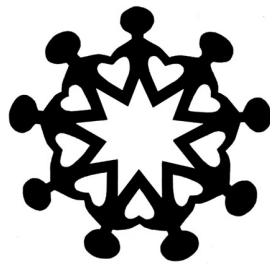


*Oneness*

*Oneness  
of Humanity*



*Level One*



# TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLE OF ONENESS AS THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:  
LOVE, TOLERANCE, COMPASSION, KINDNESS**

The All-Knowing Physician hath His finger on the pulse of mankind. He perceiveth the disease, and prescribeth, in His unerring wisdom, the remedy. Every age hath its own problem, and every soul its particular aspiration. The remedy the world needeth in its present-day afflictions can never be the same as that which a subsequent age may require. Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and center your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 213

The principle of the Oneness of Mankind – the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh revolve – is no mere outburst of ignorant emotionalism or an expression of vague and pious hope... its message is applicable not only to the individual, but concerns itself primarily with the nature of those essential relationships that must bind all the states and nations as members of one human family.

Shoghi Effendi, *World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 42-43

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES**



### **KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE**

- To know from the Bahá'í writings that the principle of oneness is the fundamental and pivotal principle of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh

#### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Research the writings for delineating the various categories of oneness discussed in the writings.
- Use writings on the principle of oneness in puzzles, tangrams, etc.
- Learn songs about the principle of oneness.



### **WISDOM OBJECTIVE**

- To understand how all other Bahá'í teachings relate to the principle of oneness

#### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Create a mobile with oneness as the pivotal point and other personal and social outcomes surrounding it.
- Discuss how all other Bahá'í teachings relate to the principle of oneness using diagrams and games.
- In small groups encourage students to explain to one another how oneness relates to specific principles.
- Read Bahá'í and other stories illustrating how principles such as not backbiting relates to the oneness of humanity.

## TOPIC: THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE

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### SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

- To perceive the significance of the analogy of the Divine Physician to understand how consciousness of the principle of oneness is central to the healing of the problems of the peoples and nations of the world
- To perceive how the principle of oneness relates to our interactions with others in friendships, in schools, and in the community

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Use drama to illustrate the analogy of dispensing prescriptions to cure the ills of the people and the nations of the world.
- Give the students the opportunity to ponder, reflect, and discuss their interactions with others in friendships, schools and in the community and how they relate to oneness.
- Create stories or poems using personal experiences in implementing this principle. These stories may be put in drama.



### ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

- To demonstrate understanding of the principle of oneness in teaching activities and within the Bahá'í community
- To demonstrate understanding in application to one's friendships and interactions with all people

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Perform drama, songs, or dances that demonstrate the principle of oneness at teaching events and holy days.
- Talk about and develop personal goals for applying the principle of oneness to friendships and interactions with all people.
- Plan for the students to give a monthly report on their plan using any medium of presentation.

**GOAL: TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLE OF ONENESS AS THE  
PRIME AND PIVOTAL TEACHING OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**

**TOPIC: THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE**

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**Sample Activities**

**ACTIVITY: IDENTIFY PRINCIPLES RELATED TO THE ONENESS OF HUMANITY**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To know from the Bahá'í Writings that the principle of oneness is the fundamental and pivotal principle of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand how all other Bahá'í teachings relate to the principle of oneness

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í Sacred Writings; Engaging the mind and heart; Use of arts; Use of manipulatives; Use of reasoning

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 50 MIN.

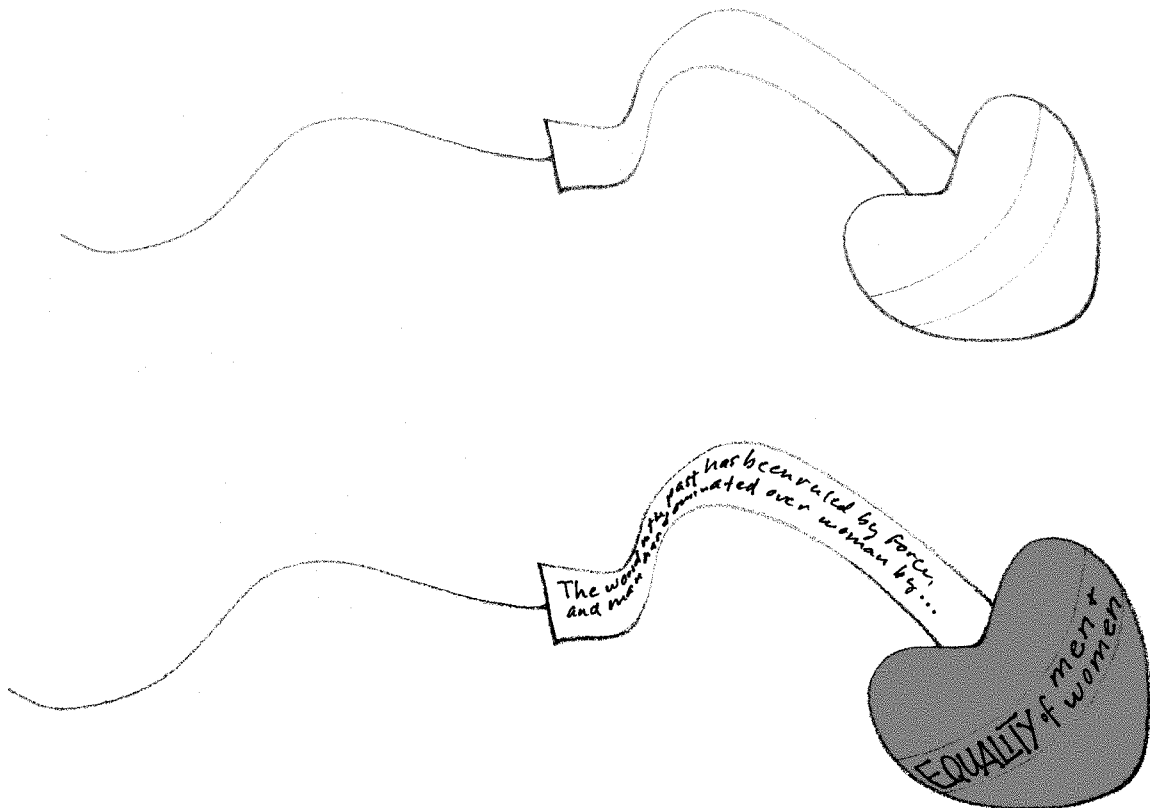
**Materials Needed:**

- Pre-cut magazine pictures of diverse peoples
- Art supplies: markers, glitter, stickers, etc.
- Calculator paper roll, 3" wide, cut in 4-foot lengths (6 to 10 strips)
- Stapler and staples
- Verses from *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Resource Page 48
- Glue or glue-sticks
- Scissors
- Sturdy cardboard: one piece 8½" x 11" plus 6 to 10 pre-cut heart shapes, approximately 8 inches across
- Pencils
- Chart paper or board and marker
- Yarn, cut into 8-foot lengths (6 to 10 pieces)

1. Read aloud Shoghi Effendi's words from *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 42:  
The Principle of the Oneness of Mankind – the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh revolve...
2. Ask students, "What is the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh revolve?"
3. Act out the definition of a pivot: have students stand, with one foot firmly grounded, and practice moving back and forth, and all around in a circle, around the pivot. Encourage them to switch legs, so that the other foot becomes the pivot. Recite the verse again, as they are experiencing this movement.
4. Invite the students to chant this phrase with you as they practice. Can they create a rhythm for the words and then move to the rhythm?
5. Create a collage on the theme, "The Oneness of Humanity," using pre-cut magazine pictures. Assemble the collage on a sturdy piece of cardboard, approximately 8 ½" x 11". Include the words, "Oneness of Humanity" in large letters, using glitter or paints to make them special. Display your collage as you continue with the next step of this activity.
6. Remind the students that the Oneness of Humanity is the pivot round which all of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings revolve. Invite students to assist you in compiling a list of some of Bahá'u'lláh's other teachings. Together, come up with a list of 6 to 10 teachings, and chart these on a board for all to see. Examples: equality of women and men, universal language, elimination of prejudices, world peace, unity of science and religion, oneness of religions, elimination of extremes of wealth and poverty, etc.

## TOPIC: THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE

7. Encourage students to work with a partner to learn more about one of the listed teachings. Give each pair a quotation to read from *The Promulgation of Universal Peace* or other Bahá'í texts relating to their principle, see Resource Page 48.
8. Provide each pair with a piece of cardboard cut in the shape of a heart, approximately 8 inches across. Invite them to create a decorated sign for their principle, with the title printed in large letters, adding artwork as desired.
9. Give each pair a 4-foot strip of calculator paper. Invite them to copy the quotation about their principle down the length of this strip. Staple one end of the completed strip to the top of their heart-shaped sign.
10. Cut an 8-foot length of yarn for each pair. Staple one end of the yarn to the top of the back side of their signs. Run the yarn behind the calculator tape, stapling the two together every few inches. The yarn will extend 4 feet beyond the paper strip.
11. Let the students know that in your next session you will connect these principles to the Pivotal Principle, the Oneness of Humanity.
12. Practice again demonstrating a pivot while chanting Shoghi Effendi's words. Encourage students to teach this verse to someone in their family before your next session, and to commit it to memory.



