing, or play a recording of the song, “Equal but not the Same.”
2. Teach the students to sing the song. Consider including the song in a devotional meeting on the subject of equality.

ACTIVITY: NEW FAMILIES

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To gain a deeper understanding of family roles and responsibilities

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To be able to communicate one’s understanding of the family to others

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct study of the Bahá’í Sacred Writings; Use of reflection; Use of arts; Use of consultation; Use of teaching; Use of peer teaching

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

Materials Needed:

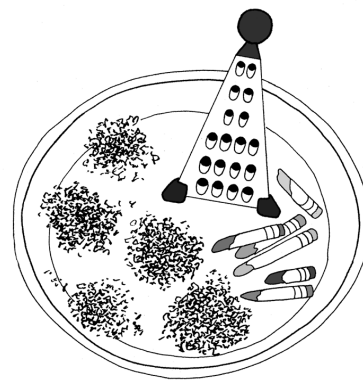
- Selected quotations posted in the room
- Old crayons
- Waxed paper
- Old newspapers
- Plain white paper
- Construction paper
- Vegetable grater
- Glue
- Scissors

Advance Preparation:

Write the quotations on Resource Page 140 on the chalkboard or poster paper.

Display these quotations in the classroom.

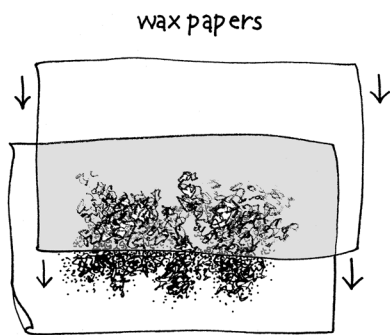
Create various colors of crayon shavings, by rubbing old crayons across the vegetable grater. You may want to purchase one at a dollar store just for this purpose. Keep each color separate. You may also choose to have students create their own crayon shavings.



ACTIVITY CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE ➤

TOPIC: ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS, WIVES AND HUSBANDS

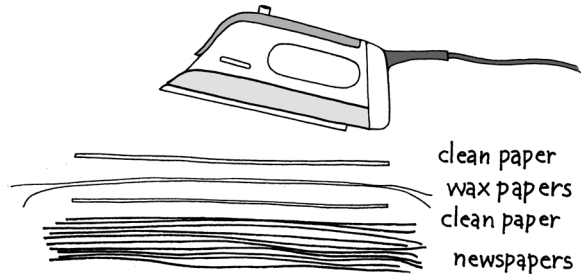
1. Encourage the students to follow along as you read the quotations posted throughout the room. After reading each quotation, encourage the students to explain the meaning of that quotation in their own words.
2. Invite the students to work in small groups of three or four. Re-read the posted passages, allowing time after reading each passage for the groups to discuss the ways that this admonition will strengthen the family. First identify key words and phrases, then encourage the students to think of positive examples within their own families of people striving to live in light of these beautiful teachings.
3. After all passages have been re-read and discussed within the group, invite the students to create an artistic representation of the beauty of family life. The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are like the light, and this image of family life will show the beauty of the light.
4. Provide the students with a sheet of waxed paper and access to the crayon shavings. Encourage them to arrange the colors in a beautiful pattern, inspired by these teachings about the family. Encourage them to consciously create a pattern that depicts the ideal



relationships between husband and wife, mother and father, and parents with children.

5. When the crayon shavings are arranged to the students' satisfaction, cover the arrangement with another sheet of waxed paper. Gently place the two sheets of waxed paper – with crayon shavings inside – between two sheets of clean paper. The teacher then gently irons these papers with an iron set at low heat, being careful not to touch the waxed paper directly with the iron, and placing the clean paper on a stack of

old newspapers, rather than directly upon an ironing board. The gentle heat from the iron will melt the wax crayon shavings into a beautiful design on the waxed paper.



6. After the waxed paper images are complete, frame them by cutting an oval or rectangular shape from a sheet of construction paper. Then glue the construction paper frame to the waxed paper. The waxed paper art is particularly beautiful when hung in a window, so that light shines through it.



7. Once the images are complete, encourage students to return to the same groups in which they discussed the quotations. Invite the students to show their art and explain how the art illustrates family roles and responsibilities. Assist students as necessary to incorporate words and phrases from the writings in their short explanations.
8. Encourage the students to offer these artistic representations of the family as a gift to their parents or other adults that they love.
9. Consider also arranging for students to offer their explanations and these writings at an upcoming devotional program for the community or the Bahá'í school, perhaps also incorporating their work in the next topic.

