

# Brilliant Star

A BAHÁ'Í COMPANION FOR YOUNG EXPLORERS

MARCH/APRIL 2011



## Exploring Mysteries



# Brilliant Star

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**Brilliant Star** magazine invites all kids to explore the Bahá'í Faith. It is the second most widespread religion in the world, with more than five million Bahá'ís.

The Bahá'í Faith was founded by the Prophet **Bahá'u'lláh** ("Glory of God" in Arabic) in 1863. Bahá'u'lláh taught that all people are part of one human family, and that all religions come from one God. Bahá'ís work to bring peace and unity to the world, and end prejudice and discrimination of all kinds.

Bahá'u'lláh's eldest son, **'Abdu'l-Bahá**, interpreted His teachings and led the Bahá'í community after Bahá'u'lláh's passing.

**Brilliant Star** encourages kids to bring their virtues and talents to light, and use them to make the world a better place. **Brilliant Star** is produced bimonthly by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the U.S.

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### DEAR FRIENDS,

From Harry Potter to Sherlock Holmes, characters who solve mysteries entertain and inspire us. But do you ever think of *yourself* as a detective? Your imagination, determination, and curiosity can help you delve into the mysteries that are all around us.

In this issue of **Brilliant Star**, we invite you to polish your magnifying glass and investigate the wonders of life. What's beyond our solar system? Why did ancient cultures build pyramids? What happens to our souls after this life?

You can explore these questions and many more. Learn fascinating space facts with Zeke from Zilizag. Investigate injustice with Josie the detective. Try meditating, interpreting your dreams, and creating a star-studded mobile about you. You'll also meet Ruth Forman, an award-winning writer who believes we all need poetry in our lives.

There are so many mysteries and questions in our world—which ones will you try to solve?

With love from **Brilliant Star**



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# Singing Truths

*"In the meeting place of life be ye a guiding candle; in the skies of this world be dazzling stars; in the gardens of unity be birds of the spirit, singing of inner truths and mysteries." — 'Abdu'l-Bahá*

**W**hen songbirds want to communicate something important, they say it through song. In fact, a male nightingale can sing at least 180 tunes! The beauty of the nightingale's music has inspired poets and storytellers for centuries.

When you speak from the heart about who you are and what you believe, you're singing your own unique song. Sometimes it takes courage to find your voice. Some

kids might think it's not cool to ask questions or share ideas about life's mysteries. They may not want to talk about serious things such as religion, friendship, fears, or dreams for the future. That doesn't mean you always have to keep quiet or hide your spiritual qualities. When it feels right, express yourself. Talk about what you believe and what's important to you. Your "song" may speak to others and inspire them to sing along.

**Find 16 birds in the wildlife reserve. Look closely — some are real and some appear mysteriously.**





## A Brief Timeline

### The Life of Bahá'u'lláh

The highlighted area marks the time in which this story takes place.

#### 1817 November 12

Birth of Bahá'u'lláh in Tíhrán, Iran

#### 1844

Recognizes the Báb as a new Messenger of God

#### 1852

Imprisonment in the "Black Pit" of Tíhrán

#### 1853–1863

Exile in Baghdád, Iraq. From 1854–1856, He goes into the mountains to pray in solitude.

#### 1863 April 22

Declares Divine Mission as Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith

#### 1863–1868

Exile in Constantinople (Istanbul), then Adrianople (Edirne), Turkey. Begins writing letters to kings and rulers in 1867, urging world unity

#### 1868

Last exile, to prison-city of 'Akká, Israel

#### 1877

Finally free to live in countryside homes of Mazra'ih and then Bahjí, outside 'Akká

#### 1892 May 29

Bahá'u'lláh passes away at Bahjí.

# Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace Miracles and Mysteries

Have you ever heard of mysterious or miraculous events and wondered if they're true? The history of religion is full of such stories, including this one from the Bahá'í writings about Mírzá Ja'far-i-Yazdi. He was a religious scholar in the city of Yazd, Persia (now Iran). When he learned about the Bahá'í Faith, he accepted it wholeheartedly. He traveled to Baghdád, Iraq, and met Bahá'u'lláh. Mírzá Ja'far decided to give up his position and instead work as a carpenter and as a servant for Bahá'u'lláh's household. He felt content to humbly serve Bahá'u'lláh, His family, and the other Bahá'ís.

In 1868, Bahá'u'lláh and about 70 family members and friends—including Mírzá Ja'far—were exiled to 'Akká, in what is now Israel. Though they had not committed any crime, they were sent to the foul prison-city because the government wanted to stop Bahá'u'lláh's teachings of unity from spreading.

After arriving in 'Akká, Mírzá Ja'far became terribly ill. His condition grew worse and worse, until the doctor said he could do nothing more to help him. Finally, Mírzá Ja'far stopped breathing, and his body went limp and cold. Family and friends surrounded him, weeping and mourning his death. Another Bahá'í, Mírzá Áqá Ján, ran to Bahá'u'lláh and told Him of Mírzá Ja'far's passing. Bahá'u'lláh said to him, "Go; chant the prayer of Yá Sháfi—O Thou, the Healer—and Mírzá Ja'far will come alive. Very rapidly, he will be as well as ever."

The prayer was chanted. Mírzá Ja'far began to stir. Slowly, he started to move his limbs. Within an hour, he was sitting



Mírzá Ja'far was imprisoned for his faith in 'Akká, Israel, with Bahá'u'lláh and many of His followers. While in prison, Mírzá Ja'far lived through a very mysterious experience.

up, laughing and telling jokes with his friends! He lived a long time after that, continuing to assist Bahá'u'lláh and the Bahá'ís.

Messengers of God, such as Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, the Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh, had the power to cause miracles. While stories such as this are remarkable, the Bahá'í writings say that these accounts should not be seen as proof of God's Messengers. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'u'lláh's son who led the Bahá'í Faith after His passing, said, "many wonderful things were done by Bahá'u'lláh, but . . . they do not constitute proofs . . ." He also explained that to the Messengers of God, "these miracles and wonderful signs have no importance . . . They are still only proofs and arguments for those who are present when they are performed, and not for those who are absent."

The true proof of the Messengers of God is in Their words. When Their teachings have the ability to change people's hearts and inspire them to be of service to others—that is the real miracle.





# MUSIC CAFÉ

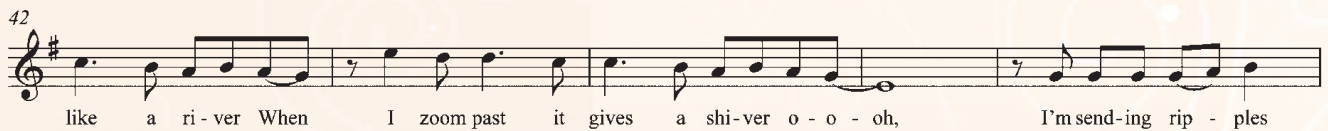
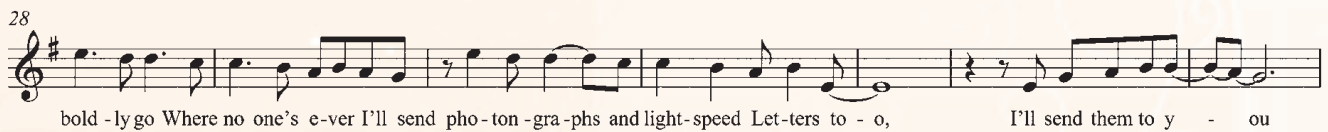
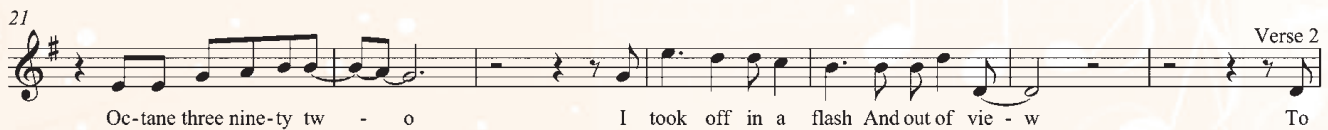
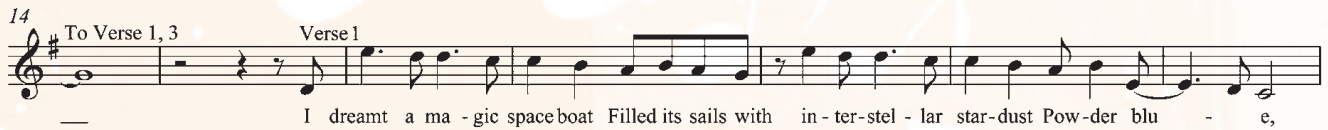
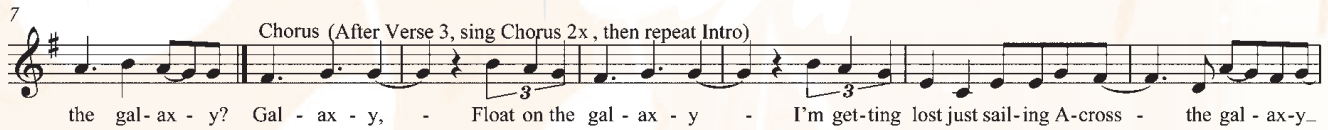
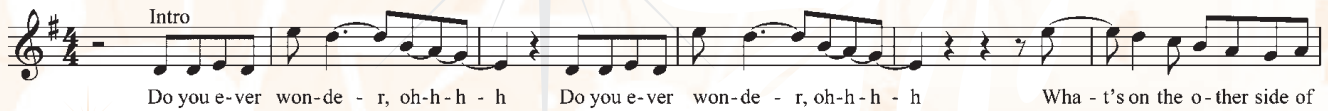
"Music, sung or played, is spiritual food for soul and heart." —Bahá'í Writings

DON'T YOU JUST LOVE TO LOOK UP AT THE STARS AND THINK ABOUT WHAT'S OUT THERE? OUR UNIVERSE IS SO IMMENSE THAT SOME SCIENTISTS SAY IT'S **ENDLESS**.

