

A BAHÁ'Í COMPANION FOR YOUNG EXPLORERS

# Brilliant Star

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VOL. 47, NO. 2/3

GO TEAM!

FRIENDS FOREVER

QUIZ: ARE YOU A  
WORLD CITIZEN?

LIGHTNING & LUNA:  
SECRETS REVEALED



BUILDING UNITY



# Brilliant Star

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Brilliant Star empowers kids to explore their roles as world citizens. Inspired by the principles of peace and unity in the Bahá'í Faith, we encourage readers to use their virtues to make the world a better place.

The Bahá'í Faith is the second most widespread religion in the world, with over five million Bahá'ís. It 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 all religions come from one God. Bahá'u'lláh's eldest son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, interpreted His teachings and led the Bahá'í community after Bahá'u'lláh's passing.

Today, Bahá'ís work to bring love and justice to the world, and end prejudice and discrimination of all kinds.

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## DEAR FRIENDS,

What do cheering on your teammates, cleaning up a park, and praying with friends have in common?

They're actions that help build our communities!

A community might be a group of people who live, learn, or work together. It could be people who share beliefs, interests, or goals. We can even think of the whole world as a community — a huge global neighborhood made up of people from all races, faiths, and nationalities.

In this issue, discover tools to make any group more vibrant and unified. Quiz yourself on world citizenship. Play games from diverse cultures and find out about festivals around the globe. Create a community of light with a paper craft project. Draw a mural to support the right to education. And meet writer and performer Andrea Hope, who promotes social action through spoken word poetry.

Wherever you live, you can find lots of ways to make a difference in your local and global communities. So grab your tool kit and get started.



LOVE, BRILLIANT STAR ☆

## NEWS ABOUT YOUR SUBSCRIPTION



Creating *Brilliant Star*'s new website at [www.brilliantstarmagazine.org](http://www.brilliantstarmagazine.org) has been an important part of our work for some time. With *Brilliant Star* Online, we're reaching and connecting with more kids and families around the globe.

However, you may have noticed that your magazine has been late getting to your mailbox. We're excited to announce our plan for getting back on schedule. We're producing four issues that cover four months each, instead of two. And these new issues will have eight extra pages of fun.

After four expanded issues, we'll return to our bimonthly schedule for the January/February 2016 issue. If you have an annual subscription, you'll still receive the same number of issues.

Thanks for your patience with us as *Brilliant Star* grows to serve you better! For more details, check out:

[www.brilliantstarmagazine.org/about/otd](http://www.brilliantstarmagazine.org/about/otd)



# Delicious Diversity

**W**hether your favorite cookies are bursting with chocolate chips or covered in frosting and sprinkles, a sweet treat is something to savor. As if by magic, a blend of flour, butter, eggs, and sugar gets transformed into crunchy, chewy, or nutty goodness.

Like skillful baking, a mix of people and talents

can add up to a happy community. Just as it's fun to try new flavors, bringing together diverse friends and ideas can have sweet results. You might cook up creative ways to help end hunger, care for the environment, or stop bullying at school. When everyone feels accepted and shares their opinions with respect, it's a recipe for unity!

Fill in the blanks to find ingredients for a caring community.







# RILEY'S RAINFOREST

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

## Finding Friends

**H**ow is friendship like riding a bike or eating veggies? It gives your health a boost!

Research shows that in addition to being fun, social ties with friends and family are crucial for our health and happiness. In fact, one study found that strong, happy relationships are as important as eating a nutritious diet and not smoking! Getting support from others helps us deal with stress, which leads to better health. People with close friends and family are happier and may even live longer than those who feel more isolated.

Feeling connected to a community is like a safety net. You have the confidence to leap into a new sport or an audition for a play because you know

your friends are cheering you on. And if you don't make it, they'll be there for encouragement. On the other hand, loneliness hurts. Feeling rejected activates the same areas of our brains as physical pain. A put-down from a friend can feel as bad as a punch in the stomach.

If you don't have a *lot* of friends, don't worry! The number doesn't matter as much as having some strong and positive ties. Be sure to nurture your relationships. Enjoy fun times and build good memories together. Offer encouragement when someone is down. Take time to check in with people you haven't seen in a while. When you make friends and family a priority, everyone can be healthier and happier.



## Explore & Soar: Strengthen Your Friendships

**N**urturing relationships takes some time and effort, but it also feels great. Try these simple ways to build stronger bonds with people in your life:

- ☐ Give sincere compliments. *Awesome job! Your music rocks!*
- ☐ Be curious about people and ask questions. *Did you have a good trip? How are you today?*
- ☐ Explore things you have in common, such as hobbies or music.



- ☐ Support healthy interests you don't have in common. If they make your friends happy, cheer them on.
- ☐ Look for creative ways to show your thanks when someone is kind.
- ☐ Keep in touch with friends and family you don't see often. Send texts, e-mails, cards, or homemade gifts.

## Curiosity Canopy



**T** rue or False? More than half of teens spend time texting friends every day.

**TRUE.** In one survey, 55% of teens 13–17 said they text friends daily. Just 25% said they spend time every day with friends outside of school.



# ARE YOU A WORLD CITIZEN?

"The concept of world citizenship is a direct result of the contraction of the world into a single neighborhood . . ." —Bahá'í Writings



**W**hen you travel to another country, you have to show your passport. But in today's interconnected world, you can virtually experience other countries with all kinds of media. You can see events unfolding as they happen on live news feeds or blog updates. Anyone, including *you*, can make their voice heard from almost

anywhere on Earth. Your actions aren't confined to your neighborhood or city—you can be a world citizen.

World citizens believe it's up to each of us to take care of our global community. All people and creatures should be treated fairly and have an equal chance to be safe, healthy, and happy.

Take this quiz and find out if you're a world citizen. Circle your answers, then add up your points.

**1** I remember that all of Earth's people and creatures are connected, and what we do can impact others.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1

**2** I get to know people from different cultures, religions, and backgrounds.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1

**3** I use technology in a positive, friendly way, to stay in touch with friends and share ideas.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1

**4** I care for the environment and do my part to conserve our resources.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1



**5** I find peaceful ways to resolve conflicts with others.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1

**6** I try to learn about the world's religions and the many things they have in common.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1

**7** If I or someone else is treated unfairly, I speak up.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1

**8** I'm concerned about injustice anywhere, and I try to help.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1

**9** I reach out to new kids at school or in the neighborhood.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1

**10** I learn about what's happening on other parts of the planet.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1



**11** I find ways to be of service in my school or community.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1

**12** I treat everyone with fairness and respect.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1

**13** I'm curious about cultural traditions and ways of life.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1

**14** I share my time, money, or stuff to help others.

OFTEN = 3 • SOMETIMES = 2 • RARELY = 1

## SCORING

## MY TOTAL:

**42–33 points** You're a committed world citizen who cares about your community. Keep up the good work.

**32–23 points** You're making good progress on the path to world citizenship. Find a friend to work with, and do even more.

**22–14 points** Keep looking for ways to reach out to your world community. Pick an idea from the quiz to start. You can make a difference!



# Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace Guidance for Global Leaders

## 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 Tihrán, Iran

#### 1844

Recognizes the Báb as  
a new Messenger of God

#### 1852

Imprisonment in the  
"Black Pit" of Tihrán

#### 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.

Imagine being on a dangerous 12-day journey, riding in wagons or on pack animals. It's the middle of winter, and the bitter cold cuts through your thin clothes. The only way to get drinking water is to build a fire that melts the ice.

In 1863, Bahá'u'lláh, His family, and about a dozen companions faced these hardships. Though He had committed no crime, Muslim officials saw Bahá'u'lláh's influence as a threat, and He was exiled from Constantinople (now Istanbul) to Adrianople (now Edirne), Turkey.



House of Bahá'u'lláh in Edirne, Turkey

Soon after Bahá'u'lláh arrived in Adrianople, people began noticing His noble character and kindness. Top officials, including the governor, visited Him. People bowed to Him in the streets.

Bahá'u'lláh spent much of His time revealing holy writings. "Day and night," wrote one eyewitness, "the Divine verses were raining down in such number that it was impossible to record them."

Although He was living in exile, Bahá'u'lláh fearlessly conveyed His teachings to some of the world's most powerful kings and leaders. He wrote to Sultán 'Abdu'l-'Azíz, who ruled the Ottoman Empire (including what are now Turkey and Israel), as well as to Násiri'd-Dín Sháh of Persia (now Iran). He addressed Tsar Alexander II of Russia, Emperor Napoleon III of France, Kaiser Wilhelm I of Germany,

Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria-Hungary, and Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom. He also wrote to the Pope, the rulers of the American continent, and all leaders on Earth as a group.

Bahá'u'lláh called upon these powerful people to turn to God and lead fairly. "Be vigilant, that ye may not do injustice to anyone," He wrote, "be it to the extent

of a grain of mustard seed."

He told them to cooperate and establish peace on Earth. "Compose your differences and reduce your

armaments . . . that your minds and hearts may be tranquilized."

And He advised them to live moderately. "Your people are your treasures," He wrote. "Do not rob them to rear palaces for yourselves; nay rather choose for them that which ye choose for yourselves."

Some rulers responded angrily to Bahá'u'lláh. Napoleon reportedly flung away the first of two Tablets he received, and ordered an impolite reply. Badí, a 17-year-old who voluntarily took Bahá'u'lláh's message to the sháh in Persia, was tortured and killed. Only Queen Victoria, whom Bahá'u'lláh praised for ending slavery, was open-minded. She was said to have noted, "If this is of God, it will endure; if not, it can do no harm."

Today, millions of Bahá'ís use Bahá'u'lláh's words as a blueprint for building peace and justice.



“Tread ye the path of justice, for this, verily, is the straight path.” —Bahá’u’lláh



Bahá’u’lláh called Adrianople the “remote prison.” It was over 1,740 miles (2,800 km) from Iran, the farthest He was exiled from His homeland.

Find words from Bahá’u’lláh’s Tablets to the kings and rulers of the world.

