A Parent-Teacher’s Manual of Activities and Curriculum
To be adjusted creatively according to age groups

Message to Children, Parents, and Teachers

“God will not change the condition of a people until they change what is within themselves.”
(Chapter 13, Verse 11)

Dear Children, Parents, and Teachers,

Let’s change what is within ourselves for the better! That is the intention of the Ghazali Children’s Series. We all feel terrible about what is going on in the world today, and we want to know what we can do about it. Allah promises us that He will improve our situations if we improve what is inside of us, meaning our character. Our character is made up of our habits which can be good or bad actions, thoughts, or feelings. Building good character cleans our spiritual hearts and allows Allah’s beauty to shine through us. To build it, we must practice living and thinking in the best way until good habits become our way of life inwardly and outwardly. Together, we will set upon a journey to build good character and polish our hearts—helping each other along the way. Let’s begin!

Teaching Methods for Parents and Teachers

Children will easily recognize and understand the truths of each teaching from Imam al-Ghazali. What is of utmost importance is that these lessons are reinforced by actually being practiced on a regular basis. In life, what we do over and over again quickly becomes a habit and the way we naturally do something. In this curriculum, we present traditional teaching methods such as review questions, crafts, and songs, but we also introduce a new method of play-learning in the spirit of prophetic instructions to let children play. Playing games and play-acting virtuous qualities is a fun and effective way for children to change their reflex reactions through repetition and allow those virtuous qualities to become second nature. For example, sharing when their first instinct is not to share—they must practice sharing in play-acting, over and over again, until it becomes easy for them and a pleasure. The success of the Ghazali Children’s Series will depend upon the children being encouraged by parents and teachers in creative and enjoyable ways to practice all their learning on a regular basis.

Teacher Etiquette

• We must demonstrate to our children that we are applying the Ghazali Children’s Series to ourselves and that we are willing to participate in the learning activities. For every learning activity, we strongly recommend doing exactly what the children are expected to do, yourself.

• Make the lessons in this Series a regular conversation in your family/class, and/or share the lesson plans with the families of the children in your class clearly requesting that they incorporate the Series into their family life. (Parents will be included among those referred to as “teachers” in this manual.)

• You are key to nourishing the children’s motivation as you gather them to learn in a supportive and non-judgmental environment, providing positive reinforcement for their efforts.

• Have realistic expectations based on each child’s developmental level in helping the students perform virtuous habits and putting into practice what they have been taught. Young children vary considerably in their understanding of questions and taking part in discussions.

• Be patient and encourage your student to reach his/her maximum potential and praise them often in
their efforts to develop good character. Remember, you may not see all of the positive results of this Series until the children have grown into adults, but God-willing it is making a positive impact!

Program Overview

• The Ghazali Children’s curriculum is a habit-forming program that builds upon itself. It includes daily, weekly, and monthly activities that are repeated in order to form good habits that enhance the inner and outer lives of children.

• After meeting on a recommended weekly basis in a formal class to learn through short and light-hearted readings, crafts, songs, and fun games, children will choose virtues from a “Secret Virtue Box,” which they help to make and decorate.

• The children will perform daily practice of the virtue(s) chosen from the “Secret Virtue Box.” The children will look for daily opportunities to practice their virtue(s), aiming for 40 repetitions to make it a habit.

• Alongside their “secret virtue” practice, they will use a symbolic spiritual heart craft to visualize bad habits, and plan what parts of their character they want to work on.

• As the curriculum progresses, children will begin to work in teams to donate toys and clothing to charities, cook food for those in need, and/or visit the sick/elderly. The children will work in teams to keep up at least one community service activity on a monthly basis minimum. You are essential to assisting the children in planning and arranging these repeated activities, and making sure the children keep them up. Please read ahead so that you can adequately plan for these activities.

Curriculum Specifics and Delivery

• This curriculum is intended for children ages 7 to 13 years old. The reading level of the Book of Knowledge and Book of Belief is appropriate to be read aloud by an adult to any age group. Children who are reading on grade level could read the Book of Knowledge and Book of Belief themselves if they are mid-year 3rd grade or higher. The reading materials and curriculum could potentially be simplified for younger children and adjusted for older adolescents at your own discretion.