IT'S MIND-BOGGLING TO TRY TO IMAGINE. THERE'S SO MUCH MYSTERY ABOUT ...

## THE GALAX SEA

By Recess Monkey



Check out some incredible space facts on page 17.





# Mystery of Me

"Be as stars, brilliant and sparkling in the loftiness of their heavenly station." —'Abdu'l-Bahá

**O**ur amazing universe sparkles with trillions of stars. In a similar way, your virtues and talents are like brilliant constellations.

Throughout your life, you can make endless discoveries about your mysterious self. By visiting new places, exploring ideas, and trying different things, you'll learn more about your interests and gifts.

Being aware of your strengths and skills will help you improve and achieve your goals. From playing

volleyball to conducting a science experiment, you'll know when to ask for help and when it's your turn to shine.

As you explore, you can find creative ways to use the arts to express your feelings, thoughts, and dreams. Follow the steps below to make a mobile that reflects your radiant self.

## You'll Need

Two strips of 8" x 2" (20 cm x 5 cm) firm poster board ruler • colorful markers • 19 paper clips (about 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" or 4.5 cm) • scissors 8 pieces of 3" x 3" (8 cm x 8 cm) heavy paper • pencil • hole punch



## Star Mobile of Me

- 1 Cut one strip of poster board into two 4" (10 cm) pieces.



- 2 Punch a hole centered on one long edge of all three strips, to mark top for hanging.



- 3 Along bottom edge of each strip, punch a hole 1/2" (1.3 cm) from each side.



- 4 Punch another hole along bottom edge of long strip, under center hole.

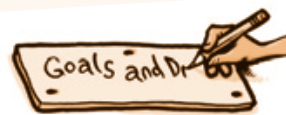


- 5 On one piece of paper, draw a star that fills page and cut it out. Trace around it to create a star on each sheet. Cut stars out.



- 6 Punch a hole in top and bottom of all eight stars.

- 7 Place strips so multiple holes are at bottom. Label long strip "(Your Name)'s Best Virtues." Label one short strip "Interests and Hobbies" and one "Goals and Dreams." Repeat same labels on back.



- 8 Place stars so top holes face up. Decorate with words, designs, and pictures that describe you. Make four stars for virtues, two for interests and hobbies, and two for goals and dreams.



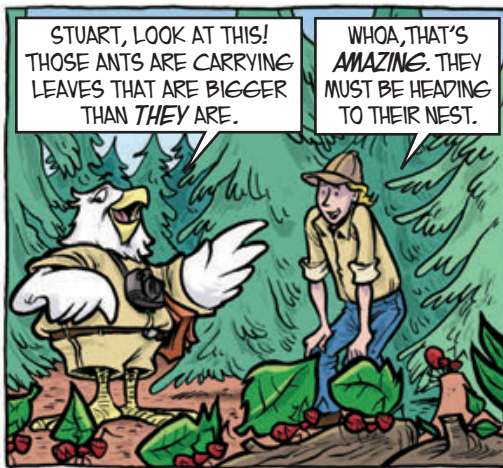
- 9 Link paper clips together and thread them through holes as shown. Hang stars under the correct strips.



- 10 Link a chain of three paper clips to top hole to hang and share your radiance.



# Stuart and Gabriella: Discovering Nature



What mysteries of nature did Gabriella capture in her photographs?  
Unscramble the words to find out.





# Be a Super Sleuth

"Observe with your own eyes and not with those of others, hearken with your own ears and not with the ears of others, and discover mysteries with the help of your own consciences and not with those of others." — 'Abdu'l-Bahá

**I**n books and on TV, detectives search diligently to find clues and solve mysteries. They often face great danger, but they never give up. They keep going until they uncover the truth.

In real life, we encounter mysteries large and small all the time. You may wonder about science, spirituality, or everyday life. Will we ever discover life on other planets? Does God answer our prayers? How do I deal with the bullies at school?

When you're grappling with a puzzling question, trust yourself and do your best to figure it out. You can ask your friends and family for their ideas, but think about the best solution for you. God gave each of us an amazing brain for solving problems. Gather the facts, then rely on the answers that feel right in your own mind and heart.

Being curious about the world can make life an exciting adventure. What will you investigate today?

In this learning center, kids are exploring mysteries. Search the scene for words to complete the tips about being a super sleuth.

PROCESS			
1.	Keep an <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> mind and put aside any prejudices you have about your topic.	4.	Take <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> to keep track of ideas and clues you discover.
2.	Find people who know about your topic and ask a lot of <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> .	5.	<span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> at the topic from many different points of view.
3.	Gather all the <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> you can find from books, newspapers, the Internet, and other sources.	6.	When exploring science, try some <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> .
		7.	Keep your eyes open and carefully <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> the world around you.
		8.	Brainstorm many possible <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> to your mystery, then figure out which one fits best.
		9.	Spend time daydreaming — your <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> is a great source of ideas!
		10.	Be patient and don't <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> <span style="background-color: yellow; border-radius: 50%; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> up, even if you run into challenges.

SEE ANSWERS ON PAGE 28
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“Observe with your own eyes and not with those of others, hearken with your own ears and not with the ears of others, and discover mysteries with the help of your own consciences and not with those of others.” —‘Abdu’l-Bahá

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4. Take  to keep track of ideas and clues you discover.
5.  at the topic from many different points of view.
6. When exploring science, try some .
7. Keep your eyes open and carefully  the world around you.
8. Brainstorm many possible  to your mystery, then figure out which one fits best.
9. Spend time daydreaming — your  is a great source of ideas!
10. Be patient and don't  up, even if you run into challenges.





# RILEY'S RAINFOREST

"Send down...from the clouds of Thy mercy the rains of Thy healing..." —Bahá'u'lláh

## Living with Loss

**I**f you've ever had a favorite friend move away or lost a family pet, you know how sad and empty you can feel. Those emotions are even stronger and deeper when a person close to you dies. You might feel sad, angry, scared, or worried. Or you might be numb, like you can't feel anything at all.

Though it is hard, grieving over a loss is a process that everyone goes through at some point. And everyone grieves differently. Some people can't eat or sleep, while some eat or sleep more than usual. Some people like to talk about their feelings, while others need time alone to think or pray. As long as you're not hurting yourself or others, there's no *wrong* way to grieve.

One thing that may help is to imagine your departed loved one in a beautiful, peaceful place. Many faiths teach that after the body's death, the soul can move on to a spiritual world to be closer to God.



Focusing on happy memories can help, too. Sharing funny stories with friends and family can lighten the mood and help ease some of the sadness. Try recording your memories in a journal or scrapbook. If a friend has moved, letters, e-mails, and photos can help keep your friendship strong.

Finally, praying—for yourself, your loved one, and others who are grieving—can bring you peace. It might be hard to believe, but in time, your heavy sadness will become lighter.

## Canopy of Questions

**W**hat do you want to know about staying healthy and happy? Health can involve your body, mind, emotions, and spirit. Send your questions to [brilliant@usbnc.org](mailto:brilliant@usbnc.org). Responses are given by a health professional.

**“What do you do if your best friend moves away and you feel really sad about it?”**

—Arden, age 13

Dear Arden,

It would be helpful to talk to your mom or dad or an understanding grown-up about how hard it is for you, now that your friend is gone. Whenever we are sad and talk about it with someone who is sympathetic, we feel better. That's one reason why we all need to learn to be good listeners when our friends are sad. That way, everyone helps everyone else, and we are all better for it.

Another thing that might help is to call or write your friend who moved away, or be a friend to someone new. That person might unexpectedly end up becoming a good friend, too.

*Wishing you health and happiness,  
Mary K. Radpour  
Licensed Family Counselor*

## Explore and Soar: Honoring Loved Ones

**W**hen those we care about leave this world, it's natural to want to hold on to them somehow. You can honor them with tributes to their lives. Here are some ideas to celebrate your loved ones:

- ☐ Create special frames for your favorite photos of them.
- ☐ Participate in charities or service projects in their names.

- ☐ Hold a prayer gathering to remember and pray for them.
- ☐ Plant a tree or garden in their memory.
- ☐ Create a scrapbook of favorite times.
- ☐ Before you fall asleep at night, think about them and silently tell them about your day.







"One of the created phenomena is the dream. Behold how many secrets are deposited therein, how many wisdoms treasured up, how many worlds concealed." —Bahá'u'lláh

I'M LEARNING  
A LOT IN  
MY SLEEP.



## World of Dreams

**H**ave you ever wondered why we dream? It's a mystery that hasn't yet been solved. Some experts believe dreams don't have a purpose. Others think they help us sort through emotions, concerns, or information.

When you sleep, your brain is still active. Most dreams occur during periods of sleep called Rapid Eye Movement (REM), when your eyes move quickly under your eyelids. It's common to dream several times each night. When you have longer periods of REM sleep as

the night goes on, dreams can get longer. You're more likely to remember dreams that occur shortly before you wake up. But being awakened by an alarm clock can disrupt your memories. It's easier to remember dreams when you wake up naturally and peacefully.

Images in dreams can be interpreted in many different ways. You may find that some dreams have important meanings, while others don't seem to have any meaning at all. Try to discover if there are any helpful messages in the world of your dreams.

### WHAT DO YOUR DREAMS MEAN?

Dreams may give us insight into our feelings or goals. Try recording your next dream below, or start a dream journal. As soon as you wake up, write down the details and feelings

you can remember. Ask yourself what the people, places, and things mean to you. Dream symbols and meanings can be unique to each person, but here are some common interpretations.

#### Flying

Freedom, optimism, rising above problems, adventure

#### Light

Gaining clarity or insight about a situation

#### Monsters

Danger, conflict, fear, anger

#### Being Lost

Confusion, anxiety, trying to find direction

#### Taking a Test

Fear of failure, concern about a challenge

#### Stars

Hopefulness, dreams you want to accomplish



Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

's Dream Journal

Date of dream: \_\_\_\_\_

What I dreamed: \_\_\_\_\_

Key symbols and feelings: \_\_\_\_\_

What the dream could mean: \_\_\_\_\_



## Enjoy Some "Pi"

**W**hat does apple pie have to do with math? On Pi Day, March 14, all flavors of pie come in handy. Pi ( $\pi$ ) stands for a circle's **circumference** (the measurement around it) divided by the **diameter** (distance across the middle). It's always the same, for any size circle! Pi is often rounded to 3.14, but incredibly, it really goes on forever. It's been calculated to over 5 trillion digits! And there isn't—and never will be—a repeating pattern.