TOPIC: ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS, WIVES AND HUSBANDS

ACTIVITY: MY ROLE IN MY FAMILY

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To reflect on one's own role in the family

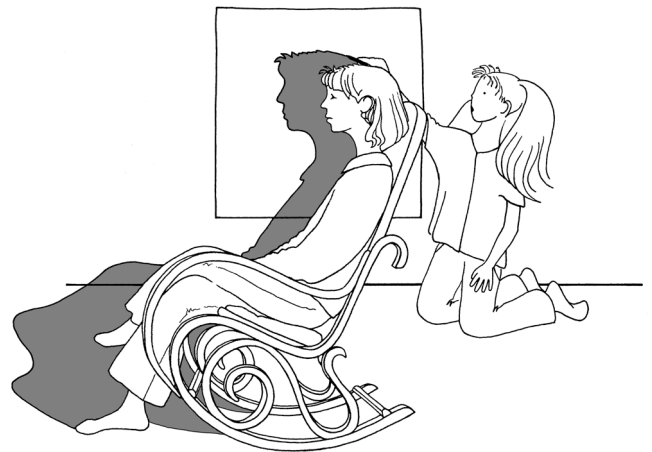
INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Use of direct study of the Bahá'í Sacred Writings; Use of peer teaching; Use of working in groups, Use of reflection; Use of arts

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Quotations included on Resource Page 138, on chalkboard or chart paper
- Writing paper and pencils
- Butcher paper or other large sheets of paper
- Pictures from old magazines
- Scissors
- Glue
- Bright light from lamp or window

1. Read aloud the quotations that describe family roles and responsibilities. Encourage the students to share again their explanations of family roles and responsibilities.
2. Re-read the quotations describing the responsibilities of children. Invite the students to consider their own role in the family. After a period of reflection, encourage the students to select one action that they will undertake in response to these beautiful teachings. They may also choose to copy the quotation as a reminder of the importance of this goal.
3. Then, working in teams of two, invite the students to trace their partner's silhouette. Post a sheet of butcher paper on the wall. Encourage one student at a time to sit so that a bright light casts the shadow of his or her profile onto the butcher paper, while the partner draws around the shadow.
4. Then invite the students to fill in their silhouette with magazine pictures illustrating the goal they selected and then glue their goal sheets to the back of the silhouettes.
5. Encourage the students to display their silhouettes in their rooms as a reminder of their commitment to this process.



TOPIC: ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS, WIVES AND HUSBANDS

ACTIVITY: FAMILY UNITY CUPCAKES

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To perceive how one's contributions to one's own family also contribute to the process of transforming humanity

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Use of science; Use of consultation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 50 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of Resource page 141 for each student
- Oven for baking
- Muffin tin for 12 cupcakes
- Muffin papers to line muffin cups
- Mixing bowls
- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Several large spoons for mixing
- Rubber spatula
- Napkins
- Cupcake ingredients, listed below

Advance Preparation:

Write the Family Unity Cupcake recipe and all or part of the quotation, Resource Page 141, on the chalkboard or chart paper to display in the classroom.

1. Briefly review family roles and responsibilities. Invite the students to share their contributions to their families since the class has last met. Read the posted quotation aloud and discuss how the students' contributions assist the family to progress. Encourage them to think of other examples of how unity can help the family progress.
2. Invite the students to explore the importance of their own contributions to the family by conducting a scientific experiment, using cupcakes as an example.
3. Prepare cupcakes according to the recipe, taking care to include all students in the process.
4. While the cupcakes are baking, discuss: Why are there so many different ingredients to make something so simple as a cupcake? Discuss the roles of different ingredients in the recipe to show the students that each ingredient adds something unique that is needed to make the cupcakes turn out properly:
 - Flour – Absorbs liquid, binds ingredients, and makes cakes hold their shape.
 - Cocoa – adds flavor, absorbs liquid, and binds ingredients
 - Sugar – Gives color, sweetness, tender texture
 - Interaction of sugar and butter or margarine – Sugar crystals are hard. When the hard crystals cut into the butter/shortening, tiny air pockets are continually formed.
 - Butter and margarine expand, becoming creamy as air is added, contributing to the formation of tiny air pockets; adding to flavor and tender texture
 - Milk and water – Help bind the ingredients and soften texture
 - Eggs – Help bind ingredients, help make tiny air pockets develop and hold their structure during baking
 - Vanilla – Adds flavor
 - Baking soda and vinegar – Make the batter rise; together they create an expanding gas that makes air pockets form

**TOPIC: ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS,
WIVES AND HUSBANDS**

5. Remind the students of the story of the cake that Navváb made during the long winter journey to Baghdad after Bahá'u'lláh was released from the Siyah-Chál. There was only rough food and when they stopped at night, there was no light. One day, the saintly Navváb was able to get a little flour to make a cake for her beloved Husband, ill from His long imprisonment. That night, in the dark she used salt instead of sugar to make the cake. To her sorrow, the cake was inedible!
6. Discuss why Navváb's cake was inedible and what would happen if other ingredients were left out. Would we have a cake? Then discuss: Why are the contributions of each member of the family important to the family? In what ways do happy, unified families contribute to the happiness of the community? Why is it important for each of us to contribute to the well-being of our families? What are some of the important contributions that our families make to the world?
7. Re-read the quotation on family unity. Explore how the students' contributions to their families contribute to the human family as a whole.
8. Allow time for the class to clean the work area as the cupcakes finish baking.
9. When the cupcakes are ready, enjoy! As they enjoy the sweet taste of the cupcakes, remind the students to continue to work toward their personal goals and to explain to their families what they learned about the importance of each member's contributions to the family.

