

Course Outline for Book 5

Ruhi Book 5: *Teaching Children's Classes, Grade 2* is the second in a series in the area of the spiritual education of children and youth. It follows Book 3 and, in many ways, is a continuation of it. It offers thirty lessons for youngsters entering the second year of a Baha'i educational program, which the teacher is expected to apply to the particular circumstances of his or her class. The material in the book is also intended to help those who, though not interested in teaching formal classes, wish to develop some of the skills related to child education and gain a more profound understanding of its dynamics.

Excerpted from "To the Collaborators": Because the spiritual education of children is a matter of such critical importance to the Baha'i community, two books dedicated to this field of service have been placed in the main sequence of courses in the Ruhi Institute's program for adults and older youth. Everyone in its program is encouraged to study the books, for, whether teaching regular classes in a formal setting or serving on Baha'i institutes, whether raising children as parents or influencing them as members of an extended family, we all carry some degree of responsibility for ensuring the younger generations are prepared to assume their future duties. Following Book 5, the courses in the area of child education form a specialized branch, which those interested in pursuing this path of service can enter, while they continue their study of the main sequence. The courses in this branch will train teachers of Baha'i children's classes for grade three and upwards and will become progressively more complex in nature. It is envisioned that, upon their completion of this specialized branch, teachers will have acquired a substantial amount of knowledge about the educational field in general and will have developed fairly sophisticated skills related to lesson planning and classroom management.

It should be remembered that the purpose of the main sequence of courses in the Ruhi Institute's program, and its various branches, is the development of human resources - - in this specific case, Baha'i children's class teachers. The materials provided in Books 3 and 5 to create lessons for the children, as well as those in the books yet to come, can only be as effective as the teachers who use them. The success, then, of a national community in establishing a program for the spiritual education of its young people, with regular classes for different age groups, will depend largely on its efforts to systematically develop the capability of its teachers through a vibrant institute process. It is hoped that this book will contribute to such efforts.

Unit 1: Lessons for Children's Classes Grade 2

Purpose: To develop further the capability of teaching children's classes consisting of memorization of prayers and quotations, songs, stories, historical episodes, creative drama and drawing.

Practice: To conduct a regular class for children in their second year of a Baha'i program for their spiritual education.

Excerpted from "To the Collaborators": The thirty lessons for children are preceded by sections for the study of the teachers themselves in a group setting, with the assistance of a tutor. This part of the book encourages them to review their experience in conducting classes for the first grade so that they can learn from one another. They are helped to think about each element of the curriculum and its role in the educational process. Not every member of the group will have necessarily taught regular classes for children after studying Book 3, and this is taken into account in these sections. While clearly the friends who were involved in a formal class with a large number of children will have much to express in the discussions, others will also have insights to share, and the diversity of experiences should be used as a means to enhance the group's learning.

30 Lessons for Children

Excerpted from "To the Collaborators": Although the thirty lessons in this book are a continuation of those in Book 3 for grade one, there are some significant differences between them, especially in the latter fifteen. The first set of fifteen focus on spiritual qualities, and aspiring teachers will find them much like the lessons they taught the previous year. They will, however, need to exercise the skills they acquired in conducting classes for first grade to manage more complex activities in the area of creative drama. This part of each lesson is designed in such a way that it draws naturally on the teacher's experience in carrying out cooperative games with his or her students in grade one. Nevertheless, these activities, as well as certain other aspects of the lessons, will require increased capacity on the part of the teacher.

In the second set of fifteen lessons, the content itself becomes somewhat more challenging. Each lesson evolves around a theme related to one or the other of the Twin Manifestations of God for today, and we hope that teachers will take advantage of the class period to fully develop the various themes so that the children begin to acquire some structured knowledge about the lives and Missions of the Bab and Baha'u'llah. It should be recognized that, by the time children have entered the second year of a Baha'i educational program, they already have developed a relationship with the Manifestations and have a sense of the history of the Faith. Teachers should build on this foundation by using the rich material presented in the book, adapting it to the level of comprehension of their students, remembering that they are not trying to give them a detailed chronology of historical events, but increase their understanding of the theme in each lesson.