DUTY	M	O	D	E	R	A	T	I	O	N	N	Y	Y	S
FAIRNESS	S	E	T	M	A	K	P	H	Y	B	T	C	T	S
GENEROSITY	A	T	C	G	E	V	N	Y	T	I	Y	E	I	C
GRACE	F	L	E	I	R	R	T	O	S	U	A	E	N	H
HEAL	E	O	T	P	T	U	C	O	W	D	R	Y	U	U
JUSTICE	G	M	O	Z	D	S	R	Y	F	L	W	T	M	N
KNOWLEDGE	U	I	R	T	Y	E	U	A	N	K	E	O	A	X
MERCY	A	G	P	O	N	S	S	J	Z	M	D	D	U	K
MIGHT	R	H	Z	E	I	T	P	T	F	S	A	N	G	W
MODERATION	D	T	G	S	S	E	N	R	I	A	F	Z	H	E
PEACE	H	E	A	L	A	Y	B	W	G	R	A	C	E	O
POWER	Q	C	J	C	R	E	W	O	P	O	H	X	Z	L
PROTECT	N	S	E	Z	H	W	L	W	M	P	L	R	B	J
SAFEGUARD	A	M	K	L	V	J	Z	A	L	Q	Z	A	L	U
STEADFAST														
TRUTH														
WISDOM														
UNITY														



# 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ'S KINDNESS IN NEW YORK

**W**hen 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited North America in 1912, he spent more time in New York City than any other place. There he gave dozens of talks about the Bahá'í teachings of peace and unity.

About a week after arriving in the spring, he went to the Bowery Mission to speak to poor, homeless men. He and his large group of friends were an unusual sight. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who was 67, wore long, flowing robes and a white turban. His long hair and beard were white, too. When neighborhood boys saw him, some began calling him names and tossing sticks.

A Bahá'í named Carrie Kinney stopped to talk with the boys. She patiently explained that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was a holy man who had been unfairly imprisoned and exiled for many years. The boys became interested, and Carrie invited them to her home to meet him.

The next Sunday, a noisy group of about 25 kids trooped into the stately Kinney home. 'Abdu'l-Bahá greeted each one with playful smiles and laughter, clapping their hands or putting an arm around their shoulders.

The kids were Caucasian, except for one African American boy of about 13. He came in last and paused at the doorway, looking a little unsure about whether he was welcome. In many places, due to racism, black and white kids couldn't go to the same schools, parks, or restaurants. But 'Abdu'l-Bahá showered everyone with kindness.

Howard Colby Ives, a minister who later became a Bahá'í, said that when 'Abdu'l-Bahá saw the boy, "His face lighted up with a heavenly smile. He raised His hand with a gesture of princely welcome and exclaimed in a loud voice so that none could fail to hear; that here was a black rose. The room fell into instant silence."



'Abdu'l-Bahá (seated) with Carrie Kinney (back row, left), her husband Edward, and their three sons. 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave Carrie the name Vafa (Certitude) and called Edward Saffa (Serenity).

'Abdu'l-Bahá had sent out for candy, and a large, five-pound box of chocolates arrived. He took the box around the room, putting a large handful of candy into every boy's hands with a smile.

Then, from the nearly empty box, he chose a very dark chocolate. He looked at it with a smile, then went over to the African American boy and put his arm around him. The boy gazed at 'Abdu'l-Bahá with adoration.

Howard knew these simple acts of kindness could have a powerful impact. He wrote, "The freedom from just this one prejudice in the minds and hearts of this score or more of souls would unquestionably bring happiness and freedom from rancor to thousands of hearts."



# HEARTS IN ACTION

"Strive, therefore, to create love in the hearts in order that they may become glowing and radiant. When that love is shining, it will permeate other hearts . . ." —'Abdu'l-Bahá

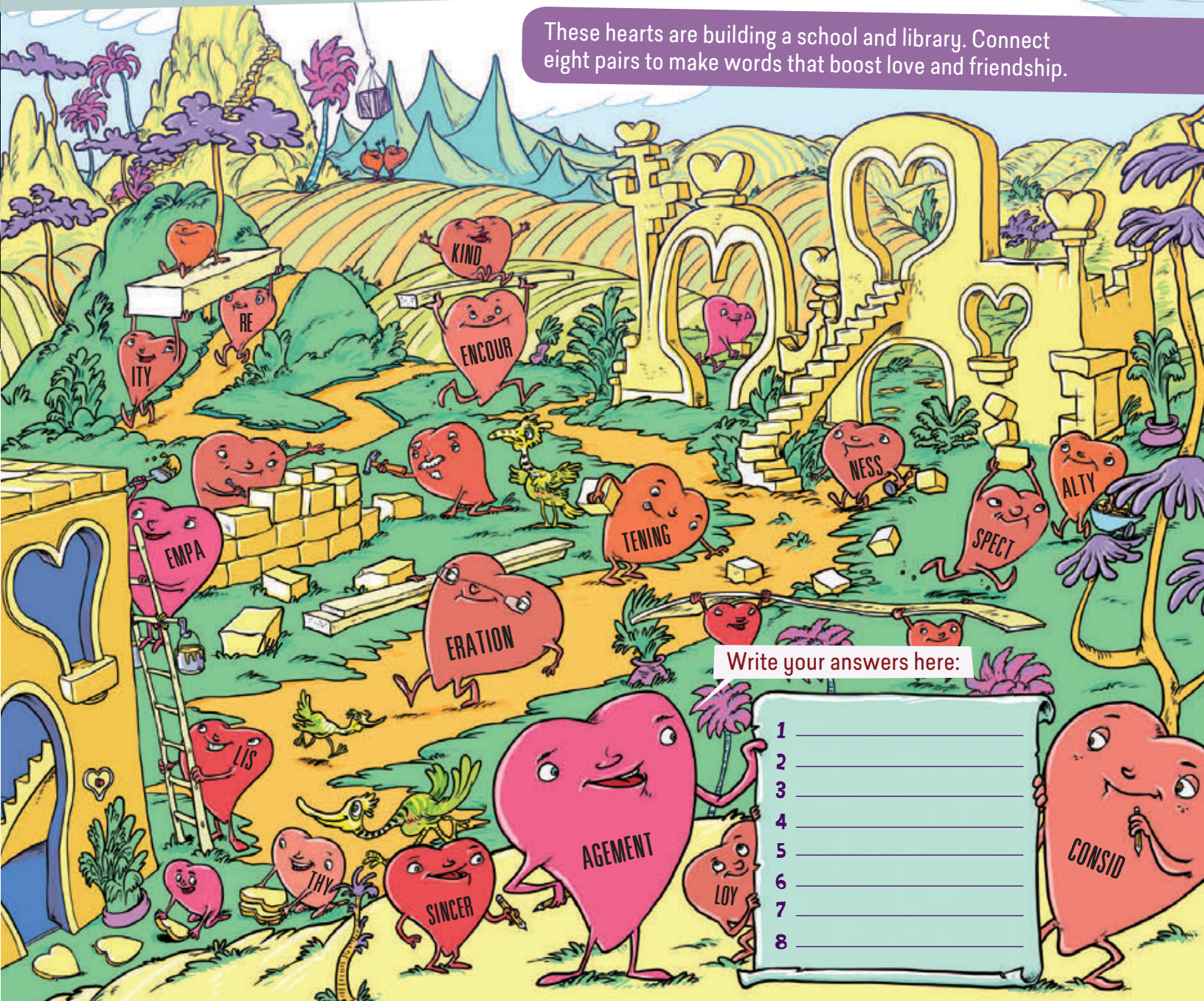
**H**ow do you build a friendly community? One heart at a time! Connecting with people starts with a foundation of love and compassion.

In a vibrant community, people show love by getting along and helping each other. Everyone feels safe and welcome. It's great to be different—diversity makes the group more

fun. Each person's unique gifts are appreciated, helping the group work toward common goals. Maybe one person makes a cool design, another figures out how to use earth-friendly materials, and another is a champ at cheering on the team.

When we share our talents and cooperate in service, we turn our cities, neighborhoods, and families into true works of heart.

These hearts are building a school and library. Connect eight pairs to make words that boost love and friendship.





# Hoshi's Adventures: Packing Smart



**H**i, I'm Hoshi. I love zooming around Earth and space on the adventure ship, the *Mystic Explorer*. I get to work with amazing friends from lots of cool places.

From this command bridge, the crew of the *Mystic* plans journeys, navigates oceans and galaxies, and gathers facts about the places we explore.

It's so much fun! But it's not always easy. Making lots of different decisions with

a group can be tricky. When everyone consults by talking calmly and respectfully, a crew can handle stormy situations. The same kind of decision-making can work for group activities at school, service projects in your neighborhood, or sharing chores with your siblings. Wherever you go in life, be sure to pack consultation for a smooth and happy voyage.

Search the screen for words to complete tips about consulting in a group.

1. Gather facts from a variety of \_\_\_\_\_ sources.
2. Figure out the \_\_\_\_\_ ideas involved, like fairness or unity.
3. Give everyone a chance to share their \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Try to think of several creative \_\_\_\_\_, not just the most obvious solutions.
5. Identify positive and negative \_\_\_\_\_ of ideas.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ to each speaker without interrupting.

7. Be \_\_\_\_\_. It often takes time to make a decision.
8. Ask \_\_\_\_\_ if you don't understand something.
9. Be \_\_\_\_\_. Focus on the best idea, even if it isn't yours.
10. Keep in mind what's good for the \_\_\_\_\_ as a whole.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ for the choice that you believe will work the best.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ the group's decision with unity.

listen

group

outcomes

vote

opinions

patient

detached

options

spiritual

questions

support

trustworthy

# 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

### Smart Decorating

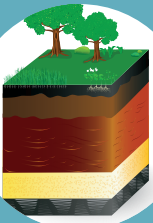
Decorate with natural items, like pinecones, branches, shells, or colorful fruit. If you buy new stuff, pick things that can be reused or recycled.



## WOW, REALLY?

Bamboo, a hollow, woody grass, can grow about 3 ft. (91 cm) in one day! It's Earth's fastest-growing plant and a favorite of pandas.