• We recommend you (the teacher) first read the chapter in the Book, the Workbook questions, and the respective activity descriptions in order to prepare class materials ahead of time.

• Always begin each lesson with du’a’ and end with du’a’. We also recommend incorporating a moment of silence before you begin.

• We present various activities per chapter in order that you might choose whichever of them works best for your group of students (not because we expect you would complete all of the activities).

• The Core Lessons can serve as checkpoints for verifying that children understand the basic message of the chapters, but are not meant to be easy summaries so as to diminish the process of learning through stories. The Essential Questions are meant to be open-ended and can be used during the Guided Personal Reflections and/or with older children in essay format.

• The timing and amount of material to be delivered at once is up to you, although you will notice that this curriculum is presented as if the students are meeting at least weekly. Meeting at least once weekly is recommended for the sake of habit building.

• Deliver the curriculum in the sequence presented in the Book (unless otherwise noted) because the curriculum builds upon itself. Some activities correlate to more than one chapter, and as some chapters are very short you may choose to combine chapters.
Before moving on to a new chapter, the teacher should review the Core Lesson(s) in the previous chapter.

During class time, the reading in the Book and Workbook questions should precede the activities unless otherwise noted.

You should engage the students with real life experiences and examples, give instructions, supervise discussions, and help the student when needed.

Please create your own activities too and post them on www.ghazalichildren.org for the whole community. We simply request that you keep the activities habit-forming and fun!

Be creative in your teaching approach and turn to Allah first whenever inevitable challenges come up. Always feel free to reach out to Fons Vitae if you need help, and please encourage your students to frequently visit http://www.ghazalichildren.org for illustrated guides to the activities. Do submit your own insights and ideas to be shared!

Rules of Written Work

- Children may write in their Workbooks or answer Workbook questions in their own journal.
- You may photocopy pictures in the Workbook for coloring or allow children to color in their own Workbooks.
- Encourage students to keep their written work orderly and neat. Writing with a pencil instead of a pen may be neater.
- Reflection journals should be updated each time a discussion takes place.
- Students should write in paragraph form and stress the importance of keeping all work free from blemishes.

Goals

- Teachers and students will read and discuss the text.
- Teachers and students will answer questions in the Workbook.
- Teachers and students will work together to engage in discussions regarding experiences related to the reading.
- Teachers and students will participate in in-class activities.
- Teachers and students will participate in daily-life activities.
- Teachers and students will participate in community service activities.
- Teachers and students will be role models of good character to others around them.
- Students will be more cognizant of their thoughts, actions, and words and how they relate to their spiritual hearts.

May Allah guide each of us and our beloved children! Ameen.

General Teacher Supply List

- Adult edition as well as Children’s Reader (Book of Knowledge, Book of Belief, etc.), Workbook, large item to write on such as dry erase board, large flipping paper pad on an easel, or chalkboard, corresponding writing materials.
General Student Supply List

- Reader (Book of Knowledge, Book of Belief, etc.), Workbook, composition journals (2), pencils, colored pencils, and paper for art work and drawings.

Curriculum Guidance for Introducing Ghazali Children’s Series

Step 1: Background Story

Read the introductory story about Imam al-Ghazali and complete questions about his life with the children.

Step 2: Teacher Demonstration

Prepare a simple skit for children to watch in which adults are treating each other unkindly. For example, one adult has a delicious treat and refuses to share with the other person. Gossip, envy, hatred can also be demonstrated in short skits to the children. Tell the children that you will let them know when they can contribute to the conversation. Ask them to share what they see happening, determine if it is good behavior or not, and say what behavior would be better. Use the children’s feedback to act out the skits once again. Tell the children that you will speak your negative thoughts and feelings out loud, but then stop yourself from acting upon them and instead choose the virtuous action recommended by the children.

