**Ruhi Grade 2 LESSON 15**

**Forming Loving Bonds of Friendship with Many Souls**

*Slightly modified from Ruhi Grade 2 Book*

**Prayers:**

**Reciting and memorizing prayers**

You can begin the class with the recitation of prayers and then help the children finish memorizing the prayer introduced in Lesson 13.

**"0 Lord! Unto Thee I repair for refuge, and toward all Thy signs I set my heart. 0 Lord! Whether traveling or at home, and in my occupation or in my work, I place my whole trust in Thee. Grant me then Thy sufficing help so as to make me independent of all things, 0 Thou Who art unsurpassed in Thy mercy! Bestow upon me my portion, 0 Lord, as Thou pleasest, and cause me to be satisfied with whatsoever thou hast ordained for me. Thine is the absolute authority to command."**

Please see [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) under lesson 13 for this prayer in a 4 x 6 format as well as youtube links to songs of this prayer.

**Intro to Lesson:**

Over the last two lessons, we have been learning about the importance of friendship. In the first lesson, we learned about the most enduring and lasting relationship that we will have throughout our lives. What is it? Our relationship with God, our Creator. He loves us, He surrounds us with His mercy and blessings and He is always with us.

Last class, we talked about true friendship, and one quality that particularly important for our friendships with others. What it is? Trustworthiness. We talked about how true friends trust each other, but does that mean that one accepts blindly whatever the other says or does? No. A true friend has the obligation to help the other when he or she strays from the straight path. Second, it is true that we should feel kindness in our hearts towards all humanity, but does that mean that we should trust those who are untrustworthy or allow ourselves to be cheated or deceived in the name of friendliness and friendship? No. Who remembers the story about Abdu’l-Baha and the carriage driver?

So today, we are going to continue to talk together about true friendship and focus on the concept of caring. True friends care for each other. They enjoy spending time together, and each wants what is best for the other. True friends, though, are not just those with whom we play and have fun. We accompany our friends through times of sorrow. We help them in times of need. We do not leave friends behind and find new ones at the first signs of difficulty, right? If we see our friends are sad, what do we do? We do what we can to bring joy to their hearts. If a friend is sick, what do we do? We want to make sure he or she is well cared for. **Because we want what is best for our friends, we listen to them and always try to pay attention to their wishes.** It is a joy to give something up when we know it will make our friend happy or help him or her to progress. **In friendship we give of our time and our possessions and share our happiness and our learning.** We learn this in families with siblings- right? How do you show caring to each other in yoru family- and especially if you have a brother or sister? What a blessing it is to have true friendship that withstands the ups and downs of life.

Of course, sometimes a friend makes a mistake, and we may feel sadness in our heart, but we remember that **'Abdu'l-Baha was always forgiving**, and so we are forgiving too. And when our hearts are filled with generosity and we remember our love for our friend, the sadness goes away. You know there are times when you make mistakes, and your friend is forgiving to you. **What is important is that you both know neither would ever want to bring sadness to the heart of the other.** It was the wish of 'Abdu'l-Baha that no soul should ever be hurt or grieved. **There is no greater gift, He told us, than bringing joy to another heart.** "I beg of God," He prayed, "that ye will be bringers of joy, even as are the angels in Heaven."

**Memorization**:

That we may form such loving bonds of friendship with many souls, let us memorize the following quotation:

**". . . strive ye with all your might to create, through the power of the Word of God, genuine love, spiritual communion and durable bonds among individuals."**

*Genuine*

1. The bag looked like it was made of leather, but it was really made of a plastic material. The bag was not made of genuine leather.
2. Some rings only look like they are gold, but the king's ring is genuine. It is gold with a beautiful red stone.

*Durable*

1. When choosing a fabric to make her children's clothes, Mrs. Singh looked for one that would not tear easily. She chose a durable fabric that would last a long time.
2. The wheels on a tractor are big and thick so that they can go over rocks and dirt easily and still work fine. The wheels on a tractor are durable.

*Bond*

1. A dog often feels an attachment to its master. There is a special bond between a dog and its master.
2. There is a strong bond between a mother whale and her young calf, and they stay close together for long distances in the ocean, with the mother feeding the calf and protecting it from enemies.

**Songs:**

Suggestions include:

Joy Gives Us Wings

Circle of Light by Red Grammer (really any songs from his Circle of Light CD- it is soooo good!)

Strive by Tim Urbonya

**Story:**

Here is a folktale about a mountain and a meadow that will help the children to think about the nature of friendship.