**GOAL: TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLE OF ONENESS AS THE  
PRIME AND PIVOTAL TEACHING OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**

**TOPIC: THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE**

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**ACTIVITY: ONENESS POLE**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To know from the Bahá'í Writings that the principle of oneness is the fundamental and pivotal principle of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand how all other Bahá'í teachings relate to the principle of oneness

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of Bahá'í writings; Engaging the mind and heart; Use of the arts; Use of music; Use of manipulatives; Use of reasoning

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 40 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Recorded music or sing-a-long song on the theme of oneness, see List of Additional Resources
- Pole, 6-8 feet tall or alternate, described below
- Sturdy tape, such as duct tape or strapping tape

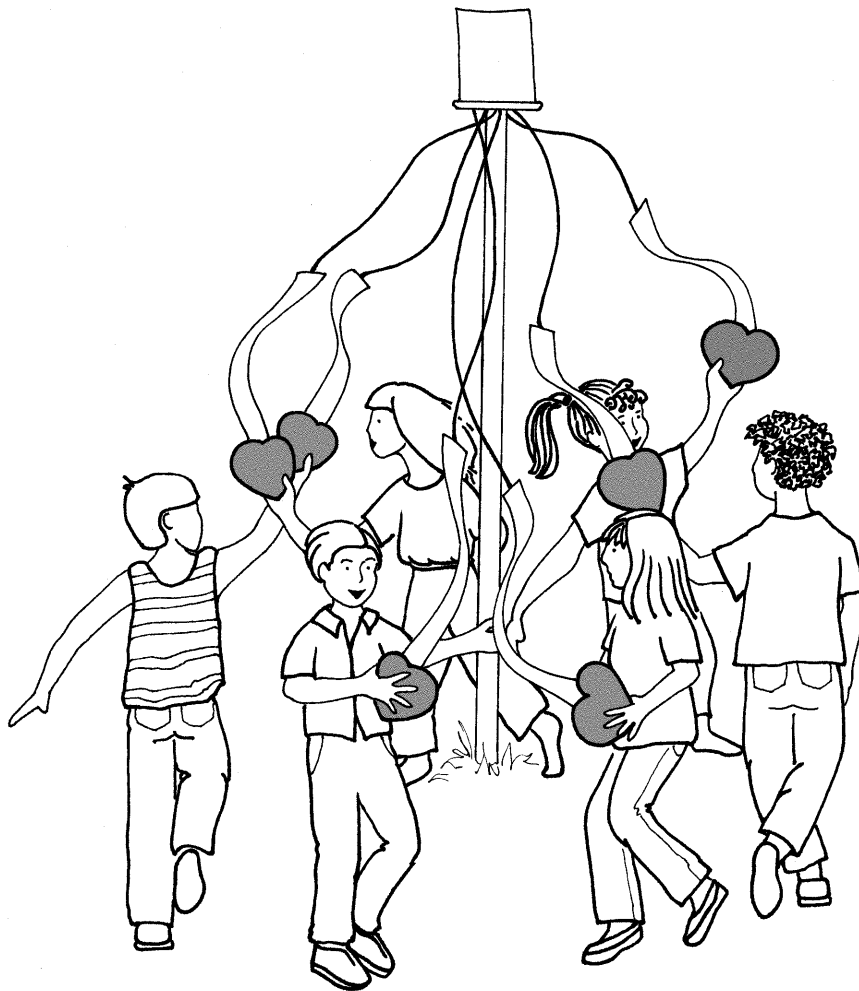
1. Welcome students and invite all to recite Shoghi Effendi's words about the oneness of humanity. Also invite the students to describe what happened when they shared the verse with a friend or family member.
2. Set up a pole, which will become the Oneness Pole. A tetherball pole outside (minus its rope and ball) is ideal. Alternate ideas: hammer a broomstick into soft ground, build a wooden pole that can stand up inside, with the aid of wooden supports, or use an over-hanging hook for support.
3. Use sturdy tape to attach the "Oneness of Humanity" collage/sign, made in the last activity, to the top of the pole.
4. Invite pairs of students to bring their heart-shaped "Bahá'í Teaching" sign, with its cord of yarn and paper, to the Oneness Pole. Attach the loose end of each length of yarn to the top of the pole with the sturdy tape, below the "Oneness" collage, while the students hold onto their heart-shaped signs, forming a circle around the pole.
5. In turn, encourage each pair to read aloud the name of their principle and the verse they copied, and show their heart-shaped sign. As a group, briefly describe the ways that this principle expresses the Oneness of Humanity. These can be simple statements, for instance: "If all people are one, then everyone is equal, no matter if they are a girl or a boy (or, black or white)," etc.
6. Circle around the Oneness Pole, while holding the heart-shaped signs, to demonstrate that the oneness of humanity is the pivot round which the others revolve.
7. As you circle around the pole, chant the words of Shoghi Effendi, "The principle of the Oneness of Mankind – the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh revolve...." You may also play recorded music or sing songs about the oneness of humanity (see List of Additional Resources, p. 52).
8. As you circle, the lengths of yarn and paper will become wrapped around the pole and each other, with the signs hanging below. Everyone will enjoy leaving the wrapped pole standing, as a visual reminder of the prime and pivotal principle of Bahá'u'lláh.



**TOPIC: THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE**

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9. For a more advanced activity, teach students the movements for a maypole dance: Demonstrate how the dancers around the circle should alternate the direction (clockwise or counter-clockwise) they move. Have them also alternate going under (to the inside of the circle) and going over (to the outside of the circle) each person they encounter as they walk. This will create a decorative, woven wrapping of the yarn/paper lengths around the pole.
10. Invite the students to find an opportunity in the coming week to share their particular Bahá'í principle and how it relates to the oneness of humanity, with someone new: friends, teachers, etc.



**GOAL: TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLE OF ONENESS AS THE  
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**TOPIC: THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE**

**ACTIVITY: DIVINE PHYSICIAN**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand how all other Bahá'í teachings relate to the principle of oneness

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To perceive the significance of the analogy of the Divine Physician to understand how the consciousness of the principle of oneness is central to the healing of the problems of the peoples and nations of the world

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í Sacred Writings; Engaging the mind and heart; Use of manipulatives; Use of reasoning; Use of memorization; Use of drama

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Globe
- Brief verses on the oneness of humanity, on colored paper, cut into thin strips, see Resource Page 49
- Pre-cut photographs from news magazines, showing social ills
- Stethoscope (real, toy, or made from crafts materials)
- First-aid or cloth tape (transparent tape may also be used)
- Scissors
- Small empty bottle (possibly a medicine bottle)
- Adhesive label and pen
- Photocopies of verses, below

**Advance Preparation:**

Prepare the medicine bottle: Type a mailing label as if it were a prescription label. List the doctor's name as "Divine Physician." List directions such as: "Take one every morning and evening." Add other data or artwork as desired. Affix this label to the empty bottle. Fill the bottle with "pills": roll up thin strips of colored paper, printed with brief verses about the oneness of humanity. Use a small piece of cloth or first-aid tape to hold each roll closed. Bring the bottle to class.



1. Post copies of these statements of Bahá'u'lláh, for the learners to read along with you:

The All-Knowing Physician hath His finger on the pulse of mankind. He perceiveth the disease, and prescribeth, in His unerring wisdom, the remedy...

Bahá'u'lláh,  
*Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 213

That which God hath ordained as the sovereign remedy and mightiest instrument for the healing of the world is the union of all its peoples in one universal Cause, one common Faith.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 62

2. Help explain these verses by having students find their own pulse with their fingertips. If you have access to a real stethoscope, let students use it to listen to their own and others' heartbeats. Using a globe and stethoscope as props, explore the analogy of the All-Knowing Physician perceiving what ails the world.
3. Choose one of these passages to memorize as a class. Consider using movements or hand gestures to assist with memorization.

**TOPIC: THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE**

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4. Display a collection of pre-cut pictures from news magazines, portraying some of the ills of the world, such as war, homelessness, hunger, etc. Be sensitive to the maturity level of your students when choosing pictures, to create understanding, not fear.
5. Invite students to work in small groups, with each group choosing one of the pictures. Together, they should identify the world problem or illness being shown and discuss how this illness will be cured when the peoples of the world are brought together in one common Faith and the oneness of humanity expressed. Circulate among the groups to facilitate this discussion. For instance, if the illness is poverty, this could be cured if all people saw each other as brothers and sisters? Would we allow our own family members to suffer? Would we share?
6. Invite each group to act out the application of Bahá'u'lláh's sovereign remedy to their problem. For example, one person can represent a sick world, suffering from the particular illness they've discussed. Another person could play the role of physician, checking the pulse, perceiving the disease and prescribing the remedy, based on the group's earlier discussion. Each physician may then give the sick world one or more of spiritual medicine verses, rolled earlier. The "sick world" may unroll the tablet, read the verse, and demonstrate the remedy.
7. Invite the students to describe how these solutions and remedies relate to Bahá'u'lláh's pivotal principle of the oneness of humanity.
8. Encourage the students to choose one thing they can say and one thing they can do to help apply Bahá'u'lláh's sovereign remedy this week. Remember to discuss these words and activities at the beginning of the next class, so that the students truly understand the power of their actions.

**GOAL: TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLE OF ONENESS AS THE  
PRIME AND PIVOTAL TEACHING OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**

**TOPIC: THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE**

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**ACTIVITY: ROLE-PLAYING FRIENDSHIP SCENARIOS**

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To perceive how the principle of oneness relates to our interactions with others in friendships, in schools, and in the community

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To demonstrate understanding of the principle of oneness by applying it to our friendships and interactions with all peoples

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Engaging the mind and heart; Use of reasoning; Use of drama

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Cards with role-playing scenarios, Resource Page 50

1. Invite students to share their experiences practiced apply Bahá'u'lláh's remedy to the ills of the world. Who was able to discuss this principle with others?
2. Invite students to consider how this same principle applies to smaller problems – ones we might encounter everyday.
3. Invite the students to work in small groups of three or four. Give each group a card describing a problem that could happen at their school, or among their friends. See Resource Page 50 for scenarios for samples; also consider developing your own scenarios. Ask groups to consider how to use the principle of the oneness of humanity to solve to the problem. Invite each group to demonstrate their solution through role-play.
4. Gather the class together to discuss the importance of the principle of oneness. Based on all the writings we have studied, and all the actions we have discussed, what are some examples of powerful words we can use to promote the principle of oneness? What are some powerful actions that we can do to promote oneness? After this brief discussion, invite the group to choose a goal collectively: What can we all decide to do this week to promote oneness? How can we support each other so everyone is successfully achieving this goal? How can we get our families and other friends to help?
5. Remember to share the results of these actions at the next class.

