Oneness

Race Unity



Level One

TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UNITY IN DIVERSITY THE BEAUTY AND PURPOSE OF DIVERSITY IN THE REALM OF CREATION

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

The Creator of all is One God.

From this same God all creation sprang into existence, and He is the one goal, towards which everything in nature yearns....

Consider the world of created beings, how varied and diverse they are in species, yet with one sole origin. All the differences that appear are those of outward form and colour. This diversity of type is apparent throughout the whole of nature.

...Likewise, when you meet those whose opinions differ from your own, do not turn away your face from them. All are seeking truth, and there are many roads leading thereto. Truth has many aspects, but it remains always and forever one.

Do not allow difference of opinion, or diversity of thought to separate you from your fellow-men, or to be the cause of dispute, hatred and strife in your hearts.

Rather, search diligently for the truth and make all men your friends.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, pp. 51-53

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



• To know the purpose of the multiple diversities in the realm of creation

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Study how the diversity of plants and animals contribute to the betterment of the workings of the universe.
- Learn a song that is a "round" and discuss how harmony is created through singing different parts.
- Plan a cooking activity showing how the different ingredients come together make a whole.
- Read and memorize the Bahá'í writings on diversity.



• To understand the essential necessity and benefits of diversity to the well-being of humanity

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Learn the process of consultation, and how bringing in diverse ideas aids the process of finding a solution.
- Conduct a consultation activity on the benefits of diversity to the well-being of humanity.
- Brainstorm on the benefits of diversity to the well-being of humanity.

- Through the arts, develop analogies about the benefits of diversity.
- Giving each child only one color, ask the group to create a finished product.

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

• To discern the purpose of diversity in all the realms of creation and appreciate the diversities that are part of one's own life

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Pray and meditate about the diversities in one's own life.
- Invite students to reflect upon and develop their personal diagrams of the diversity of people in their lives and their separate contributions to their lives.
- Develop a skit depicting the importance of diversity.



• To demonstrate ability to articulate the beauty and purpose of diversity in all the realms of creation

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Create a diverse art exhibit with diverse contributions.
- Plan an event which showcases unity in diversity. Invite diverse individuals and groups.
- Perform a dance or drama that demonstrates unity in diversity.

- Give speeches on different aspects of diversity.
- Share writings from the Faith that demonstrate a Bahá'í appreciation for diversity in all the realms of creation.

Sample Activities ACTIVITY: THE WEB OF LIFE

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To discern the purpose of diversity in all the realms of creation and appreciate the diversities which are part of one's own life

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate the ability to articulate the beauty and purpose of diversity in all the realms of creation

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

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN. Materials Needed:

- Pictures of various elements of a natural environment, sketched or cut from nature magazines or calendars
- Large index cards or pieces of poster board
- Marker

Hole punch

Minimum of 6 participants

Yarn and scissors

Advance Preparation:Select enough nature pictures so that each student will have one. Choose a natural environment, such as a meadow, forest, seashore, desert, etc. familiar to your students. Select pictures or make simple sketches of elements from that environment, including: a common tree, grass or flowering plant; insects; animals; and essential components such as the sun, water, soil and air. Mount pictures on index cards or poster board. Write the name of each element or creature on the card. Punch two holes at the top corners of each card. Run yarn through, and tie loops so that the cards may be placed around the students' necks like name tags.

1. Share these words from 'Abdu'l-Bahá: ...Among the parts of existence there is a wonderful connection and interchange of forces, which is the cause of the life of the world and the continuation of these countless phenomena.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Divine Art of Living, pp. 107-108

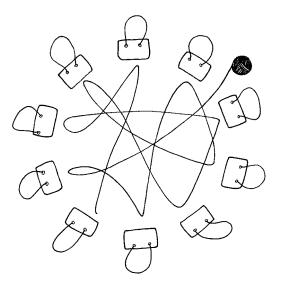
- 2. Spread out the prepared nature pictures and explain that the connections among these parts of existence enable their life.
- 3. Hold up each card in turn and briefly describe the role this creature or part of the environment in helping to sustain life, pointing out how it directly interacts with the other components pictured.
- 4. Distribute the cards randomly and encourage students to place them around their necks, picture side facing out.

- 5. Introduce the web of life and invite students to stand in a circle. Encourage them to look at the images and notice the connections among them: What do they eat? Where do they live? What eats them or lives in or on them? What other connections can they find?
- 6. Show students a large ball of yarn. Tell them that they will use this yarn to physically connect each part of the natural world with every other part, creating, as they do, a representation of the web of life.
- 7. Demonstrate the process: begin by handing the ball of yarn to the person labeled with, for example, a tree squirrel. The person with the squirrel card holds the yarn and looks for something else in the environment that he or she is directly connected to; for example, an oak tree. The "squirrel" says, "I am a squirrel, and I'm connected to the oak tree because I build my nest in its trunk, and love to eat its acorns." Then the "squirrel" tosses the ball of

GOAL: TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UNITY IN DIVERSITY TOPIC: THE BEAUTY AND PURPOSE OF DIVERSITY IN THE REALM OF CREATION

yarn to the "oak tree," holding on to the end, so that a line of yarn connects them. Now it is the "oak tree's" turn. He or she says, "I am an oak tree and I am connected to the sun, because I need sunlight for my green leaves to grow." The "oak tree" tosses the ball to the "sun," keeping hold of the yarn that connected him or her to the "squirrel" in one hand.

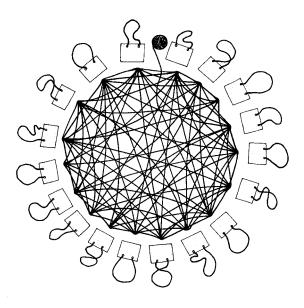
8. Continue in this way, making yarn connections, until all possible ways of directly connecting various elements of the ecosystem have been made.



