

# One World Language and Script

## INTRODUCTION: *Approaching the Sacred Valley...*

### Facilitator

The following is an introduction. Please read it out loud without comment, and then proceed with the study of the quotations.

The most desirable condition a human being can experience in relations with others is unity. Unity is that heart-felt condition of trust, understanding, love and peace with other people. What could be more hopeful in the world than a condition of global unity? It becomes especially evident how desirable world unity is when we contrast it with disunity – relationships characterized by distrust, fear, suspicion, hatred, conflict, violence and its worst expression, war.

The central emphasis of God’s guidance to mankind in this day through His Manifestation Bahá’u’lláh, is the establishment of a condition of world unity. One of the requirements He proclaims as a necessity for social unity is the adoption of a single world-wide language and script.

It is well understood by experts in the field of relationship enhancement that love, peace and unity are more forthcoming when people are able to communicate their thoughts and feelings clearly and understandably to one another. Additionally, it is well known that when communication skills are lacking in relationships they can easily deteriorate into misunderstanding, frustration, distrust, aggression and violence. So one of the most potent unifying factors initiated in our time is the world-wide adoption of a single language that can be used by all the inhabitants of the earth.

Let us explore together the unifying affect of a universal language and script as it is presented in the Bahá’í sacred Writings.



**“From the beginning of time the light of unity hath shed its divine radiance upon the world, and the greatest means for the promotion of that unity is for the peoples of the world to understand one another’s writing and speech.”**

– Bahá’u’lláh

## OBJECTIVE: *A look to the horizon...*

### Facilitator

Review the following objective with the participants:

The purpose of this group experience is to *explore* the concept of “one world language and script”, through a study of selected Bahá’í Writings.

## THE STUDY PROCESS: *Attaining the water of life...*

### Facilitator

Review the following study process with the participants. Then study the numbered quotations that follow, one at a time as described below.

#### 1. **READING:** *A drink from the cup of guidance...*

A. **Read the quotation** out loud in its entirety.

#### 2. **CONFIRMING MEANING:** *A spray from the fountain of light...*

To better understand certain words used in the quotation, take turns with the following:

A. Each participant **choose a word** from the quotation and **state it** for the whole group to hear. (Like a fun game – pick a word!) Then...

B. Read out loud the sentence that contains the **word** you selected, **while substituting for that word**, its given phrase, definition, or synonym from the boxes below the quotation.

C. Repeat A and B above until everyone is satisfied with their understanding of the words.

D. **Read the quotation** out loud again in its entirety.

#### 3. **FINDING VALUE:** *Gem-like discoveries...*

In the tradition of the “talking circle” ask the participants to take turns sharing, one at a time, in a round, **WHAT WAS PERSONALLY MOST MEANINGFUL FROM THE QUOTATION AND WHY.** (Remember show and tell?) Remind the participants that *whatever* is shared should be considered as a valid perspective, and that in this *exploratory study* there are no right or wrong perceptions and no lesser or greater understandings. All are therefore asked to avoid comments, corrections, or judgments on the perceived insights of others. This is not a time for questions and answers, it is an exercise for the purpose of bonding hearts by sharing and receiving personal heartfelt perspectives without discussion.

1. “O members of parliaments throughout the world! Select ye a single language for the use of all on earth, and adopt ye likewise a common script. God, verily, maketh plain for you that which shall profit you and enable you to be independent of others. He, of a truth, is the Most Bountiful, the All-Knowing, the All-Informed. This will be the cause of unity, could ye but comprehend it, and the greatest instrument for promoting harmony and civilization, would that ye might understand!”

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 88)

**adopt:** accept formally and put into effect  
**Bountiful:** generous in giving gifts and favors  
**civilization:** cultural and social refinement and development  
**common:** shared; widespread  
**harmony:** agreement in facts, opinions, manners, and interests; calm and tranquility  
**independent:** free from influence, control, and requirements

**instrument:** means or aid  
**language:** system of verbal communication  
**parliaments:** the supreme law making branches of government  
**script:** written method of communication  
**unity:** a heartfelt condition of peace, love, and harmony in human relations, free of conflict, contention, dissension and the struggle for dominance

2. “Bahá'u'lláh enjoins the adoption of a universal language and script. His Writings envisage two stages in this process. The first stage is to consist of the selection of an existing language or an invented one which would then be taught in all the schools of the world as an auxiliary to the mother tongues. The governments of the world through their parliaments are called upon to effect this momentous enactment. The second stage, in the distant future, would be the eventual adoption of one single language and common script for all on earth.”

(From Notes to *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 250)

**adoption:** formal acceptance, practice, and use  
**auxiliary:** supplementary aid or assistance  
**common:** shared; widespread  
**effect:** cause to come about  
**enactment:** prescribed requirement  
**enjoins:** with urgency and authority, commands  
**envisage:** foresee; anticipate  
**language:** system of verbal communication

**momentous:** very important  
**mother tongues:** native languages  
**parliaments:** supreme law making branches of government  
**process:** series of events leading to a particular result  
**script:** written method of communication  
**universal:** present everywhere and including all without exception

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3. "...the most important thing in the world is the realization of an auxiliary international language. Oneness of language will transform mankind into one world, remove religious misunderstandings, and unite East and West in the spirit of brotherhood and love. Oneness of language will change this world from many families into one family. This auxiliary international language will gather the nations under one standard, as if the five continents of the world had become one, for then mutual interchange of thought will be possible for all. It will remove ignorance and superstition, since each child of whatever race or nation can pursue his studies in science and art, needing but two languages – his own and the International. The world of matter will become the expression of the world of mind. Then discoveries will be revealed, inventions will multiply, the sciences advance by leaps and bounds, the scientific culture of the earth will develop along broader lines. Then the nations will be enabled to utilize the latest and best thought, because expressed in the International Language."

(From a talk given by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the Esperanto Society of Edinburgh in 1913, cited in *Bahá'í Scriptures*, p. 340)

**auxiliary:** secondary or supplementary  
**broader:** more varied and diverse  
**East:** the nations of the middle and far-East  
**enabled:** provided the means and opportunity  
**expression:** product or outcome  
**ignorance:** the absence of knowledge and awareness  
**international:** among all nations  
**language:** system of verbal communication  
**matter:** that which is physical  
**mutual:** with shared concern for one another

**oneness:** being one  
**pursue:** proceed along in  
**realization:** bringing into being; accomplishment  
**standard:** flag; rule or principle  
**superstitions:** false beliefs resulting from ignorance  
**transform:** completely change  
**utilize:** make use of  
**West:** the nations including Europe and the Americas

4. "*The day is approaching when all the peoples of the world will have adopted one universal language and one common script. When this is achieved, to whatsoever city a man may journey, it shall be as if he were entering his own home.*"

(*Gleanings From the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 249-50)

**adopted:** formally accepted and put into effect  
**common:** shared; widespread  
**language:** system of verbal communication

**script:** written method of communication  
**universal:** present everywhere and including all without exception

5. "Unless the unity of languages is realized, the Most Great Peace and the oneness of the human world cannot be effectively organized and established because the function of language is to portray the mysteries and secrets of human hearts. The heart is like a box, and language is the key. Only by using the key can we open the box and observe the gems it contains. Therefore, the question of an auxiliary international tongue has the utmost importance."

('Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 60)

**auxiliary:** secondary or supplementary  
**effectively:** while producing the desirable results  
**established:** originated and made permanent  
**gems:** symbolic for – "highly prized qualities"  
**language:** system of verbal communication  
**Most Great Peace:** condition of permanent peace and unity in the world strongly urged by Bahá'u'lláh  
**mysteries:** those things not easily understood

**oneness:** quality, state, or fact of being single and indivisible; unity, harmony, and agreement of mind, feeling, and purpose  
**portray:** describe in words  
**realized:** brought into being and made real; accomplished  
**tongue:** language  
**unity:** being as one and the same  
**utmost:** greatest or highest degree of

**APPLICATION: Showing forth divine light...**

**Facilitator**

Read through #1 together and proceed as stated. Then take time for the participants to write out their individual plans for action in #2. (these are not shared) When everyone has finished, move on to the closing reading.

**1. IMAGINING THE POSSIBILITIES: Visions of radiant lights...**

**Bahá'u'lláh wrote:** *“It is incumbent upon every man of insight and understanding to strive to translate that which hath been written into reality and action...”* Imagine how the Bahá'í Teachings in this study class could be translated into reality and action. Take turns sharing the possibilities. Begin your statements with: **“One could....”** Suggest as many ideas as you want.

**2. DECIDING ACTION: Mirroring forth a beam of light...**

From your experience in this study class on One World Language, describe what **you** are inspired to put into reality and action. **I will make conscious efforts to...** \_\_\_\_\_

**My next step will be...** \_\_\_\_\_

**CLOSING MEDITATION: A heart song...**

**Facilitator**

Read the following out loud.

*“Lauded be Thy name, O my God! I can discover no one in Thy realm who can befittingly turn unto Thee, or is able to adequately hearken unto what hath gone out of the mouth of Thy will. I beseech Thee, therefore, O Thou Who art the Possessor of the entire creation and the King of the realm of Thine invention, graciously to aid Thy creatures to accomplish that which is pleasing and acceptable unto Thee, that they may arise to serve Thy Cause amidst Thy creatures, and to speak forth Thy praise before all who are in heaven and on earth.*

*“Thou art He, O my Lord, Whose bounty hath surpassed all things, and Whose power hath transcended all things, and Whose mercy hath encompassed all things. Look, then, upon Thy people with the eyes of Thy tender mercies, and leave them not to themselves and to their corrupt desires in Thy days. How farsoever they may have strayed from Thee, and however grievously they have turned back from Thy face, yet Thou, in Thine essence, art the All-Bountiful, and, in Thine inmost spirit, art the Most Merciful. Deal with them according to the unrevealed tokens of Thy bounty and Thy gifts. Thou art, verily, the One to the power of Whose might all things have testified, and to Whose majesty and omnipotence the whole creation hath borne witness.*

*“No God is there but Thee, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.”*

(Bahá'u'lláh, Prayers and Meditations, pp. 244-45)