

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Bahá'í Education Materials

This is meant to serve as a guide for teachers using WellSpring Feast Materials.

When using these materials in a class for children, the majority of activities should be appropriate for most children between the ages of 6 and 13. They may also be adapted for use in youth and adult Deepenings.

Materials to have on hand for activities:
(*necessary materials - others optional)

- *Pens, pencils, crayons or colored markers, drawing paper
- Story about successful use of will power or obedience (e.g., BJ and the Language of the Woodlands by Alvin N. Deibert, available from Bahá'í Distr. Svc.) for p.1 or later
- Poster board, newspaper, magazines, scissors, glue or paste for p.3
- Dictionary for p.3
- Gentle music for p.4

PAGE 1

Begin with a prayer, preferably one recited by a student from memory. If the students set any spiritual goals at the last Feast, such as developing a particular virtue or perfection, have them report on what was difficult, successful, victorious, what were the tests involved, what did they feel good about, etc. Make sure to encourage effort and acknowledge feelings of frustration.

Read the first quotation aloud and have the class repeat it a number of times to memorize it. They may want to recite it for the others at Feast just before the social portion begins.

Invite discussion about what it means to have no will but God's Will. If you have a story selected about will, read it to the class. Suggestion: BJ and the Language of the Woodlands, by Alvin N. Deibert is lengthy but can be read in parts. It's an example of the use of will power to accomplish something very difficult (the learning of all the animal languages).

Have the students complete page 1 in the workbook, then share what they wish with one another about their answers. Point out that what is easy for one person might be difficult for another, and so on, because we all have different capacities and gifts. (This teaches unity in diversity).

PAGE 2

After reading the quotation aloud or having a good reader in the class do so, ask the children to complete the exercises on this page, then discuss.

Answers:

1. *excellence*
2. *confidence*
3. *Trust*
4. *rights*

What can girls do that will make equality and God's Will happen slower?

Examples of possible answers: Avoid trying hard at things in school, believe they are inferior to boys, not respect themselves, criticize themselves too much, expect to be treated differently than boys.

PAGE 3

Answers:

1. *respect*
2. *Encourage*
3. *Remind*
4. *teasing*

What can boys do that will make equality and God's Will happen slower?

Some possible answers: Criticize girls, tease them too much, act superior, avoid doing household chores.

Can we stop equality? No.

Before going on to look at how nature is God's Will in the contingent world, ask the class to draw or dramatize some of the changes which have occurred in the equality of women and men since Bahá'u'lláh's coming in the 1800's. (Examples: women can vote, own property, now doing jobs only men used to do, woman on the Supreme Court of the U.S., woman as Prime Minister of the U.K., etc.)

An "Equality Collage": You may also wish to have some newspapers and magazines available if there are good pictures of women and men which demonstrate equality and have the class do a collage by cutting out and pasting various pictures and articles or headlines/lines from articles on a piece of poster board or construction paper. You may do this as a cooperative project with teams of students, the whole class if it is small, or allow individuals to do it. If done as a cooperative project, comment on the cooperation, unity, good humour and sharing you see. (Praise the virtues, especially when they reflect effort by a particular student.)

Regarding nature as God's Will: ask some students to look up the words "embodiment," "Creator," "Will," "expression" and "contingent" in a dictionary and prepare a 5-minute presentation on their ideas about what this quotation means. Giving talks in front of the class is good preparation for teaching the Faith.

PAGE 4

After the students have completed their answers to the questions on page 4, have them discuss their answers and encourage them to take personal responsibility for caring for the earth in every way they can (e.g., refraining from littering, recycling glass, tin, plastic and newspapers, buying and encouraging their parents to buy biodegradable cleaning products, not over-using paper, etc.) Ask them to describe any pets they have and how they care for them. (Most students will thoroughly enjoy this discussion.)

What happens if we harm nature?: Some possible answers are: the ozone layer will be destroyed, air and water will become irretrievably polluted, animals could die out and become extinct, and so on.

Invite them to spend some time memorizing the prayer on this page, even if they begin only with the first phrase and finish learning it at home.

Small children might enjoy this activity: play some gentle music and have them act out being a tender herb growing in a meadow stirred by the breeze.

PAGE 5

Add-A-Letter SCRAMBLE answers:

UNITY

PEACE

PRAY

KIND

JUSTICE

GODLY

OBEY

HONEST

1. *unity*
2. *kind*
3. *godly*
4. *Pray*
5. *peace*
6. *justice*
7. *honest*
8. *obey*

PAGE 6

By now the students are ready for a more physical activity. The game of **Follow the Leader** is suggested by directions on p. 6. Make sure that different students have the opportunity to be leader. You may wish to use this as a reward for exceptional effort you have noticed in students. Mention specifically what you are acknowledging them for: e.g., “Mike, you showed lots of patience during the story time” or “Erica, you showed excellent effort in memorizing the prayer.”

Ask the class to read the rest of the page.

PAGE 7

After students complete the **MAZE**, close by reading the final quotation and ask them to think of a way they want to thank God this month.