Ancient cultures liked pi as much as we do. A Greek mathematician calculated pi over 2,000 years ago. The symbol we use today is a Greek letter.

We need pi to engineer bridges, round buildings, airplane parts, and many other things built with circles. Pi also appears in equations for electricity and the work of the famous scientist Albert Einstein. Pi Day is Einstein's birthday, too. Celebrate with a double serving of pie!

These kids are celebrating Pi Day with a pie-baking contest and other fun activities. Find 17  $\pi$  symbols in the scene.





# EXPLORE AND PROTECT THE EARTH AND ITS CREATURES

"All the members of this endless universe are linked one to another." —Bahá'í Writings

WE  
ARE  
ONE

## EARTH-SAVING TIP

### Have a swap party!

Invite friends over to trade your old books, clothes, and toys. It's a great way to reduce and reuse your stuff.



## WOW, REALLY?

There are about 146 moons in our solar system. Jupiter and Saturn each have at least 50!



## OUR CONNECTIONS



The moon has filled us with wonder through the ages. But did you know that the moon actually affects life on Earth? The moon's gravity pulls on Earth and its oceans, causing tides, or daily changes in sea level. The moon also helps keep the tilt of Earth stable. Without the moon, Earth would wobble more on its axis, causing extreme climate changes that could make life impossible.

## PROTECTING OUR PLANET

**Roz Savage**, the first woman to row solo across the Pacific Ocean, has rowed over 11,000 miles (17,700 km). She's a United Nations Climate Hero who speaks around the world about environmental issues. Roz says, "If we all pull together, we CAN build a better, greener future, the same way that I row across oceans—one stroke, one action, at a time."



## WHERE IN THE WORLD?



These glowing bands of color, called an aurora, appear most often in polar areas such as Alaska. They form when electrons and other particles from the sun collide with gas atoms in the air. *Unscramble the letters to find their common name:*

ORTRNHEN SITLGH

## AMAZING ANIMALS



This large insect can hide from prey by blending in with twigs and bushes. It's found in the southern U.S. and known for the horn on top of its head. *Fill in the blanks to find its name:*

T O X S U N C O N A N T S



# RADIANT STARS

## Getting to know kids who shine

Connect with kids around the world! How are they like you? How are they different? Each of us has a unique story to tell. What's yours?

### Noel D.

Age: **9**

I live in: **Wisconsin, U.S.**

I want to be:  
**Football player**

Something I like about me:  
**I'm good at sports.**

Hobbies or sports:  
**Football, Xbox 360, drawing, LEGO [toys]**

Favorite Bahá'í activities:  
**Teaching, children's classes, hosting Feast\***



Favorite animal or pet:  
**Wolf**

Places I'd love to visit:  
**My birthplace and Seattle, WA**

I like to help people by:  
**Giving money, cleaning up for them**

Life has many mysteries. What's one you'd love to solve?  
**Why was the earth born? Why did life pick this planet?**

How do you know God exists?  
**Someone had to create the universe and everything in it. I just look at the planets and things around me and know it was created by something.**

If you could ask God one question, what would it be?  
**What does heaven look like?**

### Naeim Z.

Age: **14**

I live in: **North Carolina, U.S.**

I want to be:  
**A doctor**

Best quality or virtue:  
**Friendliness**

Something I like about me:  
**Very neat handwriting**

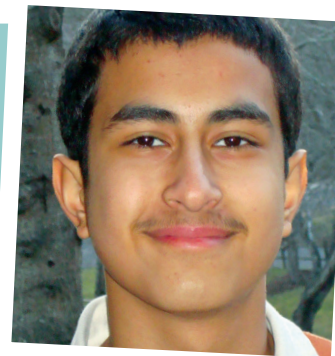
Favorite Bahá'í activities:  
**Attending junior youth class, reading the holy writings of Bahá'u'lláh**

Favorite animal or pet:  
**Dolphin or cat**

Place I'd love to visit:  
**Haifa, Israel, to visit the shrine[s] of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb**

What do you think is your purpose on this planet?  
**To serve humanity and teach the [Bahá'í] Faith**

I like to help people by:  
**Teaching children's classes**



Life has many mysteries. What's one you'd love to solve?  
**I have always been wondering if there are any other planets out there in the universe that are full of life like planet Earth. I hope to be able to explore and find an answer to my question.**

How do you know God exists?  
**By studying the holy writings of Bahá'u'lláh. Teachings . . . from all religions of the world help us understand our life in this world and bring joy and happiness to our hearts.**



### Rahim Z.

Age: **10**

I live in: **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

I want to be:  
**Doctor**

Something I like about me:  
**I run very fast.**

Favorite Bahá'í activities:  
**Attend children's class and devotional meetings**

Favorite animal or pet:  
**Dog**

Place I'd love to visit:  
**Canada**

I like to help people by:  
**Opening a shelter for the poor**

Life has many mysteries. What's one you'd love to solve?  
**Why high wind (like hurricanes) is blowing and destroying buildings and caus[ing] destruction. I would like to invent a machine/instrument to stop high winds [from] destroying everything.**

How do you know that God exists?  
**If He does not exist, how are we alive? Our life itself shows the existence of God.**

What do you think is your purpose on this planet?  
**To have a nice family**



## Dusty L.

Age: 12

I live in: **Illinois, U.S.**

Best quality or virtue:  
**Trustworthiness**

Something I like about me:  
**I am proud that I am worthy of trust. I am honest with family and friends.**

Hobbies or sports:  
**Fencing, wrestling, and I'd like to take up SCUBA**

Favorite animal or pet:  
**Genghis, our ferret**

Places I'd love to visit:  
**Haifa and Rome**

What do you think is your purpose on this planet?  
**Our purpose here is to help others and acquire virtues. According to the daily prayer, we are here "to know Thee and to worship Thee."**

Life has many mysteries. What's one you'd love to solve?  
**Why do some animals go extinct? Will those animals return? If so, would it take a millennium?**

How do you know that God exists?  
**You don't. You just have to have faith in God.**

If you could ask God one question, what would it be?  
**Why was the world created?**



**"God has crowned you with honor and in your hearts has He set a radiant star; verily the light thereof shall brighten the whole world!"** — 'Abdu'l-Bahá

## Tajalli L.

Age: 12

I live in: **Ely, U.K.**

I want to be:  
**An optometrist**

Something I like about me:  
**I persevere to try and achieve my goals.**

Hobbies or sports:  
**Horse riding, swimming, and baking**

Favorite Bahá'í activities:  
**I love going to my junior youth group, Feasts,\* the Bahá'í Arts Academy, and summer schools.**

Place I'd love to visit:  
**Australia**

I like to help people by:  
**Listening to their problems and trying to come up with solutions**

Life has many mysteries. What's one you'd love to solve?



**I would love to know how to bring people together to make one big family.**

How do you know that God exists?  
**All of the Manifestations of God have given us the same consistent message about God and spiritual principles.**

What do you think is your purpose on this planet?  
**I believe that my purpose in life is to be of service to mankind.**

## Shannon A.

Age: 10

I live in: **Georgia, U.S.**

I want to be:  
**A veterinarian**

Best quality or virtue:  
**Loving**

Something I like about me:  
**I'm funny.**

Hobbies or sports:  
**Soccer, swimming, and drawing**

Favorite Bahá'í activities:  
**Children's classes, Feast,\* and Holy Days**

Favorite animal or pet:  
**Dog**

Place I'd love to visit:  
**Haifa**

I like to help people by:  
**Doing things to help them make their day easier**

What do you think is your purpose on this planet?  
**Bahá'u'lláh tells us that our purpose is to help others. When we help others, we feel good and so do they.**

Life has many mysteries. What's one you'd love to solve?  
**What happens after we die**

How do you know that God exists?  
**Because when we pray, He always answers**

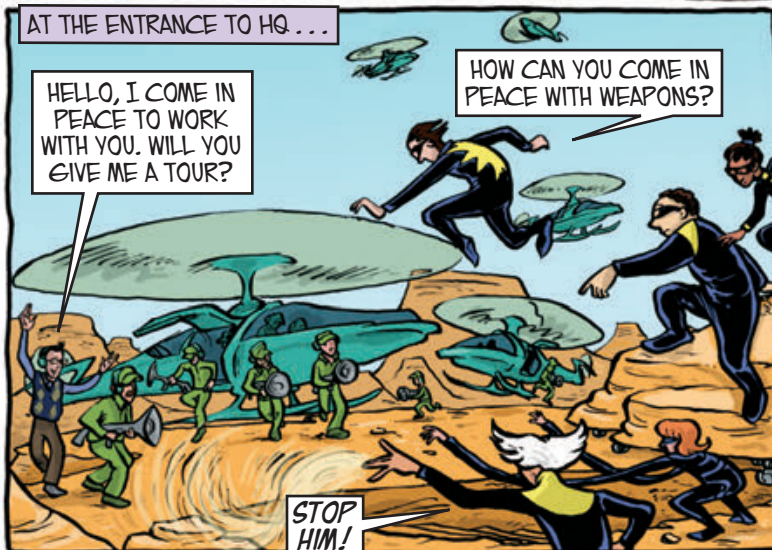
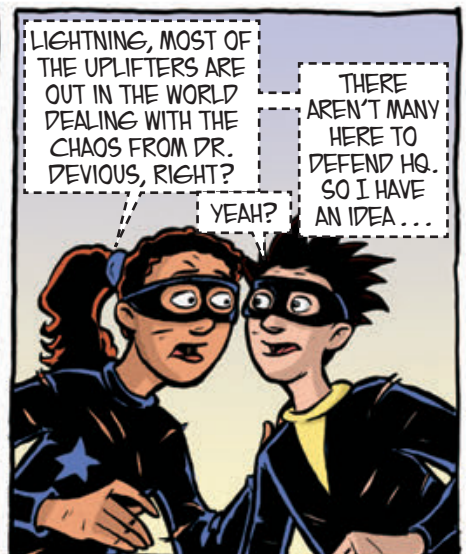
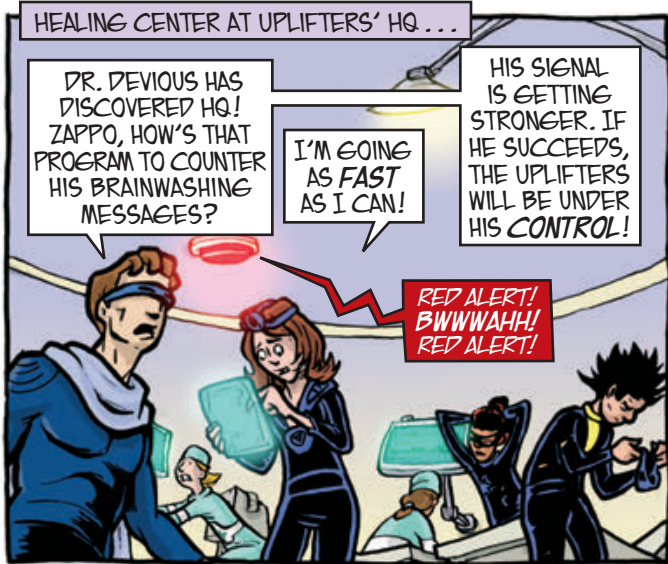