TOPIC: ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS,
WIVES AND HUSBANDS

Resource Pages



Family Roles

Unto every father hath been enjoined the instruction of his son and daughter in the art of reading and writing and in all that hath been laid down in the Holy Tablet.

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 37

For mothers are the first educators, the first mentors; and truly it is the mothers who determine the happiness, the future greatness, the courteous ways and learning and judgment, the understanding and faith of their little ones.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, #96, p. 125-26

Prayer for Parents

Thou seest, O Lord, our suppliant hands lifted up
towards the heaven of Thy favor and bounty.

Grant that they may be filled with the treasures
of Thy munificence and bountiful favor.

Forgive us, and our fathers, and our mothers,
and fulfil whatsoever we have desired

from the ocean of Thy grace and Divine generosity.

Accept, O Beloved of our hearts, all our works in Thy path.

Thou art, verily, the Most Powerful, the Most Exalted,
the Incomparable, the One, the Forgiving, the Gracious.

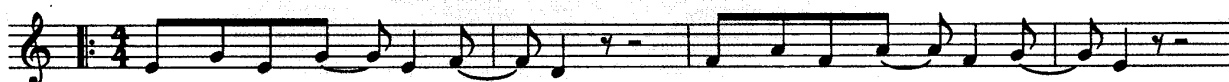
Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 301-302

TOPIC: ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS,
WIVES AND HUSBANDS

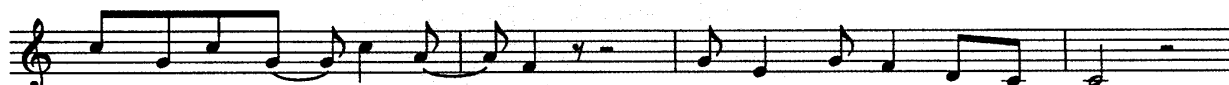
EQUAL BUT NOT THE SAME

Calypso Beat
music by Susan Engle

words by Susan Engle,
Khalil Moutrie and
Gene Unterschuetz



Wom-an and man__ are e - qual, Wom-an and man__ are e - qual,



Wom-an and man__ are e - qual, e - qual, but not the same.__

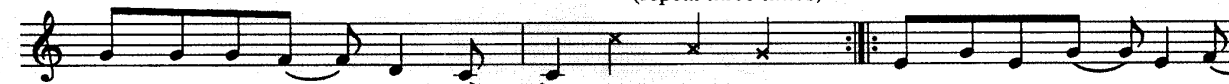


1. Wom - an__ and man__ de - cide to mar - ry, Wom - an__ and man, -
2. Wom - an__ and man, they love the ba - by, Wom - an__ and man, -
3. Wheth - er__ we're wom - man or man, Wheth - er__ we're black, -

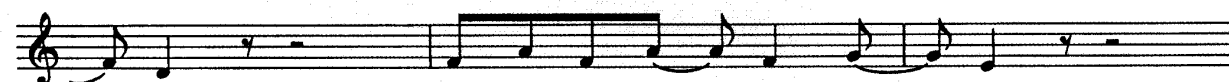


__ they want a fam - 'ly, Wom - an__ and man__ wait nine long months, and then the
__ know she's a jew - el, Wom - an__ and man__ teach her to pray, and pa - pa
__ white__ or tan, Wheth - er__ we're e - ven or odd, We are all e -

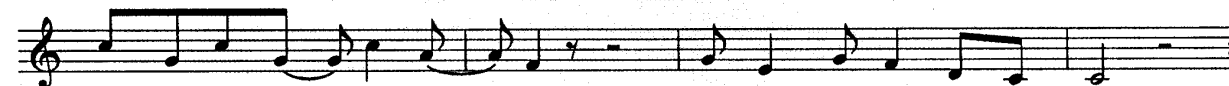
(repeat three times)



wom - an, she has__ ba - by. (sweet ba - by!) Wom-an and man__ are e -
makes sure she can go to school. (the uni - ver - sity!)
qual in the sight of God. (ev'ry - bod - y!)



qual, Wom-an and man__ are e - qual,



Wom-an and man__ are e - qual, E - qual, but not the same.__

TOPIC: ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS, WIVES AND HUSBANDS



New Families

It is the bounden duty of parents to rear their children to be staunch in faith...

Bahá'u'lláh, *Bahá'í Education*, p.3, no. 12

...It is enjoined upon the father and mother, as a duty, to strive with all effort to train the daughters and the son, to nurse them from the breast of knowledge and to rear them in the bosom of sciences and arts.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 127

Upon every father hath been enjoined the instruction of his son and daughter in the art of reading and writing...

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, K48

Let the mothers consider that whatever concerneth the education of children is of the first importance.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p.125

The parents have the inescapable duty to education their children – but not vice versa; the children have the duty to obey their parents – the parents do not obey the children....