- 9. Encourage the group to experiment with the strength and flexibility of their web: try moving the whole web up or down together, or walk in a circle together. Try supporting a lightweight object, such as a stuffed animal, on the web. Invite students to close their eyes while you pluck one string, and see if they could feel it, even if not directly connected to that string.
- 10. Re-read 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words about the "wonderful connection and interchange of forces," and voice appreciations for the part each component plays in continuing life in the world of creation.

Invite the students to turn over their name tags, then continue building the web of life, by describing the connections they have with each other, such as, "I'm LaKeesha and I'm connected with Zach because we go to the same school."

11. After identifying this second round of connections, carefully lay the web down on the ground, as a visual reminder of those connections. Invite students to place their cards at their point on this web design. Invite them to show and explain the web of life to others after class.



- 12. Encourage students to watch for components of the web of life throughout the week. Remind them that living things can be found interacting in urban environments, on school grounds, parks and their own backyards. Encourage them to use 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words to describe these connections to their friends and family members.
- 13. Invite students to share their observations during your next class.

ACTIVITY: INSPIRATION FROM 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know the purpose of the multiple diversities in the realm of creation

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

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 15 MIN. Materials Needed:

Samples of natural items

 Read aloud the following selection from 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

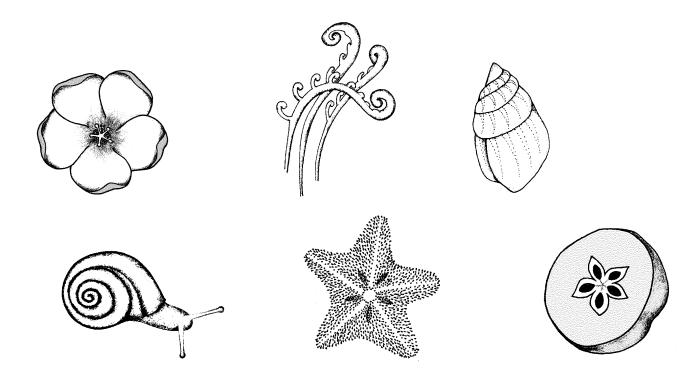
The Creator of all is One God.

From this same God all creation sprang into existence, and He is the one goal, towards which everything in nature yearns...

Consider the world of created beings, how varied and diverse they are in species, yet with one sole origin. All the differences that appear are those of outward form and color. This diversity of type is apparent throughout the whole of nature.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, pp. 51-52

- 2. Show the students some examples of natural items that display unity in diversity:
 - 5-pointed-star shape: a sea star, apple cut in half top to bottom, 5 petal flower
 - spirals: snail- or sea-shell, fern uncurling, some seeds, millipede at rest
- 3. Allow time for exploring the items. Marvel at the unity of design in natural objects that are so different from each other!



ACTIVITY: NATURE WALK

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know the purpose of the multiple diversities in the realm of creation **SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To discern the purpose of diversity in all the realms of creation and appreciate the diversities which are part of one's own life

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engaging the mind and heart; Use of questioning, Use of manipulatives; Use of nature; Use of reasoning

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN. Materials Needed:

- Park or natural area for walk
- 1. Introduce children to the exploratory nature walk you will be taking. Invite them to find and appreciate diversity in the world of creation, and to consider how all these varied elements are yearning toward God, the Creator of all.
- 2. Offer the following possible categories of items to look for, depending on what is available in your area:
 - Leaves: How many different edges (smooth, toothed, etc.), veins patterns (parallel, palmate, branching, etc.), shapes, colors, smells can be found?
 - Rocks and minerals: How many different colors, crystals, textures (layered, solid, composit, rough, smooth, etc.) can be found?
 - Birds: How many different colors, types of songs, types of nests, flight patterns (gliding, flapping, hopping to branches, etc.) can be found?
 - Spiral Patterns: can you find any?
 - 5-Pointed-Star Shapes: are there any of these?

Take the quotation with you, to organize your search for diverse object. Repeat during your walk these words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

This diversity of type is apparent throughout the whole of nature.

- For older students, list categories of diversities as a scavenger hunt and allow team explorations. With younger students, walk together, finding and exclaiming over their discoveries – all the differences of outward form and color they find.
- 4. When possible, bring items such as leaves or rocks back to class. Create displays to celebrate differences and similarities.

ACTIVITY: DIVERSITY OF COLOR

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know the purpose of the multiple diversities in the realm of creation **SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To discern the purpose of diversity in all the realms of creation and appreciate the diversities which are a part of one's own life

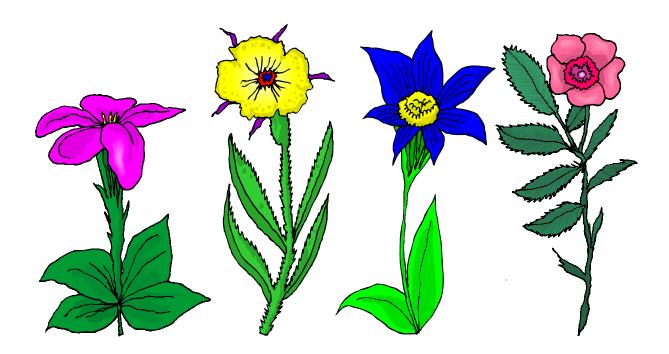
INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of the Bahá'í Sacred Writings; Engaging the mind and heart; Use of questioning

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 10 MIN.

1. Read aloud the following quotation:

Consider the flowers of a garden... How unpleasing to the eye if all the flowers and plants, the leaves and blossoms, the fruits the branches and the trees of that garden were all of the same shape and colour! Diversity of hues, forms, and shape, enricheth and adorneth the garden, and heighteneth the effect thereof.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 292 2. Invite the students to name their favorite colors, and tell how that color makes them feel. Record their responses to use later.