## OUR CONNECTIONS

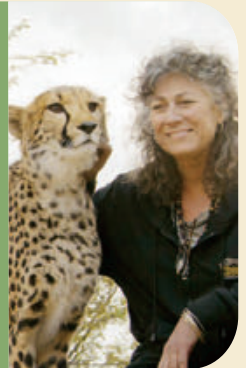


Topsoil—the top 2–8 inches (5–20 cm) of soil on Earth—is home to *billions* of microorganisms. These living creatures, such as bacteria

and fungi, give nutrients that help our food grow. But about 40% of topsoil worldwide has degraded due to chemicals, erosion, and animal grazing. Since it takes hundreds of years to develop, we're losing more than we can replenish. We can help preserve topsoil by growing plants or trees in exposed areas.

## PROTECTING OUR PLANET

**Dr. Laurie Marker** has saved cheetahs and their habitats for over 40 years. In 1990, she founded the Cheetah Conservation Fund, which doubled Namibia's cheetah population. She's won many awards and says, "We are very proud of the work we do to educate young conservationists, as we believe they are the best hope for the future of this planet."



## WHERE IN THE WORLD?



The Cinque Terre (Five Lands) sits on coastal cliffs along the Mediterranean Sea. This UNESCO World Heritage site is a cluster of small fishing villages that date back to medieval times. *Unscramble the letters to find its location:*

L A T I Y   

## AMAZING ANIMALS



These social birds cooperate to capture fish in shallow waters. Their wingspans can be nearly 12 feet (3.7 m), and they fly in a "V" formation to save energy, getting a little gust of lift from the birds in front. *Fill in the blanks to find their name:*

G R     A T    W H     T     P     L     C A     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?

### Diego R.

Age: **11**

I live in:

**Canary Islands, Spain**

I want to be: **Chemist**

This career interests me because:

**I want to discover the secrets of physics and chemistry. (Also, I want to do some experiments.)**

Virtue I admire most:

**Truthfulness**

Hobbies or sports:

**Aikido ... cello and piano, theatre, and reading ...**



Favorite animal or pet:

**DODO!!!**

What I love most about where I live:

**It is spring all the year. That's why we have many tourists, and the people here are from many different countries ... In my school ... there are children from England, Russia, India, South America ...**

To help my community, I'd:

**[Have] a temple (Bahá'í). By having one, more people would ask questions about the Faith. And many people of different religions can pray in the same place ... It would be very cool.**

My favorite role models:

**My mom and dad, because they are very active in the Faith.**

### Badi C.

Age: **13**

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

I want to be:

**My dream is to be a professional basketball player.**

Virtue I admire most:

**Kindness**

Favorite Bahá'í activities:

**Going to Bahá'í camps and ... junior youth groups**

Place I'd love to visit:

**Venezuela**

A favorite book:

**Twelve Years a Slave**

A favorite food:

**Venezuelan arepas**

A world citizen:

**Include[s] yourself in discussions about world conflicts and find[s] ways to help fix those issues**



To help my community, I'd:

**Make a special housing unit for people that need help getting back on their feet**

If I could create a town:

**It would be a pretty diverse place. It would also have lots of trees and weird things. Kind of like Oregon, actually.**

My favorite role models:

**Friends and family, because I always get encouragement from them. And I encourage them, so we're a pretty tight-knit group.**



### Pari B.

Age: **12**

I live in:

**Washington, U.S.**

I want to be:

**A veterinarian, zoologist, or ... work with pandas in China.**

Virtues I admire most:

**Friendliness or courage**

Favorite Bahá'í activities:

**Children's classes and service projects**

Favorite animal or pet:

**I like all animals ...**

**I own a rat, fish, and rabbit ...**

I like to help people by:

**Showing affection and helping with struggles**

My favorite role models:

**My family and friends, because they help me ... and I love them ...**

What I love most about where I live:

**My town is small, and most of my friends are just a few minutes away.**

To help my community, I'd:

**Pick up all the trash and other stuff that is polluting the earth.**

If I could create a town:

**It would be medium-sized and have tons of trees, plants, and gardens. The houses and buildings would be solar-powered and made out of Earth-friendly materials, and all the people would be extremely kind and loving.**

## Jamilah M.

Age: **11**

I live in: **Macau, China**

I want to be:  
**A doctor**

Virtue I admire most:  
**Joy**

Hobbies or sports:  
**Gymnastics, acting, dance, sailing**

Favorite Bahá'í activities:  
**Service projects with my junior youth group**

Favorite animal or pet:  
**My hamsters (Fluffy and Humphrey)**

I like to help people by:  
**Caring for them and giving my time**

What I love most about where I live:  
**I like my school, School of the Nations, because the students are from all over the world.**

A world citizen:  
[Knows] that we are one, and everyone is a family. We are not just part of one part of the world. We all fit in, and we shouldn't be against each other.

If I could create a town:  
**It would be a peaceful town with no wars [and] . . . with people serving each other.**

My favorite role models:  
**My mom and dad. They taught me all about the Bahá'í Faith, and we do service projects together.**



**“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

## Meena F.

Age: **11**

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

I want to be:  
**Something that has to do with animals**

Virtues I admire most:  
**Kindness and loyalty**

Hobbies or sports:  
**Basketball and reading**

Favorite Bahá'í activities:  
**Jr. youth group and attending Bahá'í conferences**

Favorite animal or pet:  
**My dog, Lilly**

Places I'd love to visit:  
**Ireland or Scotland**

I like to help people by:  
**Giving them advice and just being there for them**

A favorite book:  
**All . . . Harry Potter books**

A favorite food:  
**Brynzova Halushky (Slovak dumplings)**



My favorite role models:  
**Malala [Yousafzai], my mom, and my dad, because they are all brave and believe in what's right and are willing to work for it.**

What I love most about where I live:  
**We have lots of outdoor activities and Bahá'í conferences near us.**

A world citizen:  
**Helps others and tries to protect the earth**

Five qualities of a happy community:  
**Trustworthiness, kindness, loyalty, they don't bully others, and they have fun together.**

## Citlali P.

Age: **11**

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

I want to be:  
**A fashion designer**

Virtue I admire most:  
**Tactfulness**

Favorite Bahá'í activities:  
**Reading books about the Faith and neighborhood teaching**

Favorite animal or pet:  
**Siberian tiger**

I like to help people by:  
**Giving to the poor**

A favorite book:  
**From Mountain to Mountain: Stories About Bahá'u'lláh, by Hitjo Garst**

A world citizen:  
**Believe[s] in the oneness of God . . . and love[s] all mankind . . .**

What I love most about where I live:  
**It's small and quiet, with lots of my friends! Also, there are lots of trees.**

To help my community, I'd:  
**Build a library for my school, since it doesn't have one.**

If I could create a town:  
**[It would be] a town with Bahá'is, and where everyone practices virtues . . . Also with no global warming, and peace for everyone.**



## How to be a Radiant Star:

1. If you're age 7–14, go to [www.brilliantstarmagazine.org](http://www.brilliantstarmagazine.org) and choose “Explore,” then “Bahá'is & Friends in Action,” then “Radiant Stars.” Click “Apply Now” and fill out the form. Or e-mail us at [brilliant@usbnc.org](mailto:brilliant@usbnc.org). Include your name, age, birth date, mailing address, and phone number.
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 form, 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).



# How the Kangaroo Got Her Pouch

**L**ong ago, in Australia's Outback, a mother kangaroo and her joey met a wombat who was crying. He had just escaped a skulk of foxes.

The wombat said, "I'm injured and my sight is poor. I'm trying to find food."

The kangaroo said, "I'll help you." She let the wombat hold her tail, and she led him to a patch of tasty grass. Then she realized that her joey, who loved to explore, had disappeared. The kangaroo raced off in panic. She was relieved to find the little one playing in a field of spring wildflowers.

