

SERVICE THEME

MUSIC—devotional music

- from Joe Crone's *Immerse Yourself* CD:

.....strive that your actions day by day may be beautiful prayers. Turn towards God, and seek always to do that which is right and noble. Enrich the poor, raise the fallen, comfort the sorrowful, bring healing to the sick, reassure the fearful, rescue the oppressed, bring hope to the hopeless, shelter the destitute! ~

~'Abdu'l-Bahá, (Paris Talks)

Vocabulary:

Strive=try hard, struggle

Noble=moral, upright, virtuous

Oppressed=mistreated, treated unfairly, unjustly, dominated harshly

Destitute=really poor, needy, in poverty

- This prayer is by Soulrise Melodies *At First Light* Volume 2—Can be downloaded for free at: <https://soundcloud.com/larrymagee/16prayer-song-these-lovely?in=larrymagee/sets/bahai-ruhi-book-3-grade-two-album>

O Thou kind Lord! These lovely children are the handiwork of the fingers of Thy might and the wondrous signs of Thy greatness. O God! Protect these children, graciously assist them to be educated and enable them to render service to the world of humanity. O God! These children are pearls, cause them to be nurtured within the shell of Thy loving-kindness. Thou art the Bountiful, the All-Loving.

~'Abdu'l-Bahá

- The piece below, sung by Goleta Burrison, can be downloaded for free at: <https://soundcloud.com/larrymagee/sets/bahai-ruhi-book-5-breezes-of-confirmation-album>

God is the helper of those souls whose aim is to serve humanity and whose efforts and endeavors are devoted to the good and betterment of all mankind. ~'Abdu'l-Bahá,

Vocabulary:

Endeavors=activities, deeds, works, ventures

Devoted=dedicated, committed, lovingly given

In relation to the above musical selection: We talked about ways God helps us (through guiding, other people, teachings, events, blessings, etc.) and that even if service to others or to the world is hard and not always fun and pleasant, it does not mean that we are not being helped by spiritual forces. We grow spiritually stronger, i.e., our virtues, through overcoming obstacles and challenges—not through easy tasks.

- From Joe Crone’s “Immerse Yourselves...” CD:

To be a Baha’i simply means to love all the world; to love humanity and try to serve it; to work for universal peace and universal brotherhood. ~’Abdu’l-Bahá, (as quoted in Bahá’u’lláh and the new Era, by J. Esslemont)

- “Helpfulness Quotation” from the *At First Light Vol. 1* CD by Soulrise Melodies.

It behooveth man to show forth that which will benefit mankind. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf)

Vocabulary:

Behooveth=is the duty of, is fitting for, appropriate for

- Another lovely musical option is called “Service Quotation” from the *At First Light Vol. 1* CD by Soulrise Melodies:

Arise thou to serve God and help His Cause. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (The Summons of the Lord of Hosts)

- From Jack Lenz’s *We are Baha’is Too* CD:

Verily, thou has come by the command of God. Thou hast appeared to speak of Him. Thou wast created to serve Him, the Dear, the Beloved. ~ attributed to `Abdu'l-Bahá

Notes: I can’t find an authenticated/authoritative source for the above, but I have read or heard on numerous occasions that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá revealed this utterance to be whispered in the ear of a newborn child. I still chose to use it though b/c it so beautifully captures the essence of today’s lesson.

- Grant Hindin Miller’s *Sacred Verses* CD. Also available for free at <https://soundcloud.com/larrymagee/18prayer-song-i-am-a-child-of?in=larrymagee/sets/bahai-ruhi-book-3-grade-one-album>

O My Lord! O my Lord!

I am a child of tender years. Nourish me from the breast of Thy mercy, train me in the bosom of Thy love, educate me in the school of Thy guidance and develop me under the shadow of Thy bounty. Deliver me from darkness, make me a brilliant light; free me from unhappiness, make me a flower of the rose garden; suffer me to become a servant of Thy threshold and confer upon me the disposition and nature of the righteous; make me a cause of bounty to the human world, and crown my head with the diadem of eternal life. Verily, Thou art the Powerful, the Mighty, the Seer, the Hearer. - 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Vocabulary:

Nourish=feed, nurture

Bosom=chest

Suffer=allow

Threshold=entrance

Confer=grant, give

Disposition=character

Righteous=virtuous, good

Bounty=gifts

Diadem=crown

- “Arise” by Sky, *A Cycle of Divine Love Songs*. We discussed how the success of one’s service is not always seen. “Ultimate” means final, in the end—which means it’s entirely possible that we may not witness or understand our victory until after we pass from this mortal world.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yL6fAhTjxbk>

Arise in His name, put your trust wholly in Him, and be assured of ultimate victory. ~ The Bab

SUGGESTED MEMORY VERSES to take home—place on attractive paper or below images color copied from a book that represent the concept, go over big or unfamiliar words

Think ye at all times of rendering some service to every member of the human race. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá,
(Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá)

Let your acts be a guide unto all mankind..... Through them the brightness of your light can be shed upon the whole earth. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

Love all the world, love humanity and try to serve it. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá (Quoted by Dr. J.E. Esslemont, Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era, p. 71)

The betterment of the world can be accomplished through pure and goodly deeds... Bahá'u'lláh

Vocabulary:

Betterment=improvement, progress

accomplished =achieved, done

Pure= unselfish, virtuous (A pure deed is doing for the good of others, love of God and love of others, not for personal gain).

Deeds=actions

Man's merit lieth in service and virtue and not in the pageantry of wealth and riches. ~Bahá'u'lláh,
(Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh)

Vocabulary:

Merit=value/worth

Pageantry=display

Love manifests its reality in deeds, not only in words - these alone are without effect. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá
(Paris Talks)

Love ye all religions and all races with a love that is true and sincere and show that love through deeds...
~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Baha)

...service in love for mankind is unity with God. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Promulgation of Universal Peace)

May you serve the Cause of God as one single, united force. ~ `Abdu'l-Bahá, (Promulgation of Universal Peace)

You live to do good and to bring happiness to others. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Paris Talks)

Note: Because children can be so black and white in their thinking, we did explain that if someone is asking you to make them happy by requesting you to do something that you feel is wrong or makes you uncomfortable, you should say no and not worry about their feelings of happiness or disappointment.

Blessed are they that remember the one true God, that magnify His Name, and seek diligently to serve His Cause. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

Vocabulary

Blessed=receiving of God's bounties and gifts/assisted

Magnify=extol/praise

Diligently=thoroughly, carefully, with steadfastness

Note: We discussed that it is an honor and a privilege to serve God's Cause, and that we receive untold blessings when we do. This class will include more on service to humanity, but will also begin an emphasis on service to the Cause of God as well, which is essentially service to humanity---such as promoting the oneness of humanity, world peace, the equality of women and men, economic justice, etc.

Like a candle must ye shed your light,.... illumine the hearts of humankind.... In the darkness of the world be ye radiant flames.... Now is the time to serve, now is the time to be on fire. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá) NOTE: This one has a craft to go w/ it

MUSIC—Songs (often w/ actions to the lyrics)

NOTE: “With These Hands”, “Hearts and Hands” and “Beauty is What You Do” all can be easily learned and be performed for parents if time and have willing kids 6yr olds and up can do these, some mature 5yr olds. Even some mature 4yr olds can perform the “Beauty is What You Do” song.

- **Helpfulness**” from the *Virtues in Us, Children’s Virtue Songs* (Preschool Age) by The Children’s Virtues Development Project. Need many paper wads, preferably colorful, # depends on # of kids.

Before playing this very simple song, we tossed bright pink and lime green crumpled up paper wads around the room and placed a trash bin in the center of the room.

Every time the lyrics said “May I help you?” we would unfold our arms and extend our palms outward to someone as if offering a gift. When the lyrics said “May I help you clean the floor?”, each child was to pick up one wad and put/toss it into the trash bin.

- **“With These Hands”** by Vitamin “L” on their *Swingin’ in the Key of L* recording. Nice to have earth ball or globe as prop. (See Arts and Crafts for related craft, marked w/ *****)

After the brief discussion below, we did the following actions to this song about good ways to use our hands.

Kids are gathered in a circle, sitting until we start to practice actions. First we talk about how our hands are gifts from ____ (God)? and can be used to bring happiness or ____? (sadness) to others, to make the world a better or ____?(worse) place.

To thank ____ (God) for the precious gift of our hands, we should use them to ____ (help) others, to do good deeds.

We give examples, such as a hand can be used to hit someone b/c you want what they have or to lovingly caress a child, or to grab something for yourself or to give a gift, etc. (*We do actions in the air to emphasize, along with relevant facial expressions, always ending with the more positive image.*) What we do with our hands shows what’s in our ____ (hearts), hands show in actions what we feel and think.

Then we went over the words to the song, and teach the kids the actions:

With these hands (*wave both hands in air side to side, palms facing out, hands open, or push forward and back*)

A picture I will paint (*pretend to hold paintbrush and paint*)

I see it right here in my mind, (*point to head*)

It will be one of a kind (*hold up one finger*)

And when I am through, you will see it too. (*point to someone else*)

With these hands (*wave both hands in air side to side, palms facing out, hands open, or push forward and back*)

I will plant a tree (*pretend to place a small tree in ground, bend down, pat dirt, etc.*)

I will watch it grow (*look down and up as if watching something rising from floor*)

And I'll protect it, give it love and I'll respect it (*pretend to pour water on imaginary tree*)

And one day you'll see, it will give fruit to me (*pretend to pluck a piece of fruit and eat it*)

CHORUS:

With these hands (*wave both hands in air side to side, palms facing out, hands open, or push forward and back*)

I can offer so much (*start with the backs of the fingertips of both hands touching in the center of body, then move hands outward towards others, ending with arms outstretched and palms facing ceiling*)

With these hands I can create (*wave both hands in air side to side, palms facing out, hands open, or push forward and back*)

And with these hands, (*wave both hands in air side to side, palms facing out, hands open, or push forward and back*)

I can offer my love (*hands over heart, then bring down in front, elbows bent, palms up, as if holding a pillow*)

I can do beautiful things (*each child is to come up with own unique movement for this, I give a few examples but encourage them to do their own*)

with these hands (*wave both hands in air side to side, palms facing out, hands open, or push forward and back*)

(end of chorus)

With these hands (*wave both hands in air side to side, palms facing out, hands open, or push forward and back*)

I will write a song (*pretend to write in air*)

A song of peace (*make peace symbol with fingers*)

For all to hear (*cup both ears and then extend hands and arms out forming a “v” from the head*)

A song that may catch someone’s ear (*cup ear and lean as if listening for some distant sound*)

And when they hear the song (*cup one ear*)

They may sing along (*place one palm under chin and then extend open hand out straight in front*)

With these hands (*wave both hands in air side to side, palms facing out, hands open, or push forward and back*)

I’ll reach out for the world (*reach out toward center of circle, or towards earth ball, globe or picture of world*)

I will join with other hands (*kids hold each other’s hands—or all join in touching the earth ball*)

Everywhere in all the lands (*still holding hands or touching earth ball*)

Working for the love the world’s been dreaming of! (*Can continue holding hands or earth, and place one hand over heart and close eyes while touching the earth w/ the other*)

CHORUS 3X

Thine hand is a symbol of My loving-kindness... ~Bahá'u'lláh

(Gleanings)

The betterment of the world can be accomplished through pure and goodly deeds... Bahá'u'lláh:

(Bahá'u'lláh cited by Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice)

Let your acts be a guide unto all mankind..... It is through your deeds that ye can distinguish yourselves from others. Through them the brightness of your light can be shed upon the whole earth. ~Bahá'u'lláh,

(Gleanings)

Vocabulary:

Distinguish=be different/tell apart

It is clear and evident that all men shall, after their physical death, estimate the worth of their deeds, and realize all that their hands have wrought. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

Estimate=judge/evaluate

Wrought=produced/done

(The above quote may be too heavy for wider community and young children)

- **“Hearts and Hands”** by Tickle Tune Typhoon, on their *Hearts and Hands* recording:

Here are the words and actions. Students are instructed to do the actions with as many different people as possible—i.e., to not just interact with one’s good friends. Participants are also encouraged to dance during this upbeat song, especially since there are lyrics that don’t involve any pantomiming. Before playing the song, the lyrics were read and the accompanying actions were demonstrated, and the students were to mimic me. Then only the key action words were read again, and the students were to show the appropriate actions. This double run through is necessary for remembering what to do.

Heart to heart (*press chest against another chest as in hug*)

Hand in hand (*hold someone’s hand*)

CHORUS:

People helping people

Heart to heart, hand in hand (*motions same as above*)

People helping people

Heart to heart, woman and man (*press chest against another chest as in hug*)

Reach out a helping hand (*starting with hand near chest, unbend elbow with open palm, extend towards someone*)

Children gather round

Black, white, yellow, red

Tan and all the brown

Open up your heart (*have hands over heart, open outward like a double gate*)

Know that you belong

When we stand together

We keep each other strong (*link elbows with someone, and the unlinked outside arms make a strong muscle by flexing and bending.*)

CHORUS

Look at the chain of life (*bend own index fingers and hook together to mimic chain*)

Creatures great and small (*raise arms to indicate height, then bend index finger and thumb with about an inch between them to indicate small*)

Clouds, trees, butterflies (*form large circle with arms to indicate cloud, arms up and extended with palms facing down, fingers spread out to indicate trees, and cross wrists, palms down, and flap hands by bending at wrists to indicate butterflies*)

Yes we need them all (*shake head yes*)

Everywhere around the world (*have both arms bent in front of chest, palms facing chest, unbend and extend outward to indicate everywhere, make circle with index finger of one hand pointing down, as if turning a globe.*)

The sky, the sea, the land (*sweep arm upward to point to sky, for sea, make wave motions by bending elbow and wrist, moving up and down, and for land, hands facing down make circular motions, hands and arms parallel to the floor.*)

All things link together (*link elbows with someone*)

Joining hearts and hands (*press chest against another chest and hold someone's hand*)

Joining hearts and hands (*same*)

CHORUS

NOTE: After the song, I shared these highly relevant **quotes**, (which also go with the song called “With These Hands”).