ACTIVITY: DIVERSITY OF FLOWERS

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know the purpose of the multiple diversities in the realm of creation **SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To discern the purpose of diversity in all the realms of creation and appreciate the diversities which are a part of one's own life

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

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 50 MIN. Materials Needed:

- Flower garden to visit, or bouquet of assorted flowers, or flower catalogs, magazines or calendars
- Poster or tempera paints, paintbrushes, water cups, and mixing cups
- Newspaper
- White poster board, cut in various size rectangles, from 5" x 10" to 10" x 22", each folded in half, to stand up like an easel. See examples on p. 95
- Create an opportunity for students to see and appreciate the beauty of flowers of different hues, forms and shapes. Take a walk through a flower garden, or display a bouquet of diverse blooms, or invite them to look through flower catalogs.
- 2. Invite the students to select a favorite flower from among the ones they see.
- 3. Refer to the quotation above and encourage students to paint a life size picture of their favorite flowers, in their favorite colors if they like.
- 4. Invite the students to select a poster board easel on which to paint their flowers. Leave one side of the easel blank.
- 5. Assist the students in mixing the paint colors they especially like.
- 6. Cover the work space with newspaper. The students may find it easier to flatten the poster board while painting. Carefully paint on only one face of the easel, leaving one side blank.

- 7. When finished and the paint has dried, invite the students to stand up their easels and arrange their flowers as a garden.
- 8. Invite students to walk through their garden. Gather where all can sit and appreciate the diversity of hues. Enjoy reading aloud the list of feelings associated with each person's favorite color.
- 9. Re-read again 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words while appreciating your garden.

Consider the flowers of a garden...

How unpleasing to the eye if all the flowers and plants, the leaves and blossoms, the fruits the branches and the trees of that garden were all of the same shape and colour! Diversity of hues, forms, and shape, enricheth and adorneth the garden, and heighteneth the effect thereof.

> 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 292

Leave the garden standing for the next lesson.

ACTIVITY: THE GARDEN OF HUMANITY

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To understand the essential necessity and benefits of diversity to the wellbeing of humanity

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate ability to articulate the beauty and purpose of diversity in all the realms of creation

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

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN. Materials Needed:

- National Geographic or other sources of photographs of diverse peoples
- Scissors
- Glue or glue stick
- Painted flower garden from previous lesson
- 1. Gather children, and read together these sections from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's talk in "Beauty and Harmony in Diversity," October 28:

If you meet those of a different race and color from yourself...be glad and show them kindness. Think of them as different colored roses growing in the beautiful garden of humanity, and rejoice to be among them.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 53

- 2. Present some of the different colored roses of humanity: show photographs of peoples from all over the world. Share examples of various contributions of members of the human family to human civilization, Resource Pages 96-97.
- Invite the students to create a different flower garden – this time, one made up of the various peoples of the world! Provide many magazines or calendars from which they can cut photographs of people.
- 4. Glue photographs, singly or as a collage, on the other side of their painted flowers.

- 5. When all the poster boards have been decorated with people, set them up as before, and invite the class to walk through their garden of flowers as well as the flowers of humanity.
- 6. Encourage students to describe the beauty of the diversity of the human family. Read again the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and add them to the garden:

Consider the flowers of a garden...

How unpleasing to the eye if all the flowers and plants, the leaves and blossoms, the fruits the branches and the trees of that garden were all of the same shape and colour! Diversity of hues, forms, and shape, enricheth and adorneth the garden, and heighteneth the effect thereof.

> 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 292

7. Allow students the opportunity to play in and with their garden – rearranging the flowers and the people to bring joy.

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- 8. Invite the community into the garden at an upcoming Feast or devotional gathering, with students serving as guides.
- 9. Encourage the students to watch for the natural beauty of God's creation in the faces of people they meet everyday. Beyond physical beauty, can they discover ways that their family members, friends, and others reflect the beauty of God? Encourage the students to discover at least one example of a person reflecting the beauty of God this week. Remember to invite the students to share their examples with each other during the next class.



The Garden of Humanity

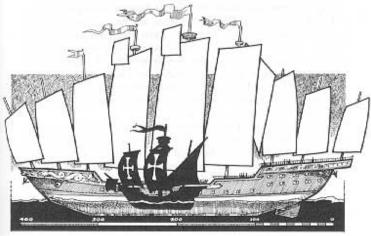
DID YOU KNOW?

That when we eat...

- **Peanut Butter**...we need to thank the Africans, who first grew peanuts as a food crop?
- **Breakfast Cereal**...we need to thank the Asian peoples who first grew rice (Rice Krispies), the Mid-Eastern peoples who first grew wheat and oats (Wheaties and Cheerios), and the Amerian Indian peoples who first grew corn (Corn Chex) as food crops?
- **Chocolate and Vanilla Ice Cream**...we need to thank the American Indian peoples, who first grew the plants from which chocolate and vanilla are made?
- **Potato Chips**...we need to thank the American Indian peoples, who first grew potatoes as a food crop?
- And, if your teacher likes Coffee or Tea...we need to thank the African peoples, who first grew coffee, and the Asian peoples who first grew tea for beverages?

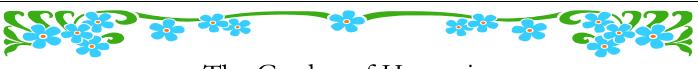
That the world's first great sailing fleet was Chinese?

