



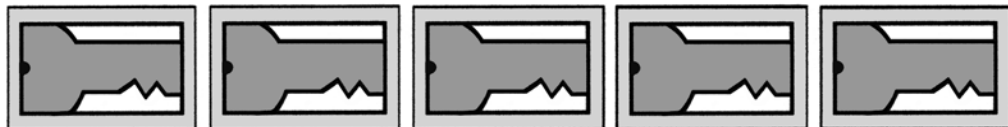
Lessons for Young Children

Core Curriculum for Spiritual Education®

Preschool

Strand: World Order of Baha'u'llah

Theme: The Nineteen Day Feast and Bahá'í Holy Days



Learning Objectives

Note that the spiritual quality chart is not included in the lessons for Bahá'í Holy Days and the Nineteen Day Feast, as these lessons may be distributed throughout the Bahá'í year. If you'd like to add the Spiritual Qualities Chart to these lessons, consider selecting the spiritual quality of service for lessons about the Feast and the spiritual quality of reverence for lessons about the Holy Days.

Knowledge

- To know that there are Bahá'í feasts every 19 days
- To know that the Nineteen Day Feast promotes unity and fellowship
- To know that Naw-Rúz, the First, Ninth, and Twelfth Days of Ridván, the Declaration of the Báb, the Martyrdom of the Báb, the Birth of the Báb, and the Birth of Baha'u'llah are all Holy Days
- To know that the Ayyám-i-Há is a Bahá'í festival

Wisdom

- To begin to appreciate the importance of fellowship and unity
- To begin to appreciate the significance of Bahá'í Holy Days

Spiritual Perception

- To reflect on the spiritual qualities of reverence and service to others
- To reflect on the lives of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh and connect events in Their lives with our own lives

Eloquent Speech

- To participate in a class Feast
- To recite a portion of a prayer for unity
- To attend or participate in a celebration of Naw-Rúz, Ridván, the Declaration of the Báb, the Martyrdom of the Báb, the Birth of the Báb, and the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh as Bahá'í Holy Days
- To attend or participate in Ayyám-i-Há activities

The Nineteen Day Feast

Welcome and Introductions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

Prayer books and items suitable for prayer area: suggestions include flowers, prayer cards or books (especially those designed for children), the Greatest Name, photographs of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the holy places, and houses of worship, and items that remind the children of Feast gatherings (pictures of people saying prayers together or gathering together—a picture of the children themselves at a Feast, if possible)

Quotation printed on a large card in big letters:

O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose.

—Bahá'u'lláh*

Save this card for future activities.

Pitcher of warm water, scented if possible with rose oil or rose water

Empty bowl to catch dripping water

Clean hand towel

Activity 1

A lock box or treasure chest that has a lock and key, if available. If a lock box is not available, use a house key, car key, or other key.

A homemade box with a "key" hole cut out into which a "key" made out of tag board, card stock, or lightweight cardboard may be inserted and turned to "open" the box. Inside this "locked" box should be an illuminated card on which is printed "affection and fellowship."

Also find a picture of people of diverse ages and ethnicities showing affection and fellowship to glue onto the card.

A key cut out of tag board, cardstock, or lightweight cardboard (as from a cereal box) on which is written "The Feast" (this will be used to "open" the box). Wrap the key as a gift.

Activity 2

Key shapes cut out of tag board or manila folders using the pattern on Resource Page 276, 1–2 for each child. On each key should be written:

The Feast is the key to affection and fellowship.

—'Abdu'l-Bahá

Markers

Hole punch

Ribbon or yarn

Small pictures cut from magazines of diverse people of all ages together in happy fellowship,

Glue and cotton swabs, or glue sticks

Activity 3

Quotation printed on a large card in big letters:

O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose.

—Bahá'u'lláh*

* *Bahá'í Prayers*, U.S. Edition 1991, p. 204



Welcome and Opening Prayers

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Prayer books and items suitable for prayer area: suggestions include flowers, prayer cards or books (especially those designed for children), the Greatest Name, photographs of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the holy places, and houses of worship, and items that remind the children of Feast gatherings (pictures of people saying prayers together or gathering together—a picture of the children themselves at a Feast, if possible)

Quotation printed on a large card in big letters:

O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose.

—Bahá'u'lláh

Save this card for future activities.

Pitcher of warm water, scented if possible with rose oil or rose water

Empty bowl to catch dripping water

Clean hand towel

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

1 Welcome children as they arrive and invite them to prepare for prayers:

- Remind them of the spiritual quality of reverence. Invite them to show reverence in their hearts and with their bodies.
- Explain that when they enter the prayer area, they will find some things that remind them of people gathering together, loving each other, and loving God.
- Have ready a pitcher of warm water (scented, if possible, with a drop of rose water or oil), clean hand towel, and an empty bowl (to catch the dripping water). One by one, invite the children to hold their hands over the empty bowl. Gently pour the warm water over their hands. Instruct them to wash their hands and face and then to wipe with the towel. If you wish to set the tone, sing "Alláh'u'Abhá" over and over as they perform their ablutions.
- Have them face the Qiblih, the resting place of Bahá'u'lláh. Depending on your geography, you may say, "This direction is where the sun rises in the morning," or "This is where we see the beautiful sunset in the evening," or other uplifting indication of the Qiblih's direction from your location.
- Demonstrate a reverent attitude of quiet and respectful behavior, such as kneeling or sitting straight and quietly, or other reverent posture.
- Ask if any of the children wishes to recite a prayer. Choose the order for saying prayers.

2 Gather at the prayer area and invite the children to recite their prayers in the pre-selected order.

3 After they say their prayers, show them the card with the verse and recite, "O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose."

4 Encourage the children to repeat the verse after you 1 or 2 times. Invite them to bring both their hands together as they hear the word "unite," and then open their hands outwardly when they hear the word "reveal," and more outwardly when they hear the word "great."



Activity 1

“Key to Affection and Fellowship”

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

A lock box or treasure chest that has a lock and key, if available. If a lock box is not available, use a house key, car key, or other key.

A homemade box with a “key” hole cut out into which a “key” made out of tag board, card stock, or lightweight card-board may be inserted and turned to “open” the box. Inside this “locked” box should be an illuminated card on which is printed “affection and fellowship.”

Also find a picture of people of diverse ages and ethnicities showing affection and fellowship to glue onto the card.

A key cut out of tag board, cardstock, or lightweight card-board (as from a cereal box) on which is written “The Feast” (this will be used to “open” the box). Wrap the key as a gift.

- 1 Invite the children to sit in a circle.
- 2 Show them the locked box. Ask the children to suggest ways to open the box. Would we pull it open? Would we kick it open? No, we use a key to gently open the box. Invite them to take turns inserting the key to open the box.

If a lock box or treasure chest is not available, show a key and ask: What can we do with this key? Affirm its purpose. Allow children to take turns holding the key while discussing ways to gently and effectively use the key. If possible, consider using the key to open a locked door.
- 3 Show them the homemade box. Tell them that lots of love and unity is inside this box, but it is locked. Share with them that the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh gave us a wonderful present.
- 4 Invite them to cooperate to open this gift (the tag board key wrapped as a gift). As the children open the gift, ask them to look for words on the key that say, “The Feast.” The Báb and Bahá’u’lláh gave us the Feast!
- 5 “Open” the box with this key and from inside the box pull out the card and read: “affection and fellowship.” If there is a picture that shows affection and fellowship affixed to this card, ask them what they see in the picture. Explain that the words “affection and fellowship” mean showing lots of love and being friends with all people.
- 6 Explain that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’ tells us that “the Feast is the key to affection and fellowship.” Explain the Feast is a very special and happy time. It is a time when Bahá’ís get together, read prayers together, talk about how they serve Bahá’u’lláh, enjoy being together, and have some simple refreshments. The Nineteen-Day Feast happens every 19 days.



Materials Needed

Key shapes cut out of tag board or manila folders using the pattern on Resource Page 276, 1–2 for each child. On each key should be written:

The Feast is the key to affection and fellowship.

—‘Abdu’l-Bahá

Markers

Hole punch

Ribbon or yarn

Small pictures cut from magazines of diverse people of all ages together in fellowship

Glue or glue sticks



Materials Needed

Quotation printed on a large card in big letters:

O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose.

—Bahá’u’lláh

Activity 2 The Feast Keys

Time: 15 minutes

- 1 Invite the children to make big keys to show that “the Feast is the key to affection and fellowship,” as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá tells us.
- 2 Distribute the key shapes to the children. Invite them to color the key shape around the words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and glue a picture of people enjoying fellowship to the other side of the key .
- 3 Assist children to punch a hole on the end of the key, thread the ribbon or yarn through the hole, and tie the ribbon or yarn together.
- 4 If time permits, invite children to make more than one key so that they can give these keys to the participants at the next Feast.
- 5 Collect these keys and explain to the children that at the next Feast, you will give them these keys to present to the friends who come.

Activity 3 Closing Prayers

Time: 10 minutes

- 1 Remind children that we have been learning about the Feast and how very special it is. The Nineteen-Day Feast is a gift from the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’ tells us that the Feast is the key to affection and fellowship.
- 2 Ask: What can we do to help make the Feast a happy time? Affirm that serving, smiling, helping, offering their seats to others, and chanting prayers all help make the Feast a happy time for everyone.
- 3 Show them again the card with the prayer verse and recite, “O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose.” Have the children repeat the verse after you 1 or 2 times. Encourage them to bring their hands together as they hear the word “unite,” and then open their hands outwardly when they hear the word “reveal,” and even more outwardly when they hear the word “great.”
- 4 After repeating the quotation, share with them that the Feast is a special time that unites our hearts and the hearts of all people. The Feast is the key to unity, affection, and fellowship.

The Feast Calendar

Welcome and Introductions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

Prayer books and items suitable for prayer area: suggestions include flowers, prayer cards or books (especially those designed for children), the Greatest Name, photographs of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the holy places, and houses of worship, and items that remind the children of Feast gatherings (pictures of people saying prayers together or gathering together—a picture of the children themselves at a Feast, if possible)

Quotation printed on a large card in big letters:

O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose.

—Bahá'u'lláh*

Save this card for future activities.

Pitcher of warm water, scented if possible with rose oil or rose water

Empty bowl to catch dripping water

Clean hand towel

Activity 1

Copies of Resource Page 277 for each child

Stickers or markers

Marked-up appointment calendar, if available

Activity 2

Pipecleaners, one for each child

Pony beads, or other inexpensive beads, 19 per child

Paper cups or other small containers to hold the beads for each child

Slips of cardstock or sturdy paper on which is written "Feast Counting Beads" with holes punched on one end of the slips

Activity 3

Completed calendar

Completed feast beads

Quotation printed on a large card in big letters:

O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose.

—Bahá'u'lláh*

* *Bahá'í Prayers*, U.S. Edition 1991, p. 204



Welcome and Opening Prayers

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Prayer books and items suitable for prayer area: suggestions include flowers, prayer cards or books (especially those designed for children), the Greatest Name, photographs of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the holy places, and houses of worship, and items that remind the children of Feast gatherings (pictures of people saying prayers together or gathering together—a picture of the children themselves at a Feast, if possible)

Quotation printed on a large card in big letters:

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—Bahá'u'lláh

Save this card for future activities.

Pitcher of warm water, scented if possible with rose oil or rose water

Empty bowl to catch dripping water

Clean hand towel

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1 Welcome children as they arrive and invite them to prepare for prayers:

- Remind them of the spiritual quality of reverence. Invite them to show reverence in their hearts and with their bodies.
- Explain that when they enter the prayer area, they will find some things that remind them of people gathering together, loving each other, and loving God.
- Have ready a pitcher of warm water (scented, if possible, with a drop of rose water or oil), clean hand towel, and an empty bowl (to catch the dripping water). One by one, invite the children to hold their hands over the empty bowl. Gently pour the warm water over their hands. Instruct them to wash their hands and face and then to wipe with the towel. If you wish to set the tone, sing "Alláh'u'Abhá" over and over as they perform their ablutions.
- Have them face the Qiblih, the resting place of Bahá'u'lláh. Depending on your geography, you may say, "This direction is where the sun rises in the morning," or "This is where we see the beautiful sunset in the evening," or other uplifting indication of the direction of the Qiblih.
- Demonstrate a reverent attitude of quiet and respectful behavior, such as kneeling or sitting straight and quietly, or other reverent posture.
- Ask if any of the children wishes to recite a prayer. Choose the order for saying prayers.

2 Gather at the prayer area and invite the children to recite their prayers in the pre-selected order.

3 After they say their prayers, show them the card with the verse and recite, "O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose."