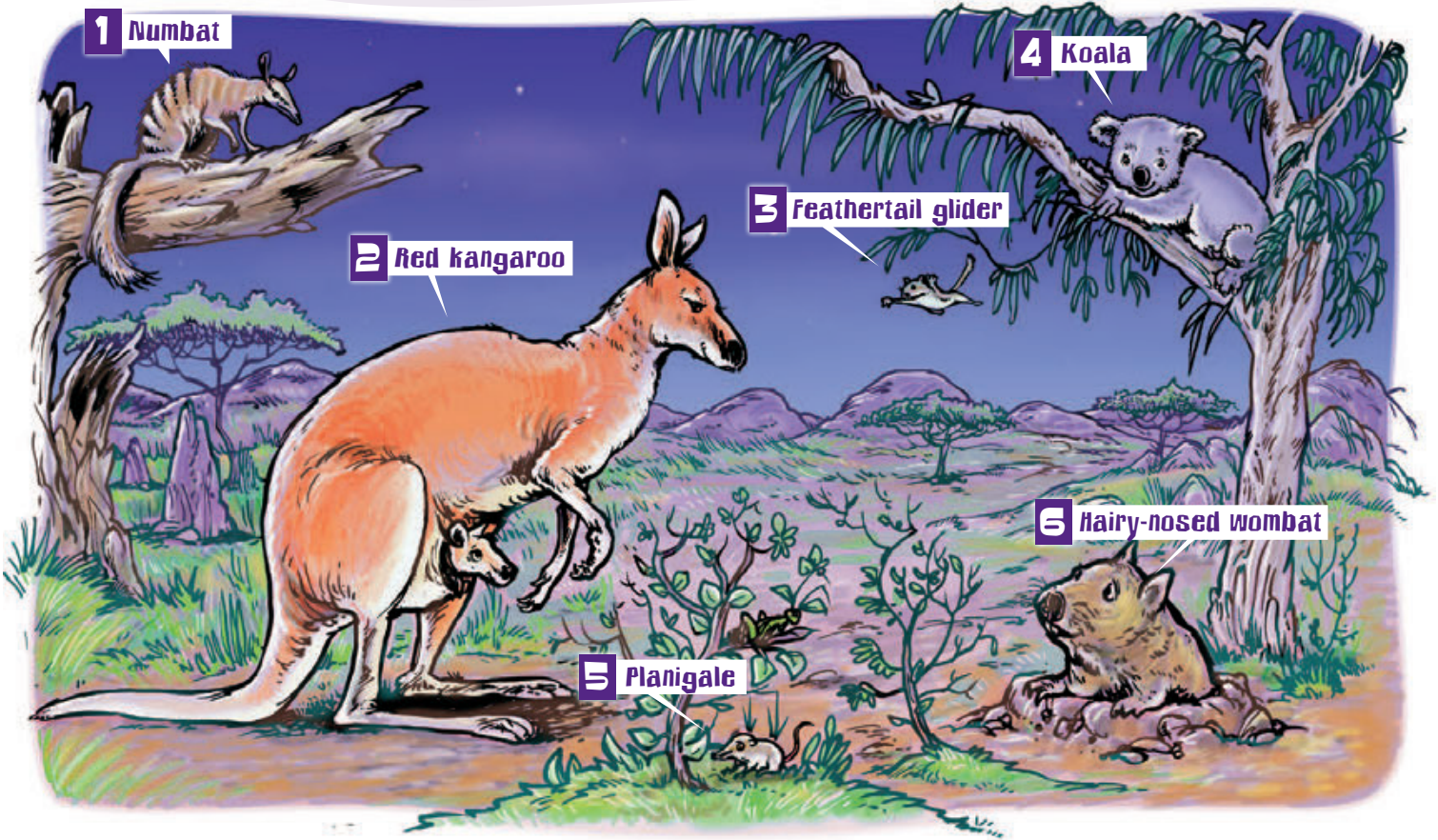


The kangaroo returned to the wombat. She spotted a hunter moving toward him. She yelled, "Run! It's a hunter!" The wombat took off through the bush.

Later, the kangaroo and wombat met again in a eucalyptus grove. He was so grateful to the kangaroo that he gave her a gift: a magic apron. When she put it on, it turned into a pouch to carry her little joey.

"Thank you!" cried the delighted kangaroo. "If only all mothers could have this magical pouch for their young!" The wombat was touched by her caring heart, so he gave magic aprons to all marsupials in the land.

**Match each statement with the animal who speaks it.**



**A** ☐ I'm the smallest meat-eating marsupial—I can catch grasshoppers that are about as big as I am!

**B** ☐ I eat about 20,000 termites a day. My pointed snout helps me find them.

**C** ☐ I like heights and often nest in tree hollows. I huddle with dozens of my family to keep warm.

**D** ☐ I travel in a mob, which can have over 100 members. If there's danger, I thump my tail on the ground and leap to safety.

**E** ☐ I use my claws to dig burrows and tunnels. I might look slow, but I can run up to 25 miles (40 km) per hour.

**F** ☐ My feet have thumbs that help me climb eucalyptus trees.



# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

**"Direct your whole effort toward the happiness of those who are despondent, bestow food upon the hungry, clothe the needy, and glorify the humble." —'Abdu'l-Bahá**

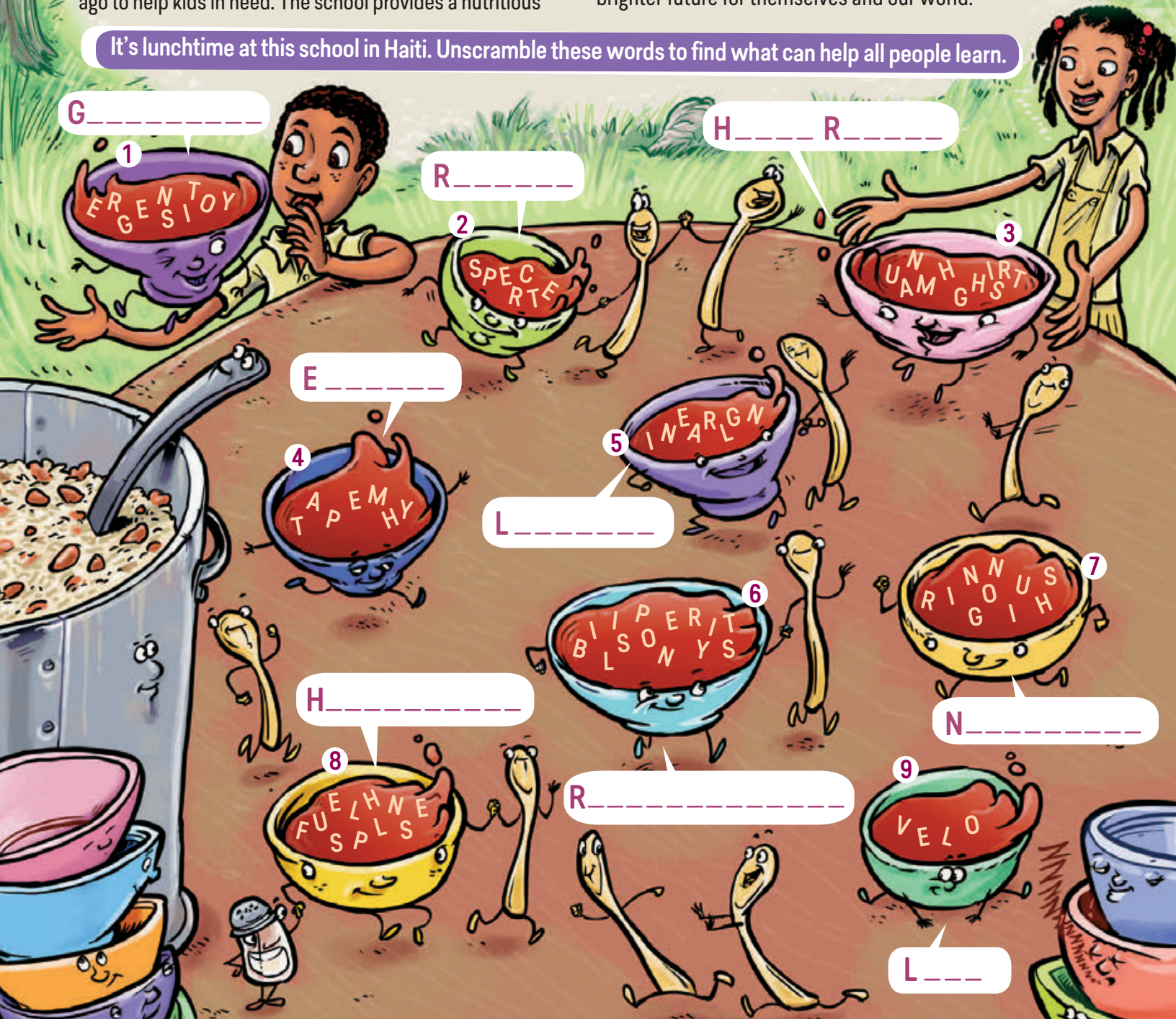
**H**ave you ever tried to do homework when you're really hungry? It's almost impossible to focus. Sadly, that's the reality for millions of kids.

Schools can make a big difference. For example, the Anis Zunuzi Bahá'í School in Haiti was started over 30 years ago to help kids in need. The school provides a nutritious

meal for its students each day. But there are still 58 million kids worldwide who aren't able to go to elementary school. Poverty and hunger are often the reason.

All people have a right to feed their bodies and minds. With good nutrition and education, kids can create a brighter future for themselves and our world.

**It's lunchtime at this school in Haiti. Unscramble these words to find what can help all people learn.**







## ASK A SPACE SCIENTIST

Our universe is full of mysteries, and some of the most mind-boggling are in space. Curious kids asked questions, and we sent them to two Bahá'í scientists who work for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). We'll have guest contributors, too. Have questions about space? Send them to [brilliant@usbnc.org](mailto:brilliant@usbnc.org) (with your name and age).



Mars Rover

**Any progress with sending people to Mars?** —Luvuyo, age 13

Hi, Luvuyo,

There are thousands of people around the world who are actively preparing to send humans to Mars. NASA plans to send humans into Mars orbit by 2039 at the latest. The Dutch non-profit foundation Mars One is shooting for a permanent departure in 2027. SpaceX has already successfully developed and launched their own rockets, and founder Elon Musk hopes to send humans to Mars in the next decade or two. It's a new space race, and odds are good you'll see humans on or near Mars in the 2030s.

—George

**What would happen if there were a planet, as big as Earth, right next to Earth?** —Luthando, age 10

Hi, Luthando,

A planet as big as Earth that was right next to us might not last long because of something you are already familiar with—**tides**. The tides in the Earth's oceans are caused by gravity forces from the moon, but these forces are not very large, because the moon is much smaller than the Earth, and it's about 239,000 miles (384,000 km) away. But if a planet as big as the Earth were right next to us, the tidal forces would be very large, perhaps large enough to tear the two planets apart. Tidal forces are believed by some to have broken up a moon of Saturn which formed Saturn's rings, so perhaps a nearby planet would become rings around the Earth!

—Steve

## COSMIC QUIZ

These objects orbit stars outside of our solar system. Over 1,900 of them have been found. Scientists estimate that over 100 billion exist in our galaxy! These objects are:

- A) Black holes
- B) Exoplanets
- C) Tardises
- D) Wormholes
- E) Space Stations



The answer is exoplanets. This is an artist's rendition of the planet "HD 219134b," the nearest exoplanet outside our solar system. It's 1.6 times the size of Earth.



**CHARLIE CAMARDA** is our guest contributor for this issue. He flew on the return-to-flight mission of Space Shuttle Discovery (see below) in 2005. He traveled 5.8 million miles during his two weeks in space. He's now the Senior Advisor for Engineering Development at NASA's Langley Research Center.

### What is it like to be inside of a spaceship? — Nika, age 7

Hi, Nika,

I actually rode to space one time in the space shuttle. It flies much like a typical rocket and blasts off straight up during launch. However, when it returns to Earth, it glides like a plane with the engines turned off and lands on a runway. I also trained on another space vehicle built in Russia, called the Soyuz. It was a much smaller vehicle which transports only three people to space, whereas the space shuttle used to fly as many as seven astronauts at one time to space.



Launching into space inside a spaceship is very exciting and can be a little noisy, with some vibrations. It is very much like some of the rides you may have ridden at an amusement park (like the roller coaster). You are inside your spacesuit during launch and strapped in tightly, with belts across your shoulders, chest, and waist to hold you securely as the vehicle accelerates to three times the acceleration of gravity. This means that during launch your arms feel heavy and the pressure on your chest

and rib cage increases, almost like having someone sit on your chest.