The Universal House of Justice, *The Compilation of Compilations*, vol. I, p. 414

...Although the mother is the first educator of the child, and the most important formative influence in his development, the father also has the responsibility of educating his children.... Similarly, although the primary responsibility for supporting the family financially is placed upon the husband, this does not by any means imply that the place of woman is confined to the home.

The Universal House of Justice, *The Compilation of Compilations*, vol. I, pp. 415-16

In the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh, women are advancing side by side with men. There is no area or instance where they will lag behind: they have equal rights with men, and will enter, in the future, into all branches of the administration of society.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Compilation of Compilations*, vol. II, p. 367

Say, O My people! Show honour to your parents...

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Compilation of Compilations*, vol. I, p. 386

My highest wish and desire is that ye who are my children may be educated according to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and may receive a Bahá'í training; that ye may each become a lighted candle in the world of humanity, may be devoted to the service of all mankind, may give up your rest and comfort, so that ye may become the cause of the tranquillity of the world of creation.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p.141

TOPIC: ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS, WIVES AND HUSBANDS



Family Unity Cupcakes

“Note ye how easily, where unity existeth in a given family, the affairs of that family are conducted; what progress the members of that family make, how they prosper in the world. Their concerns are in order, they enjoy comfort and tranquillity, they are secure, their position is assured, they come to be envied by all. Such a family but addeth to its stature and its lasting honour, as day succeedeth day. And if we widen out the sphere of unity a little to include the inhabitants of a village who seek to be loving and united, who associate with and are kind to one another, what great advances they will be seen to make, how secure and protected they will be. Then let us widen out the sphere a little more, let us take the inhabitants of a city, all of them together: if they establish the strongest bonds of unity among themselves, how far they will progress, even in a brief period and what power they will exert. And if the sphere of unity be still further widened out, that is, if the inhabitants of a whole country develop peaceable hearts, and if with all their hearts and souls they yearn to cooperate with one another and to live in unity, and if they become kind and loving to one another, that country will achieve undying joy and lasting glory. Peace will it have, and plenty, and vast wealth.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 278

FAMILY UNITY CUPCAKES

Makes 12 cupcakes. Double the recipe for a large class.

1½ cups flour
½ cup cocoa
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup butter or margarine
½ cup sugar
1 egg
1 tablespoon vinegar
½ cup milk
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ cup hot tap water

1. Preheat oven to 350 °F.
2. Line 12 cups of a muffin tin with muffin papers. Put 1/8 cup of water in any empty cups.
3. Combine flour, cocoa, and salt in a mixing bowl. Set aside.
4. Cream shortening or butter with sugar in another bowl. Beat in egg.
5. Combine vinegar, milk, and vanilla.
6. Add half of the flour mix to the creamed mixture. Stir until batter is smooth.
7. Add the in the milk mixture, then stir in the remaining flour mixture. Gently stir in the hot water.
8. Spoon batter into paper liners and fill 2/3 full. Bake approximately 20 minutes.
9. Cool before eating.

TOPIC: ROLES OF FATHERS AND MOTHERS, WIVES AND HUSBANDS

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories & Articles:

Brilliant Star: "Asking Permission" JF 94

"A Note for You," "Working For Equality... World," "Fur, Fins, Feathers, and More," "Did You Know..." MA 99

"Spiritual Family Tree" JA 97

Herald of the South, Jul 1994, "The Family – Preserving a Habitat Under Threat," "Marriage and Family Life," Oct 1993,

"Equality – What Men Stand to Gain"; Jul 1997, "The Changing Role of Women," Apr 1994, "Living Together in Unity –

Recipe for Family Harmony, Love and Unity"

Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

Garden of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 85, 95, 113, 179

Tablet of the Heart, God and Me, p. 17

Activities:

Brilliant Star: "Family Triangle," "What Does DAD Do?" "What Does MOM Do?" JF 94

"How to Make Nimni's Bird Puppet," "Decoding It...", "Working Together" MA 99

Music:

Brilliant Star: "With Two Wings" SO 02

Cameron, Doug, *If You Only Knew*, "We Will All Verily Abide"

Engle, Susan, *Loving Hands*, "Loving Hands"

Grammer, Red, *Teaching Peace*, "With Two Wings"

Lenz, Cameron, and Sheper, *We Are Bahá'is*, "My Family"

Mackay, Caroline, *Suite: Mothers and Angels*, "Wishing You'd Be Near," "Let's be Angels"

Van Manens, *Barley Bread and Reindeer Milk*, "I Love My Home"

Ward, Nancy, *Melodies from the Sacred Writings*, "My Home is My Soul"

Ward, Nancy, *To the Planters of Trees*, "Women," "My Friend"

Videos:

Family: The Seeds of World Peace

Other favorite resources:

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 74-77, 108, 133-134, 175, 280-284, 374-375, 394-395, 455

Khan, Janet A. and Peter J. *Advancement of Women: A Bahá'í Perspective*, Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1998.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of the United States, *Two Wings of a Bird, The Equality of Women and Men*,

Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1997.