Zheng He (or Zhenghe; earlier spelling: Cheng Ho) made a series of seven great voyages over the years 1405-1433. When the Chinese emperor decided to tell the world about the restoration of the Ming dynasty, he chose Zheng He to carry the word by sea. Zheng He sailed around southeast Asia and across the Indian Ocean all the way to east Africa. The fleets usually contained over 300 ships, many of which were very large. Some were over 400 feet long and 160 feet wide. Such fleets carried over 28,000 men, travelling in relative luxury (they ate fresh fish, keep alive in separate, water-filled compartments). These great sailing ships were technologically far better than anything the Europeans had at the time.



Zheng He's treasure ship (Jour hundred Jeet) and Columbus's St. Maria (cighty-five feet). (Illustration by Jan Adkins, 1993.)

[Source: http://home.apu.edu/~jmcgarv/apworld/unit2/week9.html]



The Garden of Humanity

DID YOU KNOW?

That American Indians were great pyramid builders?

Egypt is sometimes thought of as "the land of the pyramids," because of the Great Pyramids built by the ancient Egyptians. However, the many different American Indian peoples built a large number of massive pyramids that rival the Egyptian ones:

- The "Sun Pyramid" at Teotihuacan in the heart of Mexico has a base side of 738 feet almost identical to the base of the Great pyramid in Egypt. In its day (around AD 100-200), this pyramid was located in the sixth largest city in the world with a population of 60,000-80,000 people.
- In Cholula, Mexico, is said to be the largest pyramid in the world, the Tepanapa. It is so ancient that it looks like a giant hill with trees growing on it! But it is a pyramid built thousands of years ago so long ago it was covered and forgotten.
- In the Yucatan area of Mexico lie the impressive remains of the Mayan civilization, with countless pyramids.
- In Illinois, the remains of the Cahokian civilization include mounds of earth in pyramid-like formations. One of these, Monk's Mound (http://www.survive2012.com/america_pyramids.html), covers 16 acres! It has a base and total volume greater than that of the largest in Egyptian pyramid.

That the earliest known artists were Africans?

Perhaps 40,000 years before humans were painting the famous cave paintings in Europe, Africans were making the first know works of art. The earliest known art object was found in South Africa. It is a 77,000 year-old nodule of hematite that has engraved geometrical designs.

These early engravings are the oldest pieces of art, and there are also some other amazing things about African art:

- A cave in Namibia—known as Apollo 11 because it was being excavated by scientists when the Apollo 11 mission landed on the moon—was continuously occupied by humans for more than 70,000 years! In the cave are some of the earliest known cave paintings of mankind, being perhaps 28,000 years old. While cave paintings found in Europe are a few thousand years older than this, we have to consider that, given the origins of humanity in Africa, and the finds scientists are making, it seems likely that Africa is the cradle of the world's art.
- In the Tsodilo Hills of Botswana, the San (Bushmen) painted more than 4,500 rock paintings against the remarkable stone faces of the hills. With one of the highest concentrations of rock art in the world, Tsodilo has been called the *Louvre of the Desert*. This exceptional site is of such importance to the artistic heritage of humanity that it has been named a World Heritage Site by the United Nations!

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories & Articles:

Brilliant Star: "Pebbles on the Beach," MA 93 "Beyond the Storm," ND 94 "Dawn is Approaching," JF 95 "From Prejudice to Peace," MA 95 "The Most Great Gardener," MA 95 "How Long will it Take?" MA 96 "United Nations: A Step Towards Unity," JF 00 "Catching Health," SO 99

Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

Brilliant Star: "How Long will it Take?" MA 96 "Fabulous Cell Facts" JA 96 "Who Made It?" "Hidden Signs of God," "Roots" JA 97 Unity Flows from Every Color, A Coloring Book

Activities:

Brilliant Star: "Why is Unity Like a Fruit Salad?" SO 92 "Sphere's of Unity," JF 94 "Building Bridges," SE 94

"My Own Mandala" JF 01

"Virtuewoman," JA 99

"Beyond Zebras," JA 99

"Ruby's Red Dream," ND 98

"Different Talents," JA 97

"To See the World," JA 96

"Admiring Nature with 'Abdu'l-Bahá," "Wonders of

the World," "The Rose of Love," MJ 99

"Fur, Fins, Feathers and More," MA 99

Music:

Bird, "Unity," "Turn this World Around"
Grammer, Red, Happy Ayyám-i-Há, "Brothers and Sisters"
Grammer, Red, Teaching Peace, "Hooray for the World," "Barnyard Boogie"
Encore, "We Are Bahá'ís," "To the Planters of Trees," "When Will it Be," "Let it Be This Generation," "Unity House"
Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, Vol. 1, "God Is One"
Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, Vol. 2, "Bahá'u'lláh's Getting Us Ready," "We Will Have One World," "World Citizens"
Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, Vol. 3, "We Are One," "One Planet, One People, Please"
Lote Tree, "One Planet, One People, Please"
This is Faith, "Come Together World," "Vision," "Tend the Garden"
Teaching Peace, "Teaching Peace," "Listen"
We have Come to Sing Praises, "In this Day, Bahá'u'lláh," "If We Ever Needed Love"
Brilliant Star: "On This Living Earth" MJ 99 (sheet music)
"Oneness Rap" JA 95 (sheet music)

Poetry:

Brilliant Star: "A House in Lome/Division in Africa," MA 96

Reference:

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

World Wide Web:

http://www.savethechildren.org/ Great site for a variety of children's pictures.

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.