Once you reach space, you are in a near 0-gravity environment, and you can float out of your spacesuit and seats. This was probably the most fun for someone used to only playing and working on the surface of the Earth.

— Charlie

Astronaut STS-114



**STEVE SCOTTI** is a research engineer at NASA Langley Research Center in Virginia, U.S. He works to develop lighter, stronger materials and structures for aircraft and spacecraft. Watching the first astronaut launched into space inspired his interest in space exploration. He enjoys sharing his enthusiasm about science and space with kids.



**GEORGE HATCHER** is an avionics engineer at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, U.S. He works on electrical systems of uncrewed rockets. He also studies planetary science at the University of Central Florida. Working for NASA is a dream come true for George. He's aspired to be an astronaut since he was three. He's one of 100 finalists in the Mars One Project, which aims to create a human settlement on Mars.





BAXTER AND BRIDGET

# LIGHTNING & LUNA

THE SECRET WEAPON

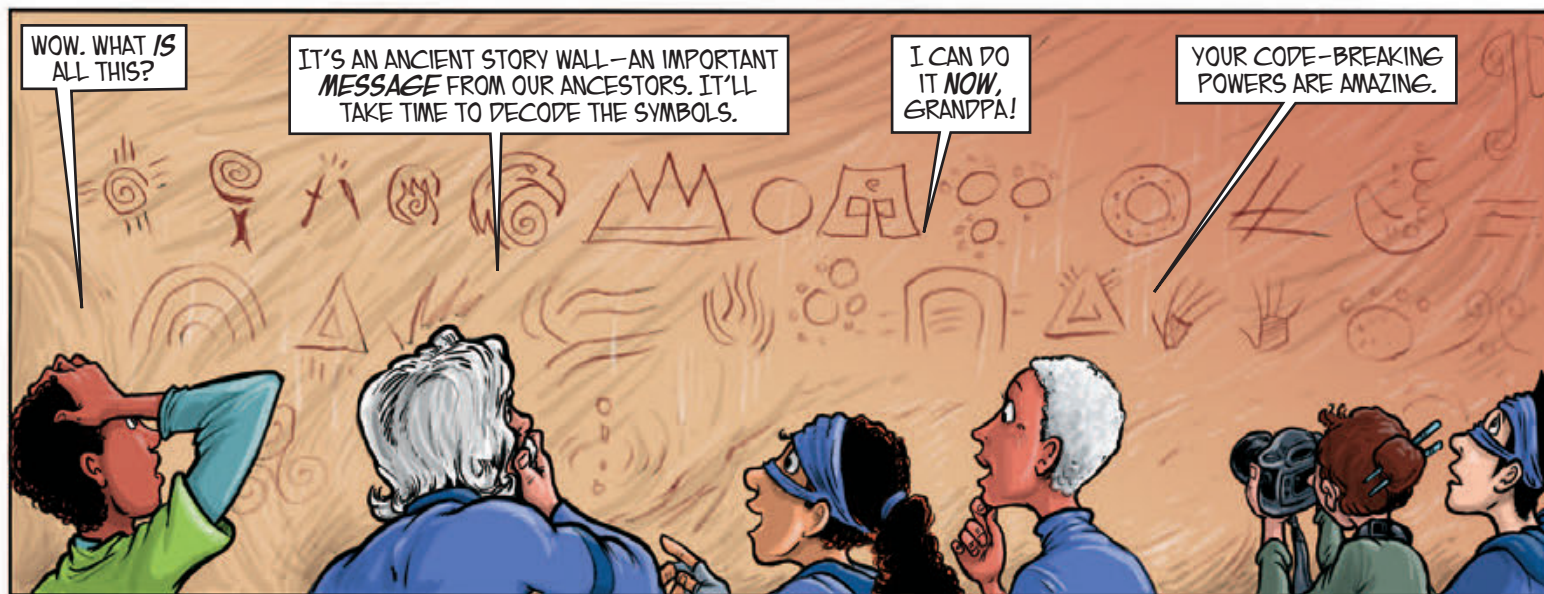
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INSIDE THE SECRET CHAMBER...









# Create a Community of Light

**W**hen you dream of the future, can you see a world where everyone lives in peace and respects each other? Does it seem realistic or impossible? The darkness of racism, inequality, and other injustices can sometimes make it hard to envision. But the Bahá'í writings promise that one day we'll have world peace. Imagining a hopeful future can keep us focused on ways to help achieve it.

Like candles lighting up a dark room, your kind actions make your community more radiant. Talk to your family, classmates, or neighbors about what you can do to help your town shine. You might start a service project, plant a community garden, or have a block party.

Create this fun craft together. Use your virtues and strengths to set your community aglow!



## You'll Need

- 8 ½" x 11" (21.6 x 27.9 cm) white paper
- ruler and scissors
- pencil and markers
- tacky glue and clear tape
- acrylic paint and brushes
- water
- 3 ½" x 6" (8.9 x 15.2 cm) decorative paper
- cotton stuffing
- battery-operated candles
- table or piece of cardboard

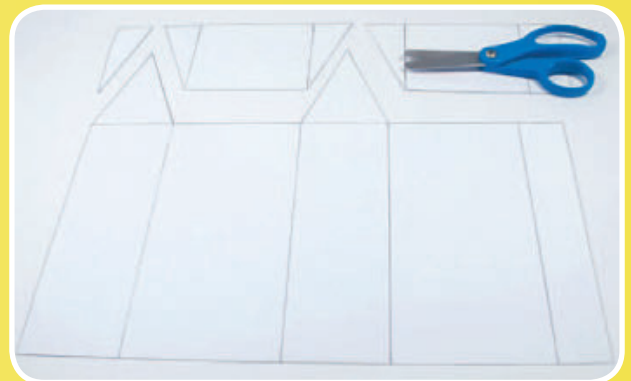
- 1 Draw a vertical line 1" (2.5 cm) from paper's short edge at right. Then draw three vertical lines to make four rectangles, alternating between 2" (5.1 cm) and 3" (7.6 cm) wide.



- 2 Draw a horizontal line across entire paper, 2 ½" (6.4 cm) from top edge. Draw a triangle roof centered in each 2" (5.1 cm) rectangle.



- 3 Trim around roof, removing smallest rectangles and triangles. Optional: For a shorter house, evenly trim bottom edge.



"Shed the light of a boundless love on every human being whom you meet . . ." —'Abdu'l-Bahá



- 4 Draw doors, windows, and designs in pencil. Fold along all vertical lines drawn in Step 1. Glue 1" (2.5 cm) tab inside end of house to form 3D shape.



- 5 Press house flat. Paint house, keeping doors and windows paint-free. Let dry.



- 6 Outline windows, doors, and designs with markers. Add virtues you'd like to see in your community.



- 7 For rooftop, fold decorative paper in half so short ends meet. Tape to roof.



- 8 Create snow by spreading cotton stuffing on table or cardboard. Place your group's houses on top, with one or more battery-powered candles in each. Dim room's lights and see your community shine!







I LOVE HAVING FRIENDS IN SO MANY PLACES!

"The diversity in the human family should be the cause of love and harmony, as it is in music where many different notes blend together in the making of a perfect chord." —'Abdu'l-Bahá



## EARTH'S BIG FAMILY

**W**ow! There are about 7.3 billion people on Earth. If every person on the planet stood fingertip to fingertip around the equator, we'd circle the Earth nearly 290 times! Our human family is enormous! We're also diverse in looks, culture, and climate. People live in freezing Arctic villages and in the typically hot Saudi Arabian desert. We have

a spectacular variety of food, music, art, clothes, and customs. With all those people, I'm sure to make friends wherever I go.

That's a lot of people to share Earth's resources, too. We have to work together to make sure there's a fair share for everyone. Caring for our planet and its creatures will make the world better for our whole global family.

## GLOBAL FAMILY FACTS

Test your knowledge about Earth's fascinating people. Circle your answers, then add up your points.

1. There are about 200 countries on Earth.

\_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False

2. Women and men earn the same pay for the same work in 35 countries.

\_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False

3. People under 15 make up one-fourth of Earth's population.

\_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False

4. Every minute, around 250 babies are born.

\_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False

5. ¡Hola! Bonjour! Ni hao! There are 3,000 different languages spoken on Earth.

\_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False



6. We have enough food in the world, but it's not fairly distributed.

At least 795 million people

don't have enough to eat.

\_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False

7. 58 million kids aren't able to go to elementary school due to poverty, war, and other injustices.

