**QuoVirtue: GENTLENESS**

**Lesson Plan for Children 0-3 years old**

**Open Play (20 minutes) and Parent Discussion:**

Invite children to play with toys- gently guiding and reminding them of the virtues of kindness, love and sharing. While keeping an eye on their children, parents talk about how to support the development of helpfulness in their families.

* How can we encourage the development of the virtue of gentleness in our children?
* How can we as parents help foster in our children the desire to be gentle to all humanity?

After about twenty minutes, a song with a verse about helpfulness is played, indicating that it is almost time to start the formal part of our playgroup.

**The Verse played is “You live to do good and to bring happiness to others.”** (from the Virtues In Us, Quotations CD)

Once the song is over, children and parents clean up toys while singing a clean-up song:

There are several cute and easy songs to choose from: Select one and have that be your 'clean up theme song' for the class.

Song 1: Clean up, clean up, everybody everywhere.

Clean up, clean up, everybody do your share.

Song 2: *(spoken)* Time to clean up, everyone. Let's pick up our things!

*(Chorus)*

Clean up, everybody clean up (x3)

Time to clean up!

Pick up, everybody pick up (x3)

Time to pick up!

Pick up the toys, put them away

Pick up the blocks, put them away

Pick up the books, put them away

Put your things away

The welcome song is played as caregivers and little ones form a circle on the floor to get ready for class.

**Song: Welcome Song** (Favorite Children’s Songs from the Family Learning House CD)

Good morning, good morning! It’s lovely to see you! Please come in and join us, we’d love to be with you. Today is going to be wonderful. Today is going to be joyful. Good morning, good morning! It’s lovely to see you! Please come in and join us, we’d love to be with you. Today is going to be beautiful. Today is going to be peaceful. Good morning, good morning! It’s lovely to see you! Please come in and join us, we’d love to be with you. Today is going to be…How is your day going to be? Get ready to sing! Today is going to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_(full of gentleness). Today I’m going to be happy. Today I’m going to be helpful. Good morning, good morning! It’s lovely to see you! Good morning, good morning! It’s lovely to see you!

**Song: Hello Song** (Music Together, Bongos CD)

Hello everybody! So glad to see you! Hello everybody, so glad to see you too!

Hello to \_\_\_\_, so glad to see you! Hello to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, so glad to see you too!

Hello everybody! So glad to see you! Hello everybody, so glad to see you!

(sing each child’s name and parent’s name)

**Opening Prayer:** Invite children to practice reverence by asking them to sit in their parent’s lap while a very short prayer is said or sung. Explain: "We always start with a prayer, because God is the source of all spiritual qualities, and we want to call on Him to aid us in our spiritual development."

**God sufficeth all things above all things,**

**and nothing in the heavens or in the earth but God sufficeth.**

**Verily, He is in Himself the Knower, the Sustainer, the Omnipotent.**

**~The Báb**

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| **WORDS** | ACTIONS |
| **Say: God** | both hands up by your head with palms facing up while you look up to the sky |
| **sufficeth** | hands crossed over chest with chin resting on chest |
| **all things above all things** | start at your waist with both hands cupped in each other in front of your tummy and move in a big circle, each hand going a different direction until they meet again above your head and are cupped in each other; |
| **and nothing** | put your right index finger in front of you and move it from left to right (shaking your finger as if saying “no”); |
| **in the heavens** | **-** put both arms up with your elbows bent by your chest, keeping your palms open and facing out while wiggling your fingers and looking up to the heavens |
| **or in the earth** | keep your elbows out but drop your arms so that now your palms are facing towards you and your fingers are pointing down and wiggle your fingers while looking down to the earth; |
| **but God** | both hands up by your head with palms facing up while you look up to the sky; |
| **sufficeth** | hands crossed over chest with chin resting on chest; |
| **Verily, He is in Himself** | move hands from top of your head, out down towards you waist and wiggle your fingers as you do this (kind of like you are creating an aura around you); |
| **the Knower** | use each index finger to tap each of your temples; |
| **the Sustainer** | put both hands in front of you with palms facing up, with left hand on top and right hand underneath it, as if supporting it, and move them upwards**;** |
| **the Omnipotent** | put both hands out to the side, with hands in fists, like you are showing your muscles |

Children practice prayer with movements. There is a beautiful rendition of this prayer, coupled with the following prayer, on the CD Intone by Rose-Marie Peterson. Another rendition of God sufficeth that is excellent is: Eric Dozier and JB Eckels rendition from the CD Badasht Volume 1- While the City Sleeps (this can be stopped halfway through, as it repeats itself)

**Song: Tony Chestnut** (Judy Ginsburgh, A Flower Is an Educated Weed CD)

Tony Chestnut knows I love you

Tony knows x 2

Tony Chestnut knows I love you

That’s what Tony knows.

(Repeat)

*Action:* **To-** (point to toe), **ny-** (point to knee). **Chest-** (point to chest), **nut-** (point to head), **knows-** (point to nose) **I-** (point to eye), **love you-** (give your child a gentle hug).

**Introduction to the Virtue of Gentleness:**

Gentleness is being very careful and considerate in what we say and do. It means touching things with care and speaking in a soft voice. Gentleness is being sensitive and taking care not to hurt other people’s feelings or bodies. When we are gentle, we are showing respect for God and His creation.

**Read a book about gentleness: Gentle Rosie by Mary Morgan**

**Love, Service, Joy and Gentleness Song** (Family Learning House, Children’s Virtues Songs- Preschool CD; available through ITunes, produced by Virtues in Us)

Love, service, joy and gentleness.

Love, service, joy and gentleness.

These are virtues we possess.

Love, service, joy and gentleness.