Step 3: Making Words Clear

Children may not have a clear definition of “character,” “actions,” “thoughts,” “feelings,” and “habits.” Ahead of time, create a simple definition of each and print them out on paper. Also create a board with the words and space to tape or paste the definition once correctly matched by the children. Hand one definition to each child. Begin by asking the children what one word means, then ask them to find the right definition from the printed definitions. Reward the children with a treat once the correct definition is chosen. Keep the finished board visible at all times so that you and the children can refer to them as needed. Make the board large enough to add definitions as you go along like “spiritual heart,” “intention,” “progress,” “truthfulness,” “sincerity,” etc.

Step 4: Discuss Pearls of Wisdom

After the children get a sense of what they will be doing with the Ghazali Children’s Series, take some time to go over the following “Pearls of Wisdom” with the children and discuss why they might be important. Display the “Pearls” for future reference and/or give each child a copy to keep with them.

Pearls of Wisdom:

1. Become the commander of your own ship! Live by these words: “Be careful of your thoughts, for your thoughts become your words. Be careful of your words, for your words become your actions. Be careful of your actions, for your actions become your habits. Be careful of your habits, for your habits become your character. Be careful of your character, for your character becomes your destiny.” —Chinese proverb

2. Focus on progress, NOT long-term goals. You will go far with Allah’s help, but it takes small steps. Measure your progress each day by checking in with yourself. Ask, “Am I making progress?” (Even a little bit counts!) Just focus on that answer being “yes,” and don’t be blinded by the long-term.

3. Cleaning one’s spiritual heart is not about doing so many extra good deeds. It is about doing what we are already doing with love, kindness, and joy.
Step 5: Time Organization Tools for Children

This Series is NOT requesting that children sacrifice a lot of their playtime for extra virtuous activities. It is simply encouraging us all to do the same things we normally do in a beautiful and virtuous way. Please stress this point as a part of discussing time organization. Here are a few tools you can use to talk about organizing time:

**Tool 1: Check-In: Freeing Up Time for Good Deeds**

Guide the children through these short questions. Repeat throughout the Series as needed.

1. Name three things that you like to do when you are not in school.
2. When do you do these activities and for how long? Which is the least important to you, and would you be willing to do something better instead?
3. Make a plan to spend less time doing one of these activities so that you have an extra 30 minutes to build good habits each day. For example, “I will spend 30 minutes less playing computer games each day so that I can help my little brother with his math homework.”
4. Write notes to yourself to take 30 minutes each day to practice a new good habit, and stick them in the places that you did the old activities and on your bathroom mirror.

**Tool 2: Weekly Time Tables**

Assist the children to draw up simple weekly time tables that honor their need for recreation, but also promote spiritual development. They can allocate time to 1) praying and pleasing Allah (in addition to the five daily prayers, it should include the character building activities that beautify the spiritual heart), 2) regular school work, and 3) recreation.

**Tool 3: “Planning For My Heart” Craft**

For mature children, ask them to memorize Surah al-Asr so that you can reward them with their own brand new daily planners. Provide art materials for the children to decorate the outside cover of their journals with an inspirational message about the true meaning of life. For example, Surah 2 verse 152 which reads, “Therefore remember Me, I will remember you. Give thanks to Me, and reject not Me.” Covering their decorated covers with clear contact paper or tape will protect their designs.

**Note for Children with Special Needs**

We pray that we have all kinds of children participating in this Series including children that are ill or disabled. If a child cannot participate in some activities, please find substitutes for those children. For example, a child who is confined to their bed is in a special position to make *du’a* for other people in need. They could also organize a charity by writing letters to donors or sharing their own story with others.

**Spiritual Heart Curriculum Guidance Review**

**Core Lesson:** There are two kinds of learning, one practical and the other divine. Real Learning teaches us how to polish our spiritual hearts, which are different from our physical hearts. Our spiritual hearts need cleaning of vices in order to shine beautifully.

**Essential Question:** What is my spiritual heart and what does it need?

You may choose to read Chapter Twenty in conjunction with Chapter One during class time because Chapter Twenty narrates the characters actually creating their own “Spiritual Heart Visual Craft” (see below). It may take two sessions or a longer first session to accomplish these activities. Most of them are
core activities to the curriculum so we strongly recommend completing them.