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

Therefore strive earnestly and put forth the greatest endeavor toward the accomplishment of this fellowship and the cementing of this bond of brotherhood between you. Such an attainment is not possible without will and effort on the part of each...Love and unity will be fostered between you, thereby bringing about the oneness of mankind. For the accomplishment of unity between the colored and whites will be an assurance of the world's peace.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Foundations of World Unity, p. 35

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

Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 34

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To know about 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to North America and His clear example regarding the abolition of racial prejudice
- To become familiar with the instructions and hopes of 'Abdu'l-Bahá concerning the elimination of racial prejudice that are provided to the American Bahá'í community in The Promulgation of Universal Peace and The Tablets of the Divine Plan
- To know the talks of 'Abdu'l-Bahá delivered throughout the United States

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Tell students stories from the history of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to North America found in '*Abdu'l-Bahá*, by H. Balyuzi, which illustrate His uncompromising demonstration of the principle of oneness.
- Have students engage in games such as puzzles or group memorization activities and learn by heart extracts of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's talks while in the United States.
- Arrange students in groups and have them list the main points made by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His talks related to racial unity, and share these with the rest of the class.
- Memorize prayers for youth by 'Abdu'l-Bahá that focus on the spiritual strength to follow the wishes and example of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and work for the elimination of prejudice.
- Sing songs which remind students of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's unique station as the Exemplar of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings.
- Create a large map and have students discover and explain the places where 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave talks on this topic.



• To gain insight into the spiritual qualities demonstrated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá while He was in the United States and in situations where He encountered racial prejudice

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Brainstorm with students the spiritual qualities demonstrated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in such situations and through the use of the arts have students explore in pairs the images that these spiritual qualities produce.
- Encourage students to develop a set of questions that they might pose to the leaders of those cities visited by 'Abdu'l-Bahá during His visit and role play a conversation they might have with the leaders of those places today regarding racial unity and justice.

Spiritual perception objectives

- To discern one's own obligation to follow the instructions and example of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and nurture, encourage, and safeguard every minority
- To strive to acquire and develop those qualities demonstrated by the Master

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Invite students to explore opportunities that exist for them to include any individual or group that has been excluded in friendships, activities, and events.
- Have students make charts of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's qualities and actions and identify the possibilities that exist in their own life to acquire these qualities.
- Invite students to role play situations they may face with regard to encountering

racial prejudice, and act following the instructions and example of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

• Use reflective activities to have students imagine being with 'Abdu'l-Bahá in situations where He encountered racial prejudice in the United States. Have students take on characters present at the time and write about their thoughts and feelings regarding 'Abdu'l-Bahá's fearless demonstration of the principle of oneness and His genuine love for all people.



ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

- To render service to those who have suffered because of racial injustice in the spirit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá
- To teach others about the principles of oneness and freedom from racial prejudice through their own example
- To share with others the stories learned from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to the United States
- To deliver memorized extracts from talks delivered by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the United States

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Have students plan how to initiate consultation at the Feast or with the Local Spiritual Assembly on appropriate projects that can render service to those who have suffered because of racial prejudice.
- Plan a personal, family, or community project to render service.
- Have older students prepare to read or tell stories about 'Abdu'l-Bahá and this topic to younger students.
- Have students write letters to the leaders of cities visited by 'Abdu'l-Bahá while in the United States. Have them share their learning from His talks and the example He set and include beautifully written and

illuminated extracts from His talks on racial unity and the abolition of racial prejudice.

- Have students plan a "Visit with 'Abdu'l-Bahá" for the community to share their learning, recite memorized passages and prayers and present a short drama on this topic.
- Have students make a weekly, monthly, or yearly plan of action with goals on this topic, and find ways to access their progress on a regular basis.

TOPIC: Following the Example of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY: STORIES 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ IN AMERICA

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know about 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to North America and the clear example He set with regard to the abolition of racial injustice

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To gain insight into the spiritual qualities demonstrated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá while He was in the United States and in situations where He encountered racial prejudice

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To share with others the stories learned from the history of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to the United States

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engaging the mind and heart; Use of memorization; Use of stories; Use of questioning; Use of consultation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN Materials Needed:

- Large photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, if desired
- Copies of prayer, Resource Page 110
- Copies of stories, Resource Pages, 106-108
- Chart paper and markers
- Box of chocolates, or blackberries
- 1. If available, display the photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Open the session by reading the prayer for humanity revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Provide photocopies of the prayer, Research Page 110.
- 2. Invite students to choose one or more sentences from the prayer to memorize. Memorize these brief passages in teams.
- 3. Explain to your students that when 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited America in 1912, there was much prejudice between blacks and whites. People of different races didn't mix together socially – sometimes even Bahá'í meetings were held separately for blacks and whites! 'Abdu'l-Bahá taught about the oneness of humanity and the elimination of prejudice between whites and blacks, through His actions and His words.
- 4. Read or tell the stories provided, Resource Pages, 106-108). Serve chocolate or blackberries to demonstrate the Master's actions, rejoicing in His example.

- 5. After each story, pose the question: What spiritual qualities did 'Abdu'l-Bahá demonstrate? Encourage students to identify how or where in the story each quality was manifested. List these qualities on chart paper. Then discuss: What obstacles did He overcome with these spiritual qualities? List the obstacles on chart paper.
- 6. Invite students to identify ways that they can demonstrate these same spiritual qualities in their lives. Encourage them to plan at least one action to demonstrate one of these qualities this week. Remember to invite students to share the results of their actions at the next class.
- 7. Encourage the students to work in small groups, with each group practicing one of the stories, to retell to the whole group. Explain that, as a way of showing respect to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, we do not portray Him in drama or as we retell the story.

8. Provide each student with the opportunity to retell one of the stories in class. Encourage each student to retell this story to a friend before the next class. Discuss: Who would enjoy hearing this story, a friend, brother, sister, parent, neighbor, classmate? When and where could we tell this story? Teacher and students alike should plan to tell someone this story. Remember to share your experiences at the next class.

9. Arrange for the students to tell these stories to the community, perhaps at an upcoming devotional gathering. Remember to invite the public and your friends.