The Universal House of Justice, *Preserving Bahá'í Marriages: A Memorandum and Compilation*

Various, *Compilation of Compilations, Vol. I, Family Life*

Various, *Spiritual Strength for Men*

Wilcox, Patricia, *Bahá'í Families, Perspective, Principles, Practice*

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

EXAMPLES OF HEROES AND HEROINES WHO DEMONSTRATED EQUALITY

EXAMPLES FROM THE HOLY FAMILY

SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC: LOVE, DETACHMENT, SERVITUDE

He [the Master] was the perfect Exemplar of the Teachings. He proclaimed the universal truths, and, through love and wise demonstration of the universal verities of the Faith, attracted the hearts and the minds.

written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, *The Compilation of Compilations*, vol. II, p. 323

Indeed, the Greatest Holy Leaf, the Trust of Bahá'u'lláh amongst us, was the emblem of His boundless grace, a luminary shining in the heaven of tender mercy and gracious providence... Her blessed life was a source of spiritual illumination for the whole world and her noble traits and heavenly attributes served as a shining example, an object of emulation for all mankind.

written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, *Bahiyih Khanum*, pp. 83-84

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To know stories about how the Central Figures and members of the Holy Family promoted the principle of the equality of women and men

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Tell or read stories from the lives of the Central Figures and Holy Family that illustrate equality.
- Encourage students in pairs to search for other stories. Each pair should work on a different member of the Holy Family. Invite students to interview community members if they desire.



WISDOM OBJECTIVES

- To understand the different ways the Central Figures or Holy Family members put the principle of the equality of women and men into practice

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Encourage students in groups to make a separate storybook based on one of the stories they found.
- Invite students to choose the actions of one of the central figures or Holy Family members to write a poem about or create an art piece, sculpture, or dance.



SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

- To reflect on how one can put into practice an example from the lives of the Central Figures and the Holy Family
- To perceive one's role in the continuation of the legacy of these wonderful lives

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Invite students to work in pairs or small groups to discuss examples from their own lives that may parallel any of the stories they've learned about.
- Encourage students to meditate on one example, seeing themselves in that situation and carrying out that example. Assist students to form concrete plans.
- Invite students to represent themselves emulating these examples through words or images.



ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

- To be able to re-tell some of the stories learned about the Central Figures and the Holy Family
- To demonstrate one's understanding of the parallels from these lives by putting them into action in one's own daily life

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Provide opportunities to share stories both in class and in the community.
- Plan a storytelling time before the social portion of Feast.

TOPIC: EXAMPLES FROM THE HOLY FAMILY

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY: THE HOLY FAMILY

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know stories about how the Central Figures and members of the Holy Family promoted the principle of the equality of women and men

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To understand the different ways the Central Figures and Holy Family members put the principle of equality of women and men into practice

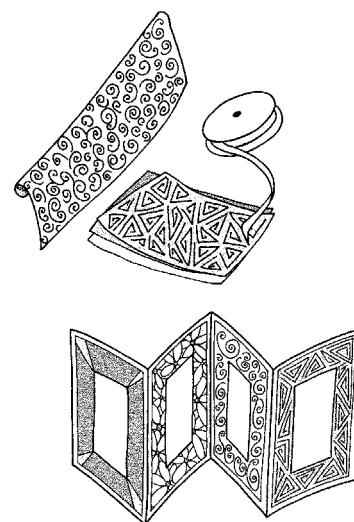
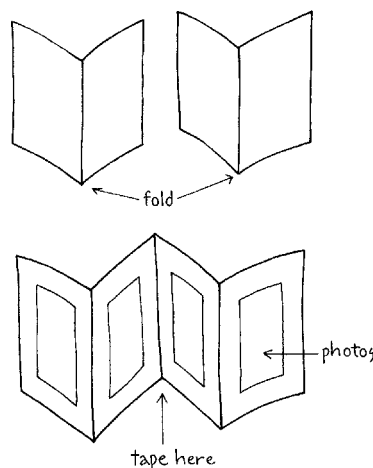
INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Education directed toward recognition of God; Use of questioning; Use of storytelling; Use of reflection; Use of the arts

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Copy of Resource Pages 149-150 for each student, or other photographs of the Shrine of the Báb, the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, and portraits of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Greatest Holy Leaf
- Stories, Resource Pages 151-153
- Two sheets of the same color of construction paper for each student
- Ribbon or strips of wrapping paper
- Glue

1. Tell or read a story from each of the Central Figures or members of the Holy Family selected. As you tell the story, display a picture of that Central Figure or member of the Holy Family.
2. Once you have told all the stories, encourage the students to select a story that they especially enjoyed. Encourage them to reflect on this story as they make a Holy Family screen.
3. Provide the students with two sheets of construction paper. Encourage them to fold each sheet in half and then carefully tape them together to make a folding screen, with four sections. This screen is inspired by one of the classic forms of Asian art.
4. Provide the students with copies of the pictures on Resource pp. 149-150. Encourage them to carefully cut them apart, and carefully position and glue each picture onto one of the sections of the folding screen.
5. Invite students to create a border for the picture using ribbon or strips of wrapping paper. Save these screens for the next two activities.



