Unity and friendship activity sheet

1) The unity in diversity nature trail

Activity: Collect leaves on a nature walk. Cover the leaves you have collected with a thin sheet of paper and use wax crayons or coloured pencils to lightly colour over the leaves.

Notice how the leaves on the different trees are all different, and even on the same tree no two leaves are
exactly the same. Notice how diversity makes nature so much more beautiful. In the same way, the differences between us enrich the human race. Wouldn’t it be boring if everyone looked the same and acted the same?

We are “.. the fruits of one tree, the leaves of one branch, the flowers of one garden.”\footnote{From the Writings of Baha’u’llah}
2) Members of one human family

Differences of race, colour, religion, and wealth can lead to divisions between people, but in reality we are all one people, one humankind.

Story: This is the story of a 9 year-old boy who stood up for equality and eventually became the second African American astronaut to go to space!


Video: [https://vimeo.com/58648044](https://vimeo.com/58648044)
Song: Good Neighbours come in all colours

Good neighbors come in all colors,
Black, red, yellow and tan.
Our outsides may look different,
But we’re the family of woman and man.

When my doorbell starts to ring,
I can’t see the ringer’s skin.
Even if he had bright blue skin, I’d welcome him right in.

Good neighbors come in all colors,
Black, red, yellow and tan.
Our outsides may look different,
But we’re the family of woman and man.

When my neighbor starts to cry,
it hurts her and that hurts I.
Even if she had orange eyes, it hurts her when she cries.

Good neighbors come in all colors,
Black, red, yellow and tan.
Our outsides may look different,
But we’re the family of woman and man.

When my neighbors want to share
joy and happiness everywhere,
Even if they had purple hair, I wouldn’t even care.

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2 Lyrics and music composed by Dick Grover
Good Neighbors

Good neighbors come in all colors: Black, red, yellow and tan; Our
out-sides may look dif-ferent, But we're the fami-ly of wo-man and man.

When my door-bell starts to ring, I can't see the ring-er's skin;
When my neigh-bor starts to cry, it hurts her and that hurts I;
When my neigh-bor wants to share joy and hap-pi-ness ever-y where,

E-ven if he had bright blue skin, I'd wel-come him right in. Good
E-ven if she had o-range eyes, it hurts her when she cries. Good
E-ven if they had pur-pile hair, I would-n't e-ven care. Good

D C'al Fine
3) We are stronger if we work together

Story: This is a story of a bundle of sticks and five brothers.

An old man had many sons, who were often quarreling. He tried to make them good friends, but could not. As the end of his life drew near, the old Man called them all to him and showed them a bundle of sticks tied tightly together.

“Now,” said the Father, “see if you can break this bundle of sticks.”

Each of the Sons in turn took the bundle and tried with all his might to break it, but could not. When all had tried and given it up, the Father said, “Untie the bundle, and each of you take a stick and see if you can break that.” This they could do very easily. Then said the Father: “You saw when the sticks were bound together how strong they were; but as soon as they were untied, you broke them easily. Now, if you will stop quarreling
and stand by each other, you will be like the bundle of sticks—no one can do you any harm; but if you do not keep together, you will be as weak as is one of the little sticks by itself, which any one can break.”

4) **We don’t have to quarrel about differences in opinion**

Can we think in different ways, have different ideas, and still have unity? Do we need to get cross if someone doesn’t agree with us? Can we learn from the people around us?

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4) The Project Gutenberg EBook of Aesop’s Fables, by J. H. Stickney

4) Adapted from the Buddhist Scriptures Udana

**Story: The blind man and the elephant**
One day a wise King had some blind men brought to his palace. He also asked that an elephant be brought in as well. He then asked each man – ‘What is it that I have brought here for you?’ One man, said, ‘O King, you have brought me a husking basket?’ he had felt the elephant’s ear. The other, feeling the elephant’s tusk, said ‘It is a plowshare!’, another feeling the trunk, said it is ‘a plow’, and another thought the tail was a ‘brush’; the last man feeling the elephant’s head, said it must be a simple pot.

We can have different perspectives and yet all be ‘right’ in some way. Abdu’l-Baha (19th C) wrote: ‘the fact that we imagine ourselves to be right and everybody else wrong is the greatest of all obstacles in the path towards unity’.5

5 Paris Talks, by Abdu’l-Baha
5) Cooperation

Example: the way the human body works is an excellent example of cooperation and collaboration. Each part of the body has a unique function, yet works together in harmony with the rest. If one part is hurt, the whole body suffers. If one part decided to be selfish and refused to cooperate, what would happen?

Can we talk together in a way that helps us come up with good ideas, solve problems and make new plans? What are some components of effective consultation and cooperation?
6) Unity at school

How can we make everyone at school feel included, regardless of what they look like or think? Can you make friends with someone you don’t usually play with or someone who is different from you? Wouldn’t you be missing out if all your friends were just like you?

Can we build friendships with everyone we meet, and so make everyone happier? What is true friendship? What makes you a good friend?

**Summary:** Unity is about working together, all of us, in our own ways: let me come to you and help you ... you can come to me, and we’ll see what we can achieve together.
Acknowledgements

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