ACTIVITY: OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES: To discern our obligation to follow the instructions and example of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; To recognize the obstacles presently in our own path and decide ways to overcome these challenges

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To teach others about the principle of oneness and freedom from racial prejudice through their own example

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

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN. Materials Needed:

- List of spiritual qualities demonstrated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá from stories shared in the previous activity
- List of key points from summary of guest's stories
- Butcher paper
- 5 or 6 lumps of clay, 3" 4" diameter
- 6 toothpicks
- 6 strips of poster board 12" x 2"
- Song, "Behold a Candle/Look at Me, Follow Me"

Advance Preparation:

Draw a roadway, with several twists and turns, the width of a toy car, on butcher paper. Have a starting point, "Today," and endpoint, "Race Unity." Decorate the endpoint with drawings of flowers or happy, diverse people.

- 1. Re-introduce the lists of challenges and spirituals qualities discerned from the stories of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in America.
- 2. Introduce the roadway you have created. Point out to your students that it begins where we are today and will continue until we are all realizing the hopes and following the example of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

- Prepared pledge papers
- Crayons or markers
- 3 index cards, cut in half
- Tape
- Small toy car
- Chart paper and markers
- Pencils
- 3. Read aloud and discuss the following quotation:

A long and thorny road, beset with pitfalls, still remains untraveled.... On the distance they cover, and the manner in which they travel that road, must depend...the operation of those intangible influences which are indispensable to the spiritual triumph of the American believers....

Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 34

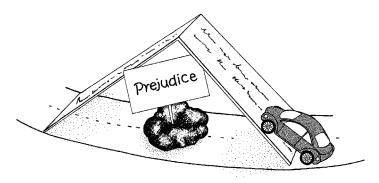
ACTIVITY CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE >

Discuss: What are some of the pitfalls or obstacles that 'Abdu'l-Bahá encountered in the Road to Race Unity? Do we know of additional pitfalls that we face today? What are the spiritual qualities that 'Abdu'l-Bahá used to overcome these pitfalls or obstacles? Record answers on chart paper. Suggest that students consider the chart you created as a list of some of the obstacles along this road to race unity.

- 4. Involve students in copying each item from the list onto index cards cut in half. Tape each card to a toothpick.
- 5. Invite students to form "rocks" out of clay, each big enough to block the roadway. In each clay rock, stick a toothpick with one of the problems. Allow students to choose spots along the road on which to place their clay rocks, creating roadblocks.
- 6. Bring out the toy car, and place it at the start of the road. What will happen if we try to drive to the endpoint?



- 7. Re-introduce the chart of spiritual qualities you created, from the stories of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in America. Suggest that 'Abdu'l-Bahá's example be used in helping to overcome today's obstacles to race unity.
- 8. Assign students the task of copying the spiritual qualities listed, each onto a 12" x 2" strip of poster board.
- 9. Gather the class around the roadway, with the completed poster board strips. Invite one person to begin driving the toy car along the roadway. When it comes to a clay obstacle, stop. Read the obstacle, then, consult together about what spiritual quality could help overcome that problem. Suggest a real-life action that could be taken, to demonstrate that quality.
- 10. Create a bridge over the clay obstacle: Tape one end of that Spiritual Quality Strip to the roadway in front of the obstacle. Fold the strip up and over, and tape the other end down on the roadway, on the other side of the obstacle. Drive the car up and over the obstacle, using the Spiritual Quality Strip.



 Repeat this process for all the obstacles. Remember that one quality may suit several problems, or one problem may seem to require several qualities – achieve consensus on one possible match for each.

- 12. Invite all learners to take turns successfully traveling from Today to Race Unity, using spiritual quality bridges to overcome the obstacles along the way.
- 13. Invite students to consider ways in which we can, in our own lives, help to overcome the obstacles to race unity. What spiritual qualities can we demonstrate? What actions can we take to render service to those who have suffered because of racial injustice? How can we follow 'Abdu'l-Bahá's example? How can we teach others about freedom from racial prejudice through our own examples?
- 14. Silently reflect on these questions while listening to the song, "Behold A Candle," also known as "Look at Me, Follow Me." See List of Additional Resources, page 111.
- 15. Distribute pledge sheets, pre-printed with a heading such as: "I will promote race unity by following 'Abdu'l-Bahá's example to…" Encourage students to list one action they will personally take. Assist as needed with suggestions, such as: befriending someone of a race or ethnicity different than my own, remembering to smile at someone new each day, speaking up when I hear friends telling racial jokes, etc. The teacher should also complete a pledge sheet.
- 16. Decide as a group: Would we like to post our pledges here in the classroom, so that we can see them each week and track our progress? Or do we prefer to take our pledge sheets home to remind ourselves of our goals everyday? In either case, consult about ways to continue to encourage each other's positive actions along the road to race unity. In subsequent sessions, share reports on experiences and continue to encourage each other in this process.

Resource Pages



Stories of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Encouragement for Racial Unity

One day, while 'Abdu'l-Bahá was in New York, a group of about twenty or thirty boys came to visit the Master. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's hostess, Mrs. Kinney, had invited the boys. They were from the area around the Bowery Mission, where 'Abdu'l-Bahá had spoken to several hundred of New York's poorest residents.

When 'Abdu'l-Bahá had visited the Bowery, some of the boys had thought that the diverse group of people with Him was so strange, that they had called names and even thrown sticks! But Mrs. Kinney had explained who 'Abdu'l-Bahá was and invited the boys to come to her house to meet him. To her surprise, they actually came!

'Abdu'l-Bahá greeted each boy as he came in; sometimes with a handclasp, sometimes with an arm around a shoulder, but always with such smiles and laughter it almost seemed that He was a boy with them. Certainly there was no suggestion of stiffness on their part, or awkwardness in their unaccustomed surroundings.