After reading and answering any questions, let the children know that you will first play a game(s) to check for understanding. Then, you will ask them to spread out in the classroom so that you can guide them through the personal reflection questions below and give them time to write and make artwork. The environment should be serene, allowing children time to focus on their feelings and relationship with God.

New art materials, journals, or sticky notes may be laid out for the children to use for Activity 3 depending on the age group. During Activity 3, you may think about adding some soft Islamic songs to encourage the children not to speak to each other and focus on their art. Join the children in creating your own spiritual heart visual, and choose vices that you are also trying to clean away in order to set a good example for the children. Charity activities will be introduced in later chapters, but you may begin planning or participating in them now to provide ample opportunities for everyone to practice their virtues.

Activity 1: Physical Heart or Spiritual Heart?

The objective of this game is to identify which actions are connected to the physical heart and which actions are connected to the spiritual heart. The teacher will go through a list of actions and will ask the children, “Is this action connected to the physical heart or the spiritual heart?” You can use this list or come up with your own. If you would like to make this into a hands-on game, you can create paper examples of foods or activities for the physical heart and examples that are connected to the spiritual heart. Ask the children to sort them into containers listed “body/physical heart” or “spiritual heart.” Hint: You can use the spiritual heart examples in “Activity 4: Spiritual Heart Visual.” You will also need to create vices for Activity 4.

Examples:

- Sharing—spiritual heart
- Running—physical heart
- Helping others—spiritual heart
- When the doctor listens to your heart with a stethoscope—physical heart
- Praying—spiritual heart
- Feeling thankful to God—spiritual heart
- Feeling tired after exercising—physical heart
- Loving others—spiritual heart
- Fruit—physical heart
- Vegetables—physical heart

Activity 2: The Virtues of the Messenger Game

The purpose of this game is to introduce “virtues” to children from the example of the Prophet Muhammad, and to emphasize core virtues of Muslims. Make sure that “virtue” has been defined on the definition board. Make a board for each child on which there is a table with three columns and three rows totaling nine blocks on a piece of paper. Randomly write the following virtues into the blocks, making the order different for each game board you create: Love, Wish good for others, Never harm anyone with words, Never harm anyone with body, Protect others from harm, Believe in Allah with your heart and actions, Protect yourself from anger, Don’t seek revenge, Forgive others.

Now share these beautiful ahadith with the children, and ask the children to put a treat on a virtue they learn from each hadith. Discuss the ahadith and their virtues as you play. Each hadith will have multiple virtues so they will quickly fill their virtue boards and can exclaim, “Al-hamdulilah!” Here are some recommended ahadith:
1. Anas relates that the Prophet ﷺ said: “None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself,” (Bukhari and Muslim). Game words: Love, Wish good for others, Believe in Allah ﻪ with your heart and actions.

2. Abu Musa Al-Ash’ari, may Allah ﻪ be pleased with him, reported: I asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: “Who is the most excellent among the Muslims?” He said, “One from whose tongue and hands others are safe,” (Bukhari and Muslim). Game words: Never harm anyone with words, Never harm anyone with body, Protect yourself from anger, Forgive, Believe in Allah ﻪ with your heart and actions, Protect others from harm.

3. Narrated by Abu Hurayra, may Allah ﻪ be pleased with him: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Iman (faith) has sixty or seventy-odd branches. The least of them is to remove something harmful from the road…” (Bukhari and Muslim). Game words: Protect others from harm, Believe in Allah ﻪ with your heart and actions, Wish good for others, Love.

4. On the authority of Abu Saeed Saad ibn Malik ibn Sinan al-Khudri, may Allah ﻪ be pleased with him: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Do not cause harm, nor respond to harm with harm,” (Recorded in ibn Maja). Game words: Love, Never harm anyone with words, Never harm anyone with body, Protect yourself from anger, Forgive others, Don’t seek revenge.