4 Encourage the children to repeat the verse after you several times. Invite them to bring both their hands together as they hear the word "unite," and then open their hands outwardly when they hear the word "reveal," and more outwardly when they hear the word "great."



Activity 1

The Feast Calendar

Time: 20 minutes

Materials Needed

Copies of Resource Page 277
for each child

Stickers or markers

Marked-up appointment
calendar, if available

- 1 Invite the children to sit in a circle.
- 2 Explain that we are like a family that loves to get together and do things together. Ask: What are some of the things that our families like to do together? Acknowledge all. Bahá'u'lláh says that Bahá'í communities should get together every 19 days to celebrate a special kind of Feast. This is called the Nineteen Day Feast.
- 3 Ask: What do Bahá'ís do at Feast? Acknowledge all responses. Affirm that the Feast includes prayers and devotional readings, consultation or talking, and fellowship. Fellowship means enjoying being together and enjoying snacks together.
- 4 Explain that the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh gave us a calendar so that we remember when to get together for the Nineteen Day Feast. Ask: Do we know what a calendar is for? If available, show them a calendar that has been marked up with notes such as doctor appointments, and show them this is how you remember which day to go to the doctor's, when we come to Bahá'í class, and so on.
- 5 Invite children to mark their own calendars to remember the Feast days. Distribute the calendars and stickers or markers.
- 6 Point to March 21. Explain that the Bahá'í calendar begins on March 21. Assist children as necessary to find March 21 on their calendars. Ask them to put their fingers on this day. Explain that this day is Naw-Rúz, or the new year. It is also a Feast day. Repeat that the Feast is a time to come together to pray, talk together or consult, and enjoy fellowship. Explain that this is a very important day. Encourage the children to place a sticker or mark that day with a marker.
- 7 Have the children follow along as you point and count the next 19 days on the calendar. Stop on April 9 and mark it with a sticker or marker.
- 8 Continue this procedure for the rest of the Bahá'í months or as long as their attention holds. If the class becomes restless, invite them to finish marking Feast days at home with their families. Be sure to note the very next upcoming Feast day before concluding the activity.



Materials Needed

Pipecleaners, one for each child

Pony beads or other inexpensive beads, 19 per child

Paper cups or other small containers to hold the beads for each child

Slips of cardstock or other sturdy paper on which is written "Feast Counting Beads" with holes punched on one end of the slips

Activity 2 Feast Counting Beads

Time: 15 minutes

- 1 Remind the children that the Feast day is 19 days after the last Feast Day. Explain that we can help ourselves remember the Feast by using 19 Feast counting beads.
- 2 Assist children as needed to count 19 beads and place them in a small container so that the beads will not roll away.
- 3 Encourage children to make a hook with one end of the pipe cleaner and to thread the pipe cleaner through the 19 beads. When all 19 beads are threaded, encourage them to thread the slip of paper.
- 4 When all is finished, show them that they can count the days from one Feast to the next by moving one bead at a time for each day. That way they will always be able to tell when the Feast day is coming.



Materials Needed

Completed calendar

Completed feast beads

Quotation printed on a large card in big letters:

O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose.

—Bahá'u'lláh

Activity 3 Closing Prayers

Time: 10 minutes

- 1 Invite children into a circle again. Show them the calendar. Show them today's date. Point to the date of the next Feast. Have them count with you the number of days until the next Feast. Show them their Feast counting beads and demonstrate again the way to count beads from one Feast to the next.
- 2 Remind the children that at each Feast, we show reverence during the prayers and readings. Invite the children to demonstrate how to show reverence. Affirm that sitting straight with quiet hands is one way to show reverence. Clapping and singing can also show our love for God. Invite children to volunteer a prayer, if they like.
- 3 Show them the card with the prayer verse and recite, "O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose." Have the children repeat the verse after you several times. Encourage them to hold both their hands together as they hear the word "unite," and then open their hands outwardly when they hear the word "reveal," and even more outwardly when they hear the word "great."
- 4 After repeating the prayer several times, remind the children that the Feast unites our hearts. It is the key to affection and fellowship.

The Key to Affection and Fellowship

Welcome and Introductions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

Prayer books and items suitable for prayer area: suggestions include flowers, prayer cards or books (especially those designed for children), the Greatest Name, photographs of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the holy places, and houses of worship, and items that remind the children of Feast gatherings (pictures of people saying prayers together or gathering together—a picture of the children themselves at a Feast, if possible)

Quotation printed on a large card in big letters:

O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose.

—Bahá'u'lláh*

Save this card for future activities.

Pitcher of warm water, scented if possible with rose oil or rose water

Empty bowl to catch dripping water

Clean hand towel

Activity 1

19 objects to be used as place markers numbered from 1 to 19 and placed in various locations. Consider using large bright colored paper stars, beanbags, little flags, or other items, to be placed indoors, outdoors, or both

Directions for the Feast Hunt on pp. 178–79, prepared to resemble a treasure map. Consider reproducing it on special paper, adding decorations, rolling it into a tube, and tying it with a ribbon

A sign that reads: Welcome to Feast!

Smiley face stickers

1–2 children's prayer books

Snacks, including drinks, covered and placed on a tray or basket

Paper or sturdy plates, cups, and napkins

Envelope addressed to "The Children in Bahá'í Class," with a letter inside reading, "Dear children, Welcome to Feast. May you shower love on all. We love you very much. Love, the Bahá'ís of [your community]"

Advance Preparation:

Hide the 19 place markers in various locations indoors, outdoors, or both. Place these markers at some distance from one another. At the 19th spot, post the welcome sign, place prayer books reverently, and arrange snacks and drinks on a covered tray or in a basket.

Activity 2

Quotation printed on a large card in big letters:

O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose.

—Bahá'u'lláh*

* *Bahá'í Prayers*, U.S. Edition 1991, p. 204



Welcome and Opening Prayers

Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed

Prayer books and items suitable for prayer area: suggestions include flowers, prayer cards or books (especially those designed for children), the Greatest Name, photographs of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the holy places, and houses of worship, and items that remind the children of Feast gatherings (pictures of people saying prayers together or gathering together—a picture of the children themselves at a Feast, if possible)

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—Bahá'u'lláh

Save this card for future activities.

Pitcher of warm water, scented if possible with rose oil or rose water

Empty bowl to catch dripping water

Clean hand towel

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1 Welcome children as they arrive and invite them to prepare for prayers:

- Remind them of the spiritual quality of reverence. Invite them to show reverence in their hearts and with their bodies.
- Explain that when they enter the prayer area, they will find some things that remind them of people gathering together, loving each other, and loving God.
- Have ready a pitcher of warm water (scented, if possible, with a drop of rose water or oil), clean hand towel, and an empty bowl (to catch the dripping water). One by one, invite the children to hold their hands over the empty bowl. Gently pour the warm water over their hands. Instruct them to wash their hands and face and then to wipe with the towel. If you wish to set the tone, sing "Alláh'u'Abhá" over and over as they perform their ablutions.
- Have them face the Qiblih, the resting place of Bahá'u'lláh. Depending on your geography, you may say, "This direction is where the sun rises in the morning," or "This is where we see the beautiful sunset in the evening," or other uplifting indication of the Qiblih's direction from your location.
- Demonstrate a reverent attitude of quiet and respectful behavior, such as kneeling or sitting straight and quietly, or other reverent posture.
- Ask if any of the children wishes to recite a prayer. Choose the order for saying prayers.

2 Gather at the prayer area and invite the children to recite their prayers in the pre-selected order.

3 After they say their prayers, show them the card with the verse and recite, "O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose."

4 Encourage the children to repeat the verse after you 1 or 2 times. Invite them to bring both their hands together as they hear the word "unite," and then open their hands outwardly when they hear the word "reveal," and more outwardly when they hear the word "great."



Activity 1

Game: Feast Hunt

Time: 30–40 minutes

Materials Needed

19 objects to be used as place markers numbered from 1 to 19 and placed in various locations. Consider using large bright colored paper stars, beanbags, little flags, or other items, to be placed indoors, outdoors, or both

Directions for the Feast Hunt on pp. 178–79, prepared to resemble a treasure map. Consider reproducing it on special paper, adding decorations, rolling it into a tube, and tying it with a ribbon

A sign that reads: Welcome to Feast!

Smiley face stickers

1–2 children's prayer books

Snacks, including drinks, covered and placed on a tray or basket

Paper or sturdy plates, cups, and napkins

Envelope addressed to "The Children in Bahá'í Class," with a letter inside reading, "Dear children, Welcome to Feast. May you shower love on all. We love you very much. Love, the Bahá'ís of [your community]"

Advance Preparation:

Hide the 19 place markers in various locations indoors, outdoors, or both. Place these markers at some distance from one another. At the 19th spot, post the welcome sign, place prayer books reverently, and arrange snacks and drinks on a covered tray or in a basket.

- 1** Invite the children to sit in a circle.
- 2** Review with the children the significance of Feast: the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh tell us that it is a very special time when we come together to pray, consult, enjoy fellowship including snacks, and show our love for one another.
- 3** Tell the children that we are going on a kind of treasure hunt. We are going to find our own special Feast—a treasure that God has given to us and to all the people in the world.
- 4** Explain that there are 19 stops before we reach the Feast. Remind them that the Feast comes every 19 days. Explain that we will all follow a map that leads us to our special Feast.
- 5** Show the map prepared from Resource Pages 176–77. Show the 19 markers on the map that will lead the class to the treasure—a special Feast for the class.
- 6** Invite the children to go with you from place marker to place marker. Complete the activities at each marker. (See the sample treasure map and suggested activities on Resource Page 176–77.)
- 7** Watch for and acknowledge friendly and courteous actions among the children. After completing the Feast, allow play time as your circumstances permit before returning to class for closing prayers.



Activity 2

Closing Prayers

Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed

Quotation printed on a large card in big letters:

*O my God! O my God! Unite
the hearts of Thy servants, and
reveal to them Thy great pur-
pose.*

—Bahá'u'lláh

- 1 Remind the children that we are learning about the Feast, a beautiful treasure, a gift from the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. 'Abdu'l-Bahá' tells us that the Feast is the key to "affection and fellowship."
- 2 Ask: What can we do to help make the Feast a happy time? Affirm that serving, smiling, helping, offering our seats to others, and chanting prayers, all help to make people happy at the Feast.
- 3 Ask: When our class enjoyed the Feast at the end of our treasure hunt, what did we see people do that brought happiness to someone? Acknowledge all. Be sure that each child has a positive action affirmed by the class. Affirm that our acts of service bring happiness to ourselves and to others.
- 4 Remind the children that we show reverence at Feast and during other times for prayer. Invite children to demonstrate reverence to show their love for God.
- 5 Invite children to say prayers if they like.
- 6 Show them the card with the prayer verse and recite, "O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose." Have the children repeat the verse after you 1–2 times. Encourage them to hold both their hands together as they hear the word "unite," and then open their hands outwardly when they hear the word "reveal," and even more outwardly when they hear the word "great."
- 7 After repeating the prayer with hand motions several times, remind the children that the Feast is one very special gift from Bahá'u'lláh that unites our hearts. It is the key to affection and fellowship.

FEAST HUNT: A TREASURE MAP

These are some sample suggestions for a treasure map to Feast. Consider reading a picture book about loving one another at one of these locations. Adapt these instructions or create your own map according to your environment and imagination!

1. First tiptoe quietly like little mice to the first *(marker)* which is *(where the marker is located)*.

START

2. Hop to the next *(marker)*. You can find it *(describe where to find it)*.

3. Because we belong to one family, let's all hold hands and go to the next *(marker)*.

5. At this spot, sing "God is One" *(or another favorite Bahá'í song)* with hand movements. Then find the next marker, which is *(indicate the location)*.

4. Pretend to wash your hands and face for Feast. Bahá'u'lláh likes for us to be clean. Then find the next marker, which is *(indicate place)*.

6. Greet everyone in the class with a handshake and say, "Alláh'u'Abhá!" Then find the next marker, which is *(indicate how to find it)*.

7. 'Abdu'l-Bahá' says that the Feast is a bringer of joy. What things can bring joy to the people at the Feast? What can you do to make people happy at the Feast? *(Plant stickers of smiley faces on their cheeks after they share their ideas)*. Now with smiling faces, let's go to the next spot *(describe how to get there)*.

8. One of the Feast names is "Núr," which means "light." Where does the daylight come from? What would happen if we did not have the sun? Can you point to the sun? Did you know that Bahá'u'lláh was born in a city called "Núr?" He was born in the city of light! Isn't that wonderful? Now find the next three *(markers)* by *(give directions)*.