Among the last to enter the room was a black boy about thirteen years. He was quite dark and, being the only boy of his race among them, he evidently feared that he might not be welcome. When 'Abdu'l-Bahá saw him His face lighted up with a heavenly smile. He raised His hand with a gesture of warmest welcome and exclaimed in a loud voice so that none could fail to hear; that here was a black rose.

The room fell into instant silence. The black face became illumined with a happiness and love hardly of this world. The other boys looked at him with new eyes. To the few of the friends in the room the scene brought visions of a new world in which every soul would be recognized and treated as a child of God.

'Abdu'l-Bahá had a great five-pound box of expensive mixed chocolates brought in for the boys. He walked with it around the circle of boys, giving each a large handful, with a word and smile for everyone. He then picked out a long, very black, chocolate nougat. He looked at it a moment and then around at the group of boys who were watching Him intently. Without a word, 'Abdu'l-Bahá walked across the room to where the black boy was sitting, and, still without speaking, but with a humorously piercing glance that swept the group, laid the chocolate against the black cheek. His face was radiant as He laid His arm around the shoulder of the boy and that radiance seemed to fill the room. No words were necessary to convey His meaning, and there could be no doubt that all the boys caught it. You see, He seemed to say, that he is not only a black flower, but also a black sweet. You eat black chocolates and find them good: perhaps you would find this black brother of yours good also if you once taste his sweetness.

-adapted from Howard Colby Ives, Portals to Freedom, p. 65



On one occasion, 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked Louis Gregory, a highly distinguished black Bahá'í who would later be appointed a Hand of the Cause of God, whether the white and black Bahá'ís in America were truly united. Mr. Gregory told Him that "there was not entire unity, but that there were earnest souls of both races who desired closer unity and hoped that He ('Abdu'l-Bahá) would point out to them the means of attaining it."

'Abdu'l-Bahá responded that "the best means is to accept the Cause. All differences must fade among the believers. In the present antagonism there is great danger to both races." 'Abdu'l-Bahá also made it clear that the races must become united in a literal sense—through interracial marriage. "Interracial marriage is a good way to efface racial differences," He told Mr. Gregory. "It produces strong, beautiful offspring, clever and resourceful." 'Abdu'l-Bahá specifically told Mr. Gregory that, "If you have any influence to get the races to intermarry, it will be very valuable."

To emphasize the importance He placed on intermarriage among blacks and whites, 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote a letter to the outstanding white Bahá'ís in Washington, D.C. which stressed this point with urgent directness: "...gather together these two races, black and white, into one assembly and put such love into their hearts that they shall not only unite but even intermarry. Be sure that the result of this will abolish differences and disputes between black and white. Moreover by the will of God, may it be so. This is a great service to the world of humanity."

To make His meaning even more evident, 'Abdu'l-Bahá read this letter aloud to pilgrims visiting Him from the Washington, D.C. community. After reading the letter, 'Abdu'l-Bahá took a vessel containing blackberries and gave some to all the friends who had heard the letter.

'Abdu'l-Bahá taught a very beautiful lesson about oneness to Corinne True, one of the Hands of the Cause of God. In 1907, Mrs. True visited 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Holy Land. In those days, travel to the Holy Land was very difficult and Mrs. True found the travel even more challenging because it brought her in contact with people she was not familiar with.

In Naples, she had remained on board ship when it docked, rather than go ashore and mingle with the unfamiliar people. Later, when her ship docked in Alexandria, she was frightened of the Arabs who seemed to be everywhere. And, finally, when she arrived in Haifa, she was again frightened of what, for her, were strange and unfamiliar people.

The Master, in His great loving kindness, spoke to Mrs. True about real universal love—a love that embraced even those we find unusual or seemingly unlovable. He gave her the key to such a love:

"Mrs. True," He said, " when you go back I want you to look at every human being and say to yourself, 'You are a letter from my Beloved, and I must love you because of the Beloved Who wrote you. The letter may be torn, it may be blurred—but because the Beloved wrote the letter, you must love it.""

-adapted from Nathan Rutstein, Corinne True: Faithful Handmaid of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 69



While in Paris, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was living in a hotel, and among those who often came to see him was a poor black man. He was not a believer but he loved 'Abdu'l-Bahá very much. One day when he came to see 'Abdu'l-Bahá someone told him that the management did not want him to come there because he was poor and black. They said it was not consistent with the standards of the hotel. Hearing this, the poor man went away, but when 'Abdu'l-Bahá learned of this he would not accept it. 'Abdu'l-Bahá sent for the person who had sent the black man away and told him that he must find 'Abdu'l-Bahá's friend and bring him back. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said He was not happy that his friend had been turned away. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "I did not come to see expensive hotels or furnishings, but to meet my friends. I did not come to Paris to conform to the customs of Paris, but to establish the standard of Bahá'u'lláh."

-adapted from Star of the West, vol. 16, p.528

During 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to San Francisco in 1912, he was welcomed as a guest of the City by the Mayor's Office. While in San Francisco, 'Abdu'l-Bahá met with many dignitaries and spoke at great universities. One of his most memorable visits, however, was not with the great and powerful, but to the humble home of one of the Bahá'ís, Charles Tinsley, a black man confined to his bed because of a broken leg. During this visit, 'Abdu'l-Bahá told a beautiful story about how adversities and tests are sometimes the means by which a loving king trains his servants to fill the glorious destiny that awaits them. He said that sufferings can fit us to fill some of the most important places in the kingdom.

-adapted from Star of the West, vol. 3, No. 13, p. 11.