Thine hand is a symbol of My loving-kindness... ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

The betterment of the world can be accomplished through pure and goodly deeds... Baha'u'lláh:
(cited by Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice)

It is clear and evident that all men shall, after their physical death, estimate the worth of their deeds, and realize all that their hands have wrought. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

Vocabulary:

Estimate=judge/evaluate

Wrought=produced/done

Love manifests its reality in deeds, not only in words - these alone are without effect. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá

Vocabulary:

Manifests=shows/reveals

- **Beauty is What You Do**

NOTE: This one is great for mixed ages, b/c it's easy to learn, repetitive, but has a beat even most 12 year olds can enjoy. We have used it as a perfect audience participation pantomime for an Ayyam-i-Ha party with the theme of “Inner Beauty.” The song is from a CD by the same title. Its available from www.fullcirclelearning.org . Just click on Educator tab, then Audio, then scroll down to find this song. It's free.

Here are the lyrics and simple motions that one can use with them. Ask the audience to stand for this and encourage them to move their bodies to the rhythm in addition to performing the actions. Since the actions

focus a lot on hand movements, one can also explain that what we do with our hands is often how we express beauty. They are the tools of the spirit, they help us do good deeds, and they reflect what is in our heart and mind.

VERSE 1

Some people say,
some people say

beauty is what you wear. *(One hand on hip, the other placed against the back of the head, then bring that hand down in front, traversing the front of the body, with palm facing body, from head to knee, ending with flipping the wrist so fingers are all pointing away from the body, parallel to the floor, as if presenting an outfit for modeling.)*

Some people say,
some people say

beauty's about your hair. *(Grasp hair on both sides with fingers or place fingers on top of head if hair is too short or one is bald).*

Some people say,
some people say something

I know is true. *(Shake head meaning yes).*

Those people say that

beauty is what you do. *(Present open palms facing outward, elbows bent, and bend and extend elbows several times, like pushing something up high.)*

CHORUS

Beauty is sharing. *(Make scooping motion with both hands to the right, open palms, elbows bent then unbent).*

Beauty is helping. *(Make scooping motion with both hands to the left, open palms, elbows bent then unbent).*

Beauty is loving. *(Place both hands over heart, then extend arms up and out--- or if kids are comfortable w/ each other, give hugs).*

Beauty is what you do. *(Present open palms facing outward, elbows bent, and bend and extend elbows several times, like pushing something up high.)*

VERSE 2

Some people say,
some people say

beauty's about your clothes. (*Grasp clothing with index finger and thumb on both sides of the body*).

Some people say,
some people say

beauty's about your nose. (*Place index finger on nose*).

Some people say,
some people say something

I know is true. (*Shake head meaning yes*).

Those people say that

beauty is what you do. (*Present open palms facing outward, elbows bent, and bend and extend elbows several times, like pushing something up high*.)

CHORUS (*Repeat same actions as in chorus above*).

VERSE 3

Some people say,
some people say

beauty is fat or thin. (*Hold hands far out from sides of body, palms facing towards each other, as if hugging giant tree trunk, bring together about 12 inches apart for thin part*).

Some people say,
some people say

beauty's about your skin. (*Place hands on both cheeks*).

Some people say,
some people say something

I know is true. (*Shake head meaning yes*).

Those people say that

beauty is what you do. (*Present open palms facing outward, elbows bent, and bend and extend elbows several times, like pushing something up high.*)

CHORUS (*Repeat same actions as in chorus above*).

- **“Help at Home”** from the *Virtues in Us, Children’s Virtue Songs* (school age) by The Children’s Virtues Development Project:

NOTE: Whenever the lyrics says “Please let me help you” or just the single word “help”, the students unfolded their forearms and hands as if offering a special gift. Other lyrics that lent themselves to obvious pantomime were:

Feeding the dog

Washing a pan

Putting my toys away

To help at home brings me joy (have both index fingers point to big smile on one’s face)

It gives me wings. Oh, I feel I could fly through the sky like a bird, so high! (Children were to outstretch their arms for wings, and each was allowed to get on and stand on one (sturdy & low) classroom chair, pretending to fly.)

Sweeping the floor

Closing a blind

Cleaning my room

- **“How Can I Help You** from Jennifer Russell’s *The Virtues Songs*, Vol. 2. We did actions/pantomime to the lyrics whenever practical. Lyrics are always read first, actions demonstrated, then music played.
- **Cooperation, together we can do great things** from Jennifer Russell:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sb2redAKEnQ>

- **“Offering Some Service”** from the *Virtues in Us, Children’s Virtue Songs* (school age) by The Children’s Virtues Development Project. In a seated circle, we did rhythmic group drumming with plastic containers to this song. During the chorus, on the phrase “always be thinking of offering some service to every member of the human race” we passed our makeshift drums to the person on our right. Nice to have *plastic containers w/ lids or many makeshift drums*.
- **“That is a Mighty Power”** by Vitamin L on their *Everyone’s Invited* recording. We read lyrics first, before listening. This song is about how bringing joy to others and doing good is the real value in a person. The first refrain, for example, goes like this: “You don’t have to be millionaire to give something of worth, if you give someone a helping hand, you give a treasure to this earth…….” The lyrics over and over offer varying ways to actively look for opportunities to do good. We pointed out that this is exactly what the students should try to do every day.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCfWt0LzoHM&list=OLAK5uy_nbMAonI7Iz06mf9cmO9OR_XBX_3NSdLvs&index=3

NOTES: We encouraged the kids to sing along and when they hear the chorus phrase: “that is a mighty power” to jump on a classroom chair and show their bicep muscles along with us as a symbol—even though the power the song is all about is non-physical. The kids probably get that.

- **“Busy Hands”**—goes perfectly w/ the idea of hands being used for service that brings happiness. Can be downloaded for free at: <https://songs.ruhi.org/songs?locale=en&locale=en>
- **“A Beautiful Way”** by Vitamin L on their *Everyone’s Invited* CD. This song is about how giving is an art and a beautiful way to live, and how one gains so much from giving to others. I first read the lyrics then asked the kids to lie down and relax while listening.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIIIHqKh-PE&list=OLAK5uy_nbMAonI7Iz06mf9cmO9OR_XBX_3NSdLvs&index=2
- **“Citizenship”** by Red Grammar is on a relatively new recording called *Be Bop Your Best*. Very Danceable. The lyrics are all about serving and doing good deeds for humanity, as well as abiding by laws. First, I read the lyrics and asked the kids to fill in the blanks to the rhyming words. Then I gave the kids batons with long rainbow-colored ribbons on them to dance with—especially since this song had a parade feel to it. I demonstrated various ways to move the ribbons and then let the kids explore possible maneuvers for a few minutes before beginning the song. Batons optional.
https://www.google.com/search?q=citizenship+red+grammer&rlz=1C1RXQR_enUS984US984&oq=citizenship+red+gra&aqs=chrome.1.69i57j0i22i30l2j0i390l4.11381j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

NOTE: Before playing the above song, I shared this quote below from Baha'u'lláh, urging the students to contemplate how if people viewed themselves as world citizens, they might be more inclined to serve humanity and the whole world.

It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world.

The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens. (Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah)

- **“Givers”** from *Habits-of-Heart: True Heroes*. This CD has some great character-building songs on it. Unfortunately it does not include the words, but a manual is available that does. Before playing the song, I read the words and we discussed how giving is not just about giving material things. It includes time, love, service, kindness, comfort, etc. (The *Habits of Heart True Heroes* CD is available for free through www.fullcirclelearning.org. Click on Educator tab, then Audio, scroll down.) We danced with silk scarves and tossed them into the air to others during any lyrics that included the word “give”. Scarves optional, but fun.
- **“It’s Time for Service”** and **“Let Deeds Not Words”** both from Joe Crone’s *It Takes a Village* CD.
- **“I Want to Make a Difference”**. It is from Jennifer Russell’s *The Virtues Songs*, Volume 3. (Available through www.virtuesproject.com.)

STORIES/ARTICLES

Tip: When reading stories to wider community kids, or new Baha'is, refrain from using the term "Master" when referring to 'Abdu'l-Bahá—its triggering for African Americans and has negative connotations b/c they have no idea about Baha'u'lláh giving His Son this name as a token of honor and respect. I have asked Black friends about this, and they agree.

Random Acts of Kindness, More Random Acts of Kindness, and Kids' Random Acts of Kindness all by the Editors of Conari Press. (Short vignettes w/ lots of acts of service depicted—choose ahead of time ones that kids can understand/relate to and are particularly relevant to service/helpfulness.)

Little Champions of Justice 8 stories for children who want to change the world. by Shirin Taherzadeh— This book was written to be attractive to the wider community. This book is beautifully illustrated and has stories about 8 children who did amazing service and were champions of justice. All the children became Baha'is as adults but that is not mentioned in most of the stories. The Faith is lightly touched on. It is beautifully written and the result of much consultation and feedback from children and adults. Ages 6-

9 <https://bahairesources.com/p/little-champions-of-justice/>

Mighty 7 Stories about Abdu'l-Baha for children who want to serve the world. by Shirin Taherzadeh

(Beautifully written and illustrated, just like Little Champions, also available on youtube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEpsOvdWyZg&list=RDHEpsOvdWyZg&start_radio=1&rv=HEpsOvdWyZg&t=533). Ages 6-9

(I have some extra copies of Mighty and Little Champions to give away to teachers or parents who would really like to use them.)

NOTE: The books marked w/ a below* are more appropriate for children familiar w/ and involved in Baha'i community life and/or have some Baha'i background.

*Kamal's Day by Leona Hosack

*Jamila Does Not Want a Bat in her House by Phyllis Edgerly Ring

*Martha Root by Melanie Lotfali taken from a series about women who did amazing acts of service for the Baha'i Faith. Martha traveled the world alone in the early 1900's to share the beautiful teachings of Baha'u'llah like the oneness of humanity and the equality of women & men

*Corinne True by Melanie Lotfali taken from a series about women who did amazing acts of service for the Baha'i Faith. This one was about Corinne True, who in 1912 was asked by Abdu'l-Baha to head the building project of the 1st Baha'i Temple in the West. He deliberately chose a woman to teach the American men about

the equality of women and men—but it took incredible determination on her part accomplish this task given the resources she had and the sexism of the time.

*Clara Dunn by Melanie Lotfali taken from a series about women who did amazing acts of service for the Baha'i Faith.

Many, many stories in The Sweetness of His Love by Jacqueline Mehrabi provide excellent examples of service. For example, p. 80, Serving God (About Lua Getsinger). Beautifully illustrated, chock full of wonderful vignettes related to services rendered by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Ages 5-9

The Proud Helper adapted for children by Anthony A. Lee. (Longer version of vignette on p. 80 in above book—may not be in print or available anymore.) Ages 5-9

Relevant quotes for Proud Helper:

...tend the sick...care for the poor and needy, ...comfort the sorrowful and love the world of humanity with all your hearts...~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Paris Talks)

Be the source of consolation to every sad one, assist every weak one..., , care for every sick one...~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Promulgation of Universal Peace)

Vocabulary: Consolation=comfort/relief

We listened to a 5 min 30 sec **story from Ted Radio Hour**, Jan. 17, 2014, under the Disruptive Leadership theme. It was Drew Dudley's talk called "Have You Changed Someone's Life Without Realizing It? It was about a funny and creative act of service that altered the course of a college student's life dramatically and for the better. I shared this b/c I want the students to know that they don't have to change the world to be of service, smaller acts are spiritually significant, meaningful and beautiful too. Ages 7-12

A very brief selection from Vignettes from the Life of Abdu'l-Baha collected and edited by Annamarie Honnold. This one paragraph vignette was from Chapter 2, story #80, page 91. It briefly describes how Abdu'l-Bahá served all others before Himself at meals. This is a simple but appropriate lesson for children who tend to rush refreshment tables before all others, even if their family is hosting, but also casts the concept of being a servant in a positive light. Ages 5-10

Story #4 from Stories for Children by Jacqueline Mehrabi is called "Kalim". It is a very simple and brief account about how a brother of Baha'u'lláh protected and served Baha'u'llah's family. Ages 5 or 6-9

Harriet Tubman—They Called Me Moses by Linda D. Meyer. Ages 6-10

The Story of Johnny Appleseed by Aliko. It is well known by all. I like this particular version b/c it not only illustrated his detachment from material comforts, but also his desire to nurture and care for others and promote unity between the settlers and Native Americans. He served in so many ways, though he was not materially wealthy. Not sure how much of the content in the story is true or just legend, but it still illustrates a variety of wonderful expressions of service to humanity. Ages 6-10