## TOPIC: THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE

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### ACTIVITY: LOVE YOUR NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To perceive how the principle of oneness relates to our interactions with others in friendships, in schools and in the community

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

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- “Love your Neighbors and Friends” song sheet, Resource Page 51

1. Remind students how important it is to be friends to all.
2. Read the following quotation:  

One must see in every human being only that which is worthy of praise. When this is done, one can be a friend to the whole human race.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá,  
*Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 169
3. Discuss: How does ‘Abdu’l-Bahá tell us that we be a friend to everyone? What are some examples of seeing only what is worthy of praise? Why is it important for us to have a diversity of friends? How do our diverse friendships express the principle of oneness?
4. Teach the song, “Love your Neighbors and Friends.”

Resource Pages



## Teachings Related to the Oneness of Humanity

### Equality of women and men

The world of humanity is possessed of two wings: the male and the female. So long as these two wings are not equivalent in strength, the bird will not fly. Until womankind reaches the same degree... humanity cannot wing its way to heights of real attainment.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 375

### Universal language

Unless the unity of languages is realized, the Most Great Peace and the oneness of the human world cannot be...established.... The heart is like a box, and language is the key.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 60

### Elimination of prejudices

Bahá'u'lláh also taught that prejudices – whether religious, racial, patriotic, or political – are destructive to the foundations of human development. Prejudices of any kind are the destroyers of human happiness and welfare.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 181

### World peace

For thousands of years we have had bloodshed and strife. It is enough... Now is the time to associate together in love and harmony. For thousands of years we have tried the sword and warfare; let mankind for a time at least live in peace.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 131

### Unity of science and religion

...Religion and science are in complete agreement. Every religion which is not in accordance with established science is superstition.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 63

### Oneness of religions

This real Shepherd [God] loves all His sheep... If we investigate the foundations of the divine religions, we find them to be one, absolutely changeless and never subject to transformation.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 393

### Elimination of extremes of wealth and poverty

In the future there will be no very rich nor extremely poor. There will be an equilibrium of interests, and a condition will be established which will make both rich and poor comfortable and content.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 132

GOAL: TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLE OF ONENESS AS THE  
PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH  
TOPIC: THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE

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## The Divine Physician

The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens. ~ Bahá'u'lláh<sup>1</sup>

The incomparable creator hath created all men from one same substance... ~ Bahá'u'lláh<sup>2</sup>

...The peoples of the world, of whatever race or religion...are the subjects of one God. ~ Bahá'u'lláh<sup>3</sup>

So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth. ~ Bahá'u'lláh<sup>4</sup>

Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch. ~ Bahá'u'lláh<sup>5</sup>

The tabernacle of unity hath been raised; regard not one another as strangers. ~ Bahá'u'lláh<sup>6</sup>

God, the Almighty, has created all mankind from the dust of earth. ~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá<sup>7</sup>

All men are the leaves and fruit of one same tree... ~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá<sup>8</sup>

This earth is one home and native land. ~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá<sup>9</sup>

...The unity of all mankind in can in this day be achieved. ~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá<sup>10</sup>

...The happiness of mankind lieth in the unity and the harmony of the human race. ~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá<sup>11</sup>

World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. ~ Shoghi Effendi<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 167

<sup>2</sup> *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 81

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, p. 217

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 287

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p. 288

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, p. 218

<sup>7</sup> *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 297

<sup>8</sup> *Paris Talks (1995 edition)*, p. 132

<sup>9</sup> *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 287

<sup>10</sup> *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 32

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p. 286

<sup>12</sup> *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 202

## TOPIC: THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE

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### Friendship Scenarios

1. Your teacher asks everyone in your class to pick a partner the next activity. You usually work with your best friend when the teacher lets you select partners, and your friend is already walking towards you to work together. But you notice that the new student in your class doesn't have anyone to work with and is looking nervous.
2. You live in a vibrant, culturally and ethnically diverse neighborhood. You love playing with all of the diverse kids on your block after school and on weekends. Some of your neighborhood friends are in the same grade as you, and one is even in the same class. At school, however, you have a different group of friends and don't usually interact with the kids from your neighborhood. Your friendship seems to exist out of school only.
3. You have a substitute teacher at school today who is from a different country and pronounces some words a little differently from your regular teacher. You think the substitute is a really good teacher and have a great time in class all morning. But at lunchtime in the cafeteria, some of your classmates begin imitating the substitute teacher's accent and making fun of it.
4. You and your friend are playing in your back yard when you hear the ice cream truck coming down the street. You really want to buy an ice cream cone with the money you have saved up for this very occasion, but you know your friend doesn't have any money.
5. It's Black History Month and your teacher has asked your class to research the lives and contributions of important African Americans to present in class. Your teacher provides a list of important individuals to choose from, but you notice that they are all men.
6. You have invited your best friends to a sleep-over this weekend at your house. Another friend who you didn't invite asks if you can play together that same evening.



GOAL: TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLE OF ONENESS AS THE  
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**TOPIC: THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE**

## Love Your Neighbors and Friends

Words and Music:  
Mrs. Jerald Day

The musical score is written for piano and voice. It consists of three systems of music. The first system contains the first two lines of the song. The second system contains the next two lines. The third system contains the final line and a double bar line. The lyrics are: "Love your neighbors and friends, That's the word that God sends. For a world of unity, Love your neighbors and friends."

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>2. I'm Bahá'u'lláh's child,<br/>He has taught me to love<br/>All the children around the world.<br/>I'm Bahá'u'lláh's child.</p> | <p>3. There's a Faith filled with love,<br/>Joy and happiness too.<br/>All Bahá'ís around the world<br/>Give this friendship to you.</p> | <p>4. Yá Bahá'ul'Abhá!<br/>Yá Bahá'ul' Abhá!<br/>Sing, you children around the world,<br/>Yá Bahá'ul'Abhá.</p> |
|---|--|--|



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**GOAL: TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLE OF ONENESS AS THE  
PRIME AND PIVOTAL TEACHING OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**

**TOPIC: THE PRIME AND PIVOTAL PRINCIPLE**

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**LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

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**Stories & Articles:**

*Brilliant Star*: “Layli Miller Bashir” Jan/Feb 00  
“A Note for You,” “Shining Lamps,” “Working for  
Equality Around the World,” “Learning to Fly,”  
“Did You Know About International Women’s  
Day?” “Kids’ Thoughts About Equality” Mar/Apr 99  
“Threads of Unity” Jul/Aug 97  
“I Believe” May/June 97

Faizi, A. J., *The Wonder Lamp*  
Irwin, Alhan, *The Case of a Different Face*  
Matthews, Gary L., *Racial Healing in the Bahá’í Faith*  
*Models of Unity: Racial, Ethnic and Religious*  
(pamphlet)  
*Uniting the Human Family*  
Wolcott, Deborah K., *The Gift*

**Worksheets and Coloring Pages:**

*Brilliant Star*: Prayer by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá (in Earth  
drawing) Jan/Feb 92  
“What does God Want Use to Do?” SE 93  
“We Are One” MJ 95  
“Consort with the Followers...” SO 02  
Dominey, Kel, *Flickerings*

*Tablet of the Heart God and Me*, pp. 25, 29, 49  
*The Garden of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 87, 91, 163, 167  
*The Light of a Good Character*, pp. 42, 44, 46  
*Unity Flows from Every Color, A Coloring Book for the  
Whole Family*

**Activities:**

*Calling All Colors Activity Book*, Coastal Carolina University, Center for Education and Community, Conway, SC

**Music:**

Bauman, Roya, *Love Setteth the World Aflame*, “Unity  
Prayer”  
Brown, Mahony, Doomun-Rouhani, *Melodies of the  
Nightingale*, “Unity Prayer”  
Davis, Mary, *Wings of Prayer*, “Unity Prayer”  
Grammer, Red, *Artists for the Ark*, “One Family”  
Grammer, Red, *Teaching Peace*, “Listen”  
Miller, Grant Hinden, *Sing O Carmel*, “Unite the  
Hearts”  
Paul, Gregory, *This is the Day*, “Fellowship”  
Price, Tom with various artists, *Lift Up Your Voices and  
Sing, Volume One: “God Is One,” Volume Two:*

“World Citizens,” *Volume Three: “One Planet, One  
people, Please,” “We Will Have One World”*  
Shropshire, Lucy, *This is Faith*, “Come Together  
World”  
Simmons, Sandra, *Artists for the Ark*, “Unity Prayer,”  
also on Sandy Simmons’ solo CD  
Van Manens, *Barley Bread and Reindeer Milk*, “Under  
One Sky”  
Van Manens, *We Recycle*, “Family Tree,” “We are  
Flowers”  
Wright, Susan Lewis, *Bird*, “Unity Prayer”

**Games:**

*Brilliant Star*: “Race Unity Game” MA 95

**Videos:**

*The Power of Race Unity*

**World Wide Web:**

<http://www.savethechildren.org/>

Great site for a variety of children's pictures .

**Other favorite resources:**

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 45-49, 114-116, 129-130, 138-140  
‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 4-7, 32, 56-57, 95-96, 190-193, 206-209  
*Brilliant Star*: “Towards a Sane Patriotism” Jan/Feb 91  
Henderson, Robert, *Equality, Oneness, Unity: The Way to Racial Peace*  
Rutstein, Nathan, *Coming of Age at the Millennium: Embracing the Oneness of Humankind*  
Rutstein, Nathan, *Healing Racism in America: A Prescription for the Disease*  
Rutstein, Nathan, *Racism: Unraveling the Fear*  
Various, *Behold Me, Bahá’í Writings on Unity*

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

# TO KNOW THAT HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL IN THE PLAN OF GOD THERE IS NO DISTINCTION OR SEPARATION

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:  
LOVE, TOLERANCE, COMPASSION, RESPECT**

O CHILDREN OF MEN! Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder at all times in your hearts how ye were created. Since We have created you all from one same substance it is incumbent on you to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land, that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. Such is My counsel to you, O concourse of light! Heed ye this counsel that ye may obtain the fruit of holiness from the tree of wondrous glory.

*Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words, Arabic #68*

There is another brotherhood – the spiritual – which is higher, holier and superior to all others. It is heavenly; it emanates from the breaths of the Holy Spirit and the effulgence of merciful attributes; it is founded upon spiritual susceptibilities.

*'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 150*

**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**

## **TOPIC: IN THE PLAN OF GOD THERE IS NO DISTINCTION OR SEPARATION**

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### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES**



#### **KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES**

- To become familiar with the Bahá'í writings regarding God's love for all His creation and the yearning of all creation for His Love
- To become familiar with the metaphors in the Bahá'í writings that describe humanity's essential oneness

#### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Read and memorize the Bahá'í writings regarding God's love for His creation and the yearning of all creation for His love.
- Working cooperatively, list some of the metaphors in the writings that describe humanity's essential oneness.
- Create an art project depicting one of the metaphors that describe humanity's essential oneness.



#### **WISDOM OBJECTIVES**

- To understand that separation and distinctions between people are accidental
- To understand that people are fundamentally the same in spite of apparent distinctions and separations

#### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Working cooperatively, list similarities and differences of people.
- Discuss the significance of apparent distinctions and separations of people. Use metaphors.
- Use music and stories to demonstrate that people are fundamentally the same in spite of apparent distinctions and separations.
- Research the scientific explanation for people's differences in their appearances.
- Demonstrate how two things can look differently on the outside (body) and be similar on the inside (spiritually).

**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**  
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## **SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES**

- To discern how science is contributing to human knowledge regarding its essential oneness
- To perceive how the forces of integration are at work in the world despite forces of separation

### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Ponder, pray and meditate about the essential oneness of creation.
- Discuss the basic building blocks of human life relating it to the essential oneness of creation.
- Using current events, point out how the forces of integration are at work in the world despite forces of separation, using news clips, music, movies.



## **ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES**

- To demonstrate understanding of the essential oneness of humanity through actions

### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Prepare and perform a dance or dramatic presentation on the oneness of humanity.
- Plan and carry out a service project that involves people from diverse groups.
- Have the students develop a personal or group goal for increasing the diversity of the people with whom they share activities.

**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**

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### **Sample Activities**

#### **ACTIVITY: HIDDEN WORD DRAMATIC MOVEMENT**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To become familiar with the metaphors in the Bahá'í Writings that describe humanity's essential oneness

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Education directed toward God; Use of drama; Use of memorization; Use of recitation

**SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY:** 5 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Poster board and pen
- Copies of the Arabic Hidden Word No. 68, Resource Page 65
- Bowls of soil
- Bowls of a snack such as puffed cereal or raisins
- Spoons, one for each person

**Advance Preparation:**

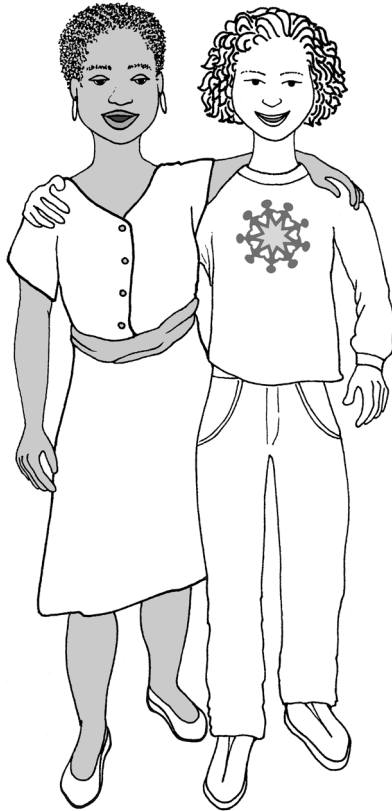
Before class, write out each phrase of the Hidden Word, as divided in the instructions below, in large letters on pieces of poster board.

1. Invite assistants to display and read aloud the words so that everyone can see and hear the words as you introduce each part with movements. Involve the students in suggesting the movements to represent each phrase. Possible examples are provided.
  - *O CHILDREN OF MEN!* Make a sweeping arm gesture towards the group, to indicate that everyone is included.
  - *Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust?* Gesture upwards on “We,” then reach down to the ground and pick up the bowl of soil. Take up a small amount of soil with one hand, letting it sift through your fingers back into the bowl.
  - *That no one should exalt himself over the other.* Stand up tall, quickly, with a proud, disdainful look on your face, then shake your head no, and calmly, humbly, contentedly, sit or stand in your original position.
  - *Ponder at all times in your hearts how ye were created.* Hold your hands together as if holding a prayer book, then move them over your heart as you close your eyes and ponder.
  - *Since We have created you all from one same substance...* Gesture upwards on “We,” then again a sweeping arm gesture to indicate the entire group, and again sift a small amount of dirt through your fingers.
  - *...it is incumbent on you...* Directly extend one arm, palm up, out towards the students, as if to indicate someone’s turn;
  - *...to be even as one soul...* Involve another student: Hold up one hand with the index finger extended, and meet their hand with their finger extended. Touch fingers, and then hold them together to indicate the number “one” made with both your fingers.

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- ...to walk with the same feet... Stand side-by-side with a student, arms around each other's shoulders. Take several steps together, moving your feet in unison.



- ...eat with the same mouth...

With a partner, pantomime feeding each other by using a spoon to indicate picking up a small amount of the snack and placing it near the other person's mouth, as if feeding that person! Do not really feed each other, as eating would disrupt the flow of movement and recitation. Enjoy the snacks later in class!

- ...and dwell in the same land... Motion to your assistant from across the room, and pretend to open a door and invite him/her inside.
- ...that from your inmost being... Stand up straight and place your hand over your heart.
- ...by your deeds and actions... Walk uprightly across a space.
- ... the signs of oneness... Hold up one hand with index finger extended.

- ...and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. Pantomime passing out more of the snack to others.
  - *Such is My counsel to you, O concourse of light!* Reach upward, then out towards the audience, then sweep your arm in circular movements, as if waving banners.
  - *Heed ye this counsel...* Shake your head in the affirmative and point upward, as if giving a directive.
  - ...that ye may obtain the fruit of holiness from the tree of wondrous glory. Pantomime picking fruit from a tree, with a look of wonder on your face.
2. Present each student with a beautiful copy of this Hidden Word. Ask them to follow along as one or two good readers read it aloud. Invite them to memorize this Hidden Word with you, while using movements you demonstrated.
  3. Discuss together the meaning of this Hidden Word, explaining it phrase by phrase.
  4. First in the whole group and then with a partner, perform the movements that will help them memorize this Hidden Word while reciting it aloud, phrase by phrase. Use the materials as in the example. Strive to express the beauty of Bahá'u'lláh's Words by making our gestures beautiful.
  5. When the memorization is complete, celebrate by enjoying the snack. Encourage learners to continue practicing so that they can recite it together again at the next class. After sufficient practice, arrange for your class to recite this Hidden Word, beautiful with movements, at an upcoming Feast, Holy Day observance or devotional gathering.

**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**

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### **ACTIVITY: THE ALL-LOVING PROVIDER**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To become familiar with the Bahá'í Writings regarding God's love for His creation and the yearning of all creation for this Love

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand that people are fundamentally the same in spite of apparent distinctions and separations

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í Sacred Writings; Engaging the mind and heart; Use of manipulatives

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Prayer on Resource page 66
- Board or chart paper and marker
- 8 small pieces of poster board or large index cards
- Pre-cut pictures (from *National Geographic* or similar source) showing the diversity of approaches in the worldwide human family to meeting basic human needs, such as: foods, and methods of food procurement and preparation; drinking water and ways water is obtained; shelter (homes); clothing; families, community groupings, employment and service opportunities, Houses of Worship of the world's religions.

1. Begin by reading the prayer that begins: "O Thou Kind Lord! Thou hast created all humanity from the same stock," Resource page 66. Allow a brief period for silent reflection. Read again the first two paragraphs.

Then read again the rest of the prayer. Discuss:

  - What happens to our eyes when we receive God's guidance?
  - What happens to our ears when we hear His Word?
  - How do we feel when we know how much God loves us?
2. Encourage your students to reflect and then list the gifts that 'Abdu'l-Bahá says that God has given all people. Discuss the meaning of the words used by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to assure that each student understands the meaning of this first part of the prayer.
3. Explain that the Creator has bountifully provided for all people everywhere, no matter who we are, or where we live He loves us, He provides for us, He gives us everything we need, and He invites us to help make the world a happy place for everyone. Read again the third paragraph of the prayer. Then discuss the questions:
  - How does our Creator want us to see each other?
  - What does He want the religions to do?
  - What does He want the nations to do?
4. Invite students list some of the gifts that God gives us, as you chart their answers on the board. Assist by putting their suggestions into major categories, such as: food, water, shelter, clothing, family, community, service to others, or the changeless faith of God.
5. Place a card with the name of one of the categories written on it, at different tables or areas of the room.
6. Show one pre-cut picture at a time. Briefly discuss how the bounty of the Creator allows us to meet our basic needs all over the world by adapting to the climate and geography in that region. Encourage students to take turns placing the pictures at the corresponding table or area. Alternately, older students may be asked to find their own pictures from suitable magazines.



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7. Conclude by summarizing: The Creator has provided bountifully for all people everywhere. He has given us food and water, shelter, clothing, family, and community, ways to show our love for Him, and to serve each other. Encourage the group to reflect silently on the gifts that the Creator gives us. No matter who we are or where we live, He has given us many gifts and most of all He has given us these beautiful teachings.
8. Encourage each student to think of one way to thank Him for these many gifts this week: Could we show our gratitude to our parents or other people that take care of us? Could we show kindness to other people at home or school or neighborhood? Could we show our gratitude through our prayers? Can we remind ourselves and our friends that we are all one family? Encourage each student to select one small action to carry out this week. Remember to invite the students to share their experiences at the next class.

