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Information for Teachers

The Bahá'í Faith is the world's seventh largest religion. The Bahá'í House of Worship in New Delhi (the "Lotus Temple") is currently the world's most visited building and the striking Bahá'í gardens on the slopes of Mount Carmel are becoming more well-known. These worksheets give basic information about the history, beliefs and practices of the Bahá'í Faith. The Bahá'í emphasis on the oneness of humanity, and its acceptance of the divine origin of the world's major religions, may make it a useful topic for pupils to study as part of their Religious Education programme.

This series of photocopiable masters sets out to provide teachers of secondary schools with accessible materials which can readily be adapted and built upon. The simple publication format allows the teacher to store his or her additional material alongside these printed pages.

These worksheets are mainly intended for Key Stage 3 but some teachers may find them suitable for certain purposes within Key Stage 4.

The Warwick Bahá'í Bookshop allows the photocopying of pages marked "copiable page" for educational use within the educational establishment which has purchased or downloaded this copy. (In the case of purchase or download by a local Bahá'í community for its own use, the pages may be copied for use by all the classes which are run by that Bahá'í community.)

Photographs are reprinted with permission of the Bahá'í International Community and have been reproduced from <http://media.bahai.org>.
The website of the Bahá'í International Community is at www.bahai.org.

Information and resources designed specifically for use in UK schools can be accessed at <http://re.bahai.org.uk>. General information about the Bahá'í Faith can be viewed at www.bahai.org.uk.

See Appendix 1 for a list of websites which provide further information on the Bahá'í Faith.

See Appendix 2 for details of leaflets available.

See Appendix 3 for books for children published by the Warwick Bahá'í Bookshop. A wide range of books about the Bahá'í Faith can be ordered from www.bahaibooks.org.uk.

**Published by the Warwick Bahá'í Bookshop,
The Haven, 6 Welsh Road West, Southam, Warwickshire, CV47 0JN.
www.warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk**



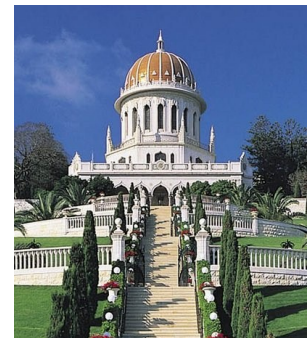
The Báb

The Báb was born in Iran in 1819, and in 1844 He declared that He was a Messenger of God. The title “Báb” means “Gate” and He said He was the gateway to the next religion, which would unite the world. This is the courtyard of the house where the Báb lived and where He made this announcement. He brought new teachings and had many followers. But the authorities did not like this and He spent several years in prison.



This is one of the castles where the Báb was held prisoner. You can see it under the rock. In 1850 He was taken to the nearest town to be killed.

A regiment of 750 soldiers was lined up to shoot the Báb but they all missed and He was not harmed. Another regiment was brought in and this time they killed the Báb. But His religion did not finish then. It was just the beginning. In 1863 Bahá'u'lláh announced that He was the Messenger promised by the Báb. It was thanks to Bahá'u'lláh that the body of the Báb was brought to Haifa and this beautiful Shrine built over His grave.



Activity

1. Why do you think the authorities thought it necessary to use 750 soldiers to kill the Báb?
2. How do you think the 750 soldiers all missed the Báb?



Bahá'u'lláh - His Early Life

The story of Bahá'u'lláh: part 1 of 3.

Bahá'u'lláh was born in Tehran on the 12th November 1817, in the country of Persia, now called Iran. His parents, who were very wealthy, gave Him the name Husayn Alí. Bahá'u'lláh, which means “the Glory of God”, was a title He took later in life.

Bahá'u'lláh was a very unusual child. His mother was amazed by His good behaviour. He never cried as a baby and was a well mannered child. He had a deep knowledge and understanding of religion and of the Holy Books. People were amazed by His intelligence and kindness, and they loved talking to Him. He had a strong sense of justice even as a young boy.



Part of the city of Tehran



Bahá'u'lláh's summer home

When He grew up, Bahá'u'lláh married a beautiful young lady called Asíyih Khánum. She was also well known for her kindness to the poor, and her generous nature. The two of them were very rich, and it took 40 mules to carry Asíyih Khánum's belongings to her new home. Even the buttons on her dresses were made of gold inset with precious stones. But the couple were always generous with their money, and looked after the poor and the sick around them. Bahá'u'lláh became known as “The Father of the Poor” and Asíyih Khánum was known as “The Mother of Consolation”.