## You can be a Radiant Star!

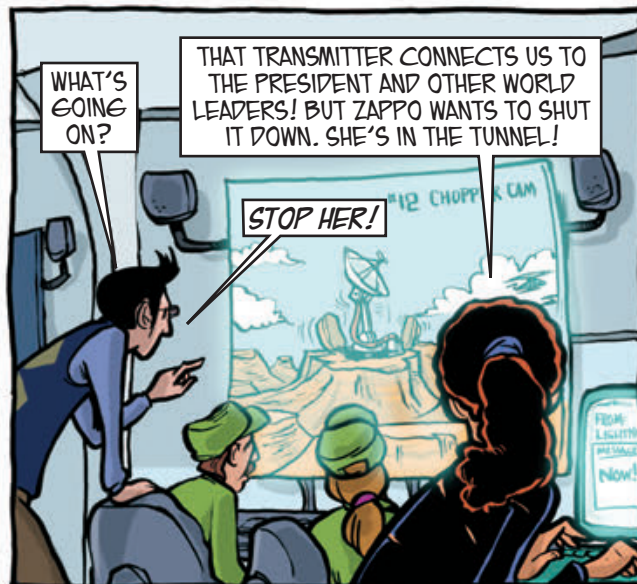
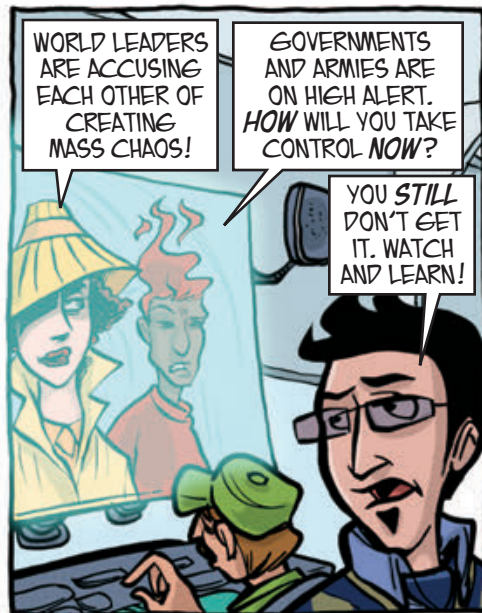
### Here's how:

1. If you're age 7–14, write us at [brilliant@usbnc.org](mailto:brilliant@usbnc.org) or Brilliant Star, 1233 Central Street, Evanston, IL 60201. Include your name, age, mailing and e-mail addresses, and phone number. Mention "Radiant Star" in the e-mail subject line or in your message.
2. When it's your turn to shine, we'll send you questions and a form for you and your parents to sign.
3. Answer the questions and send them to us with the signed forms, along with at least two good-quality, close-up photographs of your smiling face. Photos should be in sharp focus and show your eyes clearly. Please don't send color copies, low-resolution digital images, or copyright-protected images (like school portraits).









CAN ANYONE STOP DR. DEVIOUS?



# Stars of the Spirit

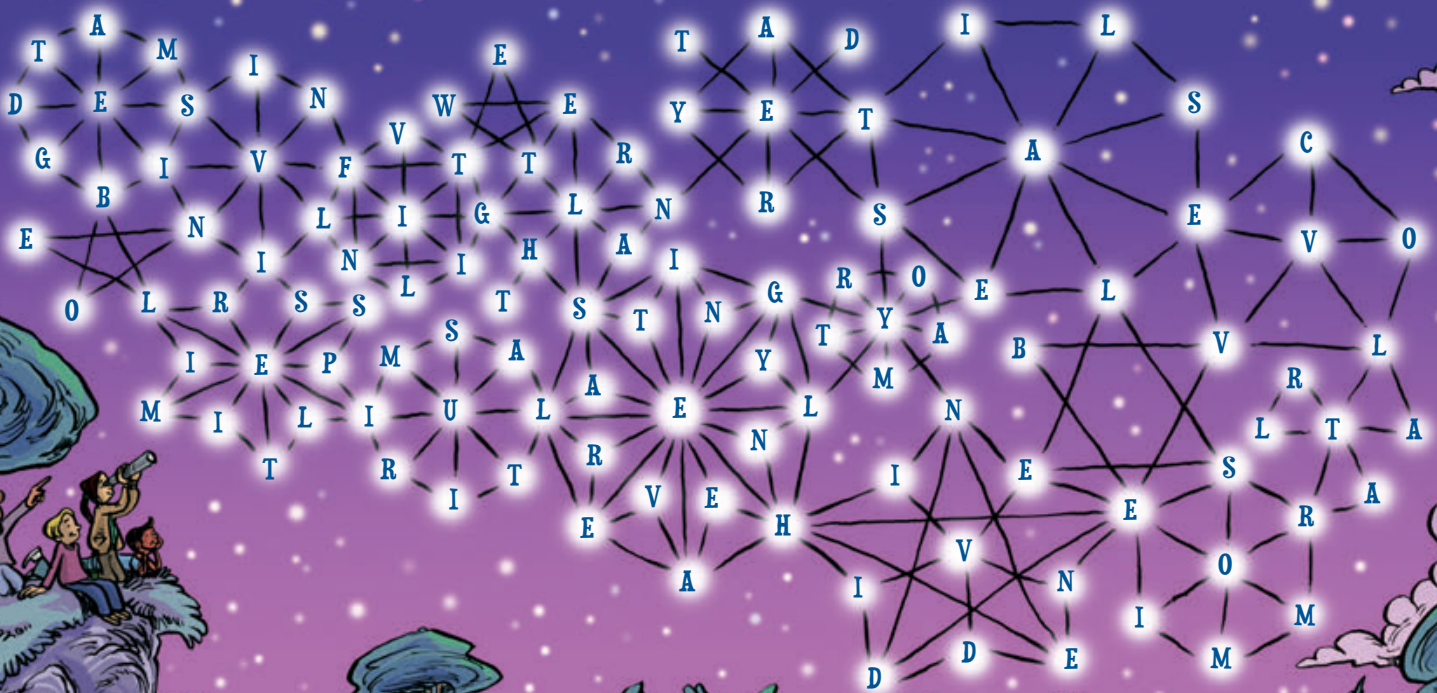
"If you turn the mirror of your spirits heavenwards, the heavenly constellations and the rays of the Sun of Reality will be reflected in your hearts, and the virtues of the Kingdom will be obtained." — 'Abdu'l-Bahá

When you gaze at the sky on a clear night, the number of stars can be dazzling. In fact, some scientists recently found that the universe may have three times more stars than previously estimated—300 sextillion in all!\*

No one knows exactly how many stars exist, though we've studied them with awe for centuries. Yet God created something even more amazing than the vast universe—the human soul.

Your soul is your spirit, or your true self. It is the part of you that lives forever. Your soul is on a never-ending journey toward God. You advance on the journey when you pray, meditate, read sacred writings, and practice virtues. Even when your body dies in this world, your soul continues to develop in the spiritual world. The strengths you build here on Earth will help you shine like a brilliant star on your eternal voyage.

In this night sky, connect stars to spell words from the Bahá'í writings about the soul or spirit. The letters are connected by lines going in any direction: up, down, forward, backward, or diagonally. You can use a letter in more than one word. But don't use a letter more than once in the same word.



CELESTIAL  
DIVINE  
ETERNAL  
EVERLASTING

EVOLVES  
GEM  
HEAVENLY  
HIDDEN

IMMORTAL  
INFINITE  
INVISIBLE  
LIGHT

LIMITLESS  
MYSTERY  
NOBLE  
SPIRITUAL



# ZEKE AND RHOMBUS: WONDERS OF SPACE

**H**i! Zeke here, from the planet Zilizag, along with my pet, Rhombus. We have an awesome time zipping through galaxies to study the mysteries of the universe. And there are a lot of them! I see that Earthlings like to explore space, too. You've visited the moon, sent rovers to Mars, and set up an International Space Station.

People on my planet are on a quest to learn

about other forms of life. We also want to find out how diverse creatures have built peaceful worlds. Zilizagians got rid of war and violence eons ago.

On Zilizag, like on Earth, scientists work together to investigate mysteries on our planet and beyond. If you love to observe and learn, like me, maybe someday you'll explore the wonders of outer space.

Rhombus is right! We've learned some fascinating facts. Check them out with my Zilizag Decoder.

BARZ-BARZ-WOOFIZZ!