**ACTIVITY: ONE RACE, THE HUMAN RACE**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand that separation and distinctions between people are accidental

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To discern how science is contributing to human knowledge regarding its essential oneness

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Engaging the mind and heart; Use of the arts; Use of memorization; Use of science

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Globe
- Flashlight

1. Invite the students to recall and share with the group the actions that they have taken to show their love for the All-Loving Creator of us all. Invite them to share what they remember from the prayer they studied at the last class. Read that prayer again, if desired.
2. Explain that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá answers many of the questions that people ask about the human family. For example, sometimes people use the word ‘race’ to describe members of the human family. Discuss: What do you think people mean when they say the word ‘race’?
3. Listen with care to all responses, and then explain that Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá teach us that there is only one race, the human race, and we are all descended from the same original parents, the parents of humanity.
4. Read through this passage several times, encouraging the students to assist each other to understand its meaning. Memorize this quotation:  

All humanity are the children of God; they belong to the same family, to the same original race. There can be no multiplicity of races, since all are descendants of Adam.

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 29*
5. While we know that there only one race, we humans keep trying to learn more and more about God’s beautiful creation, including our own selves. One question that many people wonder about is how God make all the beautiful different colors of human skin. Has anyone in this group also had this question?

**ACTIVITY CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE ➤**

## **TOPIC: IN THE PLAN OF GOD THERE IS NO DISTINCTION OR SEPARATION**

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6. Encourage students to share their reflections, then explain that as human beings, we all have color, or pigment, in our skins. This pigment is just perfect for letting just the right amount of sunlight into our bodies to help us grow and be healthy. Has anyone noticed that our skin can change its color?

7. Invite students to share their comments, then explain that when whole groups of people live thousands and thousands of years in the same part of the world, that wonderful creation of God – the human body – gradually adjusts. When people live where there is more sunshine near the equator, the body needs to absorb less of it. When people live where there is less sunshine, the body needs to absorb more of it. We all need just the right amount of sunlight and God has made our bodies so perfect that they adjust to amount of sunlight wherever we happen to live!

8. Share with the students the following explanation provided by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá:

Indeed, the world of humanity is like one kindred and one family. Because of the climatic differences of the zones, through the passing of ages colors have become different. In the torrid zone, on account of the intensity of the effect of the sun throughout the ages the black race appeared. In the frigid zone, on account of the severity of the cold and the ineffectiveness of the heat of the sun throughout the ages the white race appeared. In the temperate zone, the yellow, brown and red races came into existence. But in reality mankind is one race. Because it is of one race unquestionably there must be unity and harmony and no separation or discord.

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Power of Unity, p. 48*

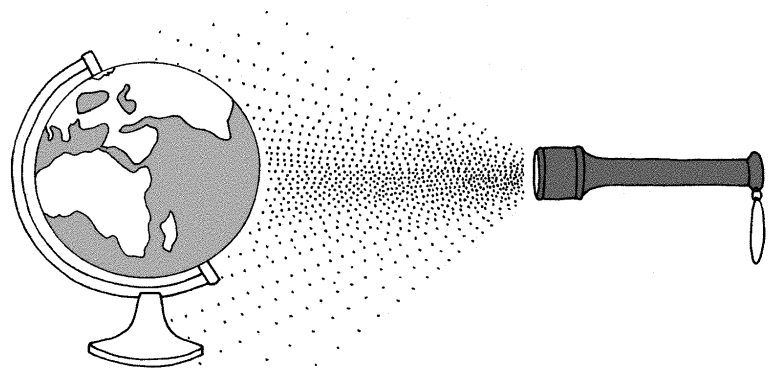
9. Using a globe, and a flashlight to represent the sun, demonstrate how the sun shines more directly – and therefore with more intensity – near the equator. Encourage the students to take turns placing their hands on the globe and moving them nearer to feel the greater

intensity of the light near the equator and the lesser intensity of the light as they move their hands further away. This is one of the ways that God created the diversity of skin color that we see today. Invite the students to show their own hands and admire the diversity of skin colors in the class. Notice that freckles consist of large amounts of highly concentrated pigment.

10. Explain that in this New Day, groups of people don’t stay in the same part of the world for hundreds and hundreds of years. We move around! Discuss: Do any of us have ancestors that lived somewhere other than where we are today? Can we find the places on the globe that our ancestors lived? Now that God has given us the means to travel, Bahá’u’lláh has brought the principle of unity in diversity. All the peoples that used to live far apart from each other can now live close together. We’re really one human family and Bahá’u’lláh came to teach us how to live together in harmony.

11. Discuss some of the ways that all human beings are the same.

12. Encourage students to identify actions that they can do to show their understanding that there is, in reality, only one race, the human race. Encourage each to carry out one of these actions this week.



**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**  
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**ACTIVITY: A BEAUTIFUL MIX OF COLORS**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand that people are fundamentally the same in spite of apparent distinctions and separations

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Engaging the mind and heart; Use of the arts; Direct use of the Bahá'í Sacred Writings

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Sturdy paper plates
- Paintbrushes
- Paper
- Newspaper
- Glue or glue sticks
- Poster paper
- Tempera paints: white, black, red, yellow
- Water cups
- Pencils
- Scissors *National Geographic* magazines or other source of photographs of diverse peoples. You may reuse the same pictures from the activity, The All Loving Provider.

1. First demonstrate all the steps in the painting activity.
2. Invite the students to explore further: Show them a prepared paint palette with a blob of each of these four colors: white, black, red and yellow, on a paper plate. Explain that all our different skin colors are a beautiful mix of these colors and even more. Invite the class to see how many variations they can create.
3. Have students work with a partner to create beautiful skin colors. Give each pair a palette with the four beginning colors, paintbrushes, a water cup and paper. Encourage them to trace their own hands several times on their paper.
4. Demonstrate the painting activity, then have students proceed:
  - Cover work area with newspaper.
  - In the center of the paper plate, carefully mix a little paint at a time, until you're satisfied that you've created a beautiful shade of skin color. Learners will discover that it is necessary to use some of each of the four paints to get the colors they want.
  - Use the mixed paint color to paint one of the hand shapes.
  - Repeat, creating a different hue for each hand on the paper.
5. When each pair has created several different shades of skin color, and painted the hand outlines on their papers, invite them to clean up their materials while the painted hands dry. Then cut out each hand.

**ACTIVITY CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE ➤**

**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**

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6. Bring the many individual painted hands to the full group and spread them all out on the floor or tabletop. Together, arrange all the shades and tones of colors, creating a beautiful display.
7. Invite students to find photographs showing the diversity of the human family and look for painted hands that match the skin colors in these photographs. Encourage students to create additional hand shapes with the colors of human skin not yet represented.
8. Encourage each student to each create a poster with cut-out painted hands encircling a quotation from the writings, such as:  

He Who is your Lord, the All-Merciful, cherisheth in His heart the desire of beholding the entire human race as one soul and one body.

*Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 214*

In the sight of God there is no distinction between whites and blacks; all are one. Anyone whose heart is pure is dear to God – whether white or black, red or yellow.

*'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 425*
9. Suggest that they display their posters in their homes, show them to their friends and family members and explain the fact that while we are many beautiful colors, we are all one human family. The teacher should also complete this action assignment. Remember to invite the students to share examples of these conversations at the next class.

### **ACTIVITY: FLOWERS OF ONE GARDEN**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand that people are fundamentally the same in spite of apparent distinctions and separations

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

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- “Flowers of the Garden” song sheet, Resource Page 67
1. Listen to the words of the song, “Flowers of the Garden.” Discuss the meaning of the song.
  2. Teach the students the song, “Flowers of the Garden.”

**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**  
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**ACTIVITY: TEACHING ONENESS**

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To discern how science is contributing to human knowledge regarding its essential oneness

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To demonstrate understanding of the essential oneness of humanity through actions

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Engaging the mind and heart; Use of science; Use of consultation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Poster from the previous activity
- People-color paint chips, if available (free from paint store)
- Poster board and markers
- Pencils and paper

1. Discuss the previous activity, perhaps while referring to one of the painted-hands posters: What colors did we use to make all the people-colors? What happened when we showed other people our posters?
2. Share with your students that for hundreds of years, scientists tried to figure out how to sort people into different races, looking at skin color and other physical differences. They finally gave up, because it is impossible to do! The Universal House of Justice tells us:  
  
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.  
  
*The Universal House of Justice,  
The Promise of World Peace, p. 13*
3. If available, spread out a collection of people-color paint chips. Invite students to select a shade they like. Read aloud the beautiful names given to each color. Try creating a beautiful pattern with these colors also. See how the Creator loves diversity!
4. Demonstrate other physical diversities besides skin color, such as hair color.
5. Encourage students to line themselves up based on how much red they have in their hair. Notice that reddish-black and reddish-blond are close.
6. Demonstrate the diversity of physical height: invite students to line themselves up from short to tall. As a group, come up with several advantages of being each height. These may be humorous. Think of other ways to enjoy the diversity in our group, by standing in groups according to answers to questions such as these: In which season were we born? What is our favorite snack? What subject is our favorite at school? How many people are in our families? Notice how we sort ourselves into different groups, depending on the question we ask. Then read and discuss the following words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá:

**ACTIVITY CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE ►**

**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**

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In physical bodies, in the law of growth, in sense endowment, intelligence, patriotism, language, citizenship, civilization and religion you are one and the same. A single point of distinction exists—that of racial color. God is not pleased with—neither should any reasonable or intelligent man be willing to recognize—inequality in the races because of this distinction.