A review of the meaning and power of service, taken from pages 221-222 of The Virtues Project Educator's Guide by Linda Kavelin Popov. Instead of just reading the information, to more thoroughly engage the kids, I asked them to fill in the blanks of key words that they could deduce from the context. If the answer was not immediately obvious, I would give them clues, such as rhyming words, pantomime, a descriptive riddle, etc. The song "I Want to Make a Difference" contained many of the answers, as the authors of the book and song have collaborated, and their work is available on the same website. Ages 6-10

From Brilliant Star Magazine: (Generally suitable for ages 6-12—stories vary in age appropriateness)

Brilliant Star Baha'i Children's magazine, *July/Aug. 1985*, pages 22-25: "A Job for Mrs. Quigley" is about how a retired woman and her dog apply their efforts to improve a neighborhood. This story is a perfect example of someone with a real spirit of service in their work. Later I shared that according to Baha'u'llah, work done in the spirit of service is a form of worship:

...for work, especially when performed in the spirit of service, is according to Bahá'u'lláh a form of worship.
(The Kitab-i-Aqdas)

Brilliant Star Baha'i Children's magazine, *Sept./Oct. 1984* pages 12-13: "The Chicken with a Tingly heart" is about a chicken that wants to learn to fly so she can be near God, who she thinks is physically up high. In this story she learns that to be near to God, one needs to serve others: (This one is fine for 4-6yrs)

...service in love for mankind is unity with God. He who serves has already entered the Kingdom and is seated at the right hand of his Lord. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Promulgation of Universal Peace)

"Collin's Food Drive". It is in *Brilliant Star* Baha'i children's magazine, *Nov./Dec. 1992* pages 8-9. It's a true story of a boy named Collin living in Philadelphia. At age 6 he began a neighborhood food drive after he was disturbed by the sight of a homeless man living in a cardboard box. His first year he collected enough food for 30 meals, but soon was collecting enough for 300 meals. Copies of his letter requesting the food and his follow up thank you notes are also included in the article. It is a truly inspiring and heartwarming article.

Brilliant Star Baha'i Children's magazine, *July/Aug 2009*, pages 6-7, gives 4 real life examples of children and jr. youth serving humanity in very different and generous ways. Very inspiring!

Brilliant Star Baha'i Children's magazine, May/June 1996 pages 6-7 contains drawings and a true story called "Mas'ud Serves Baha'u'llah". It is about an Ethiopian boy who grew up to be an incredibly steadfast and faithful Baha'i in the early days of the Baha'i Faith.

Child's Way (now Brilliant Star) Baha'i Children's magazine, March/April 1982 pages 7-9: This is a true story called "Haji Siddiq and 'Abdu'l-Bahá" about a man who detested 'Abdu'l-Bahá b/c He was a Baha'i. The man sincerely believed that he was showing love for God by showing hatred to the Baha'is, thinking that they were wicked heretics. He would cover his face so his sight would not be defiled when 'Abdu'l-Bahá came near him and publicly denounced 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Mosques. The man was very poor and often did not have food to eat or warm clothes to wear. 'Abdu'l-Bahá regularly provided these things for him. When he was sick, 'Abdu'l-Bahá came to his home with a doctor, but the man still hid his face even as he held out his arm for a pulse to the doctor. He never thanked 'Abdu'l-Bahá. This went on for 24 years, until finally the man could no longer stand himself and came to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, fell at his feet, cried and begged for forgiveness and admitted how wrong he had been. 'Abdu'l-Bahá told him to stand up and they became friends. (This story can be found in the Book 3, Teaching Children's class grade 1, p76, there is also a version of this story on youtube, MIGHTY, the4 veil:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkc849MoOts&list=PLvyNJx0XIIh-narIVzb-wLDVhhNgvGTB&index=10>)

NOTES: We talked about how we should never assume that service will be easy, and it is not only to be given to those who like us or who are easy to like. We should give it without expectation of reward and with love and forbearance.

Brilliant Star, Sept./Oct. 1992 pages 24-25: "A Visit to the Bowery Mission". It is based on the true experience of a poor man who was eating at this mission on April 19, 1912 when 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited it. It relates his impressions and the impact 'Abdu'l-Bahá had on him while He was visiting. It demonstrates 'Abdu'l-Bahá's extreme generosity and kindness to the poor. I also like how the indigent man who was so touched by 'Abdu'l-Bahá immediately began serving others. I read this quote from Baha'u'llah to go with it:

O YE RICH ONES ON EARTH! The poor in your midst are My trust; guard ye My trust, and be not intent only on your own ease. ~Baha'u'lláh, (Persian Hidden Words, #54)

NOTE ON BRILLIANT STARS MAGAZINE, you can find online content:
<https://brilliantstarmagazine.org/index.php/luminous-library>

Brilliant Star, Sept./Oct. 1995, pages 2-3 is a poem by an 11 yr. old called “How Can I Hug the World?” which shares lots of ways to make the world a better place. I asked students to raise their hand if they had engaged in any of the acts of service mentioned in the poem.

Brilliant Star, Sept./Oct. 1995, Pages 8-10 is a story called “The Lunch Club”. It is about how an elementary school Baha’i club, through trial and error, discovered the best way to serve humanity in a way that was sustainable. Through consultation they came up with the idea that at every lunch they should invite new kids and kids from other ethnic backgrounds and countries to eat with them, make them feel cared for and provide friendships.

Brilliant Star, Special Edition, 1995 (special editions have no months associated with them) pages 12-14 is another story about the same elementary school Baha’i club as above, entitled “Standard Bearers”. In this story the members discuss what it means to be a standard bearer and what sorts of qualities one must have to lead others, such as eager to serve, works in unity with others, acts with courage, etc.

The story ends with a list of qualities of a standard bearer. I asked the kids to fill in blanks after giving clues.

The underlined words were the ones that kids tried to ascertain:

1. Loves Baha’u’lláh and God
2. Reads the Creative Word
3. Willing to change and grow
4. Eager to serve
5. Strives to be prejudice-free
6. Teaches the Faith
7. Works in unity with others
8. Is trustworthy
9. Has confidence in God’s plan
10. Acts with courage

Brilliant Star, Sept./Oct. 1996, pages 2-3 shows photos of various children and quotes them sharing the ways they like to serve God, others, and the Baha’i Faith.

Brilliant Star, Jan./Feb. 1993 pages 10-11 is a story called “A Village Returns, a Story of Real Service”. I get the impression it is based on a real-life experience of families whose African village is destroyed by marauding soldiers who also kill and maim many innocent people. The story illustrates how the Baha’i villagers got together to rebuild their village, seek aid and assistance from outside Baha’i and non-Baha’i agencies, and educate themselves and others in medicine and healing. Even though they had lost everything, they united to serve the entire village.

NOTE: These are probably best suited for groups of Baha'i children only:

Brilliant Star Magazine, March/April 1992, pages 22-23, is a story called “Her Own Year of Service” which is about a younger sister coming to grips with her older sister leaving for a year to service. The younger sister gets to visit her older sister at her service post and grows aware of what a bounty it is.

Brilliant Star: Nov./Dec. 1994 pages 12-13. It's another story about a younger sibling trying to grasp the meaning and purpose of an older sibling's youth year of service. It is called “A year without Isla”.

NOTE: I am striving to help the students to be comfortable with and attracted to the concept of a youth year of service and am encouraging them to consider it as a great way to mature and grow spiritually. Thus, we discussed the benefits and challenges of this form of service. Kids can do a year close to home or overseas. I shared how both my daughters did a year of service, and my youngest did two—one before college and one in the middle of college. Youth learn so much during these periods that can't be taught in a classroom. My husband Roi and I considered it an equal, if not superior part, of their overall education. When my oldest was interviewing for medical school, it was her year of service in India that all the interviewers asked the most questions about. The photo she had sent out to get the interviews was her on a yak in India. She got into her top pick, and to this day, we all think her year of service had a lot to do with it.

CREATIVE DRAMATICS—skits, poems, puppet show

Making Faces and Service w/ a Smile. (Linking Service w/ Happiness) Ages 5-10

NOTE: I told the students that they were to show off their dramatic abilities by really exaggerating the facial expressions and body language indicated by my dialogue: I gave each person or pair a situation and asked them to express the resulting emotion.

For ex: “You live in a neighborhood of all retired people who have no children. You learn that some people from the continent of Africa are moving into the house next to yours. You look out the window one day and see them moving in. They have two children that seem to be around your age. You feel excited. Show me your excited faces. Someone unjustly accused you of cheating in a game of sports, and you feel angry, show your angry faces. You just did an excellent job on a school project, and got an “A”, show your proud faces. You just saw real children on TV who are starving. You feel really sad. Show me your sad faces.” I go through several emotions, each involving a virtue or moral situation. The last one is: “You just showed kindness to someone who was very lonely by inviting them over to play and that made you both feel really good inside. You feel happy. Show me your happy faces”.

Then all the children were asked “What did the last performers do when they showed their happy faces?” (smiled) “What makes you happy? What makes you smile?” Every child shared some examples of what makes them happy, many of which were spiritually related or other-oriented.

Several of the kids mentioned certain foods, sports, toys, and video games when they were asked what makes them happy. So, before moving on, I asked the kids which of the things they listed would make their souls rejoice and be pleasing to God upon their death? They all knew that the material things were totally unimportant in this context. (We pondered this concept more in depth during our life after death unit several years ago—but I feel it is important to regularly remind kids to evaluate their priorities and values in light of their spiritual reality and the impact their choices will have upon the station of their souls in the next world. People often do things which are harmful to themselves or others b/c they are ignorant of or forget about the long-term spiritual consequences.)

Then I pointed out that good deeds or acts of service make us happy and smile because it feels good inside to make others happy. (The rhyme called “The Helpers” poem below hints at this-- “Make happy days for everyone”). I urged the kids to remember this important lesson b/c most of us struggle with sadness and/or

depression at times, and doing good deeds is the best medicine for that. I asked for examples of service and good deeds they had done or received.

The Helpers ages 4-9

We talked about how God has given us bodies as tools to do His will and we should use them in ways that are pleasing to Him. I explained that we can use our body parts to bring sadness or happiness to others. (This description obviously would not work well with older kids and teenagers!) I said: For example, we can use our tongues to say, “Go away I don’t like you,” or we can use our tongues to say “I love you.” And while using gesticulations to illustrate, I say “We can use our hands to grab something away from someone, or we can use our hands to give a gift or loving touch”.

Then I presented them with a rhyme and asked them to fill in the blanks by either noticing my fingers, what I pointed to, or my facial clues, or by guessing through context or by finishing the last word of a section based on the rhyme. The words that are underlined were the ones the students had to guess.

Before sharing this **simple poem**, I pointed out that although it is geared towards preschoolers and early elementary age, the message in it is deep and extremely important—and much of the suffering in the world is due to the fact that too many people have not yet learned the message or lesson in this simple poem.

(See Arts and Crafts for related art activity)

The Helpers

Two eyes to see nice things to do,
two lips to smile the whole day through,
two ears to hear what others say,
two hands to put our toys away,
a tongue to speak sweet words each day,
a loving heart for work or play,
two feet that errands gladly run,
make happy days for everyone!

Then I asked what is the basic message in this poem? (That using our bodies and life to serve others and be loving and caring, brings joy to ourselves and to all those around us.)

.... the honor and distinction of the individual consist in this, that he among all the world's multitudes should become a source of social good. Is any larger bounty conceivable than this, that an individual, looking within himself, should find that by the confirming grace of God he has become the cause of peace and well-

being, of happiness and advantage to his fellow men? No, by the one true God, there is no greater bliss, no more complete delight. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

Vocabulary:

multitudes=large numbers

An extra dramatic activity based on the poem *The Helpers*: If there was time, I asked for volunteers to individually or in pairs to present the rhyme in a really unique and/or creative fashion to the group. (Rap, opera style, funny voices, character voices, etc.) I gave an example, using a really unusual voice and accent and facial expressions. The students found it highly amusing. The volunteers were then given large print versions of the poem and asked to go into separate rooms to practice for about 5 minutes. About half the group felt confident enough to do this—those who are really expressive actors (i.e., real hams). They did a fabulous job, and the audience kids were filled with hearty laughter.

Swimming versus Service Puppet Show ages 4-10

It's easy to make a makeshift puppet "theater" by throwing a large cloth over the backs of 2 chairs side by side, or using the back of a couch, and putting carpet or pillows down for the comfort of the puppeteer's knees. Need 2 puppets, preferably diverse.

In this brief puppet show we depicted 2 friends who are going to go swimming on the first day of the public pool opening. The girl is waiting for her friend to arrive and is enthusiastically exclaiming how excited she is and about all the things she loves to do at the pool.

Her friend arrives and they greet each other and talk happily about how much fun they are going to have. He asks how she is and she says fine, but in passing mentions that her mother is not feeling too well.

He inquires further and learns that the mother is actually super sick with the flu and has a fever and is throwing up. He then asks who is taking care of his friend's younger brother since her dad is out of town. She says her mother is trying to.

He says, "it sounds like she could use some help." She says: "yeah, too bad there is no one available, lets go swimming!." Then he points out that they both love her mom, that her mom has done a lot for them and that they could go swimming tomorrow or the next day.