When Bahá'u'lláh was twenty-two years old, His father, who had held a position in government, died. Bahá'u'lláh was expected to apply for the position to replace His father, but He was not interested in worldly things such as money, power and influence. Instead He devoted Himself to helping the poor people of Tehran, the city where He lived.

Activity

1. Why was Bahá'u'lláh an unusual child? List the things which were unusual.
2. Why were Bahá'u'lláh and His wife loved by the poor?
3. EITHER draw a picture of the mules carrying Asíyih Khánum's belongings OR draw a picture of one of Asíyih Khánum's dresses.



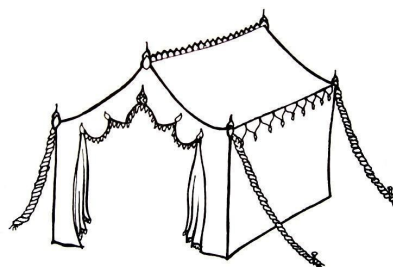
Bahá'u'lláh's Announcement

The story of Bahá'u'lláh: part 2 of 3.

When Bahá'u'lláh heard about the Báb He became a follower. Then Bahá'u'lláh was arrested and beaten on the soles of His feet and made to walk barefoot to a dungeon called the Black Pit. He had a very heavy chain put around His neck which weighed 50 kilos. He was affected by this for the rest of His life. It was while He was in this awful prison that Bahá'u'lláh realised that He was the Messenger promised by the Báb. Although He was in a terrible prison, He was filled with happiness.

After a few months Bahá'u'lláh was released and sent with His family into exile in Iraq, in the Turkish Empire. The journey to Baghdad was very hard, and took three months. Bahá'u'lláh and His family travelled mainly on foot and they suffered terribly. Many followers of the Báb also went to Baghdad. Many other people flocked to meet Him and hear His words.

Later the authorities decided to send Bahá'u'lláh away to the city of Constantinople (now called Istanbul), which was the capital of the Turkish Empire. For the 12 days before He left, Bahá'u'lláh went to stay in the Garden of Ridván. Every day many people came to say goodbye. On the ninth day the rest of his family came to join Him. There were several tents in the garden to shelter everyone. It was so windy that people used to sit on the ropes of Bahá'u'lláh's tent to stop it from blowing away!



Whilst in this beautiful garden, surrounded by roses and nightingales, Bahá'u'lláh announced that He was the Promised One of all religions and had come to unite the whole world. His followers became known as Bahá'ís. Today the 12-day Festival of Ridván is the greatest Bahá'í festival because it is when Bahá'u'lláh announced His mission.

Activity

1. How heavy was the chain around Bahá'u'lláh's neck?
2. How long was Bahá'u'lláh in the prison?
3. How long did Bahá'u'lláh stay in the Garden of Ridván?
4. Which is the greatest Bahá'í festival?
5. Bahá'ís do not make pictures of Bahá'u'lláh or any of the other Messengers. Why do you think this is?



Bahá'u'lláh in the Holy Land

The story of Bahá'u'lláh: part 3 of 3.

Bahá'u'lláh, His family and about 70 followers arrived in Constantinople in 1863. After only four months, they were sent away again to the town of Adrianople (now Edirne), also in Turkey. The journey to Adrianople took twelve days, through snow and ice, without suitable clothing, and in open wagons. Some of the animals used to carry the luggage died, and the travellers had to burn fires to melt ice before they could have anything to drink.



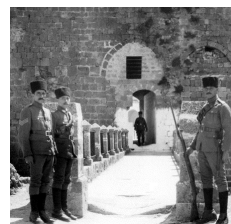
Edirne

During this time in Adrianople, Bahá'u'lláh wrote important letters to the kings and rulers of the world, including Queen Victoria. Bahá'u'lláh announced His message of unity, and told them how they could bring about world peace. He said they should hold a peace conference and agree the boundaries between countries, they should reduce their weapons and share out the wealth more fairly among their subjects.



Queen Victoria

After 5 years the government decided to get rid of Bahá'u'lláh once and for all. This time, He was sent to the remote prison city of `Akká, in Palestine (now Israel). `Akká was a horrible, unhealthy place and the authorities expected that He would die there.



For the first two years, the Bahá'ís were locked into cells inside the fortress in that city. During this time, Bahá'u'lláh lost his 22 year old son who died in an accident. After this they were held under house arrest for another 7 years.

