Ruhi Grade 2 Lesson 19- slightly modified from original content

**Prayers:**

Prayer Sharer

Review memorized prayers

New prayer:

**"0 my God! 0 my God! Thou seest these children who are the twigs of the tree of life, the birds of the meads of salvation, the pearls of the ocean of Thy grace, the roses of the garden of Thy guidance.**

**"0 God, our Lord! We sing Thy praise, bear witness to Thy sanctity and implore fervently the heaven of Thy mercy to make us lights of guidance, stars shining above the horizons of eternal glory amongst mankind, and to teach us a knowledge which proceedeth from Thee. Ya Baha'u'l-Abha! "**

(SING WORDS WITH SONG “The Twigs of the Tree of Life” Song from Tender Years CD, Julie Iraninejad and Shabnam Cyrus)

**Intro to Lesson**

We have thought a lot about the importance of showing our love for God through service to others and we know that we are to try to contribute to the betterment of the world in ALL that we do. We also have discussed how important it is to manifest at all times those qualities that help us to serve. **What are some of those qualities that help us serve?**

(love, forgiveness, selflessness, generosity, etc.)

We know we have God's teachings to guide us, and we are all working together to bui ld His kingdom on earth, by putting those teachings into practice so that we can have a much more spiritual society and community, right?

Sometimes, of course, we do not know how best to move forward, but God has given us a most wonderful gift to help us learn little by little how to put His teachings into practice and follow His Divine guidance. (Have present wrapped, inside on a piece of paper it says CONSULTATION) **Do you know what that gift is?** (have someone open it) It is the gift of consultation.

When we consult, we come together in search of truth, we discuss the possibilities, we talk about ideas, and we share understanding. Everyone participates, so that we can learn from each other, and come up with a unified vision for moving forward.

We can use the tool of consultation to help us with all matters, great or small. We know that, as we take action, reflect on our efforts, discuss what we have learned in a loving and prayerful manner, and study God's teachings, the path that lies ahead will become more and more illuminated. (What does illuminated mean? Close your eyes and imagine that you are in a dark room and you can’t see anything, then someone brings in a lamp and it illuminates the room. Now you have the light to see clearly- that is what illuminate means.) In this way, consultation is like a lamp that guides us to greater and greater understanding.

During His travels in the West, 'Abdu'l-Baha had the occasion to observe the discussions of a group that had come together to make some important decisions for their country. He was not impressed by what He saw. In this meeting, He said, fighting and arguing ruled the day. It had become a battleground, with everyone standing in opposition to the others, trying only to promote their own ideas and opinions. They had lost sight of their objective, which should have been to see the truth of the matters before them. The result was mostly confusion and turmoil. True consultation, 'Abdu'l-Baha explained, is spiritual conference and not the mere voicing of personal views in opposition and debate.

To help us remember to **rely on consultation** **to lead us to greater understanding,** let us memorize the following quotation:

**"Take ye counsel together in all matters, inasmuch as consultation is the lamp of guidance which leadeth the way, and is the bestower of understanding. "**

**Songs:**

**Consultation Song**

Then children can choose from songbook

**Story:**

Explain to the children that the story today shows how consultation can be like a lamp, guiding people through difficult problems, leading to new solutions, greater understanding, and wonderful outcomes.

*This story is about something that happened not too long ago in a Baha'i community in a very big city in Europe.*

*It was an exciting time for the Baha 'is. They had prepared themselves well and were at last ready to start a special project to invite the people of their city to join them for devotional gatherings, study circles, and classes for children and junior youth. To make a plan, all the friends came together and consulted. They decided to form teams that would be able to move around the whole city, going to different neighborhoods to tell people about the various activities and invite them to take part. As the meeting finished and the friends were going home, a few flakes of snow began to fall from the sky. No one thought much of it until after a couple of days, when the whole of the city was covered by a huge blanket of snow! It was quite unexpected and everyone in the city was taken by surprise. All the schools were closed because the teachers and children could not get there through the heavy snow. Shops were closed because the shopkeepers could not reach their shops. Buses and trains had stopped running and cars were stuck with so much snow covering them that you could not even see them. No one could travel anywhere in the city.*

*So a few of the Baha 'is consulted again about what to do. Here were all these wonderful plans that just could not be carried out. At first everyone felt very sad and discouraged. What was to be done? Should they give up? How could the obstacle of the snow be turned into an advantage? As they prayed together and consulted about these ideas, a new plan came to light.*

*"If the friends can't leave their homes to travel across the city, why don't we all visit the people who live right next to us, on our own streets or in our own apartment blocks?" said one of the friends.*

*"That's right!" exclaimed another, "We wouldn't need any transport-no car or bus or train-we would just need to put on our warm boots and take a few steps through the snow!"*

# Everyone began to get excited about this new plan. As soon as the consultation finished, they telephoned all the teams to share with them this new idea. The friends were delighted! They had not thought about this possibility before, but visiting their neighbors and inviting them to join activities seemed like the perfect thing to do. Now the project could go forward! Everybody was able to carry out the plan and their hearts were filled with joy.