She pauses and realizes he is right, and they both go off stage talking about how they are going to help her mom. I ask the students what virtues were shown, and they knew exactly: sacrifice, caring, detachment, and of course, service.

Be the source of consolation to every sad one, assist every weak one..., , care for every sick one... ~`Abdu'l-Bahá: (Promulgation of Universal Peace)

Vocabulary: =comfort/relief

Let them at all times concern themselves with doing a kindly thing for one of their fellows, offering to someone love, consideration, thoughtful help. ~ `Abdu'l-Bahá, (Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Baha)

May you be nurses for the sick...~`Abdu'l-Bahá (Promulgation of Universal Peace)

Service Skits II ages 6-12

Kids were divided into groups of 3-4 and asked to develop a skit which illustrated a way to serve others or their religion. I asked them not to do tending to the sick or injured since those examples had been used several times already in class and I wanted them to expand their awareness of ways to serve. I encouraged them to be creative, but that they should provide examples of things they really can do in real life. They were allowed to use props and costumes (they love to do this) and were given 20 minutes. They showed things like caring for young kids, doing extra chores for their parents, picking up litter, collecting for UNICEF, donating food and toys to a homeless shelter, etc. (See above for relevant quotes).

Children love to employ humor in drama, so I encourage that as long as it does not undermine the goal of the activity. Though I insisted that kids illustrate realistic ways they can serve in real life, they could add creative, zany, and funny twists. For example, 2 boys played brothers who were going around their neighborhood asking to do odd jobs for money to help a friend's parent make the rent so the family would not be evicted. I played a neighbor lady whose door they came to. I exclaimed that I really needed to run some errands and so could they please baby sit my 2 pet squashes? (The boys had drawn faces with markers on them during rehearsal). I introduced them to my pet squashes and told them their names and a little bit about how they could care for and play with them. Then the boys each whipped out a Bell Pepper from their pockets, that also had faces, exclaiming that they had experience with caring for vegetables.

In another skit, a pair of girls pretend to phone me offering to help make a refreshment for the upcoming holy day because they heard I was organizing refreshments. I lament how everybody is bringing sweets and sugary

things, and how I would love something healthy and raw like a vegetable tray or fruit salad. They eagerly agree and then get an “Ahhhhaaa” look on their faces and whip out some scissors and disappear out the door. The next scene is the day of the event, and they ring the doorbell. They are carrying a wooden bowl full of grass. What the audience doesn’t know is that it’s actually wheatgrass, a health food, that many people, (including myself) juice or put in blended drinks. I am delighted and ask if I can taste it. They agree and I eagerly stuff a wad in my mouth and start chewing and exclaiming out delicious it is, thanking them for their thoughtful donation. The audience kids are highly amused, and then to my surprise, all gather around the bowl to taste this grass. They are not as thrilled as me, to say the least! I eventually tell them the truth-- that it is not lawn grass.

Share these **2 quotes** and ask the kids to **give examples of good deeds they have done through pantomime**. The rest of us were to guess what the good deeds were. Ages 6-12

Love manifests its reality in deeds, not only in words - these alone are without effect.

~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Paris Talks)

Love ye all religions and all races with a love that is true and sincere and show that love through deeds...

~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá)

First, the **group brainstormed ways they could serve God, humanity and/or the Baha’i Faith** and I wrote them down on a dry erase board. I asked them to give ideas that were realistic and practical and ones they could actually implement. I had prepared a list ahead of time in case the kids needed more ideas. I gave them hints and clues to be able to think of them. The students liked this guessing game. This is the list I came up with in advance, which includes many of the ideas of the children came up with on their own: (There were 16 in all, these are just the ones I had prepared in advance). Ages 6-12

1. Show virtues, especially love and unity to all
2. Deepen (study scripture) myself. (Good idea to learn about other religions too).
3. Help parents or others host a Feast, holy day, or devotional.
4. One can help in #3 by: making a refreshment, cleaning up a space, choosing writings, selecting music, decorating etc.
5. Invite friends to a Holy day, Ayyam-i-Ha party, or children’s classes
6. Say prayers for the success of any Baha’i event, even if you can’t attend yourself.
7. Share Baha’i prayers and writings with friends, especially for peace and spiritual growth
8. Baby sit so parents can be in a study circle or so they can serve humanity in another way
9. Give to the Baha’i fund— (if you are a Baha’i only) or give a donation to your own church or temple.

10. Teach other kids about the Baha'i Faith

After creating the list, I turned the board containing it away from the students and using hints, pantomime, etc., guided them to remember and name all 16 items, including the suggestions the students had offered. First students were encouraged to name as many from memory as possible, then I gave hints. My youth helper called on kids, and for each new correct answer (repeats were not credited) a child got a token. Each token was then exchanged for a fruit juice flavored jellybean.

After playing with the list, we did a **dramatic activity based on the 10 suggestions above**, plus including ones the kids came up with on their own for the list. Students were to pantomime one of the items on the list above, the rest of us were to guess which one, using the dry erase board list as a guide.

Service Skits uses several quotes by Baha'u'llah as settings and subject matter. It really needs an inter-generational crowd or older kids to do since it is more complex than the other drama we have done in class. If all were 9 and up, it would work. But it's even better if youth and adults participate. Some of the quotes can be a bit heavy for wider community group...

1.. ***Concern yourselves with the things that benefit mankind, and not with your corrupt and selfish desires.***

~Bahá'u'lláh, (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf)

A child helped a blind person (wearing sunglasses) with a cane cross a busy street, some actors were cars. 1 child picked up litter, another read a book about 'Abdu'l-Bahá to a little one, and another invited a child to Baha'i children's classes. The rest of the children pretended to play video games, and when an adult asked them if they wanted to help prepare a study circle, they said "NO WAY!!".

2. ***It behooveth man to show forth that which will benefit mankind. He that bringeth forth no fruit is fit for the fire.*** ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf)

Children walk in carrying a large bowl of fruit and offer it to other kids and then they begin to consult on how they can raise funds for the Kingdom Project. Some adults are lying down on the floor pretending to watch TV. One of the fruit bearers invites them to join the discussion on fundraising, and they decline saying that they live for TV shows and that the only time they feel like exerting any effort is to go to the Mall and buy clothes and movies. The kids accept the answer with a sigh and shake their heads. Those adults then roll over and pretend to be logs. One of the kids holds up a sign that says *10 years later*. An adult wanders in looking somewhat like a lumber jack, and exclaims what handsome logs he has found and they will make great wood to burn in his new invention---a wood burning stove that powers his TV. He rolls them offstage.

It is clear and evident that all men shall, after their physical death, estimate the worth of their deeds, and realize all that their hands have wrought. I swear by the Day Star that shineth above the horizon of Divine power! They that are the followers of the one true God shall, the moment they depart out of this life, experience such joy and gladness as would be impossible to describe, while they that live in error shall be seized with such fear and trembling, and shall be filled with such consternation, as nothing can exceed. Well is it with him that hath quaffed the choice and incorruptible wine of faith through the gracious favor and the manifold bounties of Him Who is the Lord of all Faiths... ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

An adult sitting at a table or desk is filling out some papers, and a knock is heard. She says, “come in please”. The adult who enters introduces himself. They shake hands. The first adult asks him to fill out some final adoption papers, which he does quickly. When he hands them to her, she asks: “Are you *sure* you want to adopt these 4 orphans?” He says enthusiastically: “Absolutely!” She says: “Well, it’s time to meet your new family members, then.” She goes into another room and ushers out 4 children who shyly embrace him. He exclaims how happy he is to have them come into his life and tells them he promises to love them and teach them about Baha'u'lláh.

Next scene, another adult pretends to accost another, and that person falls on the ground. He pretends to repeatedly kick her and steals her purse and runs away laughing. *(This may too scary and violent for young children, be careful. I just wanted to make “they that live in error” look really wicked so people, especially children, don’t think that they or others will have this fate just through the mistakes and poor choices that we all make throughout our lives).*

Next scene, a sign is held up that says 50 years later. The adopting parent is lying down on a cloth, dying, surrounded by adults who represent the children he adopted. There are loving farewells, expressions of deep gratitude. As soon as he closes his eyes, he is completely covered with a pretty cloth. A few seconds later a person wearing a long flowing white silky cloth, representing an angel, lovingly removes the cloth. The dead person rises with a look of happy wonderment. The angel places a beautiful long sparkling cloak on his shoulders, offers him an elegant goblet, and says: “Well done, name of person! Drink ye the water of life everlasting!” Looking extremely joyful, he drinks and floats/dances away, looking totally blissful.

The thief is dying alone of a heart attack, calling out for help, but no one responds. After it is clear he is dead, the angel covers him with a dark cloth, then after a few seconds, removes it. He gets up, opens his eyes, and immediately beholds the woman he kicked writhing and crying in pain. He then immediately falls on his knees

with fear, trembling, looking absolutely terrified, and screaming in horror, saying over and over: “What have I done?!” The angel observes with a frown.

4. *Man's merit lieth in service and virtue and not in the pageantry of wealth and riches.* ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Tablets of Baha'u'llah)

An adult walks in followed by a group of kids and adults, and enthusiastically explains that they are gathered today to clean their new Baha'i center, which is a mess b/c the former owner did not take care of it. ½ the group immediately goes to different parts of the room with their props of a bucket, rags, brooms, window cleaner, mop, etc. The other ½ just stands around showing off and boasting about their jewelry, palm held computers, watches, nail polish, clothes, etc. We made it funny, in that some of things people boasted about were ridiculous, like the shape of their big toe, a tattoo of Elvis or Britney Spears, a cell phone in the shape of a banana (it really was a banana), some hideous costume jewelry, portable TV player the size of a fingernail, etc.

5. *Let them at all times concern themselves with doing a kindly thing for one of their fellows, offering to someone love, consideration, thoughtful help.* ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Selections from the writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá)

One child holds up a homemade clock—a circle or square with numbers and 2 moving arms, affixed via a paper fastener. As the clock's hands are moved, another child gives a foot massage to an adult pretending to be old with feet pain. Another sees a child sitting by himself, watching 2 other kids playing a game who are ignoring him. She walks over and introduces herself and asks if he would like a new friend. Another tip-toes quietly past a sleeping person. And finally, another offers to help do dishes after feast. They use real dishes and pretend to wash them happily.

And Finally, **The Dar**. This one should only be attempted by someone who has the time and loves drama. I can loan them the relevant book, props, and costume. Kids will never forget it. *The whole activity, including the Dar story, should take about 1 ½ hours at most. Ages 6-10*

An interactive fanciful jungle drama about using our talents in service of humanity as opposed for selfish purposes.

This skit involved a story. One can use the drama w/o the story if the book is not available, --- just set the scene so that the costume and context make sense. The title of the book was The Invisible Hunters by Harriet Rohmer, Octavio Chow, and Morris Vidaure. The text is in both Spanish and English. It is based on a legend from Nicaragua: Three hunters discover a magic vine in the jungle which is the physical form of a sort of a spirit named The Dar. The Dar gives them a piece of its vine which when held makes them invisible. Now they can hunt the wild wari (pig) with ease. But The Dar makes them promise 2 things: They never can sell the meat or hunt with guns. They have never even considered this so they all eagerly agree. As can be expected they

become very famous and successful hunters and feed the people of their village well. The elders of the village have heard of The Dar and are pleased with this great gift. But one day some traders come and convince the hunters they are foolish not to sell the meat and tempt them with fancy material goods. The hunter's egos are bruised, and their passions stimulated, so they decide to sell the meat to those not in their village to be able to afford the luxuries. Soon there is not enough meat to give away to their own villagers. The elders warn them not to break their promises to The Dar, but the hunters have become so swollen with pride that they no longer respect their elders or the other villagers. The villagers have no money to buy the meat, -- so after the Traders make fun of the hunters for hunting with sticks instead of guns, -- the hunters decide that if they hunt with guns, then they can kill enough wari to give some to the villagers and also sell to outsiders. So, they begin to hunt with guns, but they become so greedy and attached to material things that they do not want to give any of the meat away and give the villagers only spoiled meat. So, one day while in the jungle they encounter The Dar. Naturally, he is very displeased and punishes them by making them invisible permanently. When they return to their village as invisible voices, the elders kick them out telling them never to return. So, to this day they wander the river corridor calling out to The Dar to forgive them.

NOTE: We then discussed how God gives everybody special "powers" or gifts, such as musical abilities, artistic talent, a beautiful singing voice, an extremely athletic body, or a brilliant mind and that these gifts are supposed to be used to glorify God and to serve humanity, not just for our own self-glorification and self-exaltation. We also discussed how the trader used some of the same techniques on the egos of the hunters as *Cool Colleen* did—belittling, tempting, etc.

So I dress up as The Dar (this costume is my favorite and most elaborate). I had painted a white mask green and glued silk plant leaves in a pattern on the cheeks and chin. The eyes and mouth are outlined in a darker green. A large green rhinestone was glued on the mask's forehead. On the *inside* of the forehead, using duct tape, a marker cap is securely fastened. After the wig (described below) is put on, a palm frond's stem is stuck inside the cap. The palm frond arches back over my head. (A cluster of fern leaves also works). I am dressed in all green with a green cape, green silk scarf to cover my neck, green socks, (no shoes), and my gloves are green with silk leaves glued to both sides of all fingers and palm and back of hands. Instead of a cape, one can also just wrap a large green cloth around the body like a Greek toga—just try to cover as much skin as possible in green. I affixed gobs of silk green vines to a sturdy green hair net, so I have a wig of leaves that goes down well past my rear end. (The costume would be too scary for kids under 6). The Dar is holding a leaf shaped wooden bowl which contains iridescent green sparkles and 9 magic powers which are each written in silver sparkly ink on a silk green leaf, rolled around a small stick and tied with a strip of zebra grass.