19. Read the sign that says, "Welcome to Feast!" Sit down and have your very own Feast! First, we open a prayer book and say some prayers. Then, for the second part of the Feast, read a letter from the Bahá'í community. Then, enjoy refreshments! Pass one another the snacks, pour the drink into the cups, and enjoy!



17, 18. The next stop is the Feast! Let's get ready. Pretend to dress up, put on your clean socks, nice shoes, put on your dress or pants and shirt, and a smile on your face. Let's go to Feast! *(Give directions.)*

16. We are so close to Feast! Let's run to markers 17 and 18. *(Give directions.)*

15. Can anyone give us one name of a Feast? If someone can, or if they agree when you suggest the Feast of Bahá, take big giant steps to the next *(marker)*! *(Give directions.)*

14. Wave your hands in the air, turn around, and say, "Ya Baha'u'l-Abha!" Then go to the next *(marker)*. *(Give directions.)*

13. Give each other a big group hug and skip to the next *(marker)*. *(Give directions.)*

12. Touch your head, your shoulders, knees, and toes three times and go to the next marker! *(Give directions.)*

9, 10, 11. Now clap three times and find the next marker! *(Indicate how to reach marker #12.)*

Lesson 4

Naw-Rúz

Materials Needed

This activity presents Naw-Rúz as the first day of spring. If you live in the southern hemisphere, explain that this lesson focuses on the season of spring because it was the first day of spring in all the lands where Baha'u'llah lived.

Welcome and Introductions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, prayer cards, the Greatest Name, photographs of the holy places and houses of worship

Items that remind the children of spring: flowers, pictures or sculptures of birds, trees, butterflies

Quotation printed on a long piece of paper:

*I am, O my God, but a tiny seed
which Thou hast sown in the soil of
Thy love, and caused to spring forth
by the hand of Thy bounty.*

—Bahá'u'lláh*

Pitcher of warm water, clean hand towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Resource Page 281 or a recording of the song "Tiny Seed," available on the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

Activity 1

Pictures of winter and springtime, big enough for all to see or Resource Pages 278–79

Clothing for winter

Clothing for spring or summer

Items to remind the children of spring such as flowers, plants, pictures or sculptures of birds, trees, butterflies

Activity 2

A variety of seeds

Craft glue

Paper: card stock, if possible

Flower shapes and leaves cut from colored paper

Thin markers

Advance Preparation

Construct a pop-up card for each child to decorate, following the instructions on Resource Page 280. Decorate one card as a model:

Glue flower and leaf shapes
(made from bits of colored paper)
to the pop-up part of the card.

Glue seeds to the front of the card.

Activity 3

Completed Naw-Rúz cards

Resource Page 281 or a recording of the song "Tiny Seed," available on the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

* *Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh*, CVI, p. 176



Welcome and Opening Prayers

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, prayer cards, the Greatest Name, photographs of the holy places and houses of worship

Items that remind the children of spring: flowers, pictures or sculptures of birds, trees, butterflies

Quotation printed on a long piece of paper:

I am, O my God, but a tiny seed which Thou hast sown in the soil of Thy love, and caused to spring forth by the hand of Thy bounty.

—Bahá'u'lláh

Pitcher of warm water, clean hand towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Resource Page 281 or a recording of the song "Tiny Seed," available on the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

1 Welcome children as they arrive and invite them to prepare for prayers:

- Remind them of the spiritual quality of reverence and invite them to show reverence in their hearts and with their bodies.
- Explain that when they enter the prayer area, they will find some things that remind them of people gathering together, loving each other, and loving God. They will also find some things that help us think of spring.
- Have ready a pitcher of warm water (scented, if possible, with a drop of rose water or oil), clean hand towel, and an empty bowl (to catch the dripping water). One by one, invite the children to hold their hands over the empty bowl. Gently pour the warm water over their hands. Instruct them to wash their hands and face and then to wipe with the towel. If you wish to set the tone, sing "Alláh'u'Abhá" over and over as they perform their ablutions.
- Have them face the Qiblih, the resting place of Bahá'u'lláh. Depending on your geography, you may say, "This direction is where the sun rises in the morning," or "This is where we see the beautiful sunset in the evening," or other uplifting indication of the direction of the Qiblih.
- Demonstrate a reverent attitude of quiet and respectful behavior, such as kneeling or sitting straight and quietly, or other reverent posture.
- Ask if any of the children wishes to recite a prayer. Choose the order for saying prayers.

2 Gather at the prayer area and invite the children to recite their prayers in the pre-selected order.

3 After they say their prayers, recite: "I am, O my God, but a tiny seed which Thou hast sown in the soil of Thy love and caused to spring forth by the hand of Thy bounty." Reverently, use gestures to suggest the actions of this quotation: the forefinger and thumb pinched together for a "tiny seed," with the other hand covering the "seed" hand, and then have the seed grow from the soil and spring forth as you show your fingers coming through the other hand and opening up to suggest flowering. Invite the children to imitate your gestures as you help them recite the prayer with you.

4 Recite this line from the prayer several times. Then sing it to the melody on Resource Page 281, if desired.



Activity 1

Signs of Spring

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Pictures of winter and spring nature scenes big enough for all to see or Resource Pages 278–79

Clothing for winter

Clothing for spring or summer

Items to remind the children of spring, such as flowers, plants, pictures or sculptures of birds, butterflies, etc.

- 1 Invite the children to sit in a circle.
- 2 Show them a picture of winter scenes. Ask them how would it feel to be outside in this weather. (Brrr . . . It would be cold!) What would they wear? (Boots, warm jackets, hats, scarves, mittens. Show them some articles of winter clothing.)
- 3 Then show them pictures of springtime. Ask them what they see. How would they feel outside in this weather? (Warm.) What would they wear? (Shorts, no jackets, sandals. Show them samples of summer clothing.)
- 4 “Show and tell” about the springtime items. For example, if you have flowers, invite the children to smell the flowers, teach them what colors they are, show them shapes of the petals. If you have birds, teach them what colors they are, show them the wings. Explain that these are the things that they would see in the springtime, while giving a sense of the joy of spring’s warmth and growth after a long cold winter. Discuss: What are some special things we can do in warm weather?
- 5 Explain that Naw-Rúz is a special day. It is a Holy Day because it is the first day of the year in the Bahá’í calendar. In the northern hemisphere, where Bahá’u’lláh lived, Naw-Rúz is the first day of spring. Winter is gone. Warm days are coming. Flowers will bloom, leaves will grow on the trees, and birds will come and sing!
- 6 Naw-Rúz is a special day because it also is a day to be happy that Baha’u’llah has come! We are like tiny seeds—just like in the prayer that we said in the prayer area. Baha’u’llah is like the sunshine and helps us grow to become happy children—just like the sun helps seeds to grow into flowers and trees with leaves and blossoms.



Activity 2

Pop-Up Naw-Rúz Springtime Cards

Time: 20 minutes

Materials Needed

A variety of seeds
Craft glue
Copies of Resource Page 280
on card stock or heavy paper
Flower shapes and leaves out
of colored paper
Thin markers

Advance Preparation

Construct a pop-up card for each child to decorate, following the instructions on Resource Page 280. Decorate one card as a model: Glue flower and leaf shapes (made from bits of colored paper) to the pop-up part inside the card; glue seeds to the front of the card.

- 1 Invite the children to make a Naw-Rúz pop-up card to give to someone special. Ask: Who should get your special card?
- 2 Show a completed model of the cards they will decorate. Read the words on the front of this card: "I am, O my God, but a tiny seed which Thou hast sown in the soil of Thy love. . . ." Show the seeds glued to this page. Open the card to see that a flower has "popped up." Read the rest of the verse: ". . . and caused to spring forth by the hand of Thy bounty." "Happy Naw-Rúz!" is also written on this page. Discuss: To whom would you like to give this card?
- 3 Pass out the pop-up cards. Invite the children to glue seeds on the front of the card. On the inside of the card, encourage the children to glue flowers on the pop-up part. With markers or bits of construction paper, encourage them to draw or glue leaves, grass, birds, or more flowers.



Activity 3

Closing Prayers

Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed

Completed Naw-Rúz cards
Resource Page 281 or a re-
cording of the song "Tiny
Seed," available on the Core
Curriculum website,
www.core-curriculum.org

- 1 Gather the children in the circle once again. Remind them that they will give their cards to someone special.
- 2 Ask them to look at their Naw-Rúz cards and help them to read the quotation on the card by inviting them to repeat it after you.
- 3 Remind them that Naw-Rúz is a special day. We celebrate the first day of spring when flowers grow, birds come and sing, grass peeks out of the ground, and trees grow leaves. Naw-Rúz is a time when we are happy because Bahá'u'lláh has come to show all people how to be happy and united.
- 4 Recite again the words of the prayer: "I am, O my God, but a tiny seed which Thou hast sown in the soil of Thy love, and caused to spring forth by the hand of Thy bounty."
- 5 Sing together the words on the Naw-Rúz card using the melody on Resource Page 281.

The First Day of Ridván

Welcome and Introductions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as prayer cards, the Greatest Name, a card with the illuminated name of Bahá'u'lláh, photographs of the holy places and houses of worship

Items that remind the children of Ridván for the prayer area, such as roses, boats, horse and bird figurines, táj, a model of a tent

Quotation copied onto chart paper:

Behold, your Well-Beloved hath come among men!

—Bahá'u'lláh*

Activity 1

Tent (see suggestions below)

Create a dignified environment within the tent with fabrics, a small table with the Greatest Name, vase with a rose, or a samovar.

Pillows for sitting inside or in front of the tent

Paper, silk, or real flowers, enough to pile high

Small tea cups

Mild sweetened tea suitable for children

Advance Preparation

Set up the tent. A tent for small children can be as simple as a bed sheet draped over a table. Lay a rug or fabric to create a dignified place inside the tent. Place pillows inside or around the front of the tent. Consider placing a very small table covered with pretty fabric inside your tent for displaying the Greatest Name or other objects of beauty. Make a circle with the string or yarn all around the tent to designate the "island" on which the tent is placed.

Activity 2

Resource Page 282

Optional: recording of the song "I Have Found Bahá'u'lláh"

Paper, silk, or real flowers from the previous activity

Activity 3

Quotation copied onto chart paper:

Behold, your Well-Beloved hath come among men!

—Bahá'u'lláh*

* *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, CLI, p. 319



Welcome and Opening Prayers

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as prayer cards, the Greatest Name, a card with the illuminated name of Bahá'u'lláh, photographs of the holy places and houses of worship

Items that remind the children of Ridván for the prayer area, such as roses, boats, horse and bird figurines, táj, a model of a tent

Quotation copied onto chart paper:

*Behold, your Well-Beloved
hath come among men!*
—Bahá'u'lláh

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

1 Welcome children as they arrive and invite them to prepare for prayers:

- Remind them of the spiritual quality of reverence. Invite them to show reverence in their hearts and with their bodies.
- Explain that at the prayer area, they will find some special items to remind us of Bahá'u'lláh and of springtime.
- Have ready a pitcher of warm water (scented, if possible, with a drop of rose water or oil), clean hand towel, and an empty bowl (to catch the dripping water). One by one, invite the children to hold their hands over the empty bowl. Gently pour the warm water over their hands. Instruct them to wash their hands and face and then to wipe with the towel. If you wish to set the tone, sing "Alláh'u'Abhá" over and over as they perform their ablutions.
- Have them face the Qiblih, the resting place of Bahá'u'lláh. Depending on your geography, you may say, "This direction is where the sun rises in the morning," or "This is where we see the beautiful sunset in the evening," or other uplifting indication of the Qiblih's direction from your location.
- Demonstrate a reverent attitude of quiet and respectful behavior, such as kneeling or sitting straight and quietly, or other reverent posture.
- Ask if any of the children wishes to recite a prayer. Choose the order for saying prayers.

2 Gather at the prayer area and invite the children to recite their prayers in the pre-selected order.

3 After they say their prayers, recite: "Behold, your Well-Beloved hath come among men!" At the word "behold," point to your eyes. Encourage the children to repeat the words and the gesture with you.



Activity 1

To the Garden of Ridván

Time: 20 minutes

Materials Needed

Tent (see suggestions below)

Create a dignified environment within the tent with fabrics, a small table with the Greatest Name, vase with a rose, or a samovar.