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| **WORDS** | ACTIONS |
| **Love** | touch your heart |
| **Service** | extend your hand as though serving someone |
| **Joy** | raise your hands to your face and smile joyously |
| **Gentleness** | stroke your left arm with your right hand gently. |

**Hand out egg shakers to be played during the following song:**

**Song: Gentleness** (The Family Learning House, Quotations CD- Gentleness)

The fruits of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering,

gentleness, goodness and faith. X 5 (The Bible, Galations 5:22)

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| **WORDS** | | ACTIONS |
| Sway from side to side during the instrumental | | |
| **The fruits of the spirit** | move your hands out from your chest and wiggle your fingers while opening your hands like you are ready to embrace someone | |
| **is love** | touch your heart with both hands | |
| **joy** | raise your hands to your face and smile joyously | |
| **peace** | put your hands in front of you like you are praying | |
| **long-suffering** | cross your arms in front of your chest and put your chin to your chest | |
| **gentleness** | keep left arm straight with palm facing up and gently move your right hand down your left arm, stroking it gently | |
| **goodness** | draw a smile below your mouth with your index fingers as you smile | |
| **and faith** | raise both arms up above your head and look up to the sky | |

**Collect egg shakers**

**Song: Gentle Old MacDonald** (Radha and the Kiwi Kids, Virtues in Me CD)

Old MacDonald had a farm, e-i-e-i-o,

and on that farm he had a puppy, e-i-e-i-o

Be gentle with the puppy- woof! We’re gentle with the puppy- woof!

Old MacDonald had a farm, e-i-e-i-o!

Old Macdonald…he had a sheep…be gentle with the sheep- baa!

We’re gentle with the sheep- baa

Old MacDonald had a farm, e-i-e-i-o!

…he had a cat…meow…

…horse…neigh…

…hen...be gentle with eggs, I’m gentle with the eggs, cluck, cluck, cluck…

…he had a field of prickles- e-i-e-i- OW! Be gentle on yourself, gentleness! I’m gentle on myself, gentleness!

Old MacDonald had a farm, e-i-e-i-o, e-i-e-i-o!

(then at the end everyone chooses a different animal noise to make)

**Hand out a stuffed animal to each parent and child to use in the following song:**

**Song: If An Animal Be Sick** (Tim Urbonya, Love All The World CD)

If an animal be sick, let the children try to heal it; if it be hungry, let them feed it;

if thirsty, let them quench its thirst; if weary let them see that it rests.

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| **WORDS** | ACTIONS |
| **If an animal be sick** | put stuffed animal in your lap |
| **let the children try to heal it** | move both of your hands gently over the body of the stuffed animal |
| **if it be hungry** | sit animal up |
| **let them feed it** | put your hand up to the mouth of the animal like you are trying to feed it something |
| **if thirsty** | cup your hand as if it is holding water |
| **let them quench its thirst** | bring animal to your cupped hand like you are giving it something to drink |
| **if weary** | put animal on its side on the ground |
| **let them see that it rests** | pat the animal's head as it lies on the ground resting |

**Song: Sleeping Children** (The Family Learning House, Virtues- Preschool CD)

Sleeping children, sleeping children

Ssh, ssh, ssh, ssh, ssh, ssh

Now it’s time to wake up

Now it’s time to wake up

It’s a great day!

It’s a great day!

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| **WORDS** | ACTIONS |
| **Sleeping children** | kneel on floor with your head down on both hands on the floor like you are sleeping, with your eyes closed |
| **Shhhhh** | put index finger over mouth and say "sshhhhh" |
| **Now it's time to wake up** | stand on your knees and put both hands above head |
| **It's a great day** | smile and move hands above head from side to side. |

**Pass out instruments to be played during the following song:**

**Song: Fruits of the Spirit** (The Family Learning House, School Age Children’s Virtues Songs)

We can help a friendship start if we fill our hearts with the fruits of the spirit

When you speak to another, be truthful

When you meet a stranger, be warm

These fruits in your heart have been growing ever since the day that you were born

A fruit of the spirit is love

A fruit of the spirit is joy

A fruit of the spirit is peace

(repeated)

If you touch a flower, be gentle

If you play with a dog, be kind

These kind of fruits are the most delicious!

Let’s see how many we can find!

A fruit of the spirit is thoughtfulness

A fruit of the spirit is service

A fruit of the spirit is….(blank)- Moms or children call out a virtue

A fruit of the spirit is love

A fruit of the spirit is joy

A fruit of the spirit is…(blank)

We can help a friendship start if we fill our hearts with the fruits of the spirit!

**Closing Verse:** Invite children to practice reverence by asking them to sit in their parent’s lap while a Verse is said.

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| **We must associate with all humanity in gentleness and kindliness. –Abdu’l-Baha** |

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| **WORDS** | ACTIONS |
| **We** | touch your heart with both hands |
| **must associate** | put both hands in front of you and interlock your fingers |
| **with all humanity** | put both hands in front of you, palms up, and move them to each side |
| **in gentleness** | stroke your left arms with your right hand, gently |
| **and kindliness** | draw a smile under your mouth with your index finger while you smile |

**Children repeat the Verse to help them learn it by memory.**

**Closing Song:**

**(sung to the tune of "Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear....)**

**There are several different tunes for the Teddy Bear rhyme you can find on YouTube. Here is one version**

**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSLlm5bwzjs**

Gentle child, gentle child turn around. (turn around)

Gentle child, gentle child, touch the ground. (touch the ground)

Gentle child, gentle child, show your shoe. (hold foot up and point to shoe)

Gentle child, gentle child, I love you! (hugs all around!)

Gentle child, gentle child, reach for the sky.

(reach up!, or mother lifts up her child high!)

Children’s class is over. It’s time to say goodbye! (wave and say, “goodbye!”)