The children have been assigned a partner (optional) and the group, in a line of pairs, is led to me in the woods in our backyard. When I see them coming, I start saying "Dar", "Dar", "Dar", over and over, as the hunters heard in the story. In an authoritative, deep, royal sounding voice, I summon each pair of human children to stand before me and ask them if they wish to possess one of my supernatural powers. They of course say "yes," then I demand that they promise me 2 things: they must use the power to serve the human world and return

within one year (20 minutes) to recount to The Dar how they have used their power to uplift humanity and make the world a better place. The Dar then commands one of them to choose a power from the leaf-shaped wooden bowl, which I am holding. Then I touch each child in the pair with a palm frond, (or giant Hosta leaf) and state that they now possess the new power, and dismiss them, so the next pair can be summoned. (Kids should be cued ahead of time to thank the Dar). When all teams have received their power, they depart.

Once the students are away on teams, they open up the leaf wrapped around the stick to discover what their power is and to consult on how to use it to improve the condition of humanity. This proved to be a challenge for them, but all the teams came up with at least one way to use their power for the wellbeing of others. The powers were: The ability to make anything beautiful, the ability to fly, the ability to be microscopic in size, having superhuman strength, x-ray vision, moving objects with the mind, to turn anything you touch into gold, to read minds, and to become invisible at will. When they were ready, my able assistants, called my neighbors and I returned to my position in the woods, intoning “Dar, Dar, Dar” as the pairs approach me again. Then I summon them to come forth to testify to their good works (by explaining what power they obtained and how they have used their power). I proclaim that I am well pleased with their efforts, touch their heads with my “wand” again, and declare that they now possess the power for all their earthly lives. (Kids should be cued ahead of time to thank the Dar again).

(B/c it takes so long to make the powers, the students have been cued to place the sticks and leaves back in the bowl, which is now at my feet.)

It would be great if the assistant could guide the students to come up with a creative way to use their power, not just spoon feed the idea to them. The helper should help them be creative and not simplistic.

For example, if they have the power to fly, not to just use it to bring food to the hungry (b/c they don't have the power of unlimited food or extra physical strength), but to use it in a way that would really be doable if they actually had that power. For example, they could use it for search and rescue missions, or combine forces with others who have different powers to increase their usefulness.

Every time I have done this, the assistants appreciate an outline of their duties that describe the sequence of events and expectations of the students. So this is included below.

RELATED QUOTES:

To give and to be generous are attributes of Mine; well is it with him that adorneth himself with My virtues.

~Bahá'u'lláh, (Persian Hidden Words, # 49)

Forget your own selves, and turn your eyes towards your neighbor.

~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

Concern yourselves with the things that benefit mankind, and not with your corrupt and selfish desires.

~Bahá'u'lláh, (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf)

It behooveth man to show forth that which will benefit mankind. He that bringeth forth no fruit is fit for the fire. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf)

Do not busy yourselves in your own concerns; let your thoughts be fixed upon that which will rehabilitate the fortunes of mankind and sanctify the hearts and souls of men. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

... withhold not from the poor the things given unto you by God through His grace.

~Bahá'u'lláh, (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf)

O YE RICH ONES ON EARTH! The poor in your midst are My trust; guard ye My trust, and be not intent only on your own ease. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Persian Hidden Words #54)

O MY SERVANTS! Ye are the trees of My garden; ye must give forth goodly and wondrous fruits, that ye yourselves and others may profit therefrom.

~Bahá'u'lláh, (Persian Hidden Words, #80)

Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other.

~Bahá'u'lláh, (Arabic Hidden Words, #68)

Assist the world of humanity as much as possible. Be the source of consolation to every sad one, assist every weak one.....~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Promulgation of Universal Peace)

Be kind to all peoples; care for every person.... strive ye to gladden every soul.

~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá)

Service to humanity is service to God. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Promulgation of Universal Peace)

Happy the soul that shall forget his own good, and like the chosen ones of God, vie with his fellows in service to the good of all...~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

And the honor and distinction of the individual consist in this, that he among all the world's multitudes should become a source of social good. Is any larger bounty conceivable than this, that an individual, looking within himself, should find that by the confirming grace of God he has become the cause of peace and well-being, of happiness and advantage to his fellow men? No, by the one true God, there is no greater bliss, no more complete delight. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

How excellent, how honorable is man if he arises to fulfil his responsibilities; how wretched and contemptible, if he shuts his eyes to the welfare of society and wastes his precious life in pursuing his own selfish interests and personal advantages... And this is man's uttermost wretchedness: that he should live inert, apathetic, dull, involved only with his own base appetites. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

The truth is that God has endowed man with virtues, powers and ideal faculties... We must thank God for these bestowals, for these powers He has given us, for this crown He has placed upon our heads.

How shall we utilize these gifts and expend these bounties? By directing our efforts toward the unification of the human race. We must use these powers in establishing the oneness of the world of humanity; appreciate these virtues by accomplishing the unity of the white and colored races; devote this divine intelligence to the perfecting of amity and accord among all branches of the human family, so that under the protection and providence of God, the East and West may hold each other's hands and become as lovers. ~Abdu'l-Bahá, (Foundations of World Unity)

...if a judicious and resourceful individual should initiate measures which would universally enrich the masses of the people, there could be no undertaking greater than this, and it would rank in the sight of God as the supreme achievement, for such a benefactor would supply the needs and insure the comfort and well-being of a great multitude. Wealth is most commendable, provided the entire population is wealthy. If, however, a few have inordinate riches while the rest are impoverished, and no fruit or benefit accrues from that wealth, then it is only a liability to its possessor. If, on the other hand, it is expended for the promotion of knowledge, the founding of elementary and other schools, the encouragement of art and industry, the training of orphans and the poor -- in brief, if it is dedicated to the welfare of society -- its possessor will stand out before God and man as the most excellent of all who live on earth and will be accounted as one of the people of paradise. ~Abdu'l-Bahá, (The Secret of Divine Civilization)

GAMES

High Five Helper Tag, (Outdoors) One of the teachers is the tagger. We explained the boundaries of the play area. Ages 4-8, need at least 5 players

When tagged, a child is frozen and yells for help. Another child who is not frozen can give them a *High Five* to unfreeze them. We deliberately did not freeze all the kids but made it a bit risky to free others to encourage sacrifice and courage in order to help others.

Help Save Me! (Outdoors) Need star or sun on a stick or foam hand. Ages 5-10, need at least 5 players

In this game a teacher chases after the students in a defined open area. If all the kids are okay with this, the chaser teacher can wear a mask that is slightly ugly to represent the opposite of helpfulness, like selfishness. (We used a large green somewhat comical Dr. Seuss Grinch mask).

If she tags one, that child has to go to “prison”—which is our deck. Other children risk their freedom to free the prisoners by going onto the deck and tagging those on the deck. Prisoners cannot be freed until they are on the deck—i.e. no freeing on the way to prison. They yell for help, alerting others of their plight.

To make it a bit more interesting, players are each given a foam hand (or a stick w/ a sun on it to represent shining w/ service and helpfulness—a bit more abstract than a hand, though). If tagged, it is taken away and thrown on the ground.

Those freeing the others have to locate it and return it to the prisoners when freeing them. (Does not matter who gets what hand or light, there is no ownership).

The light represents shining with the virtue of helpfulness/service, or the hand is the symbol of lending a helping hand. The students LOVED this game and finally learned to work as a team—for example, luring the chaser away from dropped hands so others could sneak up and grab them to give to prisoners.

Foam hands are available at this link at amazon: [foam hands](#)

Many Hands Make Light Work ages 4-8, 4 or more players

We scatter hot pink and lime green crumpled balls of paper around the living room for each round. We set a timer for 10 seconds. One child races the timer alone to see how many balls he/she can pick up and put in a

trash can—only about 1/8 the total. Then we choose a pair, then a threesome, then finally we will let them all pitch in at once to see how fast they can do it compared to doing it alone or just as a pair or threesome.

They never got all of them in the trash can in under 10 seconds even as a whole group, but almost. It was exciting and fun for them to race the timer.

Many Hands make Light Work Version #2 ages 4-8, 6 or more players

Need sturdy blanket

For this game, a child lays in a blanket. They can pretend they are sick. Another child is chosen to move the blanket child across the room. They can drag if they are strong enough, but it's not very fun or efficient. Then the other children are invited to be helpers, and they lift and carry the child in the blanket across the room to the "hospital". Every student gets a chance to "ride" in the blanket.

When some of the students complained that their fingers were strained or tired from clinging to the blanket w/ a child inside, we did not pity them. We used it as an opportunity to remind them about the discussion we had regarding the musical selection in the devotional part: that service or helpfulness is not usually easy and often we have to struggle and push ourselves if we want to make a difference.

Loving Hands ages 5-9, at least 4 players, more is better

(Materials needed described farther down below, indoor or outdoors)

This game goes great with Baha'is Jean Marks and Susan Engle's "Loving Hands" song from their recording of the same name. We begin by playing the **song**. We asked the kids to lie down and close their eyes and listen to the beautiful words of the song about how "loving hands make loving hearts". *Song optional for game.*

After the song, we talked about how it's great to feel love and caring and to tell others you love them, but it's really more important to show love with actions.

If you had a choice between a parent who told you constantly that they loved you, but never did anything for you, or a parent who rarely said they loved you but did things for you all the time, which one would you believe or want more? Its best to have parents who show they love you through actions and tell you they love you, but "actions speak louder than words." Our hands are the perfect tools to show our love.

How many of you have ever painted with a paintbrush? The paintbrush is a tool to show our thoughts and pictures inside our heads.

Our hands are one of the tools to show what's inside our hearts. God has given us hands as tools to do His will and we should use them in ways that are pleasing to Him.

We explained that we can use our hands to bring sadness or happiness to others: For example, we can use our hands to grab something away from someone, or we can use our hands to give a gift or loving touch. So, for this game, you are going to show love with hands.

Love manifests its reality in deeds, not only in words - these alone are without effect. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Paris Talks)

Vocabulary: Manifests=shows

Thine hand is a symbol of My loving-kindness... ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

The number of players will determine how many sets of hands you need to make. For example, if there are 20 children there will be 5 sets. (With small groups, an option is to just have players work as individuals, i.e., every person makes their own set to spell LOVE and does not work in a team). The hands are different skin colors and are available at Amazon [Multi-cultural Hand Cut Outs](#) or in school supply stores and catalogs. They come in different sizes, but for little kids, I suggest using the adult life size. Each set will have four hands. On each hand is a heart and on each heart is one of the letters from the word “LOVE”. A set is complete when there are 4 hands of different colors which spell “LOVE.” The hands should be laminated or protected with clear contact paper. Each team groups together at *opposite* ends of the room (or yard) around a 11x17 piece of cardboard which spells the word “LOVE” on it. (If you use capitals on the hands then use capitals on the cardboard. Since younger players in this game are generally not strong readers, they will use this sign to match the letters to make sure they are spelling the word love.) Explain that when people of different colors get together to show love its especially beautiful and pleasing to God and that is why the goal of this game is for every team to have a set of different colored hands which spell “LOVE”.

To begin the game, (the teams are standing next to their own cardboard sign) each team member is given a hand, and make sure that within each team there are hands of the same color and same letters. When you say “GO!” they all dash to the center of the room (or yard) and start trading. (For smaller rooms, you can make this a low activity game by insisting that everyone walks). They will carry hands back and forth from their base (the piece of cardboard) until they have a complete diverse set which spells love. Kids may carry only one hand at a time. Teams may need to continue trading even if their set is complete to enable all teams to succeed. Preschoolers find this game very challenging—the idea of trading and consulting with each other so that they are not bringing back the same letters and colors to their home base is quite difficult.

Note: I once made the mistake of randomly handing out hands to a group of 20 kids, (5 teams). I had made 28 hands, enough for 7 teams and just mixed and distributed the first 20 from the pile. But b/c I had not created 5 eligible sets prior to distributing them by sorting by color and letter, the 20 I had chosen did not have the right number of letters and colors and only 3 teams out of the 5 could complete the sets. Thus, always pre-select the correct groups of hands before mixing them up and distributing them, unless you have the exact number of players as original hands made.

Variation 1: Instead of handing out the hands, hide them throughout several rooms, in one large room, or outside. They should be visible, but not extremely obvious. Kids in teams of 1-4 place their cardboard signs in their chosen location in the playing area. That is their home base. Then they race to find the right combination of 4 hands. Team members can choose to pick up everyone they find, regardless of whether they need that color or letter, and use it to trade with other teams. They can pick up and carry only one at a time, however. The team members must call frequent meetings to see who has what.

Variation 2: Hands are hidden, and cardboard signs placed, as described in Variation 1. Teams have 2-4 members. Team members must hold hands while searching. They search only as a group. If they find a color or letter they do not need, they leave it alone. Because they are together, they all know what colors and letters they already have.

Service Relay

Need at least 12 kids, outside, trays, cups, access to water, ages 6-12

This is basically a relay race game. Instead of batons however, teams had to carry trays with cups of water on them. (A tray with cups was chosen b/c it is such an obvious and concrete metaphor for serving others). There were 2 teams of 9 and they split up so 4 from each team was on one side of the yard and 5 on the other, which meant one child from each team had to go twice from the line with 4 in it. The first person on one side of each team was given a tray with 6 full cups of water. They walked as fast as they could across the yard trying not to spill any and handed the tray to the first person in their team's line on that side of the yard. This went on back and forth, and the goal was to be first team to make 10 traverses.

But being first in service is not the only goal, so is excellence, quality, carefulness, and thoroughness. Thus, after the race, each team dumped their cups into a pitcher and we measured it. (Water in the tray does not count.) So, if one team was first, but had less water b/c they spilled too much, it would be a tie. In this case the teams finished at the exact same moment, and one team had a tiny fraction more water than the other, so technically they were the winners (but I am loathe to dwell on such labels). You can make the game more challenging and dramatic by requiring that the players run with the trays. And it is also fun to just give the kids 2 large cups,

one for each hand, and they can run easily with these—no trays needed. It’s fun to do this with large cups of water on a hot summer day.

Before playing I shared these quotes and explained that “vie” means to compete. I emphasized that being first in a line or to get a material reward is not of spiritual value, but being first to serve or show a virtue, is.

Vie ye with each other in the service of God and of His Cause. This is indeed what profiteth you in this world, and in that which is to come. ~Bahá’u’lláh as quoted by Shoghi Effendi, (The Advent of Divine Justice)

Happy the soul that shall forget his own good, and.... vie with his fellows in service to the good of all...~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

Loving Service VS Corrupt and Selfish Desires

Outside, need at least 8 kids, ages 6-12, tongue depressors w/ hearts glued to one end, unattractive mask—not gory! Something to demarcate the “Prison”—can be rope, sports cones, poles.

...the honor and distinction of the individual consist in this, that he among all the world's multitudes should become a source of social good. Is any larger bounty conceivable than this, that an individual, looking within himself, should find that by the confirming grace of God he has become the cause of peace and well-being, of happiness and advantage to his fellow men? No, by the one true God, there is no greater bliss, no more complete delight. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

The Great Being saith: Blessed and happy is he that ariseth to promote the best interests of the peoples and kindreds of the earth. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh)

Happy the soul that shall forget his own good, and... vie with his fellows in service to the good of all...~`Abdu'l-Bahá:

In this game, a helper and I wore ugly masks and we represented corrupt and selfish desires—that which inhibits selfless and loving service. We stood at one end of the yard. The kids lined up at the other end. Stuck in the ground and placed in between us at many various spots, were tongue depressor sized sticks which had large cardboard hearts glued on top of them, and these represented loving service. When I said “Go!” kids raced to grab a loving service heart stick before corrupt and selfish desires poisoned them by tagging them.

If we tagged someone before they protected themselves with loving service, they had to go stand on a sewer, which represented the prison of selfishness. Once a child had a loving service stick, we could not chase them--but if someone with loving service got too close to us, we could poison them by touching them, in which case they have to drop their sticks and go into the prison with the others.

I explained that even if we are practicing selfless loving service, if we get too close selfishness, we can be corrupted and lose our spiritual protection. There were enough heart sticks for everyone, (that is optional) and one of the goals of the game is to rescue others from the prison of selfishness by giving them a stick without getting poisoned yourself. In other words, one of us guarded the prison, while those with heart sticks tried to slip one to those in prison without being tagged.

One could entice us to leave the prison area to chase them if they dropped their heart stick, and others could run along beside them and hand it to them if they really cooperated. This game was a lot of fun and the kids really worked well together. Before the game, I encouraged them to cooperate so that they work as a team—it is much harder for the guard to prevent rescues if rescuers are coming at him/her as a group.

I also encouraged them to notice when a person w/o a stick is being closed in on during pursuit and to run beside that person and give them a stick before I touch them. *To add interest and make sure that the prison population is constant, I tell players they can't rescue anyone on the way to prison, only once they have got there.*

And tossing sticks to those in prison is not allowed. They must be handed—this is riskier. You can make a rule that if a player with a stick gets touched, that stick is out of the game for good—I put them in my pocket. Or you can say they just have to drop it on the spot and others can try to get to it and pick it up off the ground--which means there will be less kids to chase b/c more will have the protection of loving service.

Baha'i Service Pictionary (more suitable for Baha'i kids) Minimum 6 kids, ages 8 and up
Need paper, pencils, erasers, sharpeners, and/or dry erase board, easel, dry erase markers

Teams of 3 each had one older student. (Teams can be as small as 2.) The older student from each team went into another room and I showed all of them at the same time a card which had the description of some sort of

service written on it. After it was clear that everybody understood, they returned to their other team members at the dining room table. When I said “Go!” they began to draw it. As in the real dictionary, words were not allowed to be said or drawn. The team who guessed what the act of service was first won that round. (Though we did not keep score on purpose). The acts they had to draw were : *care for the sick, care for young children so parents can attend study circle, make friends with someone who is lonely, make refreshments for a Feast, Holy Day or Devotional, pick up litter, give money to your religion, teach the Baha’i Faith, decorate for Ayyami-Ha or Holy Day.*

NOTES: Variations for large or mixed aged groups: This game and the one below can be played with a dry erase board and one large group. The first to guess what the picture is gets to be the next artist---or to make it less competitive and more inclusive, people can just take turns drawing, w/o having to be the one who guessed the picture. The competitive version does not work well with a wide age range b/c the little ones can never interpret fast enough. Kids as young as 6 can draw a picture of something concrete like picking up litter, but they are slow, and they are not good at illustrating any abstract concepts such as the oneness of humanity--- as would be required in the game below. The last time I played it was at a Feast, and it was a big success---judging by the laughter of all, the hilarious interpretations and wise cracks, and eagerness of the children. But since it was a large group and I wanted the game to go at a fast clip, I made the rule that only 10 years and up could be drawers, and only 9 and under got to be the interpreters. The child who guessed correctly got to choose an audience member 10 and up to be the next drawer. I quickly went through the cards with the chosen artist (so the audience could not see the cards) and they chose the act of the service they felt they could draw. The audience knew ahead of time that the drawing would represent an act of service a child or adult could do for the Baha’i community or for humanity, and that helped greatly with interpretations. As with all games, if a child or adult has already drawn or guessed, and there is a sizable group of participants who would like a turn, don’t give second turns.

Like a candle must ye shed your light... illumine the hearts of humankind... In the darkness of the world be ye radiant flames.... Now is the time to serve, now is the time to be on fire. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá)

Arise thou to serve the Cause of thy Lord; then give the people the joyful tidings concerning this resplendent Light whose revelation hath been announced by God through His Prophets and Messengers. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh)

Strive thou day and night to serve the Cause of Him Who is the Eternal Truth, and be thou detached from all else but Him. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh)

Man's merit lieth in service and virtue and not in the pageantry of wealth and riches. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh)

Think ye at all times of rendering some service to every member of the human race. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá)

“Go Serve!” Ages 6-10, 2 or more players, depending on how many copies of the game one has

A simple game from *Brilliant Star, May./June. 1996*, pages 10-11. We created 2 teams of 4 or 3 teams of 3. Each team was given its own game pages, one silver heart shaped flat bead (b/c we show our love to God and others through service) and 5 popsicle sticks which had faces drawn on them to represent people. Each stick was colored with 2 different colors, one on each side, for ex., one was black on one side and white on the other, one was red and black, yellow and red, brown and yellow, and white and brown. Of course they represented the main different ethnic groups of humanity, and the idea is that when diverse people serve as a united force, the impact is more powerful. A quote by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá for this game is written next to the game playing space:

“May you all become united and assured. May you serve the Cause of God as one single, united force.”
(Promulgation of Universal Peace)

This was a competitive game in that the team to first reach the center won. So to make that aspect more acceptable I shared these quotes that were also used last class in a competitive game on service:

Vie ye with each other in the service of God and of His Cause. This is indeed what profiteth you in this world, and in that which is to come. ~Bahá’u’lláh as quoted by Shoghi Effendi, (The Advent of Divine Justice)

Happy the soul that shall forget his own good, and... vie with his fellows in service to the good of all...~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

The game consists of spaces in a spiral leading to the center—the service area. Each member takes turns holding all 5 sticks in the air and dropping them. Each color has a score, and any time 2 of the same colors show up, they are removed and not counted. Black was 5 points, brown 4, red 3, yellow 2 and white 1. The bead for your team was moved the number of spaces indicated by the addition of these numbers. However, if it happened that all sticks fell so that all 5 different colors were face up, that team immediately placed their bead at the center and won. Since this happened way too early in the game the first time we played it, I decided to eliminate this rule. All sticks were just added up together, making 15.

In the original instructions, each player has their own bead and competes with the others who share the same board. I preferred to make it more of a team effort, so each team had only bead and competed with the other team(s). This also speeds up the game, since the rules (which can be altered) state that one must get the exact number combination to enter the center. If you have 12 kids playing, then all 12 would have to drop the sticks in the correct combination to succeed.

Stand Up Game

Need at least 5 players, preferably more. Kids 7 and up. Song great to have, but not critical. Marker and sticky back labels. Best to have carpeting.

This game goes with a song called “Stand Up” from Jonathon Sprout’s *Kid Power* recording. The song is about standing up to make a difference in the world and it repeats the phrase “Stand Up” 10 times throughout the song. The game can be played w/o the song, but the song is perfect for, and inspired the game. When given a choice, kids always prefer to play with the song—it really adds spirit to the whole thing. First I start out by asking kids what it means to stand up for something. Then I ask what are some issues we should stand up for (race unity, women’s rights, religious freedom, the environment, etc.). In a Baha’i setting, I point out that by promoting Baha’u’llah’s teachings, we are also standing up for these things b/c His teachings support and enlighten people on these issues. Next I ask what are the obstacles that get in the way of people standing up (ignorance, lack of education, illness, insecurity, apathy, materialism, violence, greed, selfishness, laziness, hopelessness, poverty, addictions, fear, etc.)

Then I ask kids to share something they would like to stand up for. In more educational or formal settings, I give them a stick-on label that looks like a medal for an award and write their chosen cause on it and ask them to wear it over their heart. This way they take it more seriously and it is kind of a way of affirming their desire to make a difference. I also tell them to wear it over their heart to remind them that it is love for others and for God that makes us care and gives us the strength to suffer, strive, struggle, and sacrifice to make the world a better place. I also ask what other virtues one uses when they stand up for something (courage, faith, detachment, determination, perseverance, generosity, justice, caring, service, etc.)

For each child who is going to stand up, you need at least 3, perhaps 4 who will be their obstacles. The child who wants to stand up for something then lies down on the floor, *hands and arms pressed against his/her sides*—he will need to get these free first. (Carpeting is nice to have. Loosely fitting pants with no belt are at risk of coming off and horribly embarrassing the victim. Dress or skirt wearers should not participate.). Then 3 or 4 kids sit down next to the prone person, *alternating sitting on the left/right of the prone person*, with their legs bent over the person from their upper chest to their ankles. (Use your best judgment when deciding # of obstacle children—a small child may need only 2 obstacles for a good struggle. And of course, the size of the obstacle children are a factor too.) It is best to keep girls with girls and boys with boys unless the kids are under the age of puberty—there is a lot of physical contact. The legs represent the obstacles. The kids holding the person lying down cannot use their arms or hands. The person lying down who wants to stand up can use their hands because the hands represent the tool of the human spirit which is indefatigable and infinitely resourceful and irrepressible. *And as in real life, the power of the human spirit must first be released in order to achieve great results*, the child lying down must first release his/her hands to be able to break free. But the person trying to break free can’t pinch or scratch or use any painful technique—they can only squirm and push. I tell them it is never OK to use violence or hurt people to further one’s cause. The kids holding him down with their legs just can squeeze and press. And *once the stander has escaped from any obstacle, the obstacle child can’t get back on*. It is very challenging—and I always point out that standing up for a cause really is full of challenge

and struggle and takes a tremendous amount of determination and perseverance. This is an excellent game to teach for classes on those virtues or for when promoting UNICEF, which our NSA asks us to do every Halloween.

If using the song, I have all in their positions, they listen, and then when the appropriate words are about to be sung, I go stand next to one of the prone kids, raise both my hands with my index fingers in the pointing position and then dramatically lower them when the singer says “Stand Up!” to point to the person to signal it is their time to break free.

Also, in the more formal or educational settings, I ask each child who has broken free to stand on a chair which is in a row with other chairs, or to go up on stage if there is a stage. At the end of the game all the standers are standing on this row of chairs or stage. I urge them to hold hands and raise their arms up to show victory. I also tell them that I put them up high to symbolize that they were able to “rise above” their obstacles.

Important Tip: If it becomes clear that a child will not be able to break free, or is getting upset, choose a few bystanders to help free them—Explain that this demonstrates that we often need community to support us in our efforts. It’s a good idea to let the group know this is an option before playing, so obstacles don’t get startled, and the stander does not feel like a failure. However, it is best to choose the right size of obstacle children for the stander to begin with---a tiny child should have small obstacle-children. I tell the kids that Baha’u’lláh says God never tests us beyond our abilities, and so I should not either!

Another tip: If in a large mixed age group, have the causes that Baha’is stand up for already written in attractive marker on the sticker medals, or if not using the stickers, have a list. Otherwise, when you call on the audience to raise their hand and share what they want to stand up for, kids often come up with silly things or can’t think of any and the audience attention is lost as they ponder. Some have no idea to begin with and just raise their hands b/c they are eager to be the stander. Party audiences have low tolerance for discussion and long silences for contemplation! So, I would just say: “Who wants to stand up for religious freedom? Who wants to stand up for universal education?” and place the appropriate sticker medal on them— (even though we don’t yet know if they will succeed breaking free, they get honored for their attempt to struggle). This also makes it easier for younger ones to be the standers, since they often can’t think of causes on their own. Here’s a list I came up with—I am sure you can add your own: The environment (or clean water, air, the rainforests, etc.), healthcare for all, the poor and homeless, (this is easier for kids to understand than elimination of the extremes of wealth and poverty) freedom of religion, (or the oneness of religion) children’s rights, racial equality, universal education, animal rights, equality of women and men, peace and justice, the hungry, the oneness of humanity, world unity, freedom of speech. Just remember, if using the song and the phrase “stand up!” to cue a person to break free, there are only 10 opportunities. (However, one can point to 2 groups at once if you have a large group).

Kids LOVE this game, and everyone always cheers during the game and applauds very enthusiastically for each success and this is so affirming for them. But a word of caution: Be careful who you do this game with. If you are working in a location with kids who have had a rough life—know that it can really open wounds if a child has been held down and abused and then he/she is placed in the similar situation of being held down for the game. On the other hand, it can be tremendously cathartic and healing to break free. Know your group.

It behooveth man to show forth that which will benefit mankind.

~Bahá'u'lláh, (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf)

Do not busy yourselves in your own concerns; let your thoughts be fixed upon that which will rehabilitate the fortunes of mankind and sanctify the hearts and souls of men.

~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression.

~Bahá'u'lláh, (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf)

The betterment of the world can be accomplished through pure and goodly deeds...

~Bahá'u'lláh

Assist the world of humanity as much as possible. Be the source of consolation to every sad one, assist every weak one.....~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Promulgation of Universal Peace)

Happy the soul that shall forget his own good, and like the chosen ones of God, vie with his fellows in service to the good of all.....~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

And the honor and distinction of the individual consist in this, that he among all the world's multitudes should become a source of social good. Is any larger bounty conceivable than this, that an individual, looking within himself, should find that by the confirming grace of God he has become the cause of peace and well-being, of happiness and advantage to his fellow men? No, by the one true God, there is no greater bliss, no more complete delight.

~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

How excellent, how honorable is man if he arises to fulfil his responsibilities; how wretched and contemptible, if he shuts his eyes to the welfare of society and wastes his precious life in pursuing his own selfish interests and personal advantages... And this is man's uttermost wretchedness: that he should live inert, apathetic, dull, involved only with his own base appetites.

~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

United We Serve (Outdoors) Ages 7-12, at least 6 players

(If you want to de-emphasize the religious/spiritual metaphors, just use regular plastic cups, and those bringing the water are servants of humanity, striving to deliver water to a drought stricken population).

Need cloth strips, trays, cups, attractive pitcher, water

Three groups of three had their legs tied together with cloth strips. These are the “servers”. (Groups can be as small as 2 or large as 4, depending on age and size of group. Children under 8 or 9 should stick with pairs only.) The inside kids of course had both legs tied, which makes moving in unity much harder. Kids got to practice walking for a while, attempting to figure out some sort of rhythm. Advise kids to link elbows to promote stability and reduce strain on ankles, since that will help prevent too much yanking in opposite directions. Some kids were chosen or asked to be those in need of God’s teachings, or the “seekers”. They stood at the far end of the yard. A pitcher of water was placed at their feet. They each held a cup. The water represented the “water of life” which Baha’u’llah often uses to symbolize His Revelation, His teachings. The teams lined up across the yard from the cup holding children. The goal was to be the first team to reach the thirsty souls and give them the water of life by having one or more members pour it into their cups. I pointed out that we are serving God and humanity whenever we give others the beautiful teachings of Baha’u’llah. I also emphasized that being first is not important except when it comes to expressing virtues or serving—then it really is commendable. I read them these quotes to go with the game:

May you serve the Cause of God as one single, united force.

~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, (Promulgation of Universal Peace)

Vie ye with each other in the service of God and of His Cause. ~Bahá’u’lláh, (as quoted by Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice)

Happy the soul that shall forget his own good, and..... vie with his fellows in service to the good of all...~ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

A nice touch is to sweeten the water and put it in an especially attractive receptacle. We used a small lovely blue bottle with a golden cork lid. I decorated the bottle with sparkly wave stickers to symbolize the Ocean of God’s Revelation, the Water of Life. It was placed on a light blue silk covered step stool. The receivers were given tiny fake gold champagne cups (I called them chalices). I got them at a party supply store (Factory Card Outlet). They come in packets of 6 and are used as party favors at weddings. They also come in silver. They hold about one sip of water. I explained that the power of God’s Revelation is so great that only a dewdrop out of it can transform a person’s awareness:

Wert thou to attain to but a dewdrop of the crystal waters of divine knowledge, thou wouldst readily realize that true life is not the life of the flesh but the life of the spirit. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (The Kitab-i-Iqan)

Surely such a precious gift is worthy of a more attractive receptacle than a paper cup! Thus, the “chalices”. However, on a hot summer day, using large picnic type plastic cups and a large pitcher may be more appealing and memorable.

ART/CRAFTS

- **Luminous Service**, ages 7 and up

Each student was given a piece of black cardstock. They could choose standard paper size or 12”X12” (some children draw really big shapes and need more space).

A tray of pens and markers that work on dark paper was provided, along with glow in dark paint pens in 4 different colors.

The instructions were to draw a scene of you being of service or helpful. The figure that was expressing the good deed was to be outlined in glow in the dark ink, to signify that when we do service or show helpfulness and good deeds, we bring light to the world and shine spiritually.

After the kids were done, we put their artwork under a bright light, then took the pictures into our downstairs bathroom (which has no windows), turned out the light, and the kids got to see themselves glowing in the dark.

- **Beautiful Helping Hands**, ages 6 and up

*****Using permanent markers, kids can **decorate a pair of white cotton costume gloves**. Encourage them to make them beautiful, as using our hands in service is beautiful. They can do this after any activity that mentions hands as tools of service or wear them if they perform “With These Hands”. (Sparkley foam stickers can also be added to the hands for extra pizzazz.)

https://smile.amazon.com/gp/product/B01F7TM73Q/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_search_asin_title?ie=UTF8&psc=1

Variation: Kids can also use markers and stickers to decorate foam hands as symbols of service. [foam hands](#)

- **The Helpers**, ages 6 and up

Students were given poster boards and copies of The Helpers poem. The students were to create a work of art related to the poem using some or all of the following materials in trays:

- Poster board
- Poem cut out on nice paper
- Glue sticks
- Markers
- Pencils & erasers
- Plastic eyes of different sizes, shapes, and colors
- Hand stickers
- Hand shapes in different skin colors
- Feet stickers
- People shapes in different skin colors & sizes
- Smiley face stickers of various sizes and colors
- Lips stickers
- Heart stickers
- Heart shapes

The Helpers

Two eyes to see nice things to do,
 two lips to smile the whole day through,
 two ears to hear what others say,
 two hands to put our toys away,
 a tongue to speak sweet words each day,
 a loving heart for work or play,
 two feet that errands gladly run,
 make happy days for everyone!

- **Candle Craft**, ages 6 and up

Like a candle must ye shed your light,... illumine the hearts of humankind... In the darkness of the world be ye radiant flames... Now is the time to serve, now is the time to be on fire. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá)

Students were instructed to create the most beautiful candle they could imagine, which represented them. I took 2 photos of each child. They were to use one of these photos on the candle pillar, when the photos are available, and the art is dry. They were also given the following supplies: (If can't do photo, have them draw their face).

- 8 ½ X11 inch black card stock as the background. Given the nature of the project, the finished product looks best if the art is done with the paper oriented so that the base and top are the shorter edges, i.e. the picture is tall not wide.
- The above quotation on pretty paper cut in a strip to be pasted on the poster at top or bottom. (I used something called gold shimmer paper from www.paperdirect.com, item # SD103, Bright Gold.) I also clipped the ends with design edging scissors to give it an elegant touch.
- Glue and/or glue sticks (remind kids to be careful not to squeeze out too much at once)
- scissors
- Various quality papers for the pillar. Some were embossed with subtle patterns, others were shimmering, others had subtle sparkles, others had a pearlized glaze, etc. These can be found at scrap-booking supply sections in stores such as Michael's Arts and Crafts, Jo Ann Fabrics, even Walmart. I avoided highly patterned paper b/c personally I think it looks cluttered with a photo on it and detracts from the image of the child. One of the favorites was actually a plastic or mylar sheet. I asked the kids to fold those in half and cut b/c they were too big for the page otherwise—and a bit pricey. One can obtain these shimmer sheets from www.franticstamper.com. Click on their search page and type “shimmer sheetz” in the box. Or you can find them at other locations by doing a Google search. There are 4 sheets per package, each package is about \$4.00. They have various layers of colors melding into each other. Students always ooh and aah over them.
- Golden foils and holographic gold cardstock for the flames. Some of these can be obtained from Michael's Arts and Crafts in the Origami section. Some have subtle embossed patterns. The holographic gold was actually the background from punch out cardstock stars, obtained from www.stumpsrom.com item #STRHOP, gold.
- Metallic gold ink/paint pens, including ones that had sparkles in the ink for the rays. Available at Michael's Arts and Crafts. The ones that have sparkles are gold metallic fabric pens.
- Fine iridescent glitter to use for the rays if not using the ink pens, or in addition to the ink.
- Pencils and erasers to mark out rays and/or draw flames before cutting them out.
- Cheap paper plates or cardstock for testing the gold ink/paint markers (These are the kind you need to shake and press, and each one requires a different level of pressure, and sometimes they are defective and just release a large blob at once. This can ruin a piece of work. That's why I always advise my students to test the marker they are using on scrap paper or paper plate before applying to their art.)
- Optional: markers for children to decorate their pillars more if the paper they are using seems too plain to them. The markers can be metallic, sparkly or just plain.

Miscellaneous tips:

When my students did this, they were really creative. Some of them combined some of the different papers to make their pillar section. Others combined the different types of gold foils for one flame. Some

combined glitter and gold pens for their rays. The rays were so unique arching, alternating tall and short straight, wiggly mixed with straight, etc. Its best to have the photos of the students faces or entire bodies before beginning the project, but I had forgotten last class to do this. (In the past, when the photos are available at the beginning, some of the students first cut out their figure and pasted it on one type of paper, cut that out like a frame, then pasted that on the paper used for the candle pillar).

It was helpful to have a few pencil drawings of flames to give them ideas and to encourage them to draw in pencil on the back of that gold then cut it out to reduce cutting errors. Some made pedestals out of paper or used the quote as a base. Every single piece of art was unique and beautiful, reinforcing a positive and spiritual self-image.

MISCELLANEOUS

Then we did an activity called **Smile Vials:** (Ages 6 and up. Goes well with “The Helpers” and “Making Faces and Service w/ a Smile” dramatic activities). These are basically film vials with holographic contact paper wrapped around them with 3 stickers, 1 on the lid and 2 on the body of the vial. All lids had a sparkly 3D sticker of a smiling face. Then on the body of the vial was a large flower w/ a tiny 3D gem sticker in the center of the flower and on the opposite side of the vial, a prismatic heart sticker. I explained to the kids that the sticker-symbols meant the following: (I let them fill in the underlined words b/c these are concepts we have studied before in class.) The smiley face is for the happiness you bring to yourself and to another when you do the good deeds, the flower symbolizes how good deeds bring joy and beauty to the world just like flowers do, and whenever you do a good deed, a new virtue flower is growing in the garden of your heart. And the heart represents that good deeds are a way of showing love.

The children were asked to think of 3 acts of service or good deeds they can do and who they will do them for. I gave them a list of ideas if they could not think of any, such as: Folding clean towels, putting clean silverware away, sitting with a child who is alone at lunch, inviting a lonely kid to play, picking up litter, clearing the dinner table, dusting furniture, picking up toys that are not yours, sharing a favorite toy, helping someone clean up their mess, hugging someone who is sad, telling someone other than a family member that you love them, etc.

The students were given a tray containing many different colors of ribbon segments that had the shiny side covered with a strip of clear tape. (Ribbon can be very hard to write on for kids). They were to choose 3 ribbons and write the acts/deeds in ink on the tape, put them in their smile vial, and to do them this summer before school begins if possible. Older kids, youth, or adults can write for kids who are not writing yet.

I asked them not to write down their routine chores, and to be specific—for example avoid writing things like: “I will be nice to my sister”. They were to describe a specific action that would reflect being nice. I also asked them to do a good job and with a pleasant attitude if it was a chore. They should not write things that they know

will involve a lot of help from you, their parents. I assured them that these good deeds would bring happiness and smiles to themselves and the recipients, because it feels so good to do them.

Students should be shown how to roll the ribbon on a pen to place it neatly in the vial. But remind them to wait until the ink is dry so it doesn't smear. Also remind them to write their initials on the sticker on the bottom so they can figure out which one is theirs when it's time to take them home.

Materials needed for the Smile Vials:

- Trays for the items listed below
- Film vials covered with a strip of attractive contact paper—holographic stars are nice. I found mine in the school supply sections of department stores—this contact paper was intended for covering books and folders.
- Film vial lids with a flower sticker and a smiley face sticker in the center of the flower
- 1 Heart sticker on each vial. I used mine to reinforce the seam of the contact paper on the vial
- Different colors of ribbon, cut into about 6 inch strips, with pretty side covered in clear tape
- Rubbing Alcohol and tissue for wiping clean mistakes in writing
- A collection of different colored permanent markers. They work best on the tape and once dry, do not smear, as some other pens do.
- Round plain stickers for bottom of each vial so kids can put their initials on it.

(This was not an arts and crafts activity, it was really about associating good deeds with happiness, so I prepared the vials ahead of time. If you have the time in class, you may want to let the kids choose and place their own stickers from a tray of many. But even if you cut the contact paper into the right length and height ahead of time, kids will have a hard time positioning them so that they are not crooked or unevenly overlapping.)

If time, students were invited to share their smile vial goals.

(The following quotes were not read but were for inspiration).

Happy the soul that shall forget his own good, and.... vie with his fellows in service to the good of all...~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

...the honor and distinction of the individual consist in this, that he among all the world's multitudes should become a source of social good. Is any larger bounty conceivable than this, that an individual, looking within himself, should find that by the confirming grace of God he has become the cause of peace and well-

being, of happiness and advantage to his fellow men? No, by the one true God, there is no greater bliss, no more complete delight. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

Today, all the peoples of the world are indulging in self-interest and exert the utmost effort and endeavour to promote their own material interests. They are worshipping themselves and not the divine reality, nor the world of mankind. They seek diligently their own benefit and not the common weal. This is because they are captives of the world of nature and unaware of the divine teachings, of the bounty of the Kingdom and of the Sun of Truth. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá)

The first thing to do is to acquire a thirst for Spirituality, then Live the Life! Live the Life! Live the Life! The way to acquire this thirst is to meditate upon the future life. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (The Importance of Deepening)

...until material achievements, physical accomplishments and human virtues are reinforced by spiritual perfections, luminous qualities and characteristics of mercy, no fruit or result shall issue therefrom, nor will the happiness of the world of humanity, which is the ultimate aim, be attained. For although, on the one hand, material achievements and the development of the physical world produce prosperity, which exquisitely manifests its intended aims, on the other hand dangers, severe calamities and violent afflictions are imminent. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, (Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá)

No matter how far the material world advances, it cannot establish the happiness of mankind. Only when material and spiritual civilization are linked and coordinated will happiness be assured. Then material civilization will not contribute its energies to the forces of evil in destroying the oneness of humanity.... ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Promulgation of Universal Peace)

Next we did an **activity** from *Brilliant Star*, Nov/Dec. 1994 called “**Light Up Your World**”. (Ages 6 and up). On pages 16-17 is a 2-page picture with a black background full of children drawn in white doing various activities. (Need to copy this). Students were to examine the drawing carefully and determine which children were doing service or showing helpfulness, kindness and caring. (Which we believe are versions of service).

Each student was given a push pin and their own drawing, though they could do it as a pair if they wanted to. Most preferred to do this as a pair, which I felt was better b/c they could consult. Some of the scenes were not obviously acts of service or caring—it depended on how it was interpreted.

This is a large drawing, covering 2 pages of the magazine, so having 2 works on it also sped up the completion time. Using carpet or thick cardboard, they were to outline the service-oriented children in holes using the push pin. When done and held up to the window or lampshade with a lit bulb, those characters let the light in and illuminated the drawing.

(The lampshade provided a more dramatic effect). We explained that whenever we do service, we are spiritually luminous and shining.

A **small gift to give to kids**: These were small bendable happy figures with special radiant heart stickers on their chest to signify that people are happy and radiant when they do good deeds for others—or are the recipients of good deeds. (I put the stickers on, they did not come w/ these). These are called Bendable Smile Figures. They were available for 3.75 per dozen in 2015 from www.rinovelty.com Product # SLBENS3. However, one can often find them in fewer quantities at places like a Party City store, but they will cost more.

MISCELLANEOUS QUOTATIONS ON SERVICE

To engage children more, ask them to guess the underlined words. If kids are stumped, start giving more clues; for example, I would provide the first letter of the answer. If still stumped, the second letter was also provided. Sometimes I hinted through providing a rhyme or descriptive riddle or pantomiming the word—the kids always enjoy this, b/c its like a riddle game. For ages 7 or 8 and up.

Wert thou to consider this world, and realize how fleeting are the things that pertain unto it, thou wouldst choose to tread no path except the path of service to the Cause of thy Lord. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

Vocabulary:

Wert=were

Fleeting=brief, transitory, short-lived

Pertain=relate

Tread=walk

Know that nothing will benefit thee in this life save supplication and invocation unto God, service in His vineyard, and, with a heart full of love, be in constant servitude unto Him. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá (Tablets of `Abdu'l-Bahá)

Vocabulary:

Supplication=asking of

Invocation=prayer

The fleeting hours of man's life on earth pass swiftly by and the little that still remaineth shall come to an end, but that which endureth and lasteth for evermore is the fruit that man reapeth from his servitude at the Divine Threshold. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá)

Vocabulary:

Endureth=continues

Reapeth=harvest/collects

Threshold=entrance point

...service in love for mankind is unity with God. He who serves has already entered the Kingdom and is seated at the right hand of his Lord. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Promulgation of Universal Peace)

NOTES: I reminded the students that the above is highly metaphorical—i.e. God does not sit on a physical throne, nor have hands.

With the utmost friendliness and in a spirit of perfect fellowship take ye counsel together, and dedicate the precious days of your lives to the betterment of the world and the promotion of the Cause of Him Who is the Ancient and Sovereign Lord of all. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

Vocabulary: Promotion=support, advancement

Let your acts be a guide unto all mankind..... It is through your deeds that ye can distinguish yourselves from others. Through them the brightness of your light can be shed upon the whole earth. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

Vocabulary: Distinguish=be different/tell apart

Help ye the one true God, exalted be His glory, by your goodly deeds, by such conduct and character as shall be acceptable in His sight. He that seeketh to be a helper of God in this Day, let him close his eyes to whatever he may possess, and open them to the things of God. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'lláh)

Vocabulary:

Exalted=high, lofty

Conduct=behavior

...the honor and distinction of the individual consist in this, that he among all the world's multitudes should become a source of social good. Is any larger bounty conceivable than this, that an individual, looking within himself, should find that by the confirming grace of God he has become the cause of peace and well-being, of happiness and advantage to his fellow men? No, by the one true God, there is no greater bliss, no more complete delight. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

Vocabulary:

Distinction=excellence/worth

Multitudes=large numbers

Conceivable=imaginable

Confirming=strengthening/assisting

Bliss=extreme joy

It is clear and evident that all men shall, after their physical death, estimate the worth of their deeds, and realize all that their hands have wrought. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

Vocabulary:

Estimate=evaluate/ judge

Wrought=done/produced

...they who are the people of God must, with fixed resolve and perfect confidence, keep their eyes directed towards the Day Spring of Glory, and be busied in whatever may be conducive to the betterment of the world and the education of its peoples. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'lláh)

Vocabulary:

Resolve=determination, steadfastness

Conducive=helpful, beneficial, contributing

They who are the people of God have no ambition except to revive the world, to ennoble its life, and regenerate its peoples. Truthfulness and good-will have at all times, marked their relations with all men. Their outward conduct is but a reflection of their inward life, and their inward life a mirror of their outward conduct.

~Baha'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'lláh

Vocabulary:

Ambition=goal, desire

Regenerate=renew, revitalize, stimulate

Conduct=behavior

How excellent, how honorable is man if he arises to fulfill his responsibilities; how wretched and contemptible, if he shuts his eyes to the welfare of society and wastes his precious life in pursuing his own selfish interests and personal advantages... And this is man's uttermost wretchedness: that he should live inert, apathetic, dull, involved only with his own base appetites.

~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Secret of Divine Civilization)

Vocabulary:

Honorable=admirable/praiseworthy

Wretched=miserable

Contemptible=shameful

Welfare=well being

Wretchedness=misery

Inert=still/motionless

Apathetic=uninterested/unconcerned/indifferent

Appetites=desires/cravings

Observe how darkness has overspread the world. In every corner of the earth there is strife, discord and warfare of some kind. Mankind is submerged in the sea of materialism and occupied with the affairs of this world. They have no thought beyond earthly possessions and manifest no desire save the passions of this fleeting, mortal existence. Their utmost purpose is the attainment of material livelihood, physical comforts and worldly enjoyments such as constitute the happiness of the animal world rather than the world of man. The honor of man is through the attainment of the knowledge of God; his happiness is from the love of God; his joy is in the glad tidings of God; his greatness is dependent upon his servitude to God. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Promulgation of Universal Peace)

Vocabulary:

Strife=conflict

Discord=friction/disunity

Submerged=sunken

Materialism=greed/obsession with material things

Manifest=show/reveal

Mortal=human/earthly

Constitute=make up/form

Attainment=gaining of

Love ye all religions and all races with a love that is true and sincere and show that love through deeds and not through the tongue; for the latter hath no importance, as the majority of men are, in speech, well-wishers, while action is the best. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá)

There is nothing that brings success in the Faith like service. Service is the magnet which draws the divine confirmations. Thus, when a person is active, they are blessed by the Holy Spirit. When they are inactive, the Holy Spirit cannot find a repository in their being, and thus they are deprived of its healing and quickening rays. ~Shoghi Effendi, (Living the Life)

Vocabulary:

Confirmations= blessings/assistance

Repository=place to deposit

Quickening=stimulating/changing

Blessed are they that remember the one true God, that magnify His Name, and seek diligently to serve His Cause. It is to these men that the sacred Books of old have referred..... The glory of their station, however, is as yet undisclosed. The Hand of Divine power will, assuredly, lift up the veil, and expose to the sight of men that which shall cheer and lighten the eye of the world. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

Vocabulary:

Magnify=extol/praise

Diligently=thoroughly, carefully, with steadfastness

Referred=mentioned

Station=rank/position

Undisclosed=unrevealed/secret

Assuredly=for sure

I swear by God! That which hath been destined for him who aideth My Cause excelleth the treasures of the earth. ~ Bahá'u'lláh, as quoted by Shoghi Effendi, (The Advent of Divine Justice)

Vocabulary:

Destined=awaits in the future

Excelleth=exceeds/is greater than/goes beyond

Know that nothing will benefit thee in this life save supplication and invocation unto God, service in His vineyard, and, with a heart full of love, be in constant servitude unto Him. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Baha'i World Faith)

Vocabulary:

Supplication=asking of

Invocation=prayer

The fleeting hours of man's life on earth pass swiftly by and the little that still remaineth shall come to an end, but that which endureth and lasteth for evermore is the fruit that man reapeth from his servitude at the Divine Threshold. ~`Abdu'l-Bahá, (Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá)

Vocabulary:

Endureth=continues
Reap=harvest/collects
Threshold=entrance point

Arise thou to serve the Cause of thy Lord; then give the people the joyful tidings concerning this resplendent Light whose revelation hath been announced by God through His Prophets and Messengers. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh)

Tidings=news
Resplendent=splendid/dazzling/brilliant

Do not feel discouraged if the work you are doing for His Cause does not bear rich and immediate fruit. The seeds you are so patiently and devotedly sowing will assuredly germinate, and future generations will reap an abundant harvest. The Master is watching over and blessing your historic services. Rest assured. Your true brother, Shoghi (November 3, 1935, Compilations, Japan Will Turn Ablaze)

Blessed are they that remember the one true God, that magnify His Name, and seek diligently to serve His Cause. It is to these men that the sacred Books of old have referred..... The glory of their station, however, is as yet undisclosed. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings)

Vocabulary:

Blessed=receiving of God's bounties and gifts/assisted
Magnify=extol/praise
Diligently=thoroughly, carefully, with steadfastness
Referred=mentioned
Station=rank/position
Undisclosed=unrevealed/secret

I swear by God! That which hath been destined for him who aideth My Cause excelleth the treasures of the earth. ~Bahá'u'lláh, as quoted by Shoghi Effendi, (The Advent of Divine Justice)

Vocabulary:

Destined=awaits in the future
Excelleth=exceeds/is greater than/goes beyond

Strive thou day and night to serve the Cause of Him Who is the Eternal Truth, and be thou detached from all else but Him. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'lláh)

Vocabulary:

Strive=struggle/try really hard

I entreat Thee, O Lord of the Kingdom of eternity....., to grant that I may remain steadfast in my love for Thee... and may stand firm in Thy service and in the service of Thy loved ones. Graciously assist then Thy servants, O my God, to do that which will serve to exalt Thy Cause and will enable them to observe whatsoever Thou hast revealed in Thy Book. ~Bahá'u'lláh, (Tablets of Baha'u'lláh)

Vocabulary:

Entreat=ask, beg, request

Grant=permit, allow

Steadfast=firm, dedicated, faithful, constant

Graciously=kindly

Exalt=promote, raise up

Observe=obey, follow