But there is need of a superior power to overcome human prejudices, a power which nothing in the world of mankind can withstand and which will overshadow the effect of all other forces at work in human conditions. That irresistible power is the love of God. It is my hope and prayer that it may destroy the prejudice of this one point of distinction between you and unite you all permanently under its hallowed protection. Bahá'u'lláh has proclaimed the oneness of the world of humanity. He has caused various nations and divergent creeds to unite. He has declared that difference of race and color is like the variegated beauty of flowers in a garden....

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.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp.  
68-69

7. Consult together about ways that we can teach everyone about the oneness of the human family. What are some of the ways that we can make friends with people of many different backgrounds? How can we demonstrate through our actions the fact that we are all one race, the human race? How can we show the whole world that we love all the diversity that God created? What are the times and places that we can tell others this truth?
8. Set a classroom goal for each person to consciously seek out and become friends with someone whose ancestors came from a different part of the globe. Encourage students learn about their new friends: What do they share in common, how are they spiritually the same? What are some of the differences that make it fun to be friends? Would these friends also enjoy coming to this class?
9. Encourage students to write the goal on paper, discuss it with their families, and then share their progress at the next class.

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Resource Pages



## Hidden Word Dramatic Movement

O CHILDREN OF MEN! Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder at all times in your hearts how ye were created. Since We have created you all from one same substance it is incumbent on you to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land, that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. Such is My counsel to you, O concourse of light! Heed ye this counsel that ye may obtain the fruit of holiness from the tree of wondrous glory.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words, Arabic*, No. 68

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**THE ALL-LOVING PROVIDER**

O Thou kind Lord! Thou hast created all humanity from the same stock. Thou hast decreed that all shall belong to the same household. In Thy Holy Presence they are all Thy servants, and all mankind are sheltered beneath Thy Tabernacle; all have gathered together at Thy Table of Bounty; all are illumined through the light of Thy Providence.

O God! Thou art kind to all, Thou hast provided for all, dost shelter all, conferrest life upon all. Thou hast endowed each and all with talents and faculties, and all are submerged in the Ocean of Thy Mercy.

O Thou kind Lord! Unite all. Let the religions agree and make the nations one, so that they may see each other as one family and the whole earth as one home. May they all live together in perfect harmony.

O God! Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind.

O God! Establish the Most Great Peace.

Cement Thou, O God, the hearts together.

O Thou kind Father, God! Gladden our hearts through the fragrance of Thy love. Brighten our eyes through the Light of Thy Guidance. Delight our ears with the melody of Thy Word, and shelter us all in the Stronghold of Thy Providence.

Thou art the Mighty and Powerful, Thou art the Forgiving and Thou art the One Who overlooketh the shortcomings of all mankind.

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 10*



GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL  
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 DISTINCTION OR SEPARATION

Flowers of the Garden

Words and Music :  
 Mrs. Jerald Day

We are the flow - ers of God's gar - den, Bright as the morn - ing,

Fresh as the dawn. Love - ly in diff-'ren-ces, var - ied in love-li - ness.

We are the flow - ers of hu - man - i - ty.

2. I am a black rose, dark, exotic,  
 Poignant in beauty, fragrant as the night.  
 God has entrusted me with joy and mystery.  
 We are the flowers of humanity. (All together)

3. I am a red rose, sweet and lovely,  
 Gay as a bird on a bright summer day,  
 Singing the song of God, where'er I wander.  
 We are the flowers of humanity.

4. My color's golden, bright as sunshine  
 Gilding the ocean and the morning sky,  
 Soft as a summer mist, sweet in the valley.  
 We are the flowers of humanity.

5. I am a white rose, gleaming, shining,  
 Sparkling like snow on the mountainside,  
 Restless as whitecaps flung by the ocean's breeze.  
 We are the flowers of humanity.

6. Brown is my color, rich and glowing,  
 Full of the warmth of God's sweet love,  
 Heir to all nations, grandeur my destiny.  
 We are the flowers of humanity.

7. We are the flowers of God's garden  
 Bright as the morning, fresh as the dawn,  
 Lovely in differences, varied in loveliness.  
 We are the flowers of humanity.



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**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**

# **TOPIC: IN THE PLAN OF GOD THERE IS NO DISTINCTION OR SEPARATION**

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## **LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

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### **Stories & Articles:**

*Brilliant Star*: “When We Were One,” “What’s In Your Skin? Melanin!” “Beyond Zebras,” “Illusions” JA 99  
“Different Talents,” “Threads of Unity” JA 97  
*Herald of the South*, Oct 1993, “A New Perspective on Race,” Jan 1992, “Racism – A Social Disease”  
Speier, Peter, *People*  
Wolcott, Cynthia S., *The Gift Uniting the Human Family*

### **Worksheets and Coloring Pages:**

*Brilliant Star*: “Be a Friend to the Whole Human Race” Jan/Feb 92  
“Same and Different” Jul/Aug 99  
“What Colors are you?” Nov/Dec 91  
“Human Ecology” Sept/Oct 90  
“Plant Naught But the Rose” SO 96  
“The Earth is But One Country” MJ 02  
“Dream Dance” ND 97  
*Unity Flows from Every Coloring, A Coloring Book*

### **Activities:**

*Brilliant Star*: “Walk with the Same Feet” Sp Ed 95  
“Unity Goggles” Sp Ed 94

### **Music:**

Davis, Mary, *Take Me Up*, “He’s Just a Man To Me”  
Quinn, Marty and Wendy, *The Magic Bird*, “One Single Country,” 1993, Design Rhythmics  
Seals, Dan, *In a Quiet Room II*, “We are One,” also on *Voices of Bahá in Concert*  
Van Manens, *Healthy Planet, Healthy People*, “Building Bridges”  
Wright, Susan Lewis, *Calling All Colors*, “Calling All Colors,” Wooden Boats Music, 1994.

### **Games:**

*Brilliant Star*: “The Same Game” Sp Ed 95

### **Poetry:**

*Brilliant Star*: “One Heart” Jan/Feb 98  
“Dream Dance” Nov/Dec 97  
“Hooray for Skin” Nov/Dec 91

### **Other favorite resources:**

‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 148-151  
'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 24, 45, 68-69, 113  
Bahá'u'lláh, *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh*  
*Creating Patterns of Unity: Getting Beyond Prejudice*, A Study Guide and Index to “The Power of Race Unity”  
Ellis, Steven E., *Overcoming Barriers to Unity: An Essay on Racial and Cultural Issues* (pamphlet)  
Various, *Behold Me: Bahá'i Writings on Unity*, pages 21-27

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

# TO KNOW THAT HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL ALL ARE BORN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:  
LOVE, TOLERANCE, COMPASSION, RESPECT**

Man is the supreme Talisman. Lack of a proper education hath, however, deprived him of that which he doth inherently possess...The Great Being saith: Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 258-259

We have created you from one tree and have caused you to be as the leaves and fruit of the same tree, that haply ye may become a source of comfort to one another. Regard ye not others save as ye regard your own selves...

The Báb, *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 129

**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**

## **TOPIC: ALL ARE BORN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

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### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES**



#### **KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES**

- To know that all are born noble and good and with the potential for spiritual and intellectual growth
- To become familiar with the Bahá'í writings referring to the importance of developing one's spiritual attributes
- To know that the purpose of life is to develop one's innate spiritual potential

#### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Talk about how all people have the capacity to know and love God.
- Engage in a free exploration with containers of varying capacity.
- Read and memorize some of the writings regarding the purpose of life.
- Have the students trace themselves on large paper, and adorn themselves with heavenly attributes.
- Memorize and illustrate a quotation about spiritual distinction.



#### **WISDOM OBJECTIVES**

- To understand from the Bahá'í writings and other sources how all humanity shares common spiritual, physical, and intellectual capacities
- To understand that distinction, especially spiritual distinction, is desired by God

#### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Read and discuss writings concerning how all humanity shares common spiritual, physical, and intellectual capacities.
- Learn about people around the world and their eating, sleeping, praying, friendships, and intellectual activities (arts, music, slides) through stories and encyclopedias.
- Consult together on the ways one can become spiritually distinguished.

# TOPIC: ALL ARE BORN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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## SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

- To gain insight into the power and majesty of the human soul
- To discern the importance of prayer in one's spiritual development
- To discern the importance of education in one's spiritual development
- To perceive how every person, society and culture has a role in the unfoldment of a divine civilization

### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Set a personal goal for spiritual distinction.
- Pray and meditate on the power and majesty of the human soul.
- Develop an art project that illustrates a quotation from the writings about the importance of education.
- Study the building of the Bahá'í Houses of Worship and the Arc, as an illustration of how individuals and groups play a role in the unfoldment of divine civilization.
- Create a group project which requires a contribution from every individual.



## ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

- To demonstrate ability to memorize and recite passages from the Bahá'í writings on the inherent nobility of each person
- To demonstrate care and respect for all members of the human family
- To demonstrate an aspiration for distinction in all undertakings

### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Recite passages from the Bahá'í writings on the inherent nobility of each person at a Bahá'í event.
- Plan and carry out a service project that demonstrates care and respect for a person or group of people.
- Plan and carry out an event recognizing the distinction of individuals in service or work.
- Plan, carry out and evaluate a personal plan in the path of distinction.

**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**

## **TOPIC: ALL ARE BORN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

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### **Sample Activities**

#### **ACTIVITY: BORN NOBLE**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES:** To know that all are born noble and good and with the potential for spiritual and intellectual growth; To become familiar with the Bahá'í Writings referring to the importance of developing our spiritual attributes

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To discern the importance of education in the intellectual and spiritual education of all people

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í Sacred Writings; Engaging the mind and heart; Use of music; Use of recitation; Use of art; Use of memorization

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN.