*Once there was a mountain whose peak was so high that it might have been the tallest mountain in the world. It was so tall that the clouds were its only company. But how the mountain enjoyed playing with its big billowing friends! And the clouds, too, were happy to gather around the mountain's snowy peak. Sometimes they would laugh so heartily that they would cry, raining tears on the earth below.*

*Then one hot summer the mountain found itself alone for many days. Not a single cloud could be seen in the sky, and the mountain felt very sad, missing its blustering friends. "Why don't the clouds run and play in your big bright blueness anymore?" it asked the wide sky.*

*"They have all gone to the kingdom of winter, very far from here," the sky replied. "They will not return until the end of summer. "*

*"But I miss them so much!" cried the mountain with a sigh. "Maybe I should go to the winter kingdom as well and visit my friends. "*

*"You are a mountain," the sky said firmly. "Mountains are heavy and cannot fly as the clouds can. You must remain in the same place. "*

*Now the mountain became very sad indeed and started to cry. Huge tears ran down its face, and soon streams and rivers were flowing from its snowy peak. Then something wonderful happened. The dried, cracked soil in the plain far below began to drink up the mountain's tears. Before long, the plain was covered in fresh green growth.*

*The grateful plain called up to the mountain. "Kind mountain!" it said, "Thank you for saving me from a terrible fate! Your pure water has healed all my wounds. Look at how it has helped me!"*

*The mountain was so surprised that it stopped crying. Until then nobody had ever spoken to the mountain from below. It looked down and gasped when it saw the flourishing green meadow, shining and fresh. To see its beauty made the mountain content. How happy it was to have found a new friend in the meadow.*

**Drama:**

To help the children continue developing the skills and abilities of creative drama, you may have them carry out the following activities:

1. Begin by having the students stretch as usual in their imaginary squares. Ask them to remain in their squares and pretend to do the following, first with a **sad look** on their faces: sweeping the floor, building a table, helping someone to find something he or she has lost on the floor, climbing a ladder to pick some fruit from a tree, washing dishes, making soup. Next, ask them to go **through the same movements, but this time with happy expressions.**
2. Ask the children to act out the following to show how they would be a good friend:
	1. A young boy learns that one of his friends is not feeling well
	2. A little girl notices her friend is sad
	3. One child in the class sees that another is afraid of the dark
	4. A young girl learns that her friend has done something wrong

The next set of activities is again related to the theme of today's lesson, that true friends care for each other. Divide the students into groups of three and explain to them that they are going to improvise a story based on the following situation:

Naw-Ruz, the Bahai new year, is a few weeks away, and the community is planning to have a special celebration. Sarah, Marion and Marco have been working especially hard to prepare a children's program. One day Marion and Marco wait for Sarah so that they can continue their work, but she does not arrive. Later they inquire after her and find out that she has fallen down and hurt her ankle, and the doctor has told her to stay off of it for a while. At first Marion and Marco are worried about the children's program. How will they finalize everything without Sarah's help? But then they think of Sarah and realize how sad she will be if her ankle does not heal fast enough for her to participate in the program. They remember the words of 'Abdu'l-Baha that **the best way to help those who are not well is to bring joy to their hearts.** So Marion and Marco decide to visit Sarah every day to cheer her up. By the time Naw-Ruz arrives, Sarah's ankle is fine and the three friends together carry out the program for which they have worked so hard.

To help the children begin their **improvisations**, ask them what they think Marion and Marco did when they visited Sarah. How did they bring joy to her heart? Did they continue, for example, to plan the program with her during their visits?

**Drawing:**

Today you could have the children draw a picture of Marion and Marco visiting their friend Sarah. Another possibility would be for them to draw the mountain and the meadow from the story they heard.

Another option: Read “Two Sandals Four Feet” book by Karen Williams and Khadra Mohammed(an example of friendship in a refugee camp) and then write postcards to refugee children through <http://anyrefugee.org>

You could also have them write notes and draw pictures for someone that is a true friend in their life. (see examples at [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) under this lesson)

Cooperative Game:

If there is time (or if you are doing this lesson over two classes), you can have the kids play a cooperative board game such as

-Richard Scarry’s Busytown Game

-Stone Soup

-Race to the Treasure

**Review:**

Repeat with the children the quotation they committed to memory in today's lesson, and review those related to generosity and kindness that they learned in Grade 1:

**"To give and to be generous are attributes of Mine; well is it with him that adorneth himself with My virtues."123**

**"Blessed is he who mingleth with all men in a spirit of utmost kindliness and love."**

**Closing prayers**