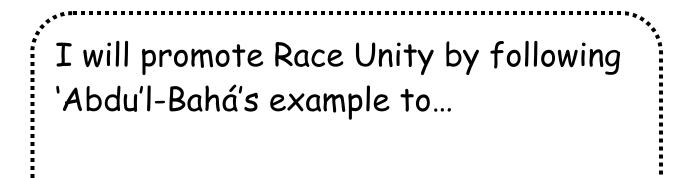
In 1911, 'Abdu'l-Bahá directed that the Bahá'ís of Washington, D.C. demonstrate the Bahá'í Teaching of the oneness of humanity as a means of overcoming existing prejudices in that racially-divided city. He advised that meetings be held, preferably at the home of one of the white Bahá'ís, which both races should attend.

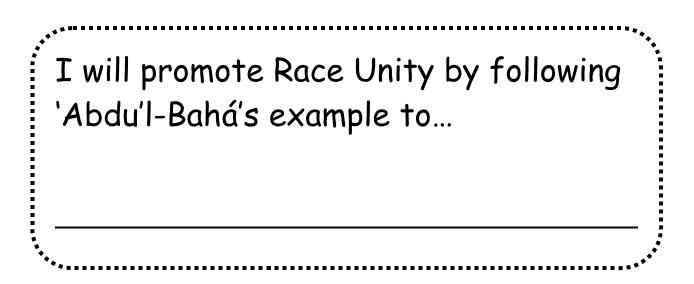
In obedience to this commandment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, monthly meetings of this sort were held by the Washington Bahá'ís. One of the foremost workers in promoting and hosting these meetings was Mrs. Andrew (Lydia) Dyer. On April 24, 1912 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke to one of these meetings at the home of Mrs. Dyer.

'Abdu'l-Bahá said that he did not feel like speaking that evening, but "as soon as I saw the unity and attraction of the colored and white believers, I became interested and anxious and with perfect sincere love I spoke. I have compared the harmony of the different colors of people to that of a pearl and ruby necklace."

-adapted from Star of the West, vol. 19, p.89; Star of the West, vol. 1, p. 18









'ABDU'L-BAHÁ IN AMERICA

O Thou compassionate Lord, Thou Who art generous and able! We are servants of Thine sheltered beneath Thy providence. Cast Thy glance of favor upon us. Give light to our eyes, hearing to our ears, and understanding and love to our hearts. Render our souls joyous and happy through Thy glad tidings. O Lord! Point out to us the pathway of Thy kingdom and resuscitate all of us through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Bestow upon us life everlasting and confer upon us never-ending honor. Unify mankind and illumine the world of humanity. May we all follow Thy pathway, long for Thy good pleasure and seek the mysteries of Thy kingdom. O God! Unite us and connect our hearts with Thine indissoluble bond. Verily, Thou art the Giver, Thou art the Kind One and Thou art the Almighty.

~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories & Articles:

Brilliant Star: "The Birthday Party," "Layli Miller Bashir" Jan/Feb 00
"The Black Rose," "Shining Lamps" Jul/Aug 99
"I Want to Be Just Like You, 'Abdu'l-Bahá" Sp Ed 96
"Nina's Teaching Trip" Mar/Apr 94
"Our Bahá'i Wedding" Jan/Feb 94
"Divine Courtesy" Nov/Dec 92
"Race Unity Walk," "Ruby" Nov/Dec 91
Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Beloved Master*, pp. 54-56 "The Black Rose;" p.71 "Unity of Mankind" – Louis Gregory
Breneman, Anne, *Like Unto Pure Gold*, the Story of Louis

Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

Brilliant Star: "Let them Purify Their Sight…" Sp Ed 99 "He is God! O ye Apostles…" Sp Ed 94 "World's Largest Race Unity Conference," Sept/Oct 92 "Hidden Helpers" MJ 91

Activities:

Gregory

Brilliant Star: "Unity Chain" Jul/Aug 99

Music:

Engle, Susan, Loving Hands, "Make Me More Like You" Lenz, Jack with various artists, Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, Vol. 1, "Look at Me, Follow Me" Lenz, Jack, The Greatest Moments, "Walking in the Footsteps" Price, Tom with the Bahá'í Chorale, Lasting Remembrance (Second Bahá'í World Congress), "Behold A Candle" Rogers, Mike, "Variety," Brilliant Star SO 92 Seals, Dan, In a Quiet Room, "Love is the Answer"

Games:

Brilliant Star: "Go Serve!" May/Jun 96

Videos:

The Power of Race Unity

Drama:

Brilliant Star: " Child of the East, Child of the West" MA 96

Reference:

Effendi, Shoghi, Citadel of Faith: Messages to America 1947-1957, Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette IL, 1997

Other favorite resources:

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Promulgation of Universal Peace, pp. 206-207, 213-215, 107-108, 287-288, 299-300 Taylor, Bonnie J., The Pupil of the Eye: African Americans in the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh Thompson, Juliet, The Diary of Juliet Thompson

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

Herald of the South, Apr 1994, "Uniting the Souls of Nations in Los Angeles"
Ives, Howard Colby, Portals to Freedom, pp. 63-67 "The Black Rose"
LaCroix-Hopson, Eliane, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in New York, the City of the Covenant, p. 59 "Encounters with Children;" p. 71 "The Day of the Covenant"
Lee, Anthony, The Black Rose
Matthews, Gary, Racial Healing in the Bahá'í Faith (pamphlet)
Regional Bahá'í Council, Walking the Talk: Bahá'ís and Racial Unity (pamphlet)

"Look at Me, Follow Me" SE 96 "Be a Friend to the Whole Human Race" JF 92 *Tablet of the Heart, God and Me*, pp. 17, 25, 33, 37, 49

"Look at Me, Follow Me, Be as I Am" Sp Ed 96