Pillows for sitting inside or in front of the tent

Paper, silk, or real flowers, enough to pile high

Small tea cups

Mild sweetened tea suitable for children

Advance Preparation

Set up the tent. A tent for small children can be as simple as a bed sheet draped over a table. Lay a rug or fabric to create a dignified place inside the tent. Place pillows inside or around the front of the tent. Consider placing a very small table covered with pretty fabric inside your tent for displaying the Greatest Name or other objects of beauty. Make a circle with the string or yarn all around the tent to designate the “island” on which the tent is placed.

1 Invite the children to sit together in a circle, a distance from the tent, if possible.

2 Recount the story of Bahá’u’lláh on the First Day of Ridván:

- Bahá’u’lláh and His family lived in a town for many years.
- People all over this city loved Him very, very much. It was not because He had many things. In fact, He had only one coat and lived in a simple home. People loved Him because He was so very loving to them, and taught them how to love God and how to act lovingly towards everyone.
- Many, many people would come to His home and never want to leave—sometimes they would forget to eat or to go home! They wanted to be near Bahá’u’lláh always.
- However, there were some people who did not like it that so many people wanted to near Bahá’u’lláh. One day Bahá’u’lláh received a letter that told Him that He and His family must leave the city and go to a faraway place.
- When the people heard about this, they were very sad, so sad that they came to Him and told Him, “Please don’t go! Please!” The people cried and cried.
- So many people went to His home that the house became very crowded. Sometimes there were even people on the roof, weeping and begging Bahá’u’lláh not to go.
- So Bahá’u’lláh walked out of His home and got on a boat (cup your hands together to create a boat) and sailed to an island. Move to the “island” where you have arranged the tent. Encourage the children to follow you to the “island” and to seat themselves on the pillows.
- A tent was put up (point to the tent) and gardeners brought roses, roses, and more roses and piled them high in front of Bahá’u’lláh’s tent. (Bring the flowers and stack them into a high pile.) The pile of roses was so high that people could not see over them! Bahá’u’lláh would pick up these roses and give them away to those who were with Him. He said to give them to the people across the river.
- The friends would be given tea. (Pass out the little cups and pour tea for the children.)

3 While they are sipping tea, tell them that here in this garden, which was called the Garden of Ridván (ask them repeat the name, Ridván), the most wonderful thing happened! Here Bahá’u’lláh told the family and friends that He was the Promised One, the Messenger from God. Ridván means paradise.



Activity 2

I Have Found Bahá'u'lláh

Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed

Resource Page 282 or recording of the song "I Have Found Bahá'u'lláh"

Paper, silk or real flowers from the previous activity

- 1 While the children are in the "Garden of Ridván," teach them this song: "I have found Bahá'u'lláh in the early days of my life; I will keep Him in my heart and stay with Him forever." Teach hand motions to go with this song, if desired.
- 2 Present each child with one of the paper, silk, or real flowers. As you present each flower say, "Behold your Well-Beloved hath come among men!"
- 3 Encourage the children to place their flower where they will see it in their homes as a reminder of the love of Bahá'u'lláh. When we feel Bahá'u'lláh's love in our hearts, we have a taste of paradise. Sing the song again, if desired.



Activity 3

Closing Prayers

Time: 5 minutes

Materials Needed

Quotation copied onto chart paper:

*Behold, your Well-Beloved
hath come among men!*
—Bahá'u'lláh

- 1 Gather the children again in a circle.
- 2 Review highlights of the lesson about the first day of Ridván.
- 3 Conclude by reciting again the quotation, which the children will repeat after you, "Behold, your Well-Beloved hath come among men!"
- 4 Lovingly remind children to take their flowers home, showing the love of Bahá'u'lláh through your words and actions. Invite them to place their flower where they will see it to remember Bahá'u'lláh's love for themselves and for all people.

The Ninth Day of Ridván

Welcome and Introductions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as prayer cards, the Greatest Name, a card with the illuminated name of Bahá'u'lláh, photographs of the holy places and houses of worship

Items that remind the children of Ridván for the prayer area, such as roses, boats, horse and bird figurines, táj, a model of a tent

Quotation copied onto chart paper:

Rejoice with exceeding gladness, O people of Bahá. . . .

—Bahá'u'lláh*

Pitcher of warm water, clean hand towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Activity 1

None

Activity 2

Picture of a nightingale, if available

Copies of Resource Page 283 on construction paper or colored cardstock for each child

Crayons or markers

Glue and cotton swabs

Straws

Streamers or ribbon for tail

Wiggle eyes (1/4") if available

Tape

Recorded birdsong, if available

Advance Preparation:

Cut out one bird shape for each child, using the pattern on Resource Page 283

Activity 3

Nightingale puppets from activity 2

* *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, XIV, p. 34



Welcome and Opening Prayers

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as prayer cards, the Greatest Name, a card with the illuminated name of Bahá'u'lláh, photographs of the holy places and houses of worship

Items that remind the children of Ridván for the prayer area, such as roses, boats, horse and bird figurines, táj, a model of a tent

Quotation copied onto chart paper:

Rejoice with exceeding gladness, O people of Bahá. . . .
—Bahá'u'lláh

Pitcher of warm water, clean hand towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

1 Welcome children as they arrive and invite them to prepare for prayers:

- Remind them of the spiritual quality of reverence. Invite them to show reverence in their hearts and with their bodies.
- Explain that at the prayer area, they will find some special items that remind us of Bahá'u'lláh and of the special time when He was in the beautiful Ridván garden.
- Have ready a pitcher of warm water (scented, if possible, with a drop of rose water or oil), clean hand towel, and an empty bowl (to catch the dripping water). One by one, invite the children to hold their hands over the empty bowl. Gently pour the warm water over their hands. Instruct them to wash their hands and face and then to wipe with the towel. If you wish to set the tone, sing "Alláh'u'Abhá" over and over as they perform their ablutions.
- Have them face the Qiblih, the resting place of Bahá'u'lláh. Depending on your geography, you may say, "This direction is where the sun rises in the morning," or "This is where we see the beautiful sunset in the evening," or other uplifting indication of the Qiblih's direction from your location.
- Demonstrate a reverent attitude of quiet and respectful behavior, such as kneeling or sitting straight and quietly, or other reverent posture.
- Ask if any of the children wishes to recite a prayer. Choose the order for saying prayers.

2 Gather at the prayer area and invite the children to recite their prayers in the pre-selected order.

3 After they say their prayers, recite: "Rejoice with exceeding gladness, O people of Bahá. . . ." At the word "rejoice," wave your hands in the air. Encourage the children to repeat the words and the gesture with you.



Activity 1

Bahá'u'lláh's Family Sails to the Garden

Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed

None

1 Invite the children to sit together in a circle.

2 Review the story of Bahá'u'lláh's arrival at the Garden of Ridván:

- Remember the time when Bahá'u'lláh and His family lived in a town for many years.
- People all over this city loved Him very much. He was so very loving to them. He showed them how to love God. He taught them to act lovingly towards everyone.
- However, there were some people who hated Bahá'u'lláh and wanted to send Him far, far away from the town.
- So one day Bahá'u'lláh was told that He and His family had to leave the city and go to a faraway place and never come back.
- How sad everyone in the town was! They cried and begged Him not to go.
- Bahá'u'lláh walked out of His home and got on a boat (cup your hands together to create a boat) and sailed across a big river to an island.
- And there on the island was a tent built for Bahá'u'lláh. In the tent were roses piled up high. That was where Bahá'u'lláh told everyone: "I am the Promised One. I am the Lord of All Ages. I am the One Whom God shall make manifest." How exciting that was!
- So instead of being sad, this was a very, very happy time!
- Nine days later, Bahá'u'lláh's family got on a boat and sailed to the Garden of Ridván. They were so happy to see Bahá'u'lláh—they had missed Him! They were so happy because they knew that He was the Promised One!
- Bahá'ís all over the world celebrate that day every year, the Ninth Day of Ridván, as a very special day.



Nightingale*

*source: www.floraberlin.de



Activity 2

Making Nightingale Puppets

Time: 20 minutes

Materials Needed

Picture of a nightingale, if available

Copies of Resource Page 283 on construction paper or colored cardstock for each child

Crayons or markers

Glue and cotton swabs

Straws

Streamers or ribbon for tail

Wiggle eyes (1/4") if available

Tape

Recorded birdsong, if available

Advance Preparation:

Cut out one bird shape for each child, using the pattern on Resource Page 283

- 1 If available, play recorded birdsong while you share with the children that another beautiful thing happened at the Garden of Ridván:
 - There were special birds called nightingales. (Can you hear them?) The people said that the nightingales there were singing so loudly that only the people who were very near to Bahá'u'lláh could hear Him.
 - Around midnight on the ninth day in the Garden, someone saw Bahá'u'lláh leave His tent and walk in the garden filled with flowers. Listening to the nightingales, He said that the birds loved the roses so much that they sang and sang to the roses.
- 2 Invite the children to make nightingales* like the ones Bahá'u'lláh heard that night. We should love Bahá'u'lláh just like nightingales love roses.
- 3 Pass out the cutouts of the bird. Show the children how to fold down the wings and glue the body together (not the wings). Invite them to decorate the bird and glue pieces of ribbons or streamers for the tail.
- 4 Then assist children to glue on wiggle eyes or draw eyes with a marker. Tape a straw to the bird for a holder. Invite the children to help their nightingales fly and to practice telling others about the nightingales that sang in the garden.



Activity 3

Closing Prayers

Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed

Nightingale puppets from Activity 2

Quotation copied onto chart paper:

Rejoice with exceeding gladness, O people of Bahá. . .
—Bahá'u'lláh

- 1 Gather the children again in circle. Invite the children to recall that on the Ninth Day of Ridván, Bahá'u'lláh's family sailed to the island to be near Bahá'u'lláh. This was a special time for the family. Explain that they can share this story with their own families—because they love their families too!
- 2 Remind them that the nightingales sang so loudly because they love roses. We love Bahá'u'lláh and want to tell everyone about His love for us.
- 3 Encourage children to practice telling their families about the nightingales in the Ridván garden using their puppets as props.
- 4 Close by reciting the quotation, "Rejoice with exceeding gladness, O people of Bahá. . ." Encourage the children to repeat after you, with their hands raised up in gladness.

* *Bahá'í Crafts for Children*, pp. 64–65. ©2003, Jodell Babbitt-Sprague and Cindy Firooz. Used with permission.

The Twelfth Day of Ridván

Welcome and Introductions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as prayer cards, the Greatest Name, a card with the illuminated name of Bahá'u'lláh, photographs of the holy places and houses of worship

Items that remind the children of Ridván for the prayer area, such as roses, boats, horse and bird figurines, táj, a model of a tent

Quotation copied onto chart paper:

Behold, your Well-Beloved hath come among men!

—Bahá'u'lláh*

Pitcher of warm water, clean face towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Activity 1

A horse figurine or a photograph of a red roan stallion, or Resource Page 284

Photograph of Bahá'u'lláh's táj, Resource Page 284

These Resource Pages may be downloaded in color from the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

Activity 2

5'–6' piece of butcher paper on which is written "Bahá'u'lláh, the King of Glory" in permanent marker. The letters should be very large and outlined only so that the children can color inside the letters.

Non-permanent markers of various colors

2 broomsticks or long rods to which the banner can be attached

Homemade pom-poms of bathroom tissue tubes with colorful crepe paper streamers attached to one end

Activity 3

Quotation copied onto chart paper:

Behold, your Well-Beloved hath come among men!

—Bahá'u'lláh*

* *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, CLI, p. 319



Welcome and Opening Prayers

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as prayer cards, the Greatest Name, a card with the illuminated name of Bahá'u'lláh, photographs of the holy places and houses of worship

Items that remind the children of Ridván for the prayer area, such as roses, boats, horse and bird figurines, táj, a model of a tent

Quotation copied onto chart paper:

*Behold, your Well-Beloved
hath come among men!*
—Bahá'u'lláh

Pitcher of warm water, clean face towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

1 Welcome children as they arrive and invite them to prepare for prayers:

- Remind them of the spiritual quality of reverence. Invite them to show reverence in their hearts and with their bodies.
- Explain that at the prayer area, they will find some special items that remind us of Bahá'u'lláh and of the special time when He was in the beautiful Ridván garden.
- Have ready a pitcher of warm water (scented, if possible, with a drop of rose water or oil), clean hand towel, and an empty bowl (to catch the dripping water). One by one, invite the children to hold their hands over the empty bowl. Gently pour the warm water over their hands. Instruct them to wash their hands and face and then to wipe with the towel. If you wish to set the tone, sing "Alláh'u'Abhá" over and over as they perform their ablutions.
- Have them face the Qiblih, the resting place of Bahá'u'lláh. Depending on your geography, you may say, "This direction is where the sun rises in the morning," or "This is where we see the beautiful sunset in the evening," or other uplifting indication of the Qiblih's direction from your location.
- Demonstrate a reverent attitude of quiet and respectful behavior, such as kneeling or sitting straight and quietly, or other reverent posture.
- Ask if any of the children wishes to recite a prayer. Choose the order for saying prayers.