\_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False

8. Tokyo, Japan, is the world's most populated urban area, with 38 million people.

\_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False

9. Around the world, 1.8 billion people use contaminated drinking water.

\_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False

10. China and Russia each have more than 1 billion people.

\_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False

11. There are about 30 megacities in the world—urban areas with populations over 10 million.

\_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False

12. The United States has about 322 million people.

\_\_\_ True \_\_\_ False

# Create Justice

**“Education and the arts of civilization bring honor, prosperity, independence and freedom to a government and its people.” —‘Abdu’l-Bahá**

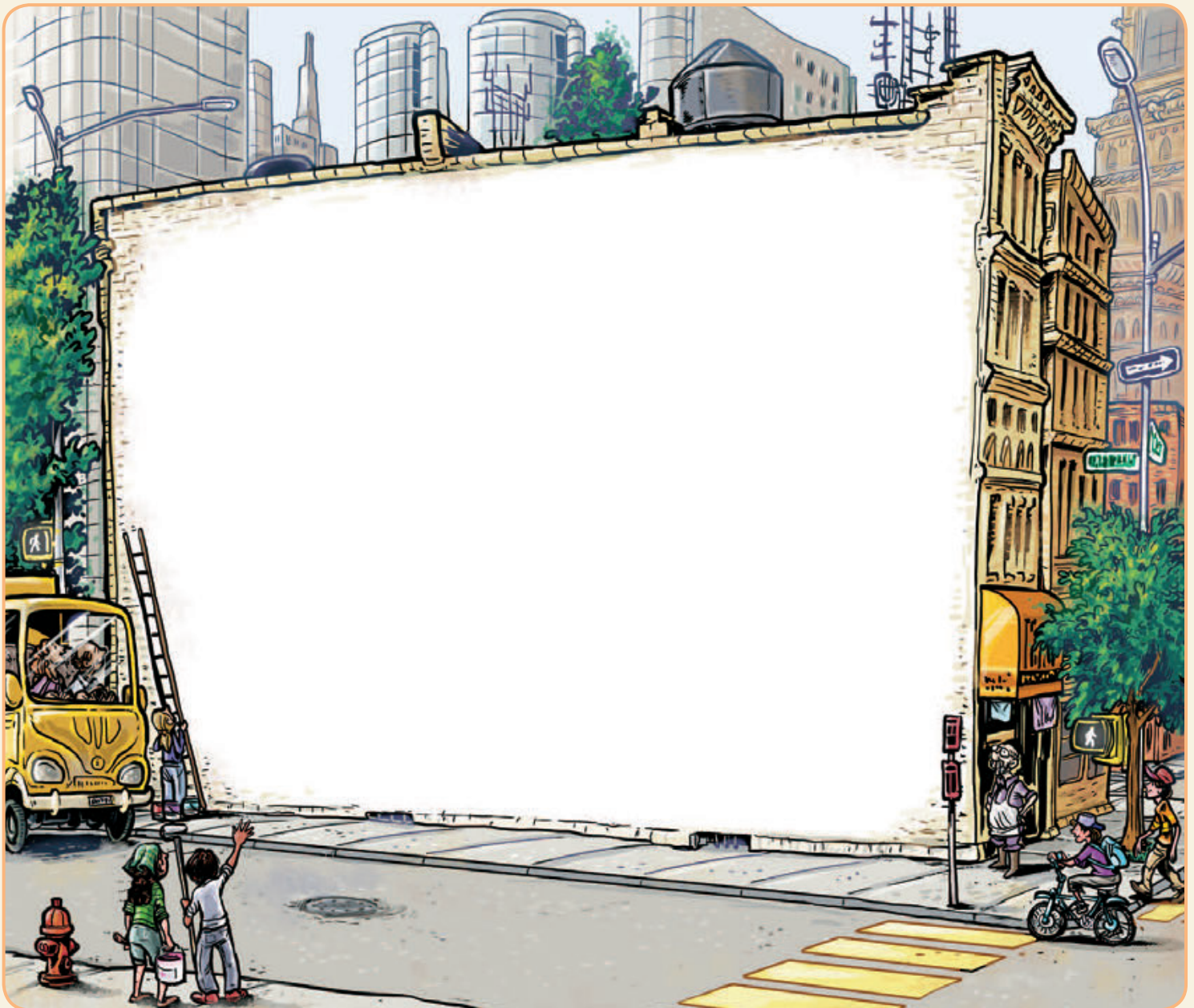
**C**an you fight for justice by making art? That’s exactly what artists around the world are doing as part of the #NotACrime campaign. Their images and words are calling attention to Bahá’ís in Iran who are denied their basic human right to education, just because of their faith.

At school, Bahá’í kids and youth are harassed by teachers and officials. Also, Bahá’ís aren’t allowed to go to college. As an

alternative, the Bahá’í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE) in Iran was created to give informal classes. But those who attend and teach at BIHE are often arrested and sometimes imprisoned.

You and your friends can help stop these injustices. Work together to create a mural that expresses the right to go to school. Then share it with the world on Instagram, or send it to us at [brilliant@usbnc.org](mailto:brilliant@usbnc.org), and we’ll share it for you.

**Imagine your #NotACrime mural. How does it promote the right to education? Draw and write your ideas here.**







# LET THE GAMES BEGIN!



**W**hat's your favorite game or sport? From soccer to tennis, games give us a chance to make new friends, cheer each other on, and build our strengths together. Games and sports can also teach us about life in other cultures. They can reflect the climate, occupations, landmarks, or traditions in a country or region. What do the games you like to play say about your world? Grab some friends, and try these games from around the globe.

## DITHWAI • South Africa

Playing Dithwai (dee-TWYEE) helps sharpen memory skills so kids can recognize their family's cows. For 4–12 players.



**To play:** Players each choose 10 stones of similar shape or markings. Each builds a mound of dirt as a “cattle pen” and puts their “cattle” (stones) in it. One player turns around, eyes closed. The others take cows from the first player's pen and put them in their own. They yell, “We capture them!” The first player has about 10 seconds to find and grab their cows. If they miss any, the other players keep them. After each player has a turn, the one with the most cattle wins.

## BLARNEY STONE • Ireland

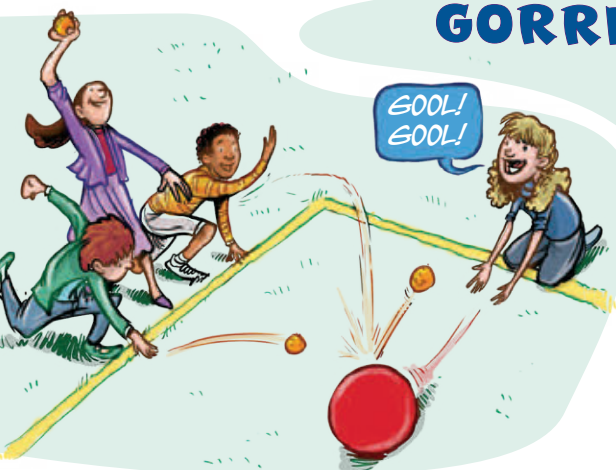
Legend says that whoever kisses the stone fixed high in the wall of Blarney Castle near Cork, Ireland, will be blessed with eloquent speech. For 6–20 players.

**To play:** Players stand around a large rock, tree trunk, or other object. A leader yells, “Go!” and players race to the object. The first to reach it will be the “keeper” who places one hand on the stone while the others return to their spots. The keeper yells, “Blarney, bum! Run, run, run!” Players run as close as they can to the keeper without being tagged. If a player is tagged, they grab the keeper's free hand. Play continues, and each tagged person becomes part of the chain. When one free player remains, he or she becomes keeper, and the game starts again.



## GORRI • Aboriginal Australia

In the original version of this game, players threw spears at a piece of rounded bark to develop speed and accuracy. For 4–20 players.



**To play:** Players stand behind a throwing line, holding tennis balls. The “roller” stands about 20 feet (6.1 m) in front of them. The roller yells, “Gool! Gool!” (Going! Going!) and rolls a soccer ball across the field, parallel to the throwing line. Players roll or throw their balls, trying to hit the soccer ball as it goes by. When a player hits the target, the others cheer. All balls are retrieved, and players try again. Everyone counts their hits to score a personal best.



# MYSTERIES IN STONE

Imagine people in the future, thousands of years from now, studying your drawings and photos. What would they learn about you and your community?

That's the mystery of petroglyphs—ancient stone carvings found throughout the world. These images are thought to be 10,000 years old or more. In the Southwest U.S., thousands of

petroglyphs hint at the lives of American Indians from long ago.

Archaeologists believe that petroglyphs may tell stories, mark trails, represent families, track seasons, or express spiritual beliefs. Many convey birth, journeys, hunting for food, or death. These carvings offer an intriguing look at the joys and challenges of human communities throughout history.

FRIENDSHIP



COOPERATION



LIFE CHOICES



JOURNEY



MOTHER EARTH



CREATIVITY



COMMUNICATION



FAMILY



PRAYER



THESE KIDS ARE STUDYING PETROGLYPHS. HELP THEM FIND SOME THAT REPRESENT PARTS OF PEACEFUL LIFE THROUGH THE AGES.

DRAW YOUR OWN PETROGLYPH FOR COMMUNITY HERE.



# Andrea Hope



**W**hat are your favorite ways to be creative? Poet Andrea Hope uses words to show her love for storytelling and helping others. She wants "to inspire other people to use what their talents or interests are to contribute to serving humanity . . ." She says, "We have all these different tools . . . like social media, like music and poetry. All these things can be used to promote positive concepts and to connect people . . ."

Andrea was born in the Bahamas and moved to Virginia, U.S., when she was six. In middle school, she started performing her poetry. After high school, Andrea earned a degree in Communication. She promotes spoken word poetry by organizing events where people share their stories. She's also published a kids' book of poetry-writing activities called *I Am and I Can*. Andrea and her husband, Marcin Góra, serve at the Bahá'í World Center in Haifa, Israel.

**Q: What's your favorite childhood memory?**

**A:** Doing fake TV shows with my sister when we were younger, when we had to do chores . . . If we had to clean the bathroom or do something, then we would pretend we were on a TV show in the bathroom mirror and explain to the audience how to clean and what we were doing.

**Q: How did you start writing poetry so young?**

**A:** When I was younger, I really always kind of felt the weight of the world on myself, and I felt like, how am I going to help with all these problems and issues? And so poetry was just somehow a natural way for me to deal with those emotions and to jot down my ideas.



When they were kids, Andrea (left) and her sister, Elizabeth, found fun ways to do household chores with creativity and imagination.

**Q: What was the most challenging experience for you when you were a kid?**

**A:** Mostly conversations about race. We grew up in the Bahamas, so we kind of had to learn about the history of race in America a little bit later . . . I was six when we came [to the U.S.] . . . So in school, I would get teased for acting white or [for] certain things that I liked or how I talked, and I was always in advanced classes . . .

I would just really talk to my mom about it. And she was always really supportive of us being individuals and us not being afraid to be ourselves and challenge people's stereotypes . . . And of course, the Bahá'í community was so diverse that I was just used to being around so many different types of people. It was really a positive grounding for me to have the Bahá'ís who were there saying we're different and we're friends and we love each other.



# Questions and Answers with an Inspirational Bahá'í



Left: Andrea's 2012 CD of spoken word poetry features this joyful portrait.  
Right: In April 2015, Andrea and Marcin Góra celebrated their marriage in 'Akká, Israel.