Activity 3: Guided Personal Reflection

Ask the children to spread out in the classroom. Ensure a serene environment perhaps with soft Islamic songs playing in background. Verify that everyone knows what “intention” means and add it to the definition board if not already done.

Provide a coloring sheet with one of the 99 Names ﻪ written in Arabic calligraphy. When beginning the reflection, the children can color the “Allah” ﻪ. [Link to coloring sheet]

Interchange coloring with free-drawing or other forms of art in future repetitions of this activity. (Ask the children to draw something that appealed to them in the lesson and to share the meanings behind their artwork later.)

Ask the Essential Question(s) to the children, and allow them time to ponder upon their answers with their eyes closed or write it out in a personal journal. For example:

a. What is my spiritual heart and why does it need?

b. What is your intention? (Help guide the children to make their intention that of pleasing Allah ﻪ alone.)

c. Why are you trying to learn about taking care of your spiritual heart? What good things will happen to you if you take care of your spiritual heart?

Softly and kindly say something like this to the children: “Now close your eyes and focus on breathing in and out for 7 breaths repeating ‘Al-’ as one inhales and ‘Hamdulilah’ as one exhales. Try to find the deepest part inside your heart. Tell it that you wish to clean it and make it beautiful. Ask yourself everyday, ‘Am I getting better?’ Just focus on that answer being ‘Yes.’ Focus on getting better each day by sticking to good habits of thoughts, feelings, and actions. Don’t worry about the far-off future just right now.”

If possible, offer one-on-one time with each child to listen to their ideas and feelings about the class and daily activities, and reflect on their artwork.

Activity 4: Spiritual Heart Visual Craft

Create a visual reminder to work on improving character and polishing the spiritual heart, and keep track of improvement. It can be a journal or artwork. Here are instructions for creating a symbolic spiritual
heart that can be used long-term.

Note on crafts: If you do not have the materials for a craft mentioned in this curriculum, try to find similar items that are still sturdy and attractive. Be creative.

Suggested materials:
- Colored foam sheets
- Craft felt sheets of various colors
- Construction paper of various colors
- Foil
- Cardboard
- Journals
- Scissors
- Strongest glue available, with adult supervision only
- Tape
- Cut-outs of words or pictures of vices to be discussed in this Series. To be referred to as the “CAU-TION List,” it includes:
  - Envy, Lying, Being a Know-It-All, Arguing, Anger, Hate, Bullying, Gossip/Back-Biting, Greed, Pride, Making Excuses, Prying and Spying, Bragging/Showing Off, Being Two-Faced/Hypocrisy, Doing Too Many Things, Wasting Our Time, Ignorance, and Ingratitude (If possible, laminate the words or stick them between contact paper in order to make them durable for long-term use.)

Trace large sized hearts onto foam or cardboard, and then re-trace onto felt sheets, foil, or construction paper. Thin artistic materials can be glued to sturdier materials for added durability. Cutting out heart shapes of materials ahead of time will make the craft easier and the product more equal from child to child. Once the spiritual hearts are designed, the children will add vices that will be discussed in the Book and Workbook.

We recommend choosing no more than four vices at a time for the children to focus on and visualize with their spiritual heart craft. (Keep the others stored away for future use.) You can use tape or another adhesive that can be removed without damaging the heart to attach the vice to the heart. You may also simply write in the words on paper hearts, but the children will need to erase and re-write in the vices several times as they go along in the Series. Younger children may be able to better understand cartoon or real picture representations of the vices better than reading the words. It also demonstrates to children the unattractive nature of these vices.

In conjunction with the next activity, “Activity 5: Secret Virtue Box,” explain to the children how to use their spiritual heart visual as a tool to plan good thoughts, feelings, and actions that they will be working on.

Example of how to adjust for ages 5–7
1. Children may need one-on-one time with an adult to help write out two simple sentences. For example:
   - I promise to Allah…
   - When I clean my heart, Allah will make me feel…
2. Provide artwork materials beforehand for children to simply glue or paste together.