The local people came to love Bahá'u'lláh and realised He was not a threat, and He was allowed to move to the countryside outside Akká, where He lived for the rest of His life. He passed away on 29th May, 1892 and was buried nearby. Thousands of people came to grieve – Christians, Muslims, people of other faiths, the Governor and other officials. Five hundred people camped in the gardens for 9 days.

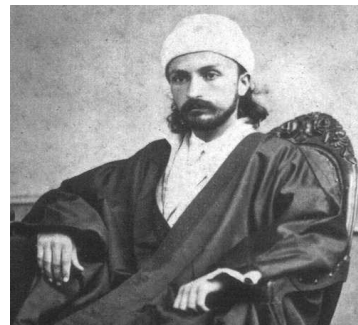
Activity

Why would Bahá'u'lláh choose a life of suffering and exile when he could have had a very comfortable life at home with His family?



`Abdu'l-Bahá

`Abdu'l-Bahá was Bahá'u'lláh's eldest son, and from the age of 8 he shared his Father's sufferings and was with Him during His exiles. He always tried to help his Father and to look after the other Bahá'ís. When Bahá'u'lláh died, He appointed `Abdu'l-Bahá to guide the Bahá'ís after Him.



`Abdu'l-Bahá as a young man



`Abdu'l-Bahá being knighted

`Abdu'l-Bahá was 64 years old when He was eventually a free man. After He was released from prison, He spent His time helping people in need. He organised food supplies for the poor during World War I, and even fed the British army when it arrived in the Haifa and Akká area. For these services He was knighted by the British government in 1920.

In His later life He was free to travel, and came to visit Britain and America. The Bahá'ís bought Him a ticket for the Titanic, but He was not interested in luxury, and went to America by a cheaper boat instead. He encouraged inter-racial marriage and treated people from all backgrounds as if they mattered. He died, worn out from sheer hard work, at the age of 77. He is buried in a room in the Shrine of the Báb. `Abdu'l-Bahá was the example of a perfect Bahá'í which all Bahá'ís should try to follow.

`Abdu'l-Bahá appointed His grandson to be the Guardian of the Faith until the Universal House of Justice could be elected. In this way the Bahá'í Faith remained united.

Activity

Do you think that `Abdu'l-Bahá was a good example to follow?
Why do you think this?



Appendix 1 - Useful Websites

The following websites provide further information on the Bahá'í Faith which may be of use to teachers of R.E.:

<http://www.bahai.org>

The official Web site of the Bahá'í International Community, offering information about the Bahá'í Faith and its worldwide community to the general public, as well as to journalists, academics, and researchers.

<http://www.bahaullah.com>

This contains details on the life of Bahá'u'lláh and of His Writings.

<http://info.bahai.org>

Bahá'í Topics, an information resource including a brief introduction to the Bahá'í Faith, its teachings, history, and community activities, in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Persian, and Arabic.

<http://reference.bahai.org>

The Bahá'í Reference Library, containing downloadable versions of all the authoritative texts of the Bahá'í Faith in English, Persian and Arabic.

<http://news.bahai.org>

The Bahá'í World News Service, reporting on news, activities, and developments around the world.

<http://media.bahai.org>

The Bahá'í Media Bank, a collection of more than 2,500 usable, high-resolution images of historical figures, holy places and buildings, and contemporary community activities. All photographs within this publication are from this website.

<http://statements.bahai.org>

A collection of statements offering the Bahá'í perspective on contemporary issues and themes, submitted by the Bahá'í International Community to United Nations agencies and conferences.

<http://www.onecountry.org>

One Country is the online newsletter of the Bahá'í International Community. The site contains numerous in-depth feature stories on the United Nations, noteworthy social and economic development projects, environmental efforts, and educational programmes.

<http://terraces.bahai.org>

The history and purpose of, and useful visitor information about the garden terraces at the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa.



Appendix 2 - Leaflets

Page 1 of 2

The Warwick Bahá'í Bookshop produces a wide range of A4 3-fold leaflets, in a standardised two-colour format, many of which are suitable for classroom use. For the most part, these concentrate on one area of Bahá'í belief, ideals or practice. The price is 10p per leaflet, plus postage. The Bookshop will send out orders of any size, single or multiple copies. The list below indicates for which Key Stages each leaflet may be appropriate:

GENERAL (INTRODUCTORY)