9. Encourage the students to share these stories with their families.

TOPIC: EXAMPLES FROM THE HOLY FAMILY

ACTIVITY: THE HOLY FAMILY'S EXAMPLE

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To reflect on how one can put into practice an example from the lives of the Central Figures and the Holy Family

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

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 15 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Writing paper
- Pencils

1. After completing the screen, encourage the students to reflect silently on their favorite stories and identify one powerful action that promoted this principle of equality. Invite students to select one way to follow this example in their own lives.
2. Then invite the students to share their action plan with the teacher, so that the teacher can write the action on the back of the screen as a reminder of this plan.
3. Read and discuss the quotations on Topic Page 143 encouraging us to follow the example of the Master and the Greatest Holy Leaf to the students.
4. At subsequent classes, encourage students to share the results of their efforts.

ACTIVITY: RETELLING STORIES ABOUT THE HOLY FAMILY

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To be able to re-tell some of the stories learned about the Central Figures and the Holy Family

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Use of direct study of the Sacred Text; Use of peer teaching; Use of working in groups

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20 MIN.

1. Explain that we will have the opportunity to share these stories with each other, as preparation for sharing them with the community as a whole. Encourage them to work in pairs to remember their stories, providing assistance as needed so that all teams successfully retell their stories.
2. Then invite students to pair up with someone who did not select the same story. In these new teams, invite the students to tell each other their stories.
3. Then encourage each person find another person with a different story and once again share their stories.
4. Arrange for the students to share their stories at an upcoming devotional gathering or during the social portion of Feast, using their screens as a visual aid.

TOPIC: EXAMPLES FROM THE HOLY FAMILY

ACTIVITY: THE POETRY OF EQUALITY

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To discern the differences in the ways that the Central Figures and members of the Holy Family promoted the principle of the equality of women and men

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

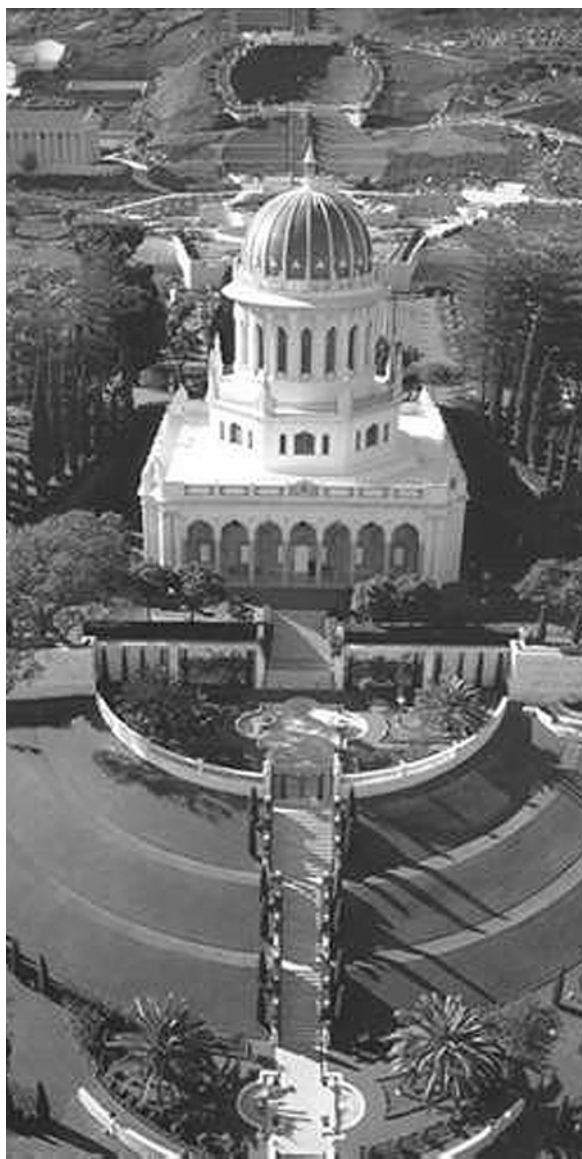
SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 15 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Writing paper
- Pencils

1. Read again the quotations, p. 143, encouraging us to follow the example of members of the Holy Family. If desired, encourage one or two students to share the results of their efforts to follow the example of the Holy Family.
2. Explain that while the Guardian was a student in Beirut, he and other students arranged a program of poetry, readings, and songs for the Greatest Holy Leaf, which brought her great joy. In the same way, we'll create poems for a program to bring joy to all the members of our community, including the community at large.
3. Invite the students to work in groups according to the action they selected to emulate.
4. Once in these groups, encourage the students to come up with a list of words and phrases that describe the action they selected. They may also choose to list words from the beloved Guardian's statements about the Master and the Greatest Holy Leaf.
5. As a group, organize these words and phrases into a poem inspired by that action. Encourage each student to copy the poem and put it to memory. The groups may add rhythm, melody, and movement to their poems if they like.
6. Invite each group to teach their poem of action to the class.
7. As a class, plan a devotional gathering or other program on the theme of equality. Plan to include poems, readings, stories, and songs from this unit of study and to display visual art.
8. After this devotional gathering, review elements of success in the next class.