Activity 5: Secret Virtue Box

To guide the children in using their “Spiritual Heart Visual Craft,” create a container with virtues written on slips of paper that the children will practice in their daily lives. The virtues that you put into the container should be the opposites of the CAUTION List words you created for the “Spiritual Heart Visual
Craft.” Again, we recommend putting no more than four corresponding virtues in the container at one time so that the children are not overwhelmed. Save the other virtues along with the vices you are not yet using in a safe place, and switch them out every month or whatever fits with your schedule.

Print out or write on small pieces of paper each virtue and its opposite vice from the CAUTION List. For example:

1. Envy is opposite to Wanting Good for Other People
2. Lying is opposite to Honesty
3. Being a Know-It-All is opposite to Humility and Letting Other People Be Right
4. Arguing is opposite to Agreeing with Others and Being Peaceful
5. Anger is opposite to Peacefulness
6. Hate is opposite to Love
7. Bullying is opposite to Being Friends with Everyone
8. Gossip/Back-Biting is opposite to Respecting Everyone (even when they are not around)
9. Greed is opposite to Generosity
10. Pride is opposite Humility
11. Making Excuses is opposite to Being Responsible
12. Prying and spying is opposite to Minding Your Own Business
13. Bragging/Showing Off is opposite to Modesty
14. Being Two-Faced/Hypocrisy is opposite to Integrity/Truthfulness
15. Doing Too Many Things is opposite to Concentrating on What You are Doing
16. Wasting Our Time is opposite to Making Good Use of Your Time
17. Ignorance is opposite to Seeking Knowledge
18. Ingratitude is opposite to Gratitude and Patience
19. Meanness is opposite to Kindness

Add these slips to a special container that you will refer to as the “Secret Virtue Box” or according to the container you choose. Each child will randomly choose two slips of paper and whatever virtues they have chosen will be their special virtues to practice for the next two weeks. Because of the number of virtues to cover, we recommend that the children choose two virtues at a time. If you have more time or want to simplify it, just choose one virtue at a time. Return the slip of paper to the container after the children write in their journal the virtues they will practice for the next two weeks.

The goal is to practice each virtue at least 40 times in order for it to become a habit, but counting forty times may be too cumbersome for the children. So while you may mention the “40 times makes a habit” rule to the children, simplify it for them by just asking the children to look for opportunities to practice the good deed in their daily-life activities. The children can record a few instances per day in which they practiced the virtue in a personal journal or planner, or if they cannot yet write discuss in class.

As this activity is ongoing throughout the curriculum, having the children pick new virtues bi-weekly will allow the in-between weeks for reflection time with the repeated activity “Guided Personal Reflection and Update Spiritual Heart Visual” (in upcoming chapters). Make sure to share this part of the curriculum with parents so that they can support their child in practicing the virtue/refusing vices.
Activity 6: Jennah’s List of Ways to Polish the Heart

Read the following “Ways to Polish the Heart” to the children to give them ideas for practice (submitted by an 11-year old girl to Fons Vitae). Assist the children in relating each good deed to a virtue you put into the Secret Virtue Box.

“Jennah’s List of Ways to Polish the Heart”

Try one of these each day and notice how lovely it feels:

1. When my parents ask me to do something difficult, like chores, I will not complain. Rather I will try my best to do whatever they ask of me.
2. If someone bothers me, or says unkind things to me, I will control my temper.
3. Whenever I do something, like make my bed or fold clothes, I will try to do it beautifully and neatly.
4. I will spend the day with my grandparents to make them happy.
5. After a snowstorm, I will shovel my neighbor’s driveway before they wake up.
6. I will be the first to say sorry when my friend and I have an argument. (Or be the first to greet the other person cheerfully upon seeing him/her again.)
7. I will read the story of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ every year.
8. I will smile more often.
9. I will place a birdbath in the yard for birds who need a drink of water.
10. I will always say “Bismillah” before starting anything.
11. I will write to my grandparents who live far away. I want them to feel the happiness when they see a letter in their mailbox.
12. I will keep a nice book or magazine on the kitchen table for my Dad to read in the morning as he eats breakfast.
13. I will help put away the groceries.
14. I will keep extra change in the car, so that my mom can quickly hand money to someone in need while we are driving someplace.
15. I will empty the dishwasher every morning.

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Chapter One Curriculum Guidance

Core Lesson: Imam al-Ghazali’s visit to the children reminds us of the two worlds, and that his teachings are timeless. No matter when we live in human history, there will always be those who cannot understand the very meaning of life…why we are born and what we are supposed to be doing in our brief lives in this world. Imam al-Ghazali’s teachings provide a sound foundation and an orderly way to understand the meaning of life and its obligations, providing us with ways to know about and love Real Knowledge!

Essential Question: Do I need Real Knowledge in my life? Why?

Activity 1: Revisit “Allah ﷺ Speaks to Me” craft from Book One, Chapter Three.

Ask the children to pull out their “Allah ﷺ Speaks to Me” craft. Ask them to think about and discuss how the knowledge of the Quran and sunna reached them today. If not yet done, create the craft along with
this chapter with the following instructions:

As in every activity, be as creative as possible in bringing the beauty of Islam into the children’s artwork. Preparing attractive and sturdy resources ahead of time will help children produce beautiful work they will be proud of and that will last throughout the duration of this Series.

Create a visual for the children to see the chain of transmission from Allah ™ to the Archangel Jibril to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to the child. It can be a wall hanging, a page in their journals, the cover of a folder they will be using in this Series, a bookmark, etc. The point is that they will see this representation of the chain of transmission and remember this special connection to God through receiving His knowledge. At www.freeislamiccalligraphy.com you can download free printouts of beautiful Islamic calligraphy with Allah’s ™ name or the name of His Beloved ﷺ. Or you can make calligraphy yourself or use decorative English words. You may print out pictures of the children ahead of time to represent the child’s position at the bottom of the chain of transmission or simply write out his/her name.

Activity 2: Interview an Elder

Either assign homework or ask pious elder(s) from your community to visit your classroom. Share this curriculum guidance section with the elders so that they understand the goal of this activity. Assign each child to an elder that they will interview with the following questions:

1. When you were little, how did you learn about how to become a good person?
2. From whom did the person who taught you learn, and from whom did they learn?
3. Why did you need to know about how to be a good person?
4. What kinds of lessons did you learn about how to be a good person?
5. What advice do you have about good habits I can make to be a good person?

Ask the children to come back together again to discuss what they discovered from their interviews. Make the point to the children at the beginning and end of the activity that the elders needed to learn the same knowledge that we need to know in order to grow up to become good people.

Activity 3: Check-in: Freeing Up Time for Good Deeds

Guide the children through these questions:

1. Name three things that you like to do when you are not in school.
2. When do you do these activities and for how long? Which is the least important to you, and would you be willing to do something better instead?
3. Make a plan to spend less time doing one of these activities so that you have an extra 30 minutes to build good habits each day. For example, “I will spend 30 minutes less playing computer games each day so that I can help my little brother with his math homework.”
4. Write notes to yourself to take 30 minutes each day to practice a new good habit, and stick them in the places that you did the old activities and on your bathroom mirror.

Activity 4: The Belongings of Paradise Charity Box

Schedule this day on your calendar so that the children are prepared and have chosen an item to bring into the classroom for the charity box. Remind the children something like, “While we do not bring any belongings from this life into Heaven, that’s all right because the more good deeds we do in this life, Allah ™ will give us even better gifts and everlasting happiness in this world and Paradise.”

Before the children put their donations into the box, ask them to remember using the item and how happy they felt at the time. Then ask them to explain why they don’t use the item anymore. After they an-
swer, explain to them again that these toys only bring happiness for a short period of time, but the actions that strengthen the spiritual heart will bring happiness in this world and the next.

Repeat this activity bi-weekly or monthly, and have the children take turns delivering the items to a chosen charity organization. We recommend that the children bring in only one item at a time so that they will have items to give in the future.

**Activity 5: Guided Personal Reflection and Update Spiritual Heart Visual**

***Special Note: This activity corresponds to the Secret Virtue Box and is ideally used as