*The people receiving visits in their homes were very happy, too, that their Baha'i neighbors were visiting them during this difficult cold winter. One family said that their children would like to come to children's classes, but even without snow it was hard for them to travel around the city. So they decided to start a new class in their own home and invite their relatives and neighbors.*

*Because of the visits these teams made to people who lived close to them, within a short time, many new friends joined devotional gatherings and study circles, and four new children's classes, just like the one we are having today, were started.*

**Drama:**

You can begin this period with selected warm-up exercises. Then explain to the children that the next activity will help them think about how consultation can guide us and lead us to insights we might not gain alone.

Ask the children to imagine they live in a small village in a large kingdom. One night, the king arrives riding an animal no one has ever seen before, called an elephant, and he camps just outside the village. The villagers hear about the king's arrival and are so curious to find out more about the elephant that they send a group of six young people out to the camp immediately, giving them a lamp to guide them through the dark, moonless night. Six children from your class can be asked to assume the part of the youth. When they arrive at the camp, everyone is already sleeping, and they put out the lamp so as not the wake the king. Now they cannot see a thing! But they can hear some strange noises coming from the edge of the camp and they follow the noises, thinking this must be the elephant:

1. The first person is in such a hurry that he runs straight into the side of the elephant. He spreads out his arms and feels the wide side of the elephant and decides it is like a wall.
2. The second person waves his arms about in the air, and suddenly grasps the elephant's trunk. It feels like a snake to him, and he notes his discovery.
3. The third person touches the elephant's tusk. It is hard and smooth and has a pointed tip. She decides that an elephant is like a spear.
4. The fourth person feels along the ground and finds one of the elephant's legs. As she touches its rough skin, the elephant stomps its foot. So she thinks that an elephant is like a tree trunk that bends and can bang on the ground.
5. The fifth person reaches out and happens to grab the elephant's tail. He decides that an elephant is just like a small bit of rope.
6. The sixth person runs up to the side of the elephant and feels a kind of breeze from the flapping of the elephant's ear. She reaches out and touches the ear and decides that an elephant is like a living fan. Then she rushes to join the others, and they all head back to the village.

Now ask the children to pretend they are back in the village. At first there is confusion, as each person repeats what he or she has found. Then, an old man happens by and reminds them that if they consult they might get a better idea of what an elephant really looks like. Taking turns, everyone explains what he or she felt to the villagers, who can be played by other children in the class. You can guide the children through the enactment of what happens next:

All agree that the elephant is covered with rough skin and that it must be very large, for none of the youth could feel its back or the top of its head. They also know that the king rides the elephant, so they think it probably has four legs like a horse or camel or other animals that people ride. They realize that the "tree" was the only part of the elephant that rested on the ground and decide that this must be what its legs are like. Then they realize that the "rope" and the "snake" were at opposite ends. They suggest that one is a nose and the other a tail. And they think that the "fans" and "spears", which were so close to the "snake", might well be ears and teeth. As they discuss what they know and what they have learned, they slowly piece together a picture of the elephant as a very large animal with broad sides and rough skin, four thick legs and two very long teeth, a small tail and very long nose, and two big floppy ears. The next day, when the king rides through the village atop the elephant, they are delighted to see that the creature walking in front of them was exactly like the one they had drawn the night before.

**Drawing**

Following the above story and improvisation, it would be natural to have the children draw a picture of an elephant and the villagers admiring it. You might think of a way, if your resources allow and the capacity of the children is sufficient, to have them all contribute to putting together one drawing of an elephant, much like the villagers in the story they improvised.

**Review**

You could have the children recite the two quotations below that they learned in Grade 1, one related to humility and the other to thankfulness, after they have reviewed the quotation they memorized in this lesson.

**"0 Son of Man! Humble thyself before Me, that I may graciously visit thee."**

**"Be thou happy and well pleased and arise to offer thanks to God, in order that thanksgiving may conduce to the increase of bounty."**

**Closing prayers**