Resource Pages



TOPIC: EXAMPLES FROM THE HOLY FAMILY



Photographs can be found on the World Wide Web at <http://www.bahai-biblio.org/biblio-photo-a.htm> or you may choose to purchase from a Bahá'í bookstore, or the Bahá'í Distribution Service at 1-800-999-0919



The Central Figures and Members of the Holy Family Promote Equality

The Báb

Perhaps we all remember the wonderful story of Tahirih, the only Letter of the Living who was a woman. Although it was very difficult for girls and women to become educated in that time and place, Tahirih was a wonderful writer and speaker. She dedicated her life to the Cause of the Báb and provided the example of a woman overcoming the terrible and unjust circumstances of her life. In those days in Iran, women were not even allowed to be seen in public. They had to cover their whole bodies, including their faces at all times. It was difficult to move in these heavy veils. One day at a conference of Bábís, Tahirih came without her veil and said that this action symbolized a new age for humanity. The Báb approved her actions. The Báb's approval opened the door to equality for women and men.

This story is told in the Core Curriculum storybook *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 1, pp. 79-83.

Bahá'u'lláh

Bahá'u'lláh established the equality of women and men through writings and the laws He made for an entirely new civilization of equality, justice, love, and unity for all people. He wrote: "All should know....Women and men have been and will always be equal in the sight of God."

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Compilation of Compilations*, vol. II, p. 379

Even though He was a Prisoner and an Exile, He found ways to promote equality. His daughter, the Greatest Holy Leaf remembers:

"Asíyih Khánum, my dear mother, was in delicate health, her strength was diminished by the hardships she had undergone, but she always worked beyond her force. Sometimes my father himself helped in the cooking, as that hard work was too much for the dainty, refined, gentle lady. The hardships she had endured saddened the heart of her divine husband, who was also her beloved Lord."

the Spoken Chronicle of Bahíyyih Khánum, *The Chosen Highway*, p. 47

Túbá Khánum, His granddaughter, remembers:

"When my little sister, Ruh-Angiz Asíyih, arrived, there was some disappointment that she was not a boy. Bahá'u'lláh said, "I will love her more than all the rest; you must not wish that she had been a boy."

the Spoken Chronicle of Túbá Khánum, in *The Chosen Highway*, p. 103

Túbá Khánum, His granddaughter, explained that,

"We children looked upon Bahá'u'lláh as another loving Father; to Him we carried all our little difficulties and troubles.... All our holidays, all our treats and our happiness came from Him in those days; when boxes of sweets were brought to Him He would set some aside for us....How we adored Him!"

the Spoken Chronicle of Túbá Khánum, in *The Chosen Highway*, p. 98

Additional stories that show how Bahá'u'lláh took an interest in the children are told in the Core Curriculum storybook, *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 1, pp. 33-46.



‘Abdu’l-Bahá

‘Abdu’l-Bahá consistently promoted the principle of the equality of women and men in His words and His deeds. As the Center of the Covenant, people looked to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to explain Bahá’u’lláh’s teachings. He gave talk after talk, explaining that women and men are equal, that the contributions of women are essential to the world, and that when women become involved in the affairs of the world, war will cease. He asked many women to do important things in the world, that other people thought only men should do. He gave a woman, Mrs. Corinne True, plans for the House of Worship to be build in America and asked her to spearhead that important project. When some men asked ‘Abdu’l-Bahá about the House of Worship, He told them to ask Mrs. True!

During the time of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, women in Persia had no access to medical care. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá asked an American woman, Dr. Susan Moody to go to Persia so that the women there could have a doctor. He also encouraged her to promote the education of girls in Iran. She worked with other Bahá’ís to establish schools for girls in that country.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá arranged for the education of both boys and girls in the Holy Land. Even during World War I, when the children were evacuated to a small village to escape the danger of bombs, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá arranged for a school to be set up in that village so that their education wouldn’t be neglected. While in Haifa, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá even found time to teach a weekly Bahá’í children’s class. During His travels in Africa, Europe, and America, He arranged special meetings with children in almost every city. There are many stories of His interactions with children. Here is one of them:

One day, during ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s long journeys in the West, He was walking through Richmond Park in London in 1912. He watched a race on ponies between some boys and a girl. When the girl won, He clapped His hands, and cried, “Bravo! Bravo!”

Retold from Janet Khan and Peter Khan, *Advancement of Women*, pp. 173-6, 161, 183, and “‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Visit to London, 1911-1912,” *The Bahá’í World*, vol. IV, p. 384

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s wife, Munírih Khánum, describes her marriage with the beloved Master:

“It is impossible to put into words the delight of being with the Master; I seemed to be in a glorious realm of sacred happiness whilst in His company.

“You have known Him in His later year, but when in the youth of His beauty and manly vigour, with His unfailing love, His kindness, His cheerfulness, His sense of humour, His untiring consideration for everybody, He was marvelous, without equal, surely in all the earth!...