- 1 Scientists believe the \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ began expanding with an explosion known as  
the Big Bang about 14 billion years ago.
- 2 Earth's \_\_\_\_\_ system formed about  
4.6 billion years ago.
- 3 One giant exploding star, called a supernova,  
was 100 billion times as \_\_\_\_\_  
as Earth's sun.
- 4 Some \_\_\_\_\_ are so far away that it  
takes centuries for their light to reach Earth.

- 5 Your sun contains over 99% of the \_\_\_\_\_  
of your solar system.
- 6 Jupiter has a \_\_\_\_\_ that's bigger than  
the planet Mercury.
- 7 The tallest \_\_\_\_\_ in your  
solar system is on Mars—almost triple the  
height of Mt. Everest on Earth.
- 8 I've heard that large \_\_\_\_\_,  
including the Milky Way, have huge black holes  
at their centers. Maybe I'll go find out!

## ZEKE'S ZILIZAG DECODER

A	C	E	G	I	K	M	O	Q	S	U	W	Y
B	D	F	H	J	L	N	P	R	T	V	X	Z



# Meditation Station

"Meditation is the key for opening the doors of mysteries." —'Abdu'l-Bahá

**F**eeeling stress from homework? Upset by a bully or an argument with a friend? You may have heard that meditation can help, but maybe you're not sure how to do it.

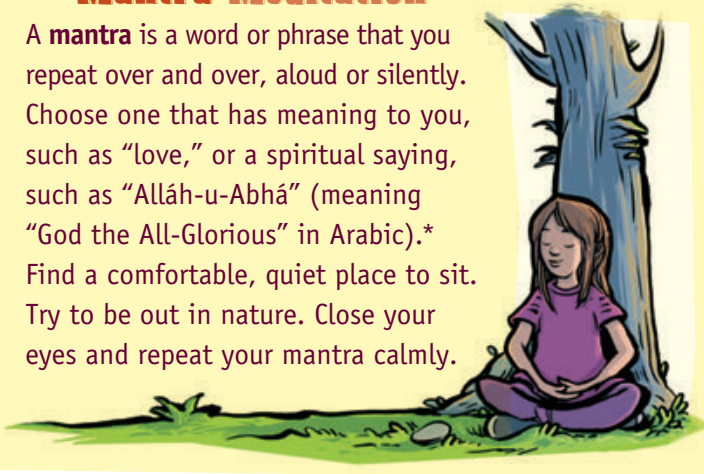
Many people use meditation as a way to connect with the inner self or spirit, and to deeply calm the body and mind. The Bahá'í writings say that during meditation, the soul is "informed

and strengthened" and "receives the breath of the Holy Spirit."

Some studies show that meditation can also have physical and emotional health benefits. Making a little time for meditation each day may help you in countless ways. There are many forms—try different ones until you find what's most comfortable for you. The three below can get you started.

## Mantra Meditation

A **mantra** is a word or phrase that you repeat over and over, aloud or silently. Choose one that has meaning to you, such as "love," or a spiritual saying, such as "Alláh-u-Abhá" (meaning "God the All-Glorious" in Arabic).\* Find a comfortable, quiet place to sit. Try to be out in nature. Close your eyes and repeat your mantra calmly.



## Mindful Meditation

Mindfulness is when you're fully aware of the present moment. Sit in a comfortable position with your back straight. Close your eyes and focus on your breath moving in and out of your body. As thoughts go through your mind, don't try to stop them. Notice them, but then let them go and focus again on your breath.



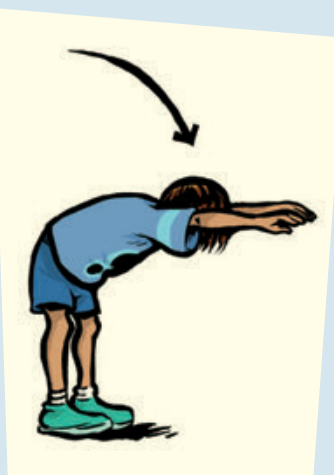
## Moving Meditation

This yoga pose is called Standing Sun. It's one way to meditate through movement.



**A** Stand straight with feet together. Exhale. Then inhale slowly and lift your arms out to your sides.

**B** Stretch your arms above your head. Keep your palms together and look up.



**C** Exhale, bend forward, and keep your head between your arms.

**D** Grasp the backs of your legs and hold a few seconds.



**E** Inhale. Stand up slowly, raising your arms above your head again, as in steps A and B. Exhale and lower your arms.





# Roses of Love



*"In the garden of thy heart plant naught but the rose of love, and from the nightingale of affection and desire loosen not thy hold." —Bahá'u'lláh*

**I**magine learning that a new Messenger of God is living on Earth, but His identity is a mystery. In the mid-1800s, a Messenger of God called the Báb told His followers, the Bábís, that another Messenger would soon come.

In April 1863, in Baghdád, Iraq, the mystery was solved in a place called the Garden of Ridván. Bahá'u'lláh, a Persian nobleman, announced that He was the Messenger of God promised by the Báb. He said that a new Messenger would not appear for another 1,000 years. He also forbade the use of violence to defend or promote religion, and He indicated that it

was the beginning of a new era for humanity. The Bábís were overjoyed with His announcement.

Bahá'u'lláh spent 12 days in the Ridván Garden before departing for Constantinople (now Istanbul), Turkey. Every day, gardeners laid roses in the center of Bahá'u'lláh's tent. The pile grew so high that visitors couldn't see over it.

The Festival of Ridván is celebrated from April 21 to May 2. The first, ninth, and twelfth days (April 21, April 29, and May 2) are Holy Days on which work or school should be suspended. Around the world, Bahá'ís celebrate Ridván with prayers, parties, and other festivities.



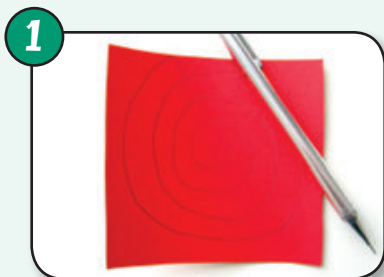
## Paper Rose Perfection

Create paper roses in different sizes and colors, and use them as decorations for Ridván or other special events. Display them in a bowl as a centerpiece, glue them to a wreath made from cardboard, or hide them around a room for guests to find.



### You'll Need

- 4" x 4" (10 cm x 10 cm) squares of colored paper
- pencil, scissors, and glue



Starting from the center of the paper, draw a spiral about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.3 cm) wide and continue until you reach the edge.



With scissors, trim off excess paper around spiral. Then cut along the line you've drawn until you reach the middle.



Starting from the outside, roll the paper spiral. Keep rolling until you reach the round part at the center.



To secure the flower, place a drop or two of glue between the flower and the rounded end underneath it. Let dry.



### TIP



Make a 4" x 4" rose, then try papers between 2" x 2" (5 cm x 5 cm) and 6" x 6" (15 cm x 15 cm). Adjust the width of the spiral accordingly, so it circles the sheet about four times.





# JOSIE THE DETECTIVE'S BLOG

[HOME](#)[ARCHIVES](#)**Monday, March 7, 6:30 p.m.**

Just bumped into Mrs. Johnson coming out of her apartment. She was in a hurry, but she gave me a hug and said, "I'm off to give a talk at the college about the Bahá'ís in Iran. The more people know about their problems, the better." What problems? Hmmmm. I'm going to find out!

6 COMMENTS

**Tuesday, March 8, 7:28 a.m.**

Told Mom I'd be at the library after school, looking into what's happening in Iran with the Bahá'ís. She said, "I've read a little in the paper. Let me know what you find." I love that my parents *really* like to keep up with what I'm interested in. *And* they let me explore in my own way.

4 COMMENTS

**Tuesday, March 8, 9:35 p.m.**

Wow, there are *tons* of stories. Why haven't I heard more about this? Facts:

- Bahá'ís in Iran have been persecuted and even killed since the early days of the Bahá'í Faith in the 1800s.
- Today, many Bahá'ís have lost their jobs, businesses, and money. They can't go to college, and kids even get bullied by teachers at school, just because they're Bahá'ís!
- Lots of Bahá'ís have been put in prison because of their religion. About 60 are in jail right now. Sad. Why do things like this *happen*? I'll catch up with Mrs. Johnson tomorrow.

9 COMMENTS

**Wednesday, March 9, 4:33 p.m.**

Glad Mrs. Johnson was in. She offered me some yummy-looking cookies. But *she* didn't eat any because of the Bahá'í Fast, so I decided not to, either. Besides, I was hungrier for answers. So I asked, "What's up with the Iranian government? Why do they want to get rid of Bahá'ís? I've been learning about the Bahá'í Faith for a couple of years now, and it seems pretty peaceful."



*Bahá'í leaders now imprisoned in Iran*

Mrs. Johnson's smile disappeared. "It's prejudice and hatred." Whoa. "When the Bahá'í Faith began in the 1840s, the Muslim clergy and government wanted to stop it." She said that even though Bahá'ís believe in peace, they're still persecuted. In 2008, seven Bahá'í leaders—two women and five men—were jailed for almost two years without a trial. Then they were sentenced to 10 years in prison! They're called the "Yaran," which means "Friends." Mrs. Johnson heard that the prison conditions are harsh and dangerous. Scary!

12 COMMENTS

**Thursday, March 10, 6:00 a.m.**

Didn't sleep well. Injustice makes me C-R-A-Z-Y. Sounds like the Johnsons are up, too. During the fast, they eat before the sun comes up and after it goes down. Got up to find clues about the Yaran on the Internet so I can *do* something:

- The prison is filthy, and they're crammed into small cells. They don't get much food. Hmmmm. Send food and blankets?
- Bahá'ís from all over the U.S. have talked with members of Congress about this. Write to my senators and representative?
- The United Nations and governments around the world have urged Iran to treat the Bahá'ís justly. Write article for school paper?

15 COMMENTS

**Thursday, March 10, 3:54 p.m.**

At lunch, I told Frieda, Eric, and Aziz everything. "The blankets and food won't reach them, if they're being treated so badly in prison," Frieda said. "The Bahá'ís are being bullied *big* time. Bullies stink," Aziz said. Eric added that he could find the e-mail addresses for Congress so we can all write them. My friends rock!