The Bahá'í Faith-What Is It?	2 3 4
The Bahá'í Faith-Being A Bahá'í	3 4
The Bahá'í Faith-How It Began	2 3 4
Cyflwyno'r Ffydd Bahá'í [<i>Welsh</i>]	2 3 4
The Bahá'í Faith – A New Religion for a New Age **	3 4
Bahá'u'lláh - The Promised One	4
Bahá'u'lláh - Messenger Of God	4
Bahá'u'lláh [<i>simple text</i>]	3 4
** full colour	

SPIRITUAL SUBJECTS

The Nature of God	4
Prayer and Meditation	3 4
The Life of the Soul	4
Why Are We Here?	3 4 5
The Meaning of Suffering	4 5
Words of Inspiration [<i>quotations</i>]	4 5
Good and Evil	3 4 5
Fasting and the Bahá'í Fast	3 4
Health & Healing - A Bahá'í View	4 5

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

All Religions Are One	3 4 5
The Return of Christ	3 4
Hinduism and the Bahá'í Faith	3 4
Buddhism and the Bahá'í Faith	3 4
Sikhism and the Bahá'í Faith	3 4
Islam and the Bahá'í Faith	3 4
Judaism and the Bahá'í Faith	3 4
Christianity and the Bahá'í Faith	3 4

continued...



Appendix 2 - Leaflets

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Continued...

MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS

Bahá'í Marriage	3	4	5
Family Life	3	4	5
Food and Farming	3	4	5
Treatment of Animals	3	4	5
Caring for the Environment		4	5
Sustainable Development			5
Bahá'í Consultation		4	5
Bahá'í Administration		4	5
The New World Order	3	4	5
God's Promise To Humanity		4	
The Importance of Religion		4	5
The Way to World Peace	3	4	5
Freedom From Terrorism	3	4	5
World Citizenship	3	4	5
The New Age			5
Space - The Final Frontier?		4	5
One Human Race [<i>on racism</i>]	3	4	5
The Status of Women	3	4	5
Religion and Science	3	4	5
Economics - A Bahá'í Approach		4	5
Bahá'í Education		4	5
Law and Order	3	4	5
Freedom Of Speech		4	5
'Abdu'l-Bahá in Britain		3	4
The Bahá'í Faith & Queen Victoria	2	3	4
The Future of Monarchy		3	4

'PRESENTATION' series

A6 single fold, 5p each:

Bahá'í Prayers [<i>9 short prayers</i>]	2	3	4	5
Life after Death		3	4	5

The Warwick Bahá'í Bookshop can be contacted at:

The Haven, 6, Welsh Road West, Southam, Warwickshire, CV47 0JN,
or by telephone on 01926 817291.

Orders and enquiries also via www.warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk.

The text of these leaflets can also be viewed at www.warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk.



Appendix 3 - Some Useful Books

Although there is a wide range of Bahá'í literature available (e.g. www.bahaibooks.org.uk), the Warwick Bahá'í Bookshop specialises in producing simple materials, including small books. Teachers of Key Stage 3 may find the following of use:

“The Bahá'í Faith”

by Patrick Vickers.

This is a simple introductory book based on a Bahá'í family. It has 64 pages, with full colour photographs on virtually every page, and has been written specifically for pupils of between 8 and 14 years. The subject matter has been tailored to the concerns and interests of this age group, and the vocabulary is not particularly challenging. Copies are available at a reduced price of £1.25 for schools, plus postage. A half class set (15 copies) would cost £18.75 plus postage (which is always charged at cost).

“The Life of the Báb”

“The Life of Bahá'u'lláh”

“The Life of `Abdu'l-Bahá”

“The Life of the Guardian”

by Helena Hastie.

These 32-page booklets each tell the life story of a central figure from early Bahá'í history. Written in a straightforward style, they are probably suitable for most KS3 students. They would also make excellent background reading for any teacher wishing to deepen their professional knowledge on the Bahá'í Faith. Each book costs £1.50, or £5.00 for the set of four, plus postage.

“My Book of Prayers – What can I say when...?”

“My Book of Readings – What can I read when...?”

produced in conjunction with Sapling Publications.

These two books, at just £1.00 each (plus postage), were produced for children from Bahá'í families rather than for teenagers, but they may be of use in the classroom as a source of Bahá'í prayers and writings on different subjects. They provide prayers or readings for e.g. “What can I say when someone is ill?” or “What can I read when I am upset about something?” In the context of the classroom, the books could also be used as a source of display material or as genuine Bahá'í “artefacts”. The prayers and readings could be used for individual pupils to read aloud to the class.

Sample pages from these books can be viewed on the Bookshop website:-

<http://www.warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk>

To order please contact enquiries@warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk.