

## BAHÁ'Í CHILDREN'S CLASS LESSONS

### 17. BACKBITING IS FORBIDDEN

Welcome the children to the class. Have one or two children say a prayer. Can anyone tell what they learnt last time? If children get too excited calling out, ask them to please put up their hands and you will ask them individually to answer.

Today we are going to study one of the Bahá'í laws. What is a law? Try to get the answers from the children. The dictionary says that laws are rules that are binding (you have to obey). Bahá'u'lláh gave us a set of laws in order for people to live together happily. The laws are for our protection. One of these laws mentioned in the Hidden Words is: - **“O Son of Man! Breathe not the sins of others so long as thou art thyself a sinner. Shouldst thou transgress this command, accursed wouldst thou be, and to this I bear witness.”** (Hidden Words, Arabic No 27)

The word backbiting or gossip is saying bad things about people when they are not there. These stories often get worse and worse as they are passed on from one person to another. The gossip causes unhappiness and disunity among the people and must be stopped. God wants all His children to live together in unity and they cannot live in unity if some people are backbiting.

What should we do if someone says something bad about someone else when we are there? We should either say something good about the person, say we don't listen to gossip, or change the conversation by talking about something quite different.

Read again the Hidden Word above, and have the children repeat the underlined sentence several times in order to learn it.

#### ACTIVITIES

##### THE WHISPERING GAME

The children sit in a circle. The facilitator starts by whispering a short sentence like “the sun is in the sky” into the ear of the child to his left. He will not repeat it. That child then whispers what he heard into the ear of the child on his left, and so on round the circle. When the last child receives the message he says it out loud. The facilitator then says the words that he started with.

Most children laugh at the result. Tell the children that the important thing for us to notice is that a story changes every time someone tells it and this makes gossip even more hurtful.

This game can be played several times with different people starting with a different sentence.

## **BAHÁ'Í CHILDREN'S CLASS LESSONS**

### **GROUP A**

These children can join in the Whispering Game if they are old enough. If not, set them to draw a flower garden. We should be like the flowers of one garden and live in harmony.

### **GROUP B**

How many words can you make from the letters in "breathe not"?

### **GROUP C**

Solve the Hidden Word puzzle attached.

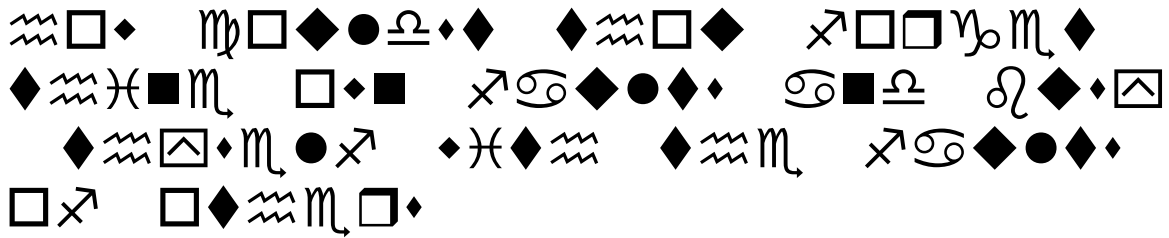
(Solution to puzzle – "How couldst thou forget thine own faults and busy thyself with the faults of others?")

### **TO FINISH**

Ask the children to put everything away neatly. Then say a final prayer.

BACKBITING FORBIDDEN - Groups B or C

Solve the Hidden Words puzzle:



☉    ☽    ♍    ♁    ♃    ♄    ♅    ♆    ♇    ♈    ♉    ♊  
 A    B    C    D    E    F    G    H    I    J    K

●    ○    ■    □    ◻    ◻    ◻    ◻    ◆    ◆    ◆  
 L    M    N    O    P    Q    R    S    T    U

❖    ◆    ⊠    ⊡    ⌘  
 V    W    X    Y    Z