#### **Materials Needed:**

- Passages (below) printed on cards
- Copy of Resource Page 80 for each student
- Small piece of poster board, cut into the shape of a key and labeled "Education"
- Homemade treasure chest or beautiful jewelry box
- Gems – inexpensive cut-glass sequins, colored aquarium marbles, or polished rocks
- Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh set to music; see List of Additional Resources, page 81
- Rocks: one polished and one rough, unpolished
- Electric rock tumbler, if available
- Chart paper and markers

#### **Advance Preparation:**

Prepare a beautiful, reverent environment for devotions and reflection. Print out these brief passages from the Hidden Words on cards:

"I loved thy creation, hence I created thee..."

"Love Me, that I may love thee..."

"Noble have I created thee..."

"I have created thee rich..."

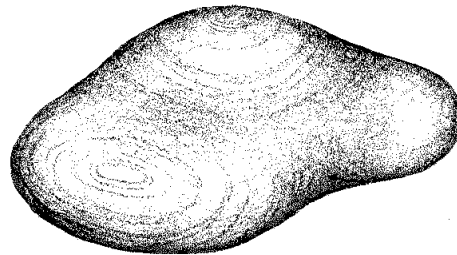
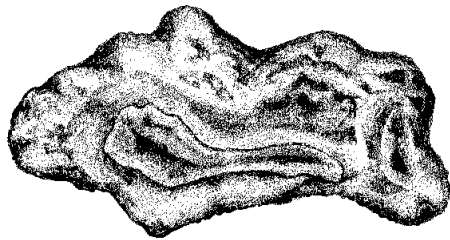
With a fine-point permanent marker, write the names of spiritual qualities such as patience, love, or wisdom on inexpensive cut-glass sequins, colored aquarium marbles, or polished rocks. Fill a homemade treasure chest or a jewelry box with these gems. Polished rocks may be purchased inexpensively in large quantities at garden supply centers.

1. Ask four students each to read one of the selections from the Hidden Words aloud, slowly and with feeling. Ask the listeners to reflect on the message of each passage. After the readings, consider playing one or more of these Hidden Words set to music; see List of Additional Resources, page 81.
2. Pose questions concerning these passages: Who loves us? Who do we need to love? Why did God create us? What has He placed in us? What do these passages tell us about the nature of our souls, and the nature of every soul?
3. Provide students with copies of the following quotation:  
Regard man as a mine, rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures and enable mankind to benefit therefrom.  
*Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 259*
4. Read the quotation aloud together, discussing the meaning of each phrase, and defining words as necessary.

## TOPIC: ALL ARE BORN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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5. Bring out the treasure chest. Suggest that this chest represents the mine of humanity of which Bahá'u'lláh speaks. Ask your students, "What causes it to reveal its treasure and enable mankind to benefit therefrom?" After they have had a chance to respond, demonstrate using the key labeled "Education" to open the box. Show students the beautiful gems inside.
6. Invite students to name some of the gems, or spiritual qualities, that we can discover in our own souls. If using polished rocks upon which these qualities have been written, invite students to each take one, and read their word aloud. List their replies on chart paper.
7. Discuss: how can we get the education to help our gems be revealed and enable mankind to benefit from them?
8. Display two rocks – one polished smooth, the other rough and irregular. Invite the students to identify which of these represents an uneducated person, and which rock represents the educated soul. Describe how a rough stone becomes smooth and polished, often through the action of water in river or ocean grinding it against other rocks, gradually rubbing the rough edges smooth and revealing its beautiful patterns and colors. Invite the students to compare this process with the process of education.
9. If an electric rock tumbler is available, place several rough rocks in it. Turn it on, and invite the students to check the progress of the rocks over the course of several days of tumbling.
10. Invite learners to select one of the gems from the treasure chest to keep as a reminder of our spiritual process of education and growth. Encourage them to take action this week to keep polishing the gems God has placed in them.



**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**

## **TOPIC: ALL ARE BORN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

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### **ACTIVITY: MEMORIZATION**

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To demonstrate ability to memorize and recite passages from the Bahá'í Writings on the inherent nobility of each person

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Use of art; Use of memorization; Use of recitation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Nice paper and pencils or pens
- Art supplies
- Glue or glue sticks
- Glitter or sequins
- Recorded music

1. Provide time for reflection on the selections from the Hidden Words and the passage from Gleanings used in the previous activity. Invite the students to choose one of the passages and copy it onto nice paper in their best penmanship. Encourage them to add artwork, glitter, or sequins, to express the message of those words. Play inspirational music as they work.
2. In small teams, recite the passage over and over until the students all memorize their selection.
3. Encourage them to share it with their families and friends, place it near their beds so that they can see it every day, and plan to recite it for opening devotions at the next class.

### **ACTIVITY: A MINE RICH IN GEMS**

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To gain insight into the power and majesty of the human soul

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To demonstrate care and respect for all members of the human family

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í Sacred Writings; Use of stories; Use of play; Use of consultation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Flip chart or chalk board
- Markers or chalk
- Optional – jewelry with gemstones to show students
- A large stack of old newspapers
- Small items to represent gems – see below
- Tape



## TOPIC: ALL ARE BORN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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### Advance preparation:

Collect as many newspapers as you can, enough to make a considerable pile of newspapers—the bigger the pile, the better! If the class is large, it's good to have enough newspapers to be able to make several large piles. You may wish to ask the students to help you collect the newspapers ahead of time, for you to use for this activity—usually people are really glad to get rid of old newspapers. Hide 'gems' within the newspapers in a location that is not visible to the students. Tape the 'gems' in place within the papers, so that the students have to work to find them. Use whatever seems best for 'gems'—colored bits of glass, candy, small coins, etc. Different items may represent different types of gems.

1. Introduce the activity by explaining that the entire class will be working together to create a story. The teacher will begin the story and then each student will add one sentence to the story. These simple guidelines will help us make the story:
  - Everyone must add a sentence.
  - Everyone listens with respect as each person speaks, one at a time.
  - The story cannot end before everyone has a chance to contribute at least once, although it may go on longer than one round, if desired.

The teacher records the story as it develops on a flip chart or blackboard for use later in the class.
2. Begin the story: "People said that there were diamonds buried in some nearby mountains, but no one knew exactly where they were. But our team found them and got the diamonds out! It all started when (student's name) overheard a fellow with a big, hairy beard say..."
3. Invite the students to think for a few moments about how they could add to the story, and then invite each student to contribute one sentence in turn.
4. When the story is complete, invite the students to consult and edit the story if they wish. During this process, the teacher needs to assure that all voices are heard and each person's ideas are incorporated into the story. It's better for the story to be a little strange and have everyone's contributions included, than to have the strongly verbal students rewrite the story according to their own taste.
5. When the students agree that the story is complete, read it aloud. Then invite the students to identify the all steps that had to be taken in order to get the diamonds. These steps might include:
  - Believing that there really were diamonds to be found
  - Figuring out how to find the diamonds
  - Mining the diamonds after they were found
  - Having patience and persevering over a long time to find the diamonds and mine them
6. Share with the students the following facts:

More than 200 tons of rock, gravel, and sand need to be blasted, crushed, and sifted to yield just one small diamond (1 carat) of gem quality.

Gold is considered quite valuable at about \$300 per ounce. Now let's consider diamonds, which are sold in carats. This will require a little math for conversion. A nice-quality, 1-carat diamond sells for about \$5,000, and there are 142 carats in one ounce. That means 1-carat diamonds sell for \$5,000 x 142, or about \$710,000 per ounce! In one hand, you can easily hold several million dollars in diamonds ([www.diamondhelpers.com](http://www.diamondhelpers.com)).
7. If available, show jewelry with gemstones in the light so that the gems sparkle. Help the students to realize that the high value placed on precious gems, such as diamonds, is related both to the difficulty in mining them, and their great beauty.

ACTIVITY CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE ➤

**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**

**TOPIC: ALL ARE BORN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

8. Read aloud twice the following passage from the Bahá'í writings, allowing time for reflection between the readings.

The Purpose of the one true God, exalted be His glory, in revealing Himself unto men is to lay bare those gems that lie hidden within the mine of their true and inmost selves.

Bahá'u'lláh,  
*Gleanings from the Writings of the Babá'u'lláh*, p. 287

9. Discuss: What are some of the ways that mining the gems within us is like mining gems from a mountain? Why do you think that Bahá'u'lláh compared human beings to a 'mine rich in gems of inestimable value?' How is growing spiritually like mining diamonds?

10. Explain that today we will be mining gems for others. Invite the students to find the gems in the 'mine' made of newspapers and place them in a central location.
11. After all the gems are found, read the quotations again. Discuss: What are some of the ways that we could share these ideas with others?
12. Invite each student to think of a person that would enjoy receiving the small gift of this gem, and make a plan to present the gift to a that person. Discuss: What will you say as you present the gift? Could you use some of Bahá'u'lláh's words? Practice presenting the gift.
13. At the next class, invite students to share the story of what happened when they gave the gift.

**ACTIVITY: SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To become familiar with the Bahá'í Writings referring to the importance of developing our spiritual attributes

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand that distinction, especially spiritual distinction, is desired by God

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Engaging the mind and heart; Use of art; Use of recitation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 40 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

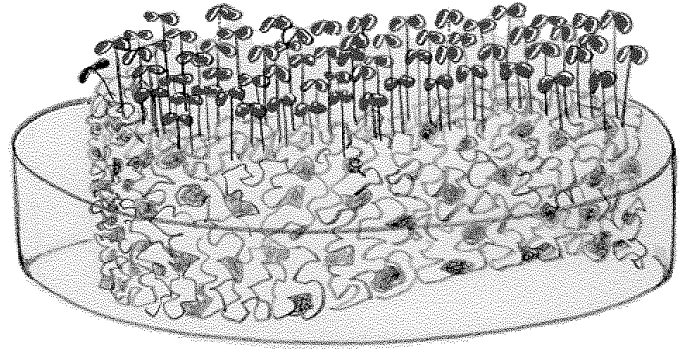
- Photocopies of passage, Resource Page 80
- Picture of hyacinths, or real hyacinths if available
- Drawing paper and art materials
- Sponges, cut into heart shapes
- Shallow dishes or lids
- Alfalfa (or other sprouts) seeds
- Water

1. Read aloud and provide students with photocopies of the following verse from Persian Hidden Word number 33:

...Sow the seeds of My divine wisdom in the pure soil of the heart, and water them with the waters of certitude, that the hyacinths of knowledge and wisdom may spring up fresh and green from the holy city of the heart.