**Q: How does spoken word poetry differ from written poetry?**

A: When you write poetry, people have longer to connect with what you're saying . . . You can reread and reread and draw more things from written poetry. But with spoken word, it's very conversational . . . So when I write for spoken word, I really write kind of imagining that I'm talking to someone or understanding that someone is going to be reacting to this, and it's more of a community.

**Q: What are some things that inspire you to write poetry?**

A: Connection is the biggest inspiration . . . So in my poetry . . . my most wonderful moments are moments where I can connect with someone else and say, you're not the only person who is going through this . . . So being open and feeling connected and vulnerable is really what inspires me to write and to share and to listen.

**Q: What qualities do you think are most important for a successful poet?**

A: Creativity, to be genuine, and passion . . . You have to really care about something to have other people also care . . . You have to do it in a creative way, and you have to do it in a genuine way.

**Q: You've written about how to break down prejudice. What's one important tip you have for kids to keep in mind?**

A: When you need help . . . ask someone who looks different than you . . . When I was in school, I know a lot of times certain types of people would sit together at lunch, or they would . . . invite people who look like them, or people who listen to the same music as [them] to do things. And it doesn't have to be like that. Just because you don't have everything in common doesn't mean that you don't have some things in common.

**Q: This issue of *Brilliant Star* is about building community. What advice do you have for kids who want to be of service to their communities?**

A: Find something that you really enjoy that's a skill or an interest or a talent, and use that to find creative ways to support those around you . . . Find out . . . what . . . my community needs, what do my siblings and my family and people in my neighborhood want, or [what's] missing? And then how can I use the talent that I have, whether that's speaking out to people about it, or . . . doing performances and food drives, or whatever it is.

**Q: What's your wish for *Brilliant Star's* readers?**

A: To use your time when you're young to find out your interests and talents and abilities, and to commit to pursuing those in a way that serves the common good.



# Positive Thoughts for Peace

**B**illions of kind people around the world help create loving and happy communities. Still, sad and scary things happen, near and far. Prejudice and hostility can lead to wars, conflicts, and other dangers. It may seem like our human family will never learn to get along.

But there is hope for the future. The Bahá'í

teachings promise that humanity is growing to respect each other. One day, we will all live in peace.

We can all help with our progress by focusing on our common ground, rather than our differences. We can reach out to each other with love and friendship. Your actions and prayers will make a positive difference in your family, school, city—and the world.

READ THE QUOTE,  
THEN CHECK OUT  
THE HIGHLIGHTED  
WORDS BELOW.

"There is nothing so **heart-breaking** and terrible as an **outburst** of human **savagery**! I charge you all that each one of you **concentrate** all the thoughts of your heart on love and unity. When a thought of war comes, oppose it by a stronger thought of peace. A thought of hatred must be destroyed by a more **powerful** thought of love. Thoughts of war bring **destruction** to all **harmony**, well-being, restfulness and **content**. Thoughts of love are **constructive** of brotherhood, peace, friendship, and happiness . . ." —'Abdu'l-Bahá

FIND EACH WORD IN THE LIST,  
AND SEE HOW IT'S USED.

THEN DRAW A LINE TO ITS  
MEANING ON THE RIGHT.

- |                  |                                 |
|------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 Heart-breaking | A Sudden release                |
| 2 Outburst       | B Brutality or cruelty          |
| 3 Savagery       | C Mighty and strong             |
| 4 Concentrate    | D Upsetting or distressing      |
| 5 Powerful       | E Satisfaction or happiness     |
| 6 Destruction    | F To focus effort and attention |
| 7 Harmony        | G Severe damage                 |
| 8 Content        | H Leading to advancement        |
| 9 Constructive   | I Agreement, peace              |



# STUART & GABRIELLA: WONDROUS WILDLIFE



**H**il Stuart and Gabriella here. We're on a fun photo expedition. We're discovering lots of cool facts, too. Turns out that many animal groups have unusual names, like a shiver of sharks—and Gabby's favorite, a parliament of owls.

Some animals we've seen live in communities that cooperate to watch for predators and care for the young. Humans can be cooperative, too. We're meeting lots of people who work together to save wildlife. It's sad that thousands of animal species are threatened due to things like pollution, climate change, and hunting.

Learning about Earth's incredible creatures is a step toward helping them. Below, match each group with its description. Together, we can protect every pack, pod, and pride!



1 Zeal of Zebras



2 Thunder of Hippos



3 Conspiracy of Lemurs



4 Rookery of Penguins



5 Flamboyance of Flamingos



6 Parade of Elephants

A

These land animals band together in groups of females to raise their young. They drink about 60 gallons of water (227 L) a day!

These spirited animals live in small family groups. They have excellent hearing and eyesight. One stands watch at night, while the others sleep.

B

C

Males and females take turns warming and protecting their egg and foraging for fish and squid.

D

Living only on and around the island of Madagascar, mothers take turns with the babies, so they all get a chance to eat and socialize.

These animals dig in mudflats for food. They gather together for safety, sometimes in groups of a million!

E

F

These massive creatures are good swimmers that can fold their ears and nose shut and hold their breath for five minutes.





# How to Create a Caring Community

"The surface of the earth is one home;  
humanity is one family and household."

—'Abdu'l-Bahá

Be kind

Be generous

*Smile*

Look for good things everywhere

Take time to praise others

Be a good listener

Be curious and ask questions

Say hello to a neighbor

*Plant a garden*

Bake cookies and share

*Start a service project*

Throw a party

Read a book with a friend

Join a club or start a new one

Cheer with glee for your team

Turn off your TV

Put down your phone

Tell jokes

*Play outside*

Learn about a friend's religion

Find fun ways to help others

Delight in diversity

Make a friend from another country

Sing a song with your siblings

Learn to say hello in 12 languages

*Laugh a lot*

Invent a game

Share your hobby

Explore a new place, near or far

Pick up litter

Start a band

*Thank a teacher*

Bring your librarian a small gift

Talk with your elders

Draw or take a picture of your family

Tell your parents you love them

Stand up against bullying

*Pray for a peaceful planet*





# Añy Time Is PARTY Time

What's more fun than gathering friends, family, and neighbors for a party? Bahá'í holy days and the festival of Ayyám-i-Há are great times to have fun and build friendships in your community.

But you don't have to wait for a special occasion to plan a celebration. You can turn an ordinary day into something amazing. So bring on your creativity and plan an event to brighten up your neighborhood!

Check out these party themes, and add your own imaginative ideas.

## Love and Laughter



'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "Joy gives us wings!" Celebrate this idea by making butterfly or bird crafts.

Play charades or have a joke-telling contest—who can get the biggest laugh? Have fun competitions, like hopping on one foot the longest or blowing the biggest soap bubbles.

Serve "smiles" made of two apple slices with mini marshmallows for teeth, stuck on with peanut butter.

## Creative Crafts

Set up stations for making homemade gifts or cards. Use recyclables like empty bottles or boxes for earth-friendly projects.

Put together craft supply kits for hospital patients (ask your local hospital for a wish list). Serve cookies you decorate yourself, or make animal shapes out of fruits and veggies.



## Celebrate Service



Ask guests to bring gifts for people at a shelter, such as soap or canned foods. On a poster, ask people to write services they're willing to do, from teaching children's classes to musical performance. Consult about volunteering that everyone can do together to help the community.

Then dig in to snacks named for virtues, like "Helpful Hummus" or "Grapes of Giving."

## Music for the Soul

Invite guests to jam and sing together. Make "shakers" out of containers filled with beads, beans, or rice.

Play freeze dance, where everyone freezes when the music stops. Try guessing tunes after just a few notes. Serve cupcakes baked in ice cream cones for edible "microphones."



You can find music and more games and crafts for parties on our website at [www.brilliantstarmagazine.org!](http://www.brilliantstarmagazine.org!)





# MUSIC CAFÉ

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

ONE OF MY FAVORITE THINGS IN THE WORLD IS HAVING A PARTY WITH FAMILY, FRIENDS, YUMMY FOOD, AND GREAT MUSIC PLAYED LIVE.

THESE KINDS OF GATHERINGS ARE WHAT INSPIRED MY FAMILY TO OPEN THE MUSIC CAFÉ. THERE'S NOTHING BETTER THAN INVITING YOUR FAVORITE PEOPLE TO ...

## GATHER ROUND

By Renee Stahl, Lisa Loeb, Rich Jacques

Verse C G G D G G C G G D

The din-ner bell rings, come on it's time So ga-ther round, ga-ther round Come and bring what you can find\_ And

8 G G C G Chorus D Em Em

ga-ther round, ga-ther round O\_\_\_\_\_ I got the can-dle, you bring the light The bread's in the o-ven, you say you might

16 G D Em 2nd time, Em sing Chorus 2X Break G

Bring your gui-tar, we'll sing through the night What can you bring to the ta - ble? When O\_\_\_\_\_ just we're

22 Em 1. D 2. D G Em G To Chorus 2X, then Verse 1

be your self\_ my dear\_ re 'Cause what you bring is al-ways what we ne\_\_\_\_\_ ed

so glad that you're he\_\_\_\_\_

### Verse 2

When I was young, my mother loved  
To gather round, to gather round  
She said, bring yourself, and that's enough  
So gather round, gather round

### Chorus 2

O, you bring the cake and I'll bring the ice  
Here comes Betty in her bright green tights  
Break out the jokes, we'll laugh through the night  
What can you bring to the table?

### Chorus 3

You bring the stories, I'll bring the dice  
Skinny Bob brings his appetite

After we eat, we'll dance through the night  
What can you bring to the table? (2X)

### Break

### Chorus 4

We finished the pudding, ate all the cake  
A kiss and a hug, 'cause it's getting late  
See you next time. I can't wait  
What will you bring to the table?

### Chorus 1

I got the candle ...  
What can you bring to the table? (3X)

### Verse 1



# Favorite Festivals

**D**oes your family celebrate Chinese New Year? Kwanzaa? Naw-Rúz? Easter? It's fun to explore Earth's diverse cultures. Our human family enjoys a wondrous variety of traditions, religions, music, clothing, language, and food. What parts of your own heritage do you enjoy most?

Share them with friends. Which cultures are you most curious about? Find someone from those backgrounds and ask questions.