“You, who have known Him, can imagine what my fifty years have been – how they fled by in an atmosphere of love and joy and the perfection of that Peace which passeth all understanding, in the radiant light of which I await the day when I shall be called to join Him, in the celestial garden of transfiguration.”

spoken chronicle of Munírih Khánum, *The Chosen Highway*, pp. 89-90



Bahíyyih Khánum, The Greatest Holy Leaf

The Greatest Holy Leaf was called to deeds of great courage at a very early age. When her beloved Father, Bahá'u'lláh, was imprisoned in the Siyah-Chál, she took care of her baby brother, Mirza Mihdi, when her mother and older brother, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, had to go out for food or for news of Bahá'u'lláh. Those were frightening times as no one knew if or when her Father, mother, and brother would ever return.

Later in Baghdad, when the Greatest Holy Leaf, then in her teens, was trusted with "missions that no girl of her age could, or would be willing to, perform, with what spontaneous joy she seized her opportunity and acquitted herself of the task with which she had been entrusted! The delicacy and extreme gravity of such functions ... marked her as one who was both capable of sharing the burden, and willing to make the sacrifice, which her high birth demanded."

Shoghi Effendi, *Bahíyyih Khanum*, p. 33

"The outbreak of the Great War gave her yet another opportunity to reveal the true worth of her character and to release the latent energies of her heart. The residence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Haifa was besieged, all throughout that dreary conflict, by a concourse of famished men, women and children whom the maladministration, the cruelty and neglect of the officials of the Ottoman Government had driven to seek an alleviation to their woes. From the hand of the Greatest Holy Leaf, and out of the abundance of her heart, these hapless victims of a contemptible tyranny, received day after day unforgettable evidences of a love they had learned to envy and admire. Her words of cheer and comfort, the food, the money, the clothing she freely dispensed, the remedies which, by a process of her own, she herself prepared and diligently applied - all these had their share in comforting the disconsolate, in restoring sight to the blind, in sheltering the orphan, in healing the sick, and in succouring the homeless and the wanderer."

Shoghi Effendi, *Bahíyyih Khanum*, pp. 40-41

After the death of Bahá'u'lláh, the Greatest Holy Leaf resisted the efforts of the Covenant Breakers to divide the Faith, at times serving almost as 'Abdu'l-Bahá's only support. When 'Abdu'l-Bahá was on His extended travels to the West,

"she was His competent deputy, His representative and vicegerent, with none to equal her."

After the death of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the newly appointed Guardian, Shoghi Effendi,

"left for a time the affairs of the Cause both at home and abroad, under the supervision of the Holy Family and the headship of the Greatest Holy Leaf..."

Shoghi Effendi, *Bahíyyih Khanum*, pp. 29, 21

Early pilgrims share remembrances of the Greatest Holy Leaf:

"She was seldom alone.... Her room was the heart of the house. Around the glow of her brazier in winter or when she sat on her window divan in full sunlight, old and young would gather near her, filtering in one by one, slipping out again to work or play, or pausing for a moment in a busy day at the doorway for a glimpse. You left your shoes at the threshold of that room and you left, too, any outer covering of pose or manner you might have made for yourself for protection in a bleak world. Here was no need for pretense and brave showing: here in the light of her shining simplicity you became simple."

The Passing of Bahíyyih Khánum, *Crystallizations*, p. 170

For additional stories about the Greatest Holy Leaf, see the Core Curriculum storybooks, *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 1, pp. 100-101; vol. 2 pp. 31-34, 41-44.

TOPIC: EXAMPLES FROM THE HOLY FAMILY

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories & Articles:

Brilliant Star: “A Life of Service” MJ 95

“Pure One and Greatest Holy Leaf” MA 99

“Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánum” JF 00

Herald of the South, Jan 1989, “Bahíyyih Khánum, Daughter of Bahá’u’lláh”

Mehrabi, Jacqueline, *Stories of the Greatest Holy Leaf*

Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

Brilliant Star: “Family Trees” SE 91

Activities:

Brilliant Star: “Family Trees” SE 91

Music:

Miller, Grant Hinden, *Fire and Steel*, “Leaf Bright Leaf”

Various Artists, *Happy Ayyám-i-Há*, “Khánum”

Games:

Brilliant Star: “Attributes of a Saintly Life” JA 93

Poetry:

Brilliant Star: “Evening Prayer” JF 98

White Roger, *The Witness of Pebbles*, “The Song of Khadijih-Bagum”

Videos:

Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánum 1910-2000

The Green Light Expedition

World Wide Web:

<http://www.bahai-biblio.org/biblio-photo-a.htm>

Dozens of historical photos.

<http://www.BahaiPictures.com/>

Good resource web page of Holy Land Images

Other favorite resources:

Blomfield, Lady, *The Chosen Highway*

Khan, Janet and Peter Khan, *Advancement of Women*

Khánum, Munírih, *Khánum*, *Munírih: Memoirs and Letters*

Ma’ani, Baharieh, *Asiyih Khánum: The Most Exalted Leaf Entitled Navvab*

Perkins, Mary, *Day of Glory: The Life of Bahá’u’lláh*

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