## TOPIC: ALL ARE BORN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

2. Invite students to work with you to create artwork to explore the meanings of these words. Suggest they begin by drawing a large heart.
3. Welcome their ideas on how to sow the seeds of God's wisdom in our hearts. Examples: Praying, reading Bahá'u'lláh's writings, learning Bahá'u'lláh's teachings in Bahá'í school, memorizing the Words of Bahá'u'lláh, etc. Invite the students to draw their ideas as seeds being sown in their hearts.
4. Discuss: How can we water these seeds with the waters of certitude? How can we become firm in our faith? Examples: Service to the Bahá'í community, teaching the Faith, making sacrifices, etc. Invite learners to add artwork symbolizing this water for the seeds in our hearts.
5. Show students pictures of hyacinths. Invite them to compare knowledge and wisdom to flowers. What kinds of knowledge and wisdom grow in a heart that has been planted and watered? Examples: knowledge of the Faith, sciences and arts, various service skills, etc. Invite students to add flowers to their artwork – flowers representing this knowledge and wisdom, springing up fresh and green, from the holy city of their hearts.
6. Attach the passage to the heart.
7. Invite the students to show their art to the others. Point out the beauty in the diversity of their approaches. Remind the learners that just as the art of each person is unique, in the same way we each have our own contribution to make to the human world.
8. Create living reminders of the verse studied earlier. Provide students with sponges, cut into heart shapes, and place these in shallow dishes or lids.
9. Explain the analogy of this step of this activity. Assist students to understand the concepts represented by sponges, seeds and water.
10. Recite, *Sow the seeds of My divine wisdom in the pure soil of the heart*, as you sprinkle seeds over a heart-shaped sponge. Invite students to recite with you as they sprinkle their seeds.
11. Remind students of the importance of prayer and reading the writings as mention the *waters of certitude*, and gently sprinkle water on the seeds. Invite students to do the same. Express confidence that the sprouts will *spring up fresh and green*.
12. Practice explaining the Hidden Word as they show their paper heart and the sponge heart to others.
13. Place dishes in a dark place and keep sponges damp for the next several days. Once the seeds have sprouted, set the dishes in the sunlight.
14. Remember to notice the sprouts, as well as *hyacinths of knowledge and wisdom*, as they grow.



**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT HUMAN REALITY IS SPIRITUAL**

# **TOPIC: ALL ARE BORN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

## **ACTIVITY: ISFANDÍYÁR**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand that distinction, especially spiritual distinction, is desired by God

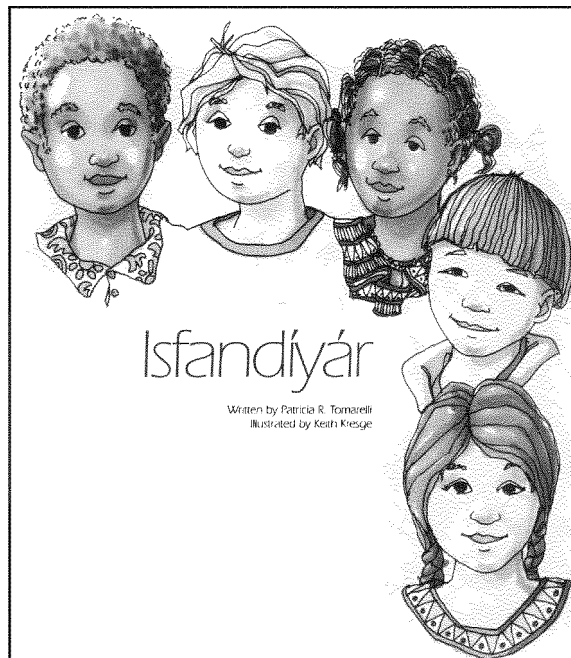
**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Use of stories; Use of consultation

**SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY:** 20 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. 1

1. Read aloud the story, Isfandíyár, pp. 95-99 of The Central Figures, Bahá'u'lláh, Volume 1. Discuss: Why do you think that 'Abdu'l-Bahá told the story of Isfandíyár when He was in America? What are some of the ways that Isfandíyár showed his spiritual distinction
2. Read aloud the story, “Thank You, Isfandíyár,” pp. 103-108, of that same book. Discuss: How did the modern Isfandíyár show spiritual distinction? What was his effect on others? What are some of the ways that we can become like Isfandíyár?



# TOPIC: ALL ARE BORN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

## ACTIVITY: FROM REFLECTION TO ACTION

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES:** To discern the importance of prayer in our spiritual development

To discern the importance of intellectual and spiritual education for all people

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To demonstrate an aspiration for distinction in all undertakings

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Engaging the mind and heart; Use of music; Use of reflection; Use of questioning; Use of consultation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Bouquet of hyacinths or other flowers
- Journals or writing paper and pencils or pens
- Prayer books
- Paper for wall chart

1. Display a bouquet of hyacinths or other flowers. Invite the students to consider the *hyacinths of knowledge and wisdom* that they hope will *spring up fresh and green from the holy city of the heart*.
2. Invite the students to close their eyes and imagine themselves as youth, and then as adults.
  - What knowledge and wisdom do they hope to manifest?
  - What skills, abilities, and talents do they hope to develop?
  - What types of service do they hope to be able to offer humanity?
3. Invite the students to share some of these visions of themselves in the future. Call attention to the beauty of the unity in diversity of the actions the students mention.
4. Create a quiet environment for reflection. Assign journal writing, individually meeting with non-writers and allow them to dictate their goals. Invite the students to draw a line down the middle of their paper and answer the above questions on one side of the line. On the opposite side, write down steps to help each goal be met. Examples: For what goals would prayer be an important step? What type of classes might one need to take to learn a topic? What experience could be gained to develop skills of service?
5. Rotate among the students as they develop their personal plans and consult about necessary steps: Encourage their visions of contributing to a divine civilization.
6. Create a wall chart on which students' progress towards some of these goals can be tracked.
7. Invite the students to join you in praying for the achievement of these goals.
8. Invite the students to acknowledge steps to progress toward their goals in subsequent classes. Celebrate victories – large and small.

**TOPIC: ALL ARE BORN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL  
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

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Resource Pages



I loved thy creation,  
hence I created thee...

Noble have I created  
thee...

Love Me, that I may  
love thee...

I have created thee  
rich...

Sow the seeds of My divine wisdom in the pure soil of thy heart, and water them with the water of certitude, that the hyacinths of My knowledge and wisdom may spring up fresh and green in the sacred city of thy heart.

~ Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words, Persian*, No. 33

# TOPIC: ALL ARE BORN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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## LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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### Stories & Articles:

*Brilliant Star*: “A Horse for Alberto” JA 92  
“Creation: An American Indian Tale” JA 99  
“Opening Our Hearts to God,” “Prayer Around the World” SO 98  
“Music from the Heart, Language of the Soul” ND 97

“Different Talents,” “Threads of Unity” JA 97  
*Herald of the South*, Oct 1998, “Unity in Diversity”  
Lemon, Jennifer, *The Story of Riaz Redfin*  
*Uniting the Human Family*

### Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

*Brilliant Star*: “Roots” JA 97  
“Temple Puzzle” SE 96  
“Grow Spiritually” MA 98

“Vision of a New World” SE 97  
*Tablet of the Heart, God and Me*, pp. 5, 9, 45

### Activities:

*Brilliant Star*: “Do You Have Rocks in Your Feeling Box?” SE 94  
“Power of Attraction” MJ 95  
“Glorious Colors Color Bag,” “Clay of Love” ND 97  
“Explore the Stars/Star Log” SE 96

### Music:

Gordi, Munro, *Unity in Diversity*, “Unity in Diversity,”  
“Unity Prayer,” “Oh Bahá’u’lláh, Help Us Make One”  
Gordi, Munro, *The Gift*, “Unity in Diversity”  
Grammer, Red, *Down the Do-Re-Mi*  
Grammer, Red, *Hello World!* “Digging for Diamonds”  
Grammer, Red, *Teaching Peace*, “I Think You’re Wonderful,” “See Me Beautiful”

Janti, Lisa and Alcivar, Bob, *Mystic Voice from the Realm of the Invisible*  
Levine, Matthew, *The Big Idea*, “Sushi in the Kremlin”  
Miller, Grant Hindin, *Sacred Verses*  
Parrish, Paul, *Selections from the Bahá’í Writings*  
Remembrance Ensemble, *Selections from the Hidden Words of Bahá’u’lláh*

### Games:

*Brilliant Star*: “Mining Your Gems” SE 93

“Happy Clams and Self-fishes” MJ 93

### Poetry:

*Brilliant Star*: “Roots” JA 97  
“I Know I’m Young” MJ 97

“Connection” ND 96

### Reference:

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 23-25, 148-149, 195-196, 302-305  
‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 212-216  
Bahá’u’lláh, *Hidden Words of Bahá’u’lláh*, Wilmette: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 1975  
Blumenthal, Erik, *Believing in Yourself: A Practical Guide to Personal Development*  
Blumenthal, Erik, *The Way to Inner Freedom: A Practical Guide to Personal Development*  
Popov-Kavelin, Linda, *The Virtues Guide*  
Rutstein, Nathan, *A Way Out of the Trap: An Innovative and Unique Ten-Step Program for Spiritual Growth*  
Rutstein, Nathan, *Winning Spiritual Battles*, New Delhi: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 1989.  
Vafai, Shahin, *The Path Toward Spirituality: Sacred Duties and Practices of the Bahá’í Life*  
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### Other favorite resources:

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

