

Lesson Plan – Bahá’i Houses of Worship or ‘Temples’

Scheme of Work: Unity and Equality in the Bahá’i Faith

PowerPoint Resource: Places of Worship in the Bahá’i Faith

Key Questions: Where do Bahá’is meet for worship? Are there Priests or Leaders in the Bahá’i Faith? How are Unity and Equality shown in the Bahá’i community?	
Activities :	Notes
<p>1. Show slide show ‘Bahá’i Places Of Worship’</p> <p>2. Discuss what you have seen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are they all alike? • Can you see any similarities? • Do they look like the places of worship of any other religion? <p>All Bahá’i Houses of Worship have 9 sides, 9 entrances and 9 paths, signifying that all paths can lead to God. These Temples are open to anyone, of any religion or belief. Though the main part of the Temple is used for worship, there are other rooms for meetings and celebrations. In the future, they will have hospitals, schools and facilities for the elderly and the wider community built around them.</p> <p>There are no sermons or talks given – only reading from Scriptures, both from the Bahá’i Writings and the Holy writings of all religions - and singing. Musical instruments are not used in this setting, but all of the Temples have their own choir.</p> <p>Inside, the Temples are built with three levels, a high dome, a middle tier and the ground level where people gather. There is a parallel with the three levels of God the Creator, His Messengers and mankind.</p> <p><u>3. Activity:</u></p> <p>Design (and if possible build a model of) a Bahá’i House of Worship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the levels, the 9 sides and entrances, and the openness to all people. • Will you include symbols? • Think about the gardens - will you add pools? Will the gardens use local plants? • Where would you build your House of Worship? • Consider the use of materials - how can you make it beautiful but not ‘showy’? • Extension: Which community facilities would you include and why? <p><u>4. Discuss:</u></p> <p>There are no sermons in the Houses of Worship – readings can be read by anyone, in any language. The concept of equality is key in the Bahá’i Faith. There are no priests or leaders in worship –The concept of ‘unity in diversity’ is very important in the Bahá’i Faith.</p>	<p>(NB: There are currently only 8 Bahá’i “Houses of Worship” or Temples across the world – at least one in each continent. Baha’is meet in each other’s homes, or in Bahá’i Centres when they do not live near a House of Worship. Bahá’i Centres are often houses adapted to have large meeting rooms, a kitchen and maybe an office for the local administrative body known as the Spiritual Assembly)</p> <p>http://bahaikipedia.org gives details of the Houses of Worship and many other topics.</p> <p>Where there are 9 or more adult Bahá’is in an area, they elect an ‘Assembly’ each year to guide the affairs of the local community, but individually, no one is more ‘important’ than another. Everyone is valued for their own talents, skills and insights.</p>