2 Gather at the prayer area and invite the children to recite their prayers in the pre-selected order.

3 After they say their prayers, recite: "Behold, your Well-Beloved hath come among men!" At the word "behold," point to your eyes. Encourage the children to repeat the words and the gesture with you.



Activity 1

The Last Day at the Ridván Garden

Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed

A horse figurine or a photograph of a red roan stallion, or Resource Page 284

Photograph of Bahá'u'lláh's táj, Resource Page 284

These Resource Pages may be downloaded in color from the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org.

1 Invite the children to sit together in a circle.

2 Review the story of Bahá'u'lláh's arrival at the Garden of Ridván:

- Remember that just before Bahá'u'lláh and His family were sent away from the town, He sailed across a river and stayed on an island called the Garden of Ridván. Ridván means paradise.
- There Bahá'u'lláh told everyone the happy news that He was a Teacher sent by God, the Manifestation of God for this Day. He was the Promised One for whom all had been searching! Let's all say, "Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá!" (Wave hands in air.)
- Do you remember the garden? Bahá'u'lláh's tent was filled with roses; birds were singing joyfully in the garden; many people were coming to the garden, having tea, and listening to Bahá'u'lláh's beautiful words.
- And on the ninth day, Bahá'u'lláh's family came! How happy they all were! (Wrap your arms around yourself in an embrace.)
- Finally, on the last day in the Garden—the Twelfth Day of Ridván—everyone left. Bahá'u'lláh wore a tall hat that made Him look like a king. (Show picture of a táj.) He rode on a beautiful red roan stallion (show the picture or horse figurine).
- People threw themselves in front of the horse because they didn't want Him to go. They followed Him and walked behind Him for miles and miles because they wanted to be close to Him. Some of them sang because they were so glad to be near Bahá'u'lláh, the Promised One. It was like a parade!
- People all over the world celebrate that Day every year because it was such a special day of happiness, even though Bahá'u'lláh and His family had to leave their home. Bahá'u'lláh turned their sadness into great joy!
- We can make people happy too!



Materials Needed

5'–6' piece of butcher paper on which is written "Bahá'u'lláh, the King of Glory" in permanent marker. The letters should be very large and outlined only so that the children can color inside the letters.

Non-permanent markers of various colors

2 broomsticks or long rods to which the banner can be attached

Homemade pom-poms of bathroom tissue tubes with colorful crepe paper streamers attached to one end



Materials Needed

Quotation copied onto chart paper:

*Behold, your Well-Beloved
hath come among men!*
—Bahá'u'lláh

Activity 2 Blazoning the Name of Bahá'u'lláh

Time: 30 minutes

- 1 Tell the children that they will have their own parade to celebrate the Twelfth Day of Ridván!
- 2 Invite them to make a huge banner proclaiming the name of Bahá'u'lláh and calling Him the "King of Glory," just as the people did when Bahá'u'lláh left the Garden of Ridván.
- 3 Lay the butcher paper on the table or floor and give the children markers to color in the letters of the Name of Bahá'u'lláh. Invite them to draw other decorations on the banner. Suggest that they draw the beautiful horse that Bahá'u'lláh rode, the táj that He wore on His head, and other happy pictures.
- 4 After they finish coloring, attach the banner to the broomsticks or other rods.
- 5 Ask two of the children to hold up the banner while the others hold the pom-poms. Invite them to march as if they were in a parade, exclaiming, "Bahá'u'lláh, the King of Glory!" over and over as they march from room to room or outside around the house.
- 6 If appropriate, tell the children that this banner will be used as decoration for the Ridván celebration.

Activity 3 Closing Prayers

Time: 5 minutes

- 1 Gather the children again in circle.
- 2 Ask the children what they remember about the wonderful days Bahá'u'lláh spent in the Garden of Ridván. Assist them as needed to retell the story.
- 3 Ask them if the people at the Garden of Ridván were happy. Then ask the children, "Are you happy?"
- 4 Close by asking the children to repeat after you: "Behold, your Well-Beloved hath come among men!" Point to your eyes with two fingers at the word "Behold" and move the fingers outward as if to welcome Bahá'u'lláh!

The Declaration of the Báb

Welcome and Introductions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as a card with the illuminated name of the Báb, a prayer revealed by the Báb, a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, prayer cards, the Greatest Name, photographs of the Shrine of the Báb, plants or flowers, candles, etc. Five pointed stars would be an appropriate symbol for the celebration of the Báb's declaration.

Quotation printed on chart paper:

*O God, my God, my Beloved,
my heart's Desire.*

—The Báb *

Resource Page 285 or a recording of the melody for these words, available on the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

Pitcher of warm water, clean hand towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Activity 1

Stories of Mullá Husayn's search for the Promised One and the Declaration of the Báb in *The Central Figures: The Báb*, vol. 1 storybook

A five-pointed star with the decorated name of the Báb

Activity 2

A five-pointed star cut from a brightly colored paper large enough for the children to see and small enough to hide easily

Activity 3

Five-pointed stars cut out of poster board, using the pattern on Resource Page 286 or the shape on p. 200

Wooden stick, paint stirrer, or cardboard tube such as often found on dry cleaner hangers

Masking tape

Crepe paper streamers or ribbons

Sequins, stickers, etc

Glue and cotton swabs

Activity 4

Completed star wands from Activity 3

Resource Page 285 or a recording of the melody for "O God, My God," available on the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

* *The Dawn-Breakers*, p. 30



Welcome and Opening Prayers

Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as a card with the illuminated name of the Báb, a prayer revealed by the Báb, a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, prayer cards, the Greatest Name, photographs of the Shrine of the Báb, plants or flowers, candles, etc. Five pointed stars would be an appropriate symbol for the celebration of the Báb's declaration.

Quotation printed on chart paper:

*O God, my God, my Beloved,
my heart's Desire.*

—The Báb

Resource Page 285 or a recording of the melody for these words, available on the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

Pitcher of warm water, clean hand towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

1 Welcome children as they arrive and invite them to prepare for prayers:

- Remind them of the spiritual quality of reverence. Invite them to show reverence in their hearts and with their bodies.
- Explain that at the prayer area, they will find some special items that remind them of the Báb, and that today we will be remembering Him on a Holy Day, the Declaration of the Báb, the day that the Báb first declared His message from God.
- Have ready a pitcher of warm water (scented, if possible, with a drop of rose water or oil), clean hand towel, and an empty bowl (to catch the dripping water). One by one, invite the children to hold their hands over the empty bowl. Gently pour the warm water over their hands. Instruct them to wash their hands and face and then to wipe with the towel. If you wish to set the tone, sing "Alláh'u'Abhá" over and over as they perform their ablutions.
- Have them face the Qiblih, the resting place of Bahá'u'lláh. Depending on your geography, you may say, "This direction is where the sun rises in the morning," or "This is where we see the beautiful sunset in the evening," or other uplifting indication of the Qiblih's direction from your location.
- Demonstrate a reverent attitude of quiet and respectful behavior, such as kneeling or sitting straight and quietly, or other reverent posture.
- Ask if any of the children wishes to recite a prayer. Choose the order for saying prayers.

2 Gather at the prayer area and invite the children to recite their prayers in the pre-selected order.

3 After they say their prayers, recite: "O God, my God, my Beloved, my heart's Desire." Invite them to repeat this verse after you or sing it to the melody on Resource Page 285 or other favorite melody.



Activity 1

Mullá Husayn's Search for the Báb

Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed

Stories of Mullá Husayn's search for the Promised One and the Declaration of the Báb in *The Central Figures: The Báb*, vol. 1 storybook

A five-pointed star with the decorated name of the Báb

1 Invite the children to sit together in a circle.

2 Share the story about Mulla Husayn's search for the Promised One. As you tell the story, use your hands and body to show the emotions and actions. If you do not have access to the illustrated stories of Mulla Husayn's search and the Declaration of the Báb from *The Central Figures: The Báb*, vol. 1 storybook, you may use the following text:

- Once upon a time, long ago, there was a young man whose name was Mullá Husayn. He had a wonderful teacher who loved to pray to God and who knew that a very Special Teacher from God was near. This teacher told Mullá Husayn that he should go find this Promised One, the newest Messenger from God. The teacher even told him what some ways to recognize the Promised One. Mullá Husayn's desire to find the Promised One shone in his heart like a star. (Show a five-pointed star.)
- Mullá Husayn did not know the Promised One's name, what He looked like, or where He lived. So Mullá Husayn went off to pray for 40 days and asked God to please help him find the Promised One.
- He went from town to town, walking for many days in the hot sun, looking and looking for the Promised One. His hope kept shining and shining in his heart. His hope shone like a bright star. He knew that someday he would find the Promised One.
- Finally, he came to a beautiful city called Shiráz. He was standing by the city gate.
- Then came a Young Man who wore a green turban and a beautiful smile. Mullá Husayn did not know Who this Man was, but the Young Man invited him to His home. That was surprising! A Stranger's home!
- Mullá Husayn went to the Young Man's home and the Young Man served him tea and food. (Use your hands to show the gesture of serving.)
- And later in the evening, this Young Man told Mullá Husayn, "Verily, I am the Báb, the Gate of God." At last, Mullá Husayn found the Promised One!
- Mullá Husayn was so excited that he wanted to go out and tell everyone that he had found the Promised One! But the Báb told him that he must not tell anyone yet. He had to let others find the Báb on their own.
- Sure enough, very soon, 17 others found the Báb by themselves—with only the help of God and their love for the Promised One to guide them.



Activity 2

Find the Báb

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

A five-pointed star cut from a brightly colored paper large enough for the children to see and small enough to hide easily

- 1 Tell the children that they will have a chance to look for the Báb also.
- 2 Show them the five-pointed star with the name of the Báb written on it. Tell them that this star will be the object of their search.
- 3 Explain that it will be like Hide and Seek. Ask if they know how to play this game. But tell them this time it will be a little different.
- 4 Share with them the rules:
 - First, they must close their eyes (or leave the room with another adult) while you hide the star somewhere in the room.
 - When you say, “Find the Promised One!” they must very quietly look for the star.
 - When they find it, they must be very, very quiet. They must tiptoe to the circle, and say nothing.
 - They are to stay sitting at the circle until all of them have found the star by themselves.
 - When they have all returned to the circle, then they all can say, “We found the Báb!” and clap.
 - The first one to find the star will be the one to hide it for the next search.
- 5 Play this game a few times.



Activity 3

Make a Star Wand

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Five-pointed stars cut out of poster board, using the pattern on Resource Page 286 or the shape on this page

Wooden stick, paint stirrer, or cardboard tube often found on dry cleaner hangers

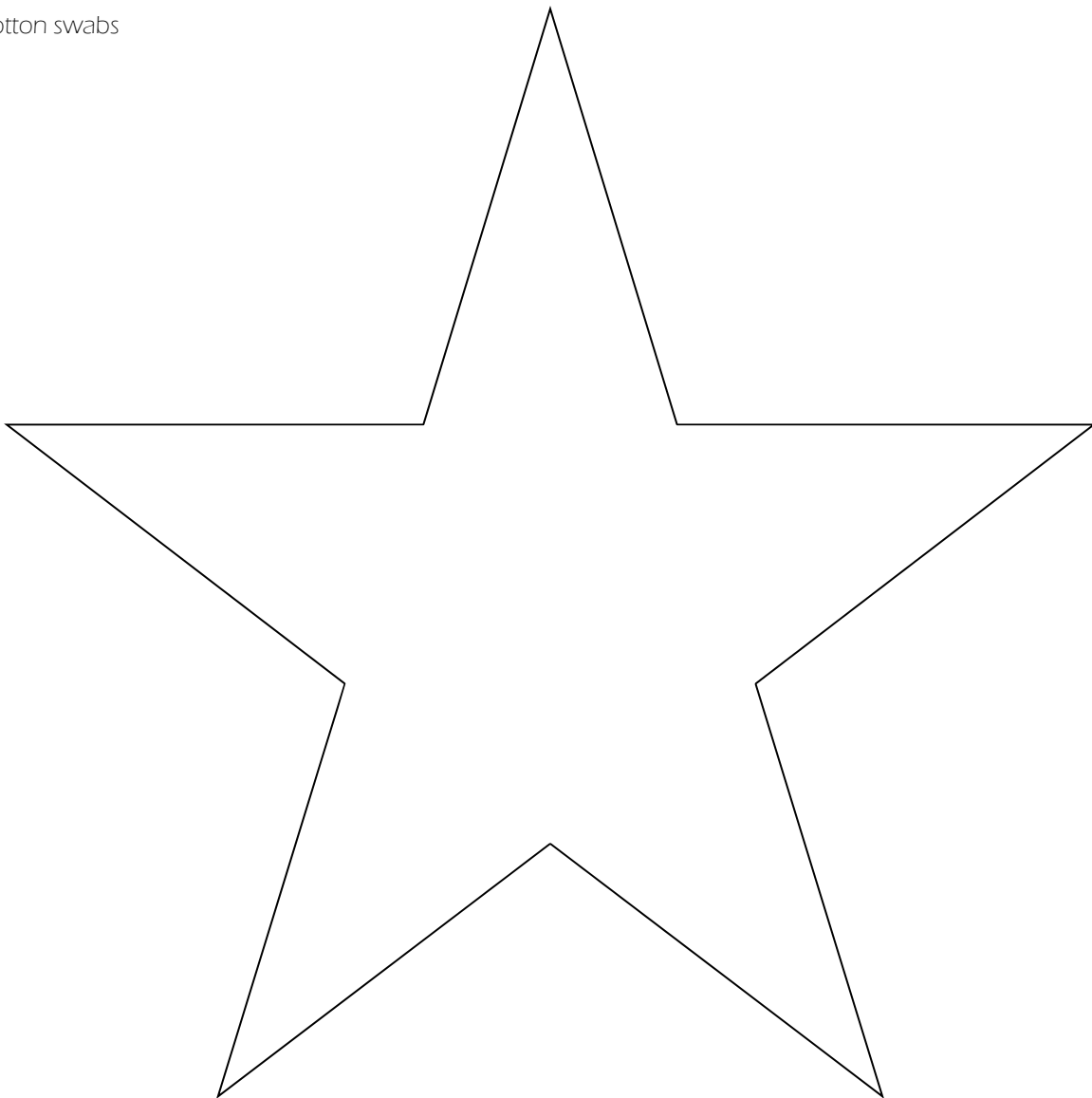
Masking tape

Crepe paper streamers or ribbons

Sequins, stickers, etc

Glue and cotton swabs

- 1** Invite the class to make star wands to celebrate the Declaration of the Báb. Give everyone a star. Show them the name printed on the star, the Báb.
- 2** Invite them to glue sequins and other decorations to make this star shining and beautiful, like the Báb.
- 3** Encourage them to glue streamers or ribbons of different colors to the base of the star.
- 4** Give them each a stick or cardboard rod and help them tape the rod onto the back of the star. Enjoy waving the wand to celebrate the Declaration of the Báb. Ask: Who can we tell about the Báb?





Activity 4

Closing Prayers

Time: 5 minutes

Materials Needed

Completed star wands from Activity 3

Resource Page 285 or a recording of the melody for “O God, My God,” available on the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

- 1** Gather the children in the circle on the floor once again. Ask them *Who* it was that Mullá Husayn found. Point to the name on the star wand. Encourage them to say with you, “the Báb.”
- 2** Ask them what Mullá Husayn did before he looked for the Báb. (He prayed for many, many days.)
- 3** Tell the children that they have the opportunity to pray now also. Invite them to the prayer area to recite or sing with you the Báb’s prayer: “O God, my God, my Beloved, my heart’s Desire.” Ask them to close their eyes reverently and repeat twice more this prayer, if their attention still holds.
- 4** After prayer time, suggest that they take their star wands home to wave on the day of the Declaration of the Báb. Encourage them to tell everyone about the Báb. Mullá Husayn had to wait patiently for people to find the Báb on their own. Mullá Husayn had to keep the Great News about the Báb secret, but we can tell everyone now!

The Martyrdom of the Báb

Welcome and Introductions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as a card with the illuminated name of the Báb, a prayer revealed by the Báb, a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, prayer cards, the Greatest Name, photographs of the Shrine of the Báb, plants or flowers, candles, five-pointed stars

Quotation printed on chart paper:

*O God, my God, my Beloved,
my heart's Desire.*

—The Báb *

Resource Page 285 or a recording of the melody for these words, available on the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

Pitcher of warm water, clean hand towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Activity 1

Photograph of the Shrine of the Báb, Resource Page 223. You may download this image in color from the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

Other color photographs of the Shrine may be downloaded from <http://media.bahai.org>

Activity 2

Copies of the picture on Resource Page 287 of the Shrine of the Báb printed or glued on heavy art paper (see resource pages)

Gold glitter

Glue

Pictures of diverse peoples cut out of magazines such as the *National Geographic*

Recorded devotional music or Bahá'í songs, if available

Activity 3

Resource Page 285 or a recording of the prayer "O God, My God," available on the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

* *The Dawn-Breakers*, p. 30



Welcome and Opening Prayers

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as a card with the illuminated name of the Báb, a prayer revealed by the Báb, a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, prayer cards, the Greatest Name, photographs of the Shrine of the Báb, plants or flowers, candles, 5-pointed stars

Quotation printed on chart paper:

*O God, my God, my Beloved,
my heart's Desire.*

—The Báb

Pitcher of warm water, clean face towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

- 1** Welcome children as they arrive and invite them to prepare for prayers:
 - Remind them of the spiritual quality of reverence. Invite them to show reverence in their hearts with their bodies.
 - Explain that at the prayer area, they will find some special items that remind us of the Báb, and that today we will be remembering Him on a Holy Day, the anniversary of the Martyrdom of the Báb.
 - Have ready a pitcher of warm water (scented, if possible, with a drop of rose water or oil), clean hand towel, and an empty bowl (to catch the dripping water). One by one, invite the children to hold their hands over the empty bowl. Gently pour the warm water over their hands. Instruct them to wash their hands and face and then to wipe with the towel. If you wish to set the tone, sing "Alláh'u'Abhá" over and over as they perform their ablutions.
 - Have them face the Qiblih, the resting place of Bahá'u'lláh. Depending on your geography, you may say, "This direction is where the sun rises in the morning," or "This is where we see the beautiful sunset in the evening," or other uplifting indication of the Qiblih's direction from your location.
 - Demonstrate a reverent attitude of quiet and respectful behavior, such as kneeling or sitting straight and quietly, or other reverent posture.
 - Ask if any of the children wishes to recite a prayer. Choose the order for saying prayers.
- 2** Gather at the prayer area and invite the children to recite their prayers in the pre-selected order.
- 3** After they say their prayers, recite: "O God, my God, my Beloved, my heart's Desire." Invite them to repeat this verse after you, placing their hands over their hearts.
- 4** Then sing it together, using the melody on Resource Page 285 or another favorite melody.



Activity 1

The Story of the Shrine of the Báb

Time: 15 minutes

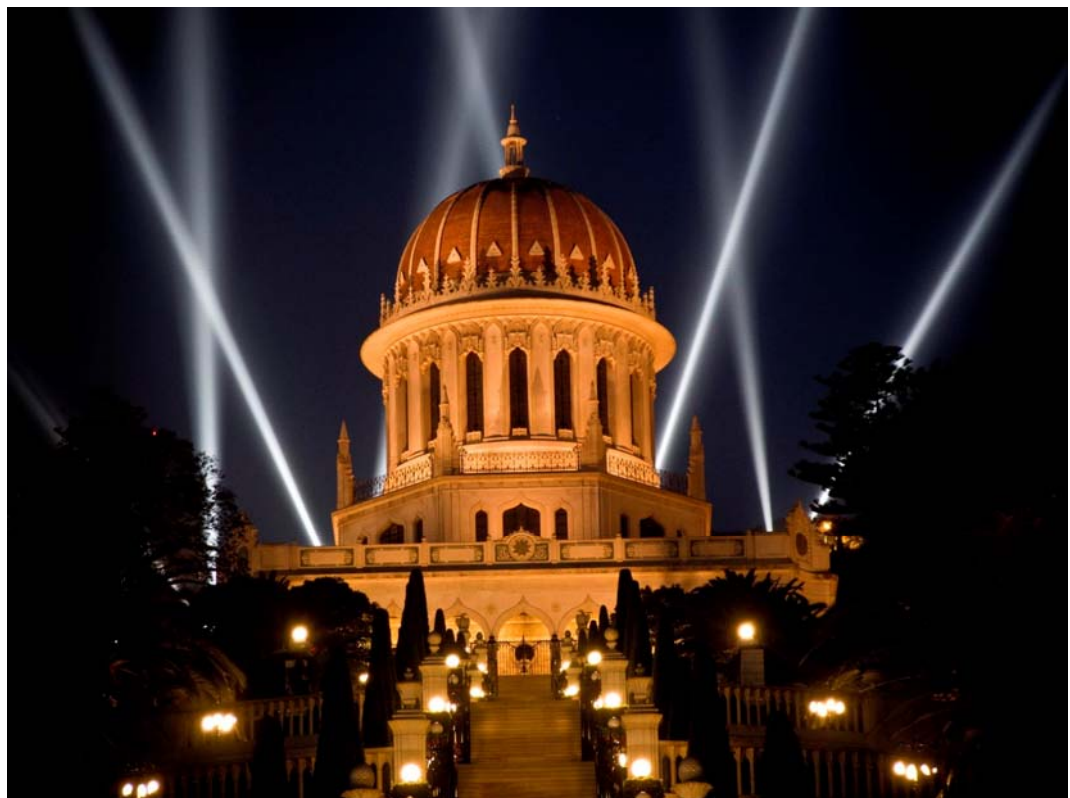
Materials Needed

Photographs of the Shrine of the Báb, Resource Page 223 and below. You may download these images in color from the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

Other color photographs of the Shrine may be downloaded from <http://media.bahai.org>

1 Share the story of the Báb very briefly:

- The Báb was God's Teacher: He was a Manifestation of God.
- The Báb told everyone that God was going to send another Teacher or Manifestation after Him, that this was a New Day of happiness for all people.
- Many of the religious leaders were not happy with the Báb and His followers and tried to hurt them in many ways. He was taken away from His home and imprisoned in the cold mountains.
- One very sad day, people killed the Báb.
- People all over the world gather together to remember that sad day every year. The Báb gave His life to teach us how to love God and how to get ready for the next Manifestation of God.
- Many, many years later, the Báb was buried in a beautiful building called the Shrine of the Báb. (Show the children the photographs of the Shrine.) See the gold dome? The building looks like the Queen of the mountain with its crown of gold.
- People come from all over the world to visit this Shrine. Someday kings, queens, and rulers will walk up the beautiful garden terraces and pray in the Shrine of the Báb. We can do that too.





Materials Needed

Copies of the picture on Resource Page 287 of the Shrine of the Báb printed or glued on heavy art paper

Gold glitter

Glue

Pictures of diverse peoples cut out of magazines such as the *National Geographic*

Recorded devotional music or Bahá'í songs, if available

Activity 2

The Beauty of the Shrine of the Báb

Time: 20 minutes

- 1 Show pictures of the Shrine of the Báb and explain that the Shrine sits on a holy mountain. Point to the dome and show them that it looks like a crown. At night the dome is lit with brilliant light and glows in the dark. It is truly a glorious sight.
- 2 Then, explain that the Báb never lived in a castle or mansion. For years He was put in mountain prisons, where at night there was no heat and no light. The Báb lived alone in these prisons and He wasn't even allowed a light.
- 3 But now the Báb's shrine is full of light and the dome is shining gold. People come from all over the world to pray in His Shrine.
- 4 Show the children the drawing of the Shrine of the Báb. Explain that they will first glue people all around the Shrine. Then they will glue gold glitter on the dome.
- 5 Consider playing devotional music or Bahá'í songs while the children work. Affirm that people all over the world love the Báb and visit His Shrine to pray. We love the Báb too and our prayers and our service can help make the world a better place for all people. Encourage them to share these pictures with their family and friends. Someday they may pray in this beautiful Shrine.