*Lunch with Frieda, Eric, and Aziz*

19 COMMENTS



## > THE CASE OF THE UNJUST IMPRISONMENT

**Thursday, March 10, 9:50 p.m.**

Sent off letters to Congress, but it's just not *enough*. Reread all my notes for clues. Bingo! I found one about lots of prayer meetings that have been held for the Yaran. Will talk to Mom and Dad about having people over to pray. Soon.

🗨 10 COMMENTS

**Saturday, March 12, 10:01 p.m.**

Smells of fresh bread and chicken soup filled our apartment. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson brought seven white candles, one for each of the Yaran. They told us more about them. They've hardly *seen* their families—and one man has a son around my age.



*My Bahá'í neighbors, the Johnsons*

After supper, Dad sang "We Shall Overcome." Aziz chanted a prayer, and Frieda said the Lord's Prayer. I read from my copy of *The Hidden Words* that Mrs. Johnson gave me when I started investigating the Bahá'í Faith: "O SON OF MAN! For everything there is a sign. The sign of love is fortitude under My decree and patience under My trials."

As the candles flickered, I prayed that the Yaran can feel the love coming their way.



*Aziz chants a beautiful prayer*

When everyone left, Mom and Dad asked how I was doing. Suddenly, I was crying. Guess I didn't realize how upset I was about people being punished for their religion. Mom and Dad promised they'd write to Congress, too.

You know what I think? I think anything is possible when you have faith and fantastic family and friends. I'm off to bed, but first I'll say some more prayers for people who face injustice in Iran—and *everywhere*.

🗨 23 COMMENTS

## ABOUT ME



Hi! My name is Josie. I love investigating mysteries. I also really like writing, so my family helped me set up this blog for my case notes and other thoughts. If you have cool ideas about where I can look for clues, please share. Or just say hey and tell me what *you* love to do.

I'm a writer for my school's newspaper. My dream is to be a lawyer or journalist. For me, tracking down the truth is like a treasure hunt!

### MY FAVORITE THINGS

- > Hanging out with friends
- > Solving mysteries big and small
- > Exploring cultures and religions. Love to travel.
- > Writing, tae kwon do, soccer, baseball, science, reading, and singing
- > Animals, especially birds, dolphins, and gorillas



## RUTH FORMAN



**'M**ake this day your own square/ in your own life quilt/ so shining/ it brighten the whole of your years this far . . ." With these inspiring words, poet Ruth Forman urges us to make our dreams come true. She delights in crafting poems that readers of any age can understand and love. Ruth began writing as a kid growing up in Massachusetts and New York. At about age seven, she wrote a book she called *Poems for Kids*. She says, "Creating that first book of poems when I was a kid maybe made it a little bit easier for me to do a book of poems when I was older." After graduating from the University of California, Berkeley, Ruth published *We Are the Young Magicians*, winning the prestigious Barnard New Women Poets Prize. Since then, she's written more books, including an award-winning book for kids, and her work is in many poetry anthologies. She also shares her passion for poetry by teaching writing classes. Ruth holds a master's degree in film, and her dream is to combine the arts of film *and* poetry.

### Q. What was your most challenging experience as a kid?

Moving from my mom's house to my dad's house when I was about nine. It was a very big change. I moved from a rural environment, where I got to play in the country pretty much every day, to an urban environment [in upstate New York] . . . One of the ways I was able to make that an easier experience actually was by meeting a Bahá'í community that was very loving and was a wonderful, very diverse family that took me in as their own.

### Q. How did you learn about the Bahá'í Faith?

I started meeting the [Bahá'ís] of Rochester, New York. And I really loved the community . . . When I was 12, I went to some Bahá'í classes and went to Bahá'í schools on Sundays . . . I went to my first youth conference, and really loved it. By the time I was 15,

### Q. How does being a Bahá'í affect your work?

Being a Bahá'í always gives me a sense of hope throughout things that might be very difficult. As a writer, you have to be wide open and be willing to be a witness to whatever is going on, whether it's beautiful,



**Left:** At age 12, Ruth loved going to Bahá'í events for kids.



**Right:** Ruth (second from right), age 14, at Green Acre Bahá'í School in Maine, U.S., where she volunteered during summers

I decided I did want to be a Bahá'í. Even though my background as a child was Christian, I very much embraced the Bahá'í Faith, its principles. Even as a child, it felt like they fit more my outlook of how life should be and how the world should work together.

whether it's something difficult or challenging. For me, because I'm Bahá'í, I have a sense that we're moving toward a better place as the human race. So I think that always gives my work a sense of hope . . .



## Q. What makes a good poem?

If you can say things in a way that's very unique, that people aren't used to hearing, that is very truthful . . . When you speak the truth, people sit up and take notice. And if you use the senses in your work—sight, sound, smells, and taste—it makes the poem come alive in a way that the person reading or hearing it can really experience it, because it's calling on their senses to participate.

## Q. Some artists feel they get inspiration from God.

**Do you feel this, and if so, can you tell us about it?**

Yes, I very much feel like I get my inspiration from God . . . Sometimes, I name God specifically in my work. But other times, I think I want . . . to exemplify some of the virtues that I feel are so important and beautiful, like truth, like justice, like peace or hope. And I try to make sure my work is infused with that so people can *feel* that hope or truth or justice.

## Q. In this issue of *Brilliant Star*, we're talking about mysteries. To you, what are life's greatest mysteries?

We're all here for a reason. We all have something to contribute to the world. So part of the mystery of life is kind of figuring that out . . . And then after we figure that out and do our best, kind of taking each step toward what we think that calling is. I think the beautiful mystery is how all of those pieces fit together.

## Q. How did tai chi and karate become important to you?

As a writer, I was sitting down too much. I wanted to get up and move. So I stumbled upon a tai chi class, and I realized that I really, really loved it . . . When I practiced tai chi, it was almost like a moving prayer . . . Karate . . . has the combination of strength and power and beauty. I think when you do it well, it's also like a moving form of poetry, for both of them.

## Q. If you had one wish for *Brilliant Star's* readers, what would it be?

That they realize that they're all very special people and have something very unique and special to offer to the



**Left:** Practicing tai chi is an important part of Ruth's life. She says, "Each movement tells a story . . ."

**Below:** Ruth presents her children's book, *Young Cornrows Callin Out the Moon*, at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books.



## Q. What's your advice for aspiring writers?

Read! Because there's so much out there to inspire us . . . The second thing I would say is to keep . . . a little journal, or just a little notebook, and write down thoughts . . . And then just be open to touch the world, and be comfortable writing that down, sharing that with other people in [your] own perspective. Because . . . a really good story teaches us and inspires us, feeds us. And I think when you can do that, it's really a contribution to somebody's life.

world, and to not be afraid to know that about themselves, to not lose that sense of being somebody special.



# MARCH 2011 • 167/168 Bahá'í Era



**W**hat do Beauty, Power, and Questions have in common? They're all names of months in the Bahá'í calendar. Many religions have their own calendars. The Bahá'í year consists of 19 months with 19 days each. Four additional days (five in leap years) are added to correspond to the solar year. Each month is named for an attribute of God. The Bahá'í New Year, Naw-Rúz, occurs at the start of the month of Splendor. It's a joyous occasion, often commemorated with prayers, music, and fellowship. How will your family celebrate?

**Sunday**

**Monday**

**Tuesday**

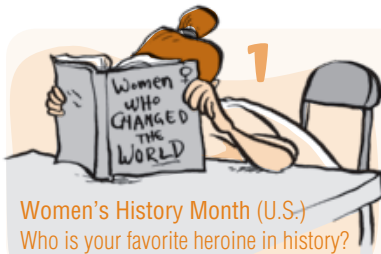
**Wednesday**

**Thursday**

**Friday**

**Saturday**

Every 19 days, Bahá'í Feast is held on or near the first day of the Bahá'í month.



Women's History Month (U.S.)  
Who is your favorite heroine in history?

**2**  
**BAHÁ'Í MONTH OF 'ALÁ'**  
(LOFTINESS)



**4**

**5**

**My Goal for the Month:**

**6**

**7**

Experts are mystified by the purpose of Stonehenge, the ancient circle of stones in England.

**8**

International Women's Day (UN)  
Equality for women is essential for a peaceful world.

**9**

Ash Wednesday (Christianity)  
Lent begins—a time of prayer, fasting, and preparation for Easter.

**10**

**11**

**12**



If you could meet God and ask any question, what would it be?

**13**

Daylight Saving Time Begins (U.S., Canada)\*

**14**



It's Pi Day (3.14)!  
Join the fun on page 10.

**15**

**16**



Brain Awareness Week (March 14–20)  
Your brain can send impulses as fast as 268 miles/hour (431 km/h)!

**17**



St. Patrick's Day

**18**

National Wildlife Week (U.S., March 13–20)

**19**

Youth Art Month (U.S.)  
How do you express your creativity?

**20**



Holi (Hinduism)  
Festival of Colors

**21**

**BAHÁ'Í MONTH OF BAHÁ'**  
(SPLENDOR)

**NAW-RÚZ**  
Bahá'í New Year

**22**

World Water Day (UN)  
2.5 billion people worldwide lack good sanitation facilities.

**23**



**24**

**25**



**26**

Earth Hour  
Turn off your lights at 8:30 p.m. to support our planet.\*

**27**



**28**

Did you know?  
Seahorse fathers, not mothers, carry and give birth to their young.

**29**

**30**

**31**

**TRANSCEND MEANS...**

**Cosmo's Word Challenge**

- a) To put words in another language
- b) To rise above or go beyond something
- c) To ship something by train





**H**ow did dinosaurs become extinct? How many species exist today? How can we protect Earth from our changing climate and environmental challenges? Even as scientists make amazing new discoveries, we still grapple with mysteries like these. From the tiniest microbes to massive blue whales, life on Earth offers breathtaking diversity. People around the world work together to expand our knowledge and find solutions to our most pressing problems. On Earth Day, April 22, more than a billion people in 175 countries celebrate our planet, its wonders, and our commitment to protecting it.



