

Lesson Plan for Year 1, Lesson 15

Aim To learn about Bahá'í Administration

Objectives

After fully participating in both the lesson and the homework, the student should be able to:

- a. State that a LSA has nine members, at least five of whom are needed for a meeting,
- b. Know that you must be a Bahá'í over 21 to vote for, or be, a LSA member,
- c. Understand that a LSA consults with other Bahá'ís at a Nineteen-Day Feast,
- d. State how often the Universal House of Justice is elected.

Materials

The Virtues Guide; Loving Hands tape; worksheet

1. Game/News – Game: ‘Shopping basket’ memory test.
First person says, “I went shopping and I bought X”
Second person says, “I went shopping and I bought X and Y”
Etc. Anyone who forgets what to say, or gets an item wrong, is out.
E.g. X could be “a banana” and Y could be “some shoes.”
2. Mark Homework
3. Virtue – Respect
Use ¼ of what is in The Virtues Guide.
4. New Topic. LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY.
Ask if anyone knows anything about a LSA. Does anyone have a parent or other relative who is a member of a LSA? Has anyone been to a Ridván meeting where the election of the LSA took place? How old do you have to be before you can vote in Bahá'í elections and be a LSA member? How many members of the LSA must be present before a LSA meeting starts? When does the LSA consult with other Bahá'ís?
The following extract is provided for the teacher:

FORMATION OF THE LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
Obligation to Form. Shoghi Effendi feels that in any locality where the number of adult believers reaches nine, a local Assembly should be established. He feels this to be an obligation rather than a purely voluntary act. Only in exceptional cases has the National Spiritual Assembly the right to postpone the formation of an Assembly if it feels that the situation does not warrant such a formation. This right, however, should be exercised if the situation absolutely demands it. As to the principle according to which the area of the jurisdiction of a Local Assembly is to be determined, he feels this to be the function of the National Spiritual Assembly; whatever principle they uphold should be fairly applied to all localities without any distinction whatever.
(Shoghi Effendi through his Secretary, *Principles of Bahá'í Administration*, p.46)
5. Story – Stories of great service in the Faith (‘Abdu'l-Bahá) *Thoughts*, pp.237-8.
When a Turkish man, living in Haifa, lost his position, he, his wife and children were in a desperate need. They went to 'Abdu'l-Bahá for help and were naturally greatly aided. When the poor man became ill, again the Master stood ready to help. He provided a doctor, medicine and provisions to make him comfortable. When this man

felt he was to die, he asked for 'Abdu'l-Bahá and called his children to him. 'Here', he told the children, 'is your father, who will take care of you when I am gone.'

One morning four small children arrived at the home of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and announced, 'We want our father.' The Master, hearing their voices, knew who they were. They shared their sorrow with Him - their own father had died.

'Abdu'l-Bahá brought them in and gave them drink, sweets and cakes. He then went with them to their home. Their announcement had been premature - their father had merely fainted, but the next day he passed away.

The Master arranged for the funeral and provided food, clothing and travel-tickets for the family to go to Turkey. His sympathetic heart was as wide as the universe.

6. Discussion
 - a. Why should we forfeit our own interests for the sake of others?
 - b. Can we willingly serve other people without genuinely loving them?
 - c. How can we show love for humanity?
 - d. What sort of helpful service can you contribute at home, at school, in the community?
7. Music – World Peace song on Loving Hands tape.
8. New Topic – What kind of skills are administrative? When and where do we exercise them? Do any students know any officers of their nearest LSA? Who chairs meetings, what do they have to do? Who deals with letters and reads reports, what are they called? Who is in charge of the Bahá'í Fund, what are they called?

At a Nineteen-Day Feast there is consultation; everyone must learn the skill of consultation.
9. Activity

Have a consultation about something which is important to your students. Make sure everyone has a chance to talk about it. If appropriate, vote by a show of hands to reach a decision. Point out that voting for the LSA is by secret ballot. If they want to vote secretly to decide something, let them.
10. New Topic – *Other aspects of administration.*

Mention briefly the other elected institutions in the Faith. Include the election of the NSA by delegates at National Convention (have they been there?) and the Universal House of Justice being elected by NSAs in Haifa, Israel, every five years.
11. Writings – (in worksheet for daily reading.)

“This is worship: to serve mankind and to minister to the needs of the people. Service is prayer.” ‘Abdu'l-Bahá: *Paris Talks*, p.177.
12. Worksheet – Help students to read the quotation.

Help them to read the sentences with missing words. See if they know what the missing words are; if not, then tell them, but they are not to write them in now! Ask them to count the hats round the table in the picture and tell you how many there are.
13. Revision of this lesson

We must show respect for our elected institutions and obey them.
14. Set Homework – Read quotation; fill in missing words; colour the picture.