Materials Needed

Resource Page 285 or a recording of the prayer, "O God, My God," available on the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

Activity 3

Closing Prayers

Time: 5 minutes

- 1 Gather the children at the prayer area. Encourage them to close their eyes and remember how wonderful the Báb is and how He loved all of us so much that He gave His life for all of us.
- 2 Encourage them to remember that even though the Báb was imprisoned in mountains and killed, His light shines forever and guides us to God.
- 3 Tell the children that you will recite a beautiful prayer by the Báb. When people heard the Báb chant this prayer, they would be moved to tears because they could see how much He loved God. Recite the prayer, placing your hand over your heart: "O God, My God, My Beloved, my heart's Desire." Invite the children to say the prayer with you using the same hand gesture. Encourage them to close their eyes and say the prayer one more time.
- 4 Then sing the prayer using the melody on Resource Page 285 or another favorite melody. Invite the children to join in when they're ready.

The Birth of the Báb

Welcome and Introductions

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as a card with the illuminated name of the Báb, a prayer revealed by the Báb, a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, prayer cards, the Greatest Name, photographs of the Shrine of the Báb, plants or flowers, candles, five-pointed stars

Card for each child in the shape of a heart with the prayer revealed by the Báb in large print:

*O God, my God, my Beloved,
my heart's Desire.*

—the Báb*

Quotation printed on chart paper:

*O God, my God, my Beloved,
my heart's Desire.*

—The Báb *

Resource Page 285 or a recording of the melody for these words, available on the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

Pitcher of warm water, clean hand towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Activity 1

4 ¼" x 11" white cardstock paper, folded with the name of the Báb written in the center with permanent marker. You may use the pattern on Resource Page 288.

Small pieces of tissue paper: select a set of colors that blend well together, such as various shades of green, yellow, and blue; or shades of yellow, pink, orange, and red.

White school glue

Brushes for glue

Small jars

Crayons or markers

Advance Preparation:

Create a sample card as a model.

Pre-cut and pre-fold a card for each child to decorate.

Activity 2

Card for each child in the shape of a heart with the prayer revealed by the Báb in large print:

*O God, my God, my Beloved,
my heart's Desire.*

—The Báb

* *The Dawn-Breakers*, p. 30



Welcome and Opening Prayers

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as a card with the illuminated name of the Báb, a prayer revealed by the Báb, a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, prayer cards, the Greatest Name, photographs of the Shrine of the Báb, plants or flowers, candles. Five pointed stars would be an appropriate symbol for the celebration of the Báb's declaration.

Card for each child in the shape of a heart with the prayer revealed by the Báb in large print:

*O God, my God, my Beloved,
my heart's Desire.*

—the Báb

Quotation printed on chart paper:

*O God, my God, my Beloved,
my heart's Desire.*

—the Báb

Resource Page 285 or a recording of the melody for these words, available on the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org

Pitcher of warm water, clean hand towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

1 Welcome children as they arrive and invite them to prepare for prayers:

- Remind them of the spiritual quality of reverence. Invite them to show reverence in their hearts and with their bodies.
- Explain that at the prayer area, they will find some special items that remind us of the Báb. Today we will be remembering Him on a Holy Day, the anniversary of His birth.
- Have ready a pitcher of warm water (scented, if possible, with a drop of rose water or oil), clean hand towel, and an empty bowl (to catch the dripping water). One by one, invite the children to hold their hands over the empty bowl. Gently pour the warm water over their hands. Instruct them to wash their hands and face and then to wipe with the towel. If you wish to set the tone, sing "Alláh'u'Abhá" over and over as they perform their ablutions.
- Have them face the Qiblih, the resting place of Bahá'u'lláh. Depending on your geography, you may say, "This direction is where the sun rises in the morning," or "This is where we see the beautiful sunset in the evening," or other uplifting indication of the Qiblih's direction from your location.
- Demonstrate a reverent attitude of quiet and respectful behavior, such as kneeling or sitting straight and quietly, or other reverent posture.
- Ask if any of the children wishes to recite a prayer. Choose the order for saying prayers.

2 Gather at the prayer area and invite the children to recite their prayers in the pre-selected order.

3 After they say their prayers, recite: "O God, my God, my Beloved, my heart's Desire." Invite them to repeat this verse after you, placing their hands over their hearts.

4 Then sing it together, using the melody on Resource Page 285 or another favorite melody.



Activity 1

The Báb as the Gate

Time: 30 minutes

Materials Needed

4 ¼" x 11" white cardstock paper, folded with the name of the Báb written in the center with permanent marker. You may use the pattern on Resource Page 288.

Small pieces of tissue paper: select a set of colors that blend well together, such as various shades of green, yellow, and blue; or shades of yellow, pink, orange, and red.

White school glue

Brushes for glue

Small jars

Crayons or markers

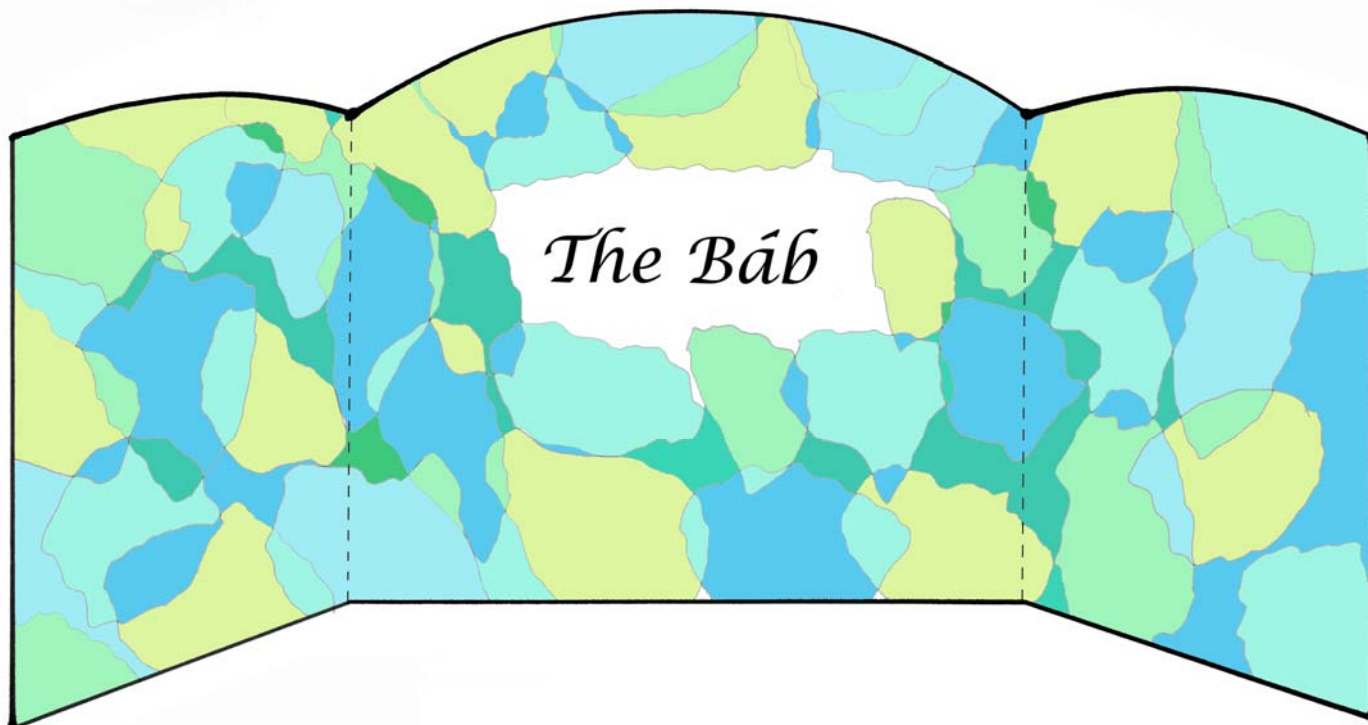
Advance Preparation:

Create a sample card as a model.

Pre-cut and pre-fold a card for each child to decorate.

- 1** Invite the children to sit together in a circle. Do the following finger play with the class, chanting the words rhythmically and opening and closing hands as suggested:

"Open them, close them, open them, close them, give them a little clap! Open them, close them, open them, close them, place them on your lap. Creep them, creep them, creep them, creep them right up to your cheeks. Cover up your little eyes, then give a little peek—peek-a-bool!"
- 2** After all have tried the finger play, encourage the children to once again cover their eyes and then to open them, explaining that their hands are like a gate that opens to reveal their eyes. Try this several times while saying, "Let's open the gate! Let's shut the gate!"
- 3** Explain that a long time ago, a very special Baby was born. His parents named Him Ali-Muhammad. He was a very sweet Child. As a Young Man, He announced to the world that He was God's new Messenger. He gave Himself a new name, the Báb. Can you repeat His special name? The Báb means the gate, just like the gate that you made over your eyes. (Put your hands over your eyes and open them like a gate opening.)
- 4** Explain that the Báb was like a gate because He opened the doors to a new Day, to a time for happiness, unity, and peace for all the world.
- 5** Explain that the anniversary of the birth of the Báb is October 20. Indicate how soon that date will be coming. Today we'll have a birthday party for the Báb. Sing the Happy Birthday song to the Báb with the second verse being "Happy Holy Day to you. . ." (Repeat this 3 times.)
- 6** Invite the children to celebrate the Báb's birthday by making a card that opens like a gate. With a model, show them that inside this gate is His name, the Báb. Explain that Bahá'u'lláh called the Báb "the Beauty of God." Inside the card around Báb's name, they will have an opportunity to make it beautiful with tissue paper and glue, in remembrance of the Beauty of God.
- 7** Distribute the pre-folded cards. Invite the children to color the outside of the card; this is the front of the gate.
- 8** Invite the children to open their cards. Mix a little water and glue inside the small jars. Show the children how to brush the glue-water mixture around the name of the Báb and place little pieces of tissue paper on top of the glued areas. They can overlap the tissue paper pieces and brush over the tissue paper. Allow the cards to dry before attempting to fold them again.



Materials Needed

Card for each child in the shape of a heart with the prayer revealed by the Báb in large print:

*O God, my God, my Beloved,
my heart's Desire.*

—the Báb

Activity 2 Closing Prayers

Time: 10 minutes

- 1** Gather the children together again in circle. Ask them Whose birthday are they celebrating. What does the Báb mean? (Put your hands over your face to show them the “gate.”)
- 2** Show them the cards they have made: open and shut the “gate” of the card. Ask: Who can we show our cards? What can we say to tell them about the Báb, the Gate of God?
- 3** Invite the children take out their heart-shaped cards to practice the prayer of the Báb once more.
- 4** Lead them to the prayer area to recite again and sing this special prayer of the Báb.

The Birth of Bahá'u'lláh

Welcome and Introductions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, prayer cards, the Greatest Name, a card with the illuminated name of Bahá'u'lláh, photographs of holy places and houses of worship, plants or flowers, candles

Pitcher of warm water, clean face towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Quotation written in large letters:

Magnified be Thy name, O Lord my God!

—Bahá'u'lláh*

Activity 1

The story "Bahá'u'lláh Is Born," *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 1, pp. 70–71, or on Resource Page 289

A book of sacred writings of Bahá'u'lláh, such as *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* or the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*

Activity 2

Approximately 12" x 3" pieces of tag board, cardstock, or other heavy paper for each student

Pieces of paper with Bahá'u'lláh's name printed on it in large letters

Sequins

Aluminum foil

Glue

Cotton swabs

Advance Preparation

Prepare the "treasures" for the children to find: on a piece of aluminum foil large enough to wrap around a piece of tag board or other heavy paper, place the tag board, the paper that has Bahá'u'lláh's name printed on it, and sequins. Wrap all of this and twist ends to hold in all the contents. Make a package for each child. Then hide these treasures in different places where the children can find them. If permissible, hide them away from the classroom—in another room or outside.

Activity 3

None

* *Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh*, IV, p. 5



Welcome and Opening Prayers

Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, prayer cards, the Greatest Name, a card with the illuminated name of Bahá'u'lláh, photographs of holy places and houses of worship, plants or flowers, candles

Pitcher of warm water, clean face towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Quotation written in large letters:

*Magnified be Thy name,
O Lord my God!*

—Bahá'u'lláh

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

1 Welcome children as they arrive and invite them to prepare for prayers:

- Remind them of the spiritual quality of reverence. Invite them to show reverence in their hearts and with their bodies.
- Explain that they will find in the prayer area some special items to remind them of Bahá'u'lláh. Today we will be remembering Him on a Holy Day, the anniversary of His birth. We're celebrating the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Have ready a pitcher of warm water (scented, if possible, with a drop of rose water or oil), clean hand towel, and an empty bowl (to catch the dripping water). One by one, invite the children to hold their hands over the empty bowl. Gently pour the warm water over their hands. Instruct them to wash their hands and face and then to wipe with the towel. If you wish to set the tone, sing "Alláh'u'Abhá" over and over as they perform their ablutions.
- Have them face the Qiblih, the resting place of Bahá'u'lláh. Depending on your geography, you may say, "This direction is where the sun rises in the morning," or "This is where we see the beautiful sunset in the evening," or other uplifting indication of the Qiblih's direction from your location.
- Demonstrate a reverent attitude of quiet and respectful behavior, such as kneeling or sitting straight and quietly, or other reverent posture.
- Ask if any of the children wishes to recite a prayer. Choose the order for saying prayers.

2 Gather at the prayer area and invite the children to recite their prayers in the pre-selected order.

3 After they say their prayers, recite: "Magnified be Thy name, O Lord my God!" At the word "magnified," extend your arms outward and upward. Encourage the children to repeat the words and gesture with you. Repeat several times, as desired.



Activity 1

Finger Play and Poem

Time: 20 minutes

Materials Needed

The story “Bahá’u’lláh Is Born,”
The Central Figures: Bahá’u’lláh, vol. 1, pp. 70–71, or
on Resource Page 288

A book of sacred writings of
Bahá’u’lláh, such as *Gleanings*
from the Writings of Ba-
há’u’lláh or the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*

- 1 Invite the children to stand together in a circle. As you read them the following poem,* invite them to copy the corresponding motions:

I have my eyes so I can see (point to your own eyes).
The beautiful world God made for me (point to yourself).

I have my ears so I can hear (point to ears).
The sounds of the world and know God’s near (nod your head).

I have my heart so I can feel (point to chest).
God’s love for me and know it’s real (pat chest).

I have my mind so I can know (point to top of head).
That God made me from head (pat head) to toe (bend down, touch toes).
- 2 Repeat this poem 1–2 times and then invite them to sit in the circle again.
- 3 Explain to the children that you will be reading a special story that tells us about a Special Person Who was born a long, long time ago.
- 4 Read the story “Bahá’u’lláh Is Born” to the children. While reading the words “eyes,” “lips,” “hands,” “legs,” and “heart,” point to your own eyes, lips, and so on.
- 5 Review the ideas in this poem with the children. Explain also that “eyes cried softly in His presence” because people loved Bahá’u’lláh so much. Have you ever felt tears when you feel love very, very, very much?
- 6 Regarding “lips that sang sweetly His praise,” ask the children to sing with you: “Bahá’u’lláh, Bahá’u’lláh, Bahá, Bahá’u’lláh. The Glory of God, the Glory of God, the Glory, the Glory of God.” When He grew up, people would sing about Him.
- 7 Regarding “hands held gently His Tablets,” hold one of the books revealed by Bahá’u’lláh and show the children how carefully we handle Bahá’u’lláh’s books. Pass the book around so that they can show how gently they hold it.
- 8 Regarding “legs walked tirelessly to see Him,” invite the children to stand up and follow you around the room—and weather permitting, go outside and then back in—while telling the children that people would walk and walk and walk for a long time just to see Bahá’u’lláh. That is how much they loved Him.
- 9 Back in the circle again, tell the children that because Bahá’u’lláh was so very special to us, we celebrate the day that He was born. We remember that His

*Deborah Christensen, *God and Me*, p. 16



Activity 2

Hunt for God's Treasure

Time: 20 minutes

Materials Needed

Approximately 12" x 3" pieces of tag board, card stock, or other heavy paper for each student

Pieces of paper with "Bahá'u'lláh" written in large letters

Sequins

Aluminum foil

Glue and cotton swabs

Advance Preparation

Prepare the "treasures" for the children to find: on a piece of aluminum foil large enough to wrap around a piece of tag board, place the tag board, the paper that has Bahá'u'lláh's name printed on it, and sequins. Wrap all of this and twist ends to hold in all the contents. Make a package for each child. Then hide these treasures in different places where the children can find them. If permissible, hide them away from the classroom—in another room or outside.

- 1 When the children are seated in a circle, explain that we are going to celebrate this Bahá'u'lláh's birthday by having a treasure hunt. Explain that the Maid of Heaven came to Bahá'u'lláh and said that He was God's Treasure. Invite the children each to hunt for one treasure and then to bring it back to the circle. Encourage them to wait until all children are back at the circle before opening their treasures.
- 2 After the children have found their treasures and brought them back to the circle, invite them to open their treasures to see what is inside: the name of Bahá'u'lláh and some "jewels."
- 3 Assist the children to glue Bahá'u'lláh's name onto the tag board and then glue the sequins all around His name. They can use cotton swabs to dot the glue onto their jewels.
- 4 Allow the glue to dry. Then invite the children to take these treasures home and display them for Bahá'u'lláh's birthday.



Activity 3

Closing Prayers

Time: 5 minutes

Materials Needed

None

- 1 Invite the children to prepare for a prayer by showing reverence.
- 2 Invite them to recite with you "Magnified be Thy name, O Lord my God!" and stretch their arms and hands out as if magnifying Him.
- 3 Conclude by singing favorite songs together, if desired.

Lesson 12

Ayyám-i-Há

Materials Needed

Welcome and Introductions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as prayer cards, the Greatest Name, a card with the illuminated name of Bahá'u'lláh, photographs of holy places and houses of worship

Items that remind the children of Ayyám-i-Há, such as little wrapped gifts to give to the children, party things, get-well cards

The quotation written on chart paper:

*Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Morn of Guidance hath dawned.
Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Sun of Reality hath shown forth.*

—'Abdu'l-Bahá*

Pitcher of warm water, clean face towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Activity 1

Attractive box or basket with a lid. Place a card inside that says "Happy Ayyám-i-Há!" and pictures of Ayyám-i-Há activities underneath this top card.

Photographs cut from magazines that show small wrapped gifts, someone offering service of some kind, someone visiting the sick, and a party. Seek out pictures of diverse people. These pictures should be placed underneath the card that says "Happy Ayyám-i-Há!"

Music or recording of the Ayyám-i-Há song by Susan Engle, the *Happy Ayyám-i-Há* CD hosted by Hand of the Cause William Sears, or other happy music that the children will enjoy

Activity 2

8 1/2" x 22" poster board for each child

Craft foam shapes, markers, or other decorations

Glue

Stapler

Hole punch

Scissors

String, yarn, or ribbon

Tissue paper, crepe paper, or streamers of assorted colors

Small cards for each child that read "visit sick," "give gifts," "prepare for fast," "give parties," "serve"

Activity 3

*Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Morn of Guidance hath dawned.
Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Sun of Reality hath shown forth.*

—'Abdu'l-Bahá*

* *Prayers of Ecstasy*, p. 8



Welcome and Opening Prayers

Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed

Prayer books, especially those designed for children

Other items suitable for the prayer area, such as prayer cards, the Greatest Name, a card with the illuminated name of Bahá'u'lláh, photographs of holy places and houses of worship

Items that remind the children of Ayyám-i-Há, such as little wrapped gifts to give to the children, party things, get-well cards

The quotation written on chart paper:

Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Morn of Guidance hath dawned.

Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Sun of Reality hath shown forth.

—'Abdu'l-Bahá

Pitcher of warm water, clean face towel, large bowl, and rose oil for ablutions

Advance Preparation: Prior to class, prepare a special area for prayers using some of the materials suggested. Make it appealing to the children's eyes.

1 Welcome children as they arrive and invite them to prepare for prayers:

- Remind them of the spiritual quality of reverence. Invite them to show reverence in their hearts and with their bodies.
- Explain that they will find some special items in the prayer area to remind them of Ayyám-i-Há, such as one beautifully wrapped gift with a small favor inside for each child, or other items.
- Have ready a pitcher of warm water (scented, if possible, with a drop of rose water or oil), clean hand towel, and an empty bowl (to catch the dripping water). One by one, invite the children to hold their hands over the empty bowl. Gently pour the warm water over their hands. Instruct them to wash their hands and face and then to wipe with the towel. If you wish to set the tone, sing "Alláh'u'Abhá" over and over as they perform their ablutions.
- Have them face the Qiblih, the resting place of Bahá'u'lláh. Depending on your geography, you may say, "This direction is where the sun rises in the morning," or "This is where we see the beautiful sunset in the evening," or other uplifting indication of the Qiblih's direction from your location.
- Demonstrate a reverent attitude of quiet and respectful behavior—kneeling or sitting straight and quietly, or other reverent posture.
- Ask if any of the children wishes to recite a prayer. Choose the order for saying prayers.

2 Gather at the prayer area and invite the children to recite their prayers in the pre-selected order.

3 After they say their prayers, recite: "Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Morn of Guidance hath dawned. Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Sun of Reality hath shown forth." At the words "Glad tidings!" use the sign language symbol for "glad," which is open hands patting the chest several times with a slight upward motion. Recite the quotation again and encourage the children to repeat and gesture after you. Repeat this several more times, as desired.



Activity 1

What Is Ayyám-i-Há?

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Attractive box or basket with a lid. Place a card inside that says “Happy Ayyám-i-Há!” and pictures of Ayyám-i-Há activities underneath this top card.

Photographs cut from magazines that show small wrapped gifts, someone offering service of some kind, someone visiting the sick, and a party. Seek out pictures of diverse people. These pictures should be placed underneath the card that says “Happy Ayyám-i-Há!”

Music or recording of the Ayyám-i-Há song by Susan Engle, the *Happy Ayyám-i-Há* CD hosted by Hand of the Cause William Sears, or other happy music that the children will enjoy

- 1 Invite the children to sit together in a circle.
- 2 Place the prepared box or basket in the center of the circle. Open the lid of the box and invite all the children to peek inside and see the card.
- 3 Pull out the card and show them that the card says “Happy Ayyám-i-Há!” Ask: Do you know what Ayyám-i-Há is? Acknowledge all.
- 4 Invite them to watch closely as you pull out pictures one by one from the box. These picture that show something that happens during Ayyám-i-Há. Explain that:
 - There are 4 and sometimes 5 days of Ayyám-i-Há.
 - It is a happy time of year during which the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh said that we can do some special things.
 - Ayyám-i-Há is a time to visit the sick. (Show picture.) How many of you have been sick? Did you have someone take care of you and make you feel better? Would you have liked to have someone visit you?
 - Ayyám-i-Há is also a time to prepare for the Fast, a time of prayer. (Show picture.)
 - Ayyám-i-Há is a time set aside for gift giving. (Show picture.)
 - Ayyám-i-Há is also a time for inviting friends over for a party or for a fun get-together. (Show picture.)
- 5 Ask: Isn’t it wonderful to have these special days for service, fellowship, and joy?
- 6 Play festive music and invite the children to enjoy making simple movements to the music with you.



Materials Needed

8 ½" x 22" poster board for each child

Craft foam shapes, markers, or other decorations

Glue

Stapler

Hole punch

Scissors

String, yarn, or ribbon

Tissue paper, crepe paper, or streamers of assorted colors

Small cards for each child that read "visit sick," "give gifts," "prepare for fast," "give parties," "serve"

Activity 2 Ayyám-i-Há Windsocks

Time: 20 minutes

- 1 Invite the children to move to a work area and to make an Ayyám-i-Há decoration to hang in their homes. This decoration is a colorful windsock.* Show how a sample windsock can move in a light breeze.
- 2 Give the children each a piece of poster board. Allow them to glue decorations or use markers to make designs or pictures on it.
- 3 If they can write, help them to write "Happy Ayyám-i-Há!" on the poster board.
- 4 Roll the poster board into a cone with the design facing outwards and staple it closed. Staple 4 or 5 streamers at the bottom.
- 5 At the end of each streamer, staple one of the small cards that describe what they can do during Ayyám-i-Há.
- 6 Punch 4 holes at the top of the windsock and tie a piece of string through each hole. Join all the yarn pieces at the top and tie them together for hanging. Encourage the children to display these windsocks in a favorite place to celebrate the happy days of Ayyám-i-Há.



Materials Needed

The quotation written on chart paper:

Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Morn of Guidance hath dawned.

Glad tidings! Glad tidings! The Sun of Reality hath shown forth.

—'Abdu'l-Bahá

Activity 3 Closing Prayers

Time: 5 minutes

- 1 Before taking the children to the prayer area, help them remember the sign language symbol for "glad" learned during opening devotions. Explain that "glad tidings" means happy news, and that Ayyám-i-Há is a happy time.
- 2 Gather the children in the prayer area one more time. Recite the Glad Tidings quotation with the sign for "glad" and encourage the children to repeat the words and gesture with you. Repeat several times, as desired.
- 3 Conclude by singing favorite songs together.

* *Bahá'í Crafts for Children*, p. 86. ©2003, Jodell Babbit-Sprague and Cindy Firooz. Used with permission.