**Sunday**

**Monday**

**Tuesday**

**Wednesday**

**Thursday**

**Friday**

**Saturday**

Every 19 days, Bahá'í Feast is held on or near the first day of the Bahá'í month.

**My Goal for the Month:**



National Poetry Month (U.S.)  
April is a perfect time  
To put your favorite words in rhyme!

**1**

April Fool's Day  
The origin of this holiday is still a mystery.

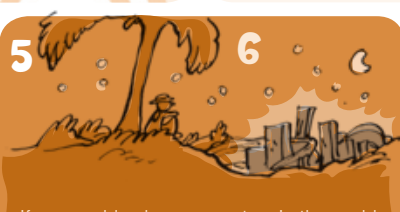


**2**



Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Month (U.S.)

**4**



If you could solve any mystery in the world, which would you choose?

**5**

**6**

**7**

World Health Day (UN)  
Low-cost resources could prevent the deaths of millions of kids each year.\*

**8**



**9**

**BAHÁ'Í MONTH OF JALÁL (GLORY)**

**10**

**FRUITION MEANS ...**

**Cosmo's Word Challenge**

- a) Constant eating of fruit
- b) Feeling or hunch about something
- c) Accomplishment of a goal or plan

**11**



**13**



It's the International Year of Chemistry. (UN)  
True or false? Diamonds and pencil lead are made from the same element.

**14**

**15**

Global Youth Service Day (April 15–17)  
How do you use your talents to help your community?

**16**



**17**

Turnoff Week (U.S.)  
Turn off your TV and computer, and focus on family time.



**18**

**19**

Passover Begins (Judaism)  
Honors the Jews' freedom from slavery in Egypt

**20**



**21**

**FIRST DAY OF RIDVÁN**

Commemorates Bahá'u'lláh's arrival in the Garden of Ridván

**22**

Earth Day  
Check out Zeke's favorite facts about Earth and our universe on page 17.

**23**

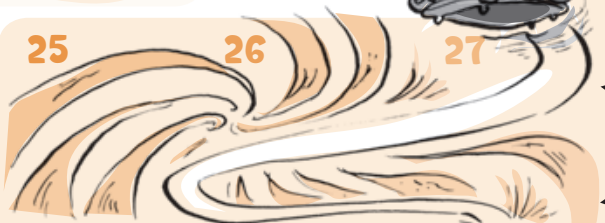
World Book and Copyright Day  
A universe of wonders is as close as your local library.

**24**



Easter (Christianity)

**25**



If you could travel in time to the past, what would you explore?

**26**

**27**

**28**

**BAHÁ'Í MONTH OF JAMÁL (BEAUTY)**

**29**

**NINTH DAY OF RIDVÁN**  
Honors Bahá'u'lláh's family joining Him in the Garden of Ridván

**30**





## KEITH RANSOM-KEHLER: Fearless Pioneer

“**E**very Bahá'í is a pioneer,” Keith Ransom-Kehler wrote, “a pioneer in a new manner of living, a new outlook on life . . .” Keith showed a courageous spirit as she traveled the world to share the Bahá'í teachings and help Bahá'ís who were being persecuted.

Nannie Keith Bean was born in Kentucky, U.S., in 1876. She went by “Keith,” and her personality was as unconventional as her name. At age 22, she graduated from Vassar College, and she later earned a master's degree—an extraordinary achievement at a time when few women went to college. She married Ralph Ransom in 1901. Sadly, he died of tuberculosis when their daughter, Julia, was one.

In 1910, Keith married Jim Kehler. Keith was an open-minded Christian, and she led a Christian fellowship in Chicago for several years. Then in 1921, she became a Bahá'í. She later wrote, “the great prophecies of Jesus are fulfilled in the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.” She began giving talks about the Faith, and became a sought-after speaker.

### All Walks of Life

Keith faced tragedy again when Jim died of a heart attack in 1923. She grieved deeply, but in time she focused on traveling and



Keith Ransom-Kehler wrote, “Amidst the perplexities . . . and problems that often beset my path . . . my abiding protection is a sense of deep and reverent gratitude . . .”

speaking about the Bahá'í Faith. In 1931, Keith set off for Australia, New Zealand, and several Asian countries. She enjoyed cultural diversity and met with people of all walks of life. In New Zealand, she spent time with the indigenous Maori people, whom she called a “nation of poets and artists.”

Keith made a big impression everywhere she went. She was bold, honest, and passionate in her speech. Wherever she went, the people she visited asked if she could stay longer.

### Fighting Forces of Darkness

In 1932, Shoghi Effendi, who led the Bahá'í Faith at the time, asked Keith to go to Persia (now Iran)

to convince the sháh (king) to lift a ban on Bahá'í books. Keith was “thunderstruck” at such a challenge, but she rose to meet it. On a visit to Haifa (in what is now Israel), Shoghi Effendi personally tutored Keith in Islam and the customs of Iran.

In Iran, Keith met with an advisor to the sháh, who assured her that the book ban would be lifted immediately. But it was not. She wrote seven long letters to the sháh and had many meetings with officials, but nothing changed. To this day, the government of Iran treats Bahá'ís with prejudice and injustice. Bahá'ís are denied jobs and higher education, and many have been imprisoned and even killed, just for practicing their faith.

Keith was deeply frustrated at the outcome of her efforts. But she wrote, “Nothing in the world is meaningless, suffering least of all. Sacrifice . . . blooms, I think forever, in the sweet fields of eternity.”

On October 9, 1933, Keith became very ill with smallpox, and she passed away two weeks later. Shoghi Effendi wrote that he was “SORROW STRICKEN” and said she “FOUGHT FORCES OF DARKNESS WITH HIGH DISTINCTION, INDOMITABLE WILL, UNSWERVING, EXEMPLARY LOYALTY.” He named her the first American Bahá'í martyr and the first female Hand of the Cause of God.\*



## Design Contest Winners:

# New Superhero Suits for the Uplifters

I'M PULSAR, ONE OF THE LEADERS AT THE UPLIFTERS' HEADQUARTERS. A WHILE AGO, WE INVITED YOU ON A MISSION TO HELP DESIGN NEW SUPERHERO SUITS FOR THE UPLIFTERS.

YOUR CREATIONS WERE IMAGINATIVE AND INNOVATIVE! THEY REFLECTED LIGHTNING AND LUNA'S AWESOME SUPERPOWERS AND VIRTUES. CHECK OUT THE WINNING DESIGNS!

## 1ST Place: STEWART A., age 13, Texas, U.S.



Stewart's uniform designs were creatively invented with a variety of useful features. Lightning's "jester-like design represents pure joyfulness," and it's rubber to withstand electricity. Both Lightning and Luna have utility belts with "an arsenal of virtuous items, like the Truth Ray, Prayerful Pulse, and Eraser-Item Eliminator . . . Underneath the shoulder armor are two cans of pure virtue." Lightning's boots "give him super speed," and Luna's "allow her to walk across water." Lightning's "x-ray goggles enhance his super vision." Luna's goggles "allow her to see invisible objects."

## NATASHA T., age 12, Australia

### 2ND Place



Natasha's colorful suits show her knowledge of the Uplifters. She said each uniform will "suit the Uplifter's powers" and make the hero twice as strong. "For example, Luna's suit supports her when she is invisible, and Lightning's suit is designed to help him with [his] electric powers." The suits also include "their first initial and their usual symbol."

## AVA Z., age 13, California, U.S.

### 3RD Place



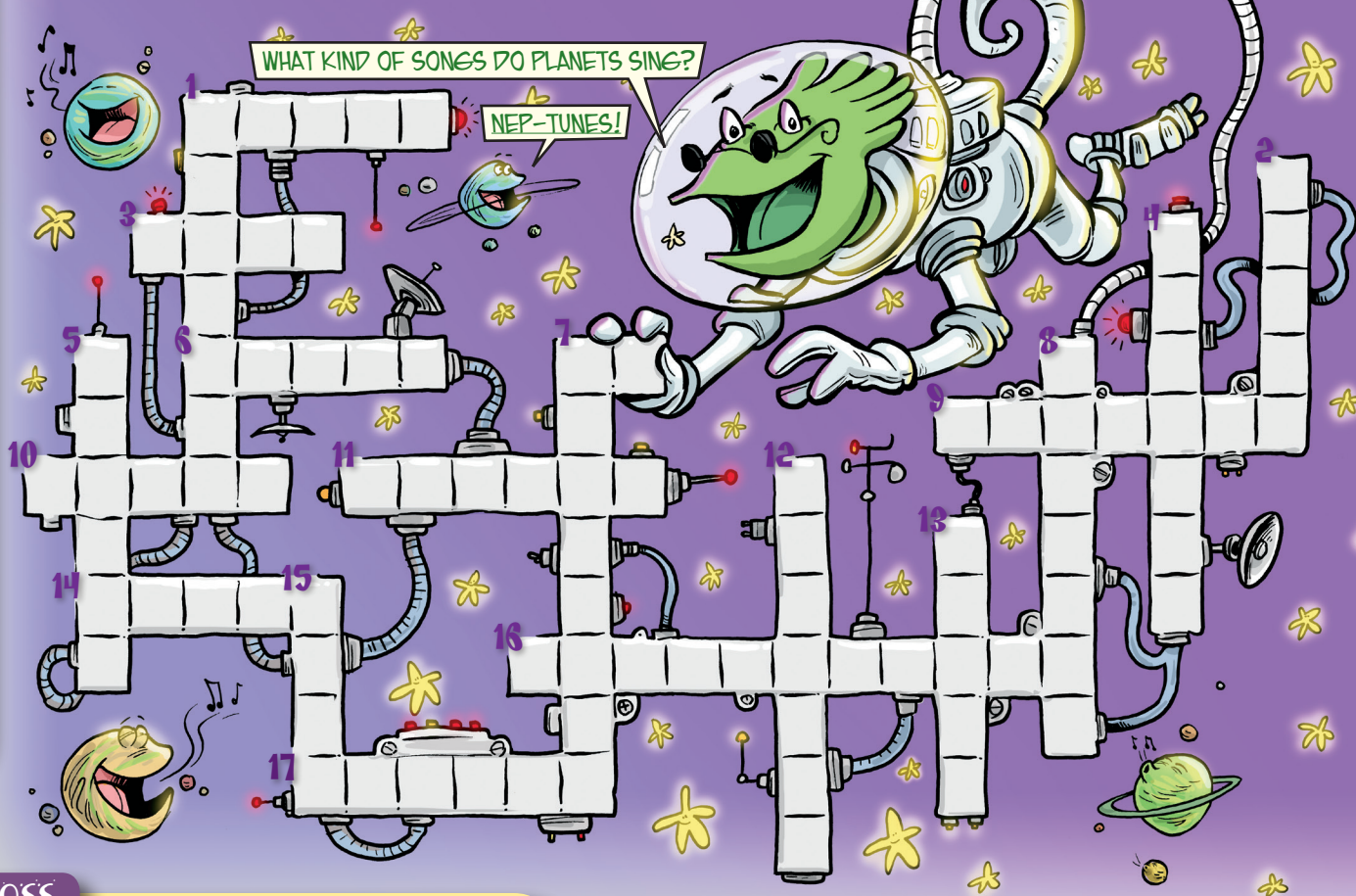
Ava designed creatively patterned uniforms. She says, "The earth in the middle with two hands, white and black," and the rainbow puzzles "represent world peace." The suits are "usually black, but can turn rainbow by command." The Uplifter thinks of a power, "taps one of the puzzles, and uses the power immediately."

