KS1: The Proud Helper

Starter

Introduce myself the word 'Bahá'í'.

Class to say the word 'Bahá'í' together, then invite children to say the word individually.

Explain what it means - Bahá'ís are followers of Bahá'u'lláh, a messenger from God.

[whole class: 10 mins]

Story 'The Proud Helper'

Talk time

- Why did Lua run away when she went to visit the poor man who was ill?
- How do you think the poor man felt?
- Was 'Abdu'l-Baha cross with Lua?
- What did he ask her to do?
- Why do you think she went back?
- How do you think she felt after she went back to help him?
- Do you know what a virtue is? (Teacher to explain 'virtues' – or 'values' if that is what they are called in your school)
- What virtue did Lua show, when she went back to help the man?
- Can you tell me about a time when you have helped someone?

Activity

Draw a picture from the story
or
Draw a picture of when you have done something helpful

The Proud Helper

'Abdu'l-Baha was the son of Baha'u'llah. For many years of his life, 'Abdu'l-Baha lived in the Holy Land, in the city of Akka. For much of this time he was a prisoner and could not leave the city. But still, he did all that he could to help others.

'Abdu'l-Baha often visited the poor people in 'Akka. If they needed food or clothes, He would bring them these things.
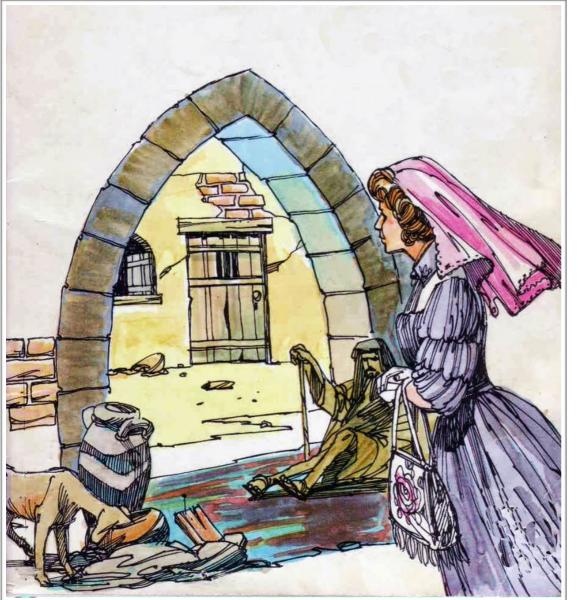
If they needed money, he would give it to them.

If they were ill, he would call a doctor or look after them himself.

Almost every day, poor people in tattered clothes were seen around 'Abdu'l-Baha's house. They waited to see 'Abdu'l-Baha and ask for his help. He would always listen to their problems and try to help them. He was like a father to all the poor people.

Many Baha'is from Europe and America came to visit 'Abdu'l-Baha in 'Akka while he was a prisoner. They came to listen to him and to ask questions. 'Abdu'l-Baha taught them many things about the Baha'i Faith.

One lady who came to 'Akka was Lua Getsinger. She came to see 'Abdu'l-Baha with some Baha'i friends. She loved 'Abdu'l-Baha very much and she would do anything he asked.

Lua came to see 'Abdu'l-Baha one day when he was very busy. He had so many things to do that he couldn't do them all. He told her that he wanted to see a poor friend of His who was very ill, but he did not have enough time. So He asked her to go in His place.

'Abdu'l-Baha told Lua to take some food to His friend and to look after him, as he had been doing. He told her where to find the man, and Lua started out.

She was happy as she walked through the streets of 'Akka, because she was helping 'Abdu'l-Baha. She was also proud that 'Abdu'l-Baha had sent her in his place to help His friend.

But as she came to the sick man's house, she could see that it was dirty and poor. There was a terrible smell from all the rubbish and filth.

When she went into the house, she couldn't believe her eyes. The man was very ill and could not get out of bed. He looked terrible. The whole house was dirty and messy.

Lua became afraid. She almost fainted. She thought that she might catch some terrible disease, so she ran from the house as fast as she could. She returned to 'Abdu'l-Baha.

"Oh, Master!" she cried. "Surely you cannot realise what a terrible place you sent me to."

She told 'Abdu'l-Baha about the dirty house and the man who was ill. 'Abdu'l-Baha looked at her sadly. Then he spoke sternly. "Do you want to serve God?" he asked her. Then, he said, she must help other people

He told her that she must go back to the man's house. If it was dirty, she must clean it. If he was ill, she must look after him. If he was hungry, she must feed him. 'Abdu'l-Baha had done this for him many times. Could not she help him just once?

So Lua went back to the sick man's house. And this time she was ready to help him.

She did all the things that 'Abdu'l-Baha had asked her to do. She cared for the man and fed him and cleaned his house. In this way, she was helping 'Abdu'l-Baha and she was serving God as well.

(by Anthony Lee, adapted from 'Portals to Freedom', by Howard Colby Ives)