The more we make friends from different parts of the planet, the better we'll understand each other and help build peace.

Read about each kid's favorite cultural celebration. Then search for the item in **blue**.

IN SPAIN, MANY FESTIVALS INCLUDE FLAMENCO **GUITAR** MUSIC, SINGING, AND DANCING.

DURING SPRING, WE CELEBRATE THE RETURN OF THE SUN IN CANADA WITH PRAYER, SINGING, ICE-LOO-BUILDING CONTESTS, AND **DRUM** DANCING.

IN MONGOLIA, DURING NAADAM, WE COMPETE IN TRADITIONAL HORSE RACING, WRESTLING, AND ARCHERY. I USE A **BOW** MADE FROM BAMBOO.

BOYS LEAVE THE VILLAGE IN MALI TO HERD CATTLE FOR A YEAR. AT THE CATTLE CROSSING, WE RETURN, AND THE BEST HERDER WINS PRIZES, LIKE A PATTERNED **BLANKET**.

AT CARNIVAL IN BRAZIL, I WEAR A COSTUME AND **MASK** TO PARADES AND SAMBA DANCES. AFTERWARD, WE FAST AND PRAY TO PREPARE FOR EASTER.

THE PARADE FOR GION MATSURI HAS HUGE FLOATS ABOUT THE HISTORY OF JAPAN. A BOY STARTS THE PARADE BY CUTTING A ROPE WITH A **SWORD**.





# SHINING LAMP

A Bahá'í who served humanity with radiance

## Agnes Parsons (1861–1934)

What would you have done if you met 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who led the Bahá'í Faith in the early 1900s? When Agnes Parsons visited him in Israel in 1910, she said a brilliant light passed from his eyes into hers. She was so overwhelmed by his powerful presence that she fell to the floor! She thought she had fainted, because when she opened her eyes, he was kindly helping her to stand.

Agnes was 49 years old, an influential woman in Washington, D.C., society. She had been raised an only child in a wealthy, strict family, and she rarely associated with anyone outside of her circle. But that changed after she met 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

She'd heard of the Bahá'í Faith two years earlier, and she arrived in Israel feeling curious and hopeful, looking for proof. When she visited the tomb of Bahá'u'lláh, the flowers shook mysteriously, though it wasn't a breezy day. A little bird nestled in Agnes's dress. She felt as though God were speaking to her. She returned home a devout Bahá'í.



lived with her husband and two sons. After meeting with people and giving public talks each day, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke there each evening. Hundreds gathered to hear his words.

Agnes was hospitable and generous. One day, she offered 'Abdu'l-Bahá a large sum of money to help with the cost of his journey. He gently declined and advised her to give the money to the poor.

In August, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spent three weeks in New Hampshire, where Agnes had a summer home. She had hoped that he would have a chance to rest. But he said, "We have come for work and service and not for leisure. We . . . must make such servitude the cause of our solace and the joy of our souls."

'Abdu'l-Bahá was 68 years old and had lived a life of exile and imprisonment. Yet his energy seemed nearly boundless as he met with people from all walks of life and spoke to large audiences about the oneness of humanity, the elimination of prejudice, and the need for world peace. His loving presence encouraged and inspired Agnes and many others.

In November, he again visited Washington. In his last talk at Agnes's home, he said, "May you be well-wishers of all humanity. May you be assistants of every poor one . . . May you be sources of comfort to the broken in heart."

### Hospitality and Generosity

Agnes had invited 'Abdu'l-Bahá to stay at her home when he visited the U.S. When he arrived in Washington, D.C., in April 1912, Agnes joyfully welcomed him to the grand home where she



### A Challenging Assignment

In 1920, Agnes returned to Israel. This time, 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave her an important task—to arrange a convention promoting harmony among all races.

"I thought I would like to go through the floor," Agnes later said, "because I did not feel I could do it . . ." Racism and segregation were widely accepted in the U.S. at that time. Race unity was challenging even for some Bahá'ís, who only gradually grew to understand the true meaning of oneness. Agnes explained, "Then a very extraordinary thing happened. I felt suddenly the power of his creative words . . . I was really getting the confidence that of course was necessary . . ."



Agnes became inspired and sprang into action. She asked for advice from an African American Bahá'í lawyer, Louis Gregory, who wrote to her, "Nothing short of a change of hearts will do. Unless the speakers are able to make the power of love felt, the occasion will lose its chief value." Months of planning

followed, along with widespread publicity arranged by a Bahá'í journalist, Martha Root.

On May 19, 1921, the race amity convention began. Two thousand people from diverse backgrounds attended the first evening! Over



Agnes Parsons, standing behind 'Abdu'l-Bahá, made her home available to him on his two visits to Washington, D.C. In one talk there, he told the audience, "I ask . . . that your hearts may become radiant . . ."

three days, the program included political leaders, singers from Howard University, a presentation on African American poetry by a female Bahá'í professor, and more. Afterward, 'Abdu'l-Bahá praised Agnes's work, saying that the convention was carried out "in utmost perfection."

In the following years, other communities around the country held similar events. Agnes continued to work diligently to share the Bahá'í teachings and promote race unity.

In 1934, Agnes passed away at the age of 73. Shoghi Effendi, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's grandson and head of the Bahá'í community, called her a "distinguished handmaid of Bahá'u'lláh," praised her "manifold pioneer services," and said she had "proved herself worthy" of the "implicit confidence" 'Abdu'l-Bahá had placed in her.





HOW DO YOU GUYS WORK SO WELL TOGETHER?

WE BELIEVE IN COW-OPERATION!

## ACROSS

1. Earth's fastest-growing plant and a favorite of pandas (p. 11)
5. Your actions aren't confined to your neighborhood or city—you can be a \_\_\_\_\_ citizen. (p. 5)
6. When everyone feels accepted and shares their opinions with respect, it's a recipe for \_\_\_\_\_. (p. 3)
8. Ancient stone carvings found throughout the world (p. 25)
12. Has feet like thumbs for climbing eucalyptus trees (p. 14)
13. We can all help bring peace to \_\_\_\_\_ by focusing on our common ground, rather than our differences. (p. 28)
14. Like \_\_\_\_\_ lighting up a dark room, your kind actions make your community more radiant. (p. 20)
16. They Unite to bring Peace, Love, Integrity, Faith, and Truth to Earth. (p. 19)
17. Simple acts of \_\_\_\_\_ can have a powerful impact. (p. 8)

## DOWN

2. Meena and Pari would like a career working with \_\_\_\_\_. (pp. 12–13)
3. A group of \_\_\_\_\_ is called a parliament. (p. 29)
4. You can fight for justice by making \_\_\_\_\_. (p. 23)
7. Be \_\_\_\_\_ about people and ask questions. (p. 4)
9. Andrea Hope is a \_\_\_\_\_ who loves storytelling and helping others. (p. 26)
10. In 1920, 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked Agnes Parsons to host a convention on \_\_\_\_\_ unity. (p. 35)
11. When everyone \_\_\_\_\_, talking calmly and respectfully, a crew can handle stormy situations. (p. 10)
13. When we cooperate, we turn our cities, neighborhoods, and families into true works of \_\_\_\_\_. (p. 9)
15. Space missions are being planned to send humans to the planet \_\_\_\_\_. (p. 16)

## FROM OUR MAILBOX



I really love reading the Radiant Stars section and hearing about other kids and jr. youth around the world; it's one of my favorite sections of the magazine! I know it must be a fun yet equally challenging job, and I just want to thank you for what you do.

—Taija P., age 14, Washington, U.S.

## ANSWERS

KEY: T=Top, C=Center, B=Bottom, L=Left, R=Right

Page 3: 1) adaptable, 2) balanced, 3) charitable, 4) generous, 5) patient, 6) loving, 7) purposeful, 8) peaceful, 9) mindful, 10) service, 11) sharing

Page 9: consideration, empathy, encouragement, kindness, listening, loyalty, respect, sincerity

Page 10: 1) trustworthy, 2) spiritual, 3) opinions, 4) options, 5) outcomes, 6) Listen, 7) patient, 8) questions, 9) detached, 10) group, 11) Vote, 12) Support

Page 11: Italy, Great White Pelicans

Page 14: A) 5, B) 1, C) 3, D) 2, E) 6, F) 4

Page 15: 1) generosity, 2) respect, 3) human rights, 4) empathy, 5) learning, 6) responsibility, 7) nourishing, 8) helpfulness, 9) love

Page 25: Friendship at TR, cooperation at CR, life choices at TL, journey at BL, mother Earth at C, creativity at CL, communication at C, family at CL, prayer at BC

Page 28: 1) D, 2) A, 3) B, 4) F, 5) C, 6) G, 7) I, 8) E, 9) H

Page 29: A) 6, B) 1, C) 4, D) 3, E) 5, F) 2

Page 33: Guitar at TC, drum at CL, bow at BR, blanket at TR, mask at TL, sword at BL



# Underground Town

aMAZEing  
ADVENTURE

If you could shrink small enough to explore a prairie dog town, you'd enter a surprising underground world. These clever creatures build burrows with bedrooms, nurseries, food storerooms, and even listening posts for checking on predators. Their tunnels can run for miles!

Cooperation is key for prairie dogs. Unlike many animals that seek new territory when close relatives are around, they like to stick with their kin. They greet each other with a friendly

nuzzle, touching noses and teeth. They share food, groom each other, and nurse the young. When there's danger, some scientists say their alarm calls spell out the type, size, and direction of a predator.

In similar ways, humans depend on each other for support. Our communities thrive when we watch out for our neighbors and work together. With open minds and hearts, we can build bonds of unity that run deep and strong.

Help the prairie dogs find their way through the burrow to the game room.

START

THE LARGEST PRAIRIE DOG TOWN COVERED 25,000 SQ. MILES, WITH MILLIONS OF RESIDENTS!

END





**"The mingling, union and friendship of the peoples and communities . . . will reach to such a degree that the human race will be like one family and kindred."**  
— 'Abdu'l-Bahá

**BROTHERS** 😊



❤️ **WE ARE ONE!** 🌍

**BEACH PICNIC** ☀️



**Homework Helpers**



**Share Ideas for Service Projects!**

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