## HONORABLE MENTION WINNERS

**Caleb Mathura**, age 10, Wisconsin, U.S. • **Esai Malia-Tharps**, age 9, Pennsylvania, U.S.

**Nathan Rivera**, age 11, Texas, U.S. • **Naeim Zarei**, age 14, North Carolina, U.S.





## ACROSS

1. Earth's \_\_\_\_\_ system formed about 4.6 billion years ago. (p. 17)
3. Throughout your life, you can make endless discoveries about your mysterious \_\_\_\_\_. (p. 5)
6. Ruth says, "When you speak the \_\_\_\_\_, people sit up and take notice." (p. 23)
7. It's often rounded to 3.14, but it really goes on forever. (p. 10)
9. Yaran means \_\_\_\_\_. (p. 20)
10. When you speak from the \_\_\_\_\_ about what you believe, you're singing your own unique song. (p. 2)
11. A word or phrase you repeat over and over (p. 18)
14. Jupiter and Saturn each have at least 50 of these. (p. 11)
16. This bird can sing at least 180 tunes! (p. 2)
17. On March 26, turn off your \_\_\_\_\_ at 8:30 p.m. for Earth Hour. (p. 24)

## DOWN

1. Rahim says he likes to help people by opening a \_\_\_\_\_ for the poor. (p. 12)
2. "Meditation is the key for opening the \_\_\_\_\_ of mysteries." (p. 18)
4. Keith Ransom-Kehler said, "Every Bahá'í is a \_\_\_\_\_." (p. 26)
5. They may give us insight into our feelings or goals. (p. 9)
7. There are 118 of these in Egypt. (p. 29)
8. Dusty says our purpose here is to help others and acquire \_\_\_\_\_. (p. 13)
12. Being \_\_\_\_\_ about the world can make life an exciting adventure. (p. 7)
13. Some \_\_\_\_\_ are so far away that it takes centuries for their light to reach Earth. (p. 17)
15. Your \_\_\_\_\_ is on a never-ending journey. (p. 16)

## FROM OUR MAILBOX



I like Lightning and Luna, because I have been getting **Brilliant Star** since I was really little, and I can go back and find most of the earliest comics and it's funny ... I love getting mail, so when **Brilliant Star** comes I feel good. I always love the creativity of the covers, and I sometimes get ideas for stories from the magazine.

—Marzi B., age 12, Maryland, U.S.

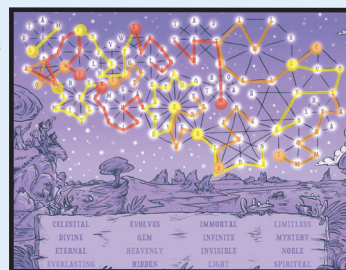
## ANSWERS

PAGE 2: Birds at far top left near title, far top right near quote, on branch at top right, in rock at center right, on branch at center right, above water at bottom right, in brush at bottom center, in rock at bottom left, on branch at bottom left, on branch at center left, in bridge at center left, on rock at top left, in leaves at top center, on wire at top center, on shirt at top center, in leaves at center

PAGE 6: (top to bottom, left to right): whale, glacier, bald eagle, squirrel, jellyfish, raindrop, grass, macaw, red-eyed tree frog

PAGE 7: 1) open, 2) questions, 3) clues, 4) notes, 5) Look, 6) experiments, 7) observe, 8) answers, 9) imagination, 10) give

PAGE 16



PAGE 10: Pi symbols at top left on wall border, brick, board, balloon, shirt; at top center on poster; at top right on building and banner outside window; at center right on shirt, sign, pie, plate; at bottom right on sign and backpack; at bottom center on plate; at center on sign and shirt



# STEP BY STEP

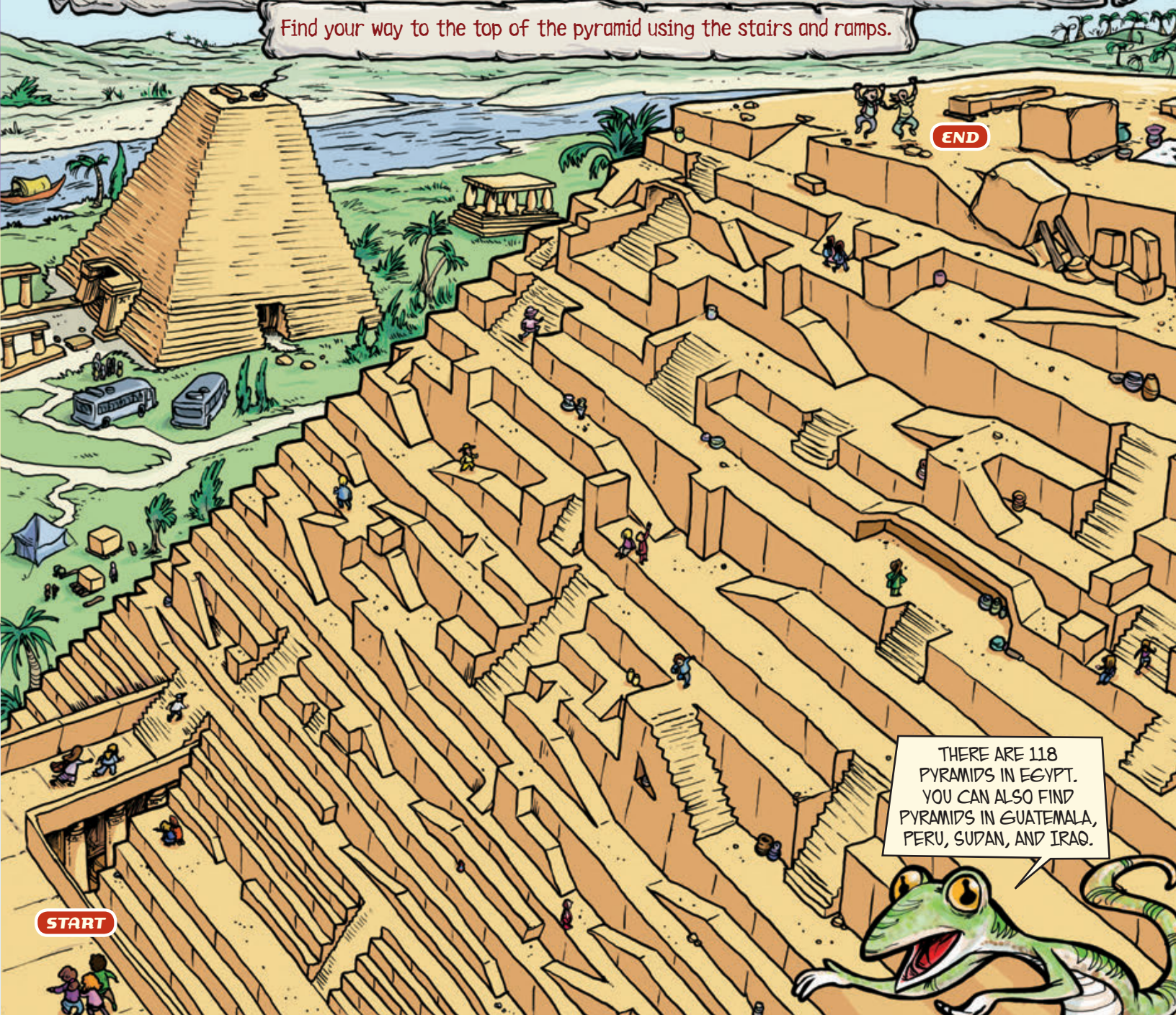
**F**rom Mexico to Egypt, mysterious stone pyramids rise out of jungles and deserts. Their history and treasures have fascinated people through the ages. Some were temples with elaborate carvings and religious symbols. The pyramids in Egypt served as royal tombs for the pharaoh and his family.

In the Sahara Desert thousands of years ago, there were no modern tools. Imagine using hand tools to cut giant stone blocks weighing as much as five camels!

Scientists believe workers used wooden sleds to drag the stones for miles and up ramps. It took about 20 years to build the largest pyramid in Egypt.

These landmarks give us clues about ancient cultures, beliefs, and ways of life. The vision, creativity, and effort used to build them can inspire us. When you're struggling with something that seems too hard, think of the pyramid builders. Remember that step by step, you too can do amazing things.

Find your way to the top of the pyramid using the stairs and ramps.



THERE ARE 118  
PYRAMIDS IN EGYPT.  
YOU CAN ALSO FIND  
PYRAMIDS IN GUATEMALA,  
PERU, SUDAN, AND IRAQ.



"In the meeting place of life be ye a guiding candle;  
in the skies of this world be dazzling stars;  
in the gardens of unity be birds of the spirit,  
singing of inner truths and mysteries."

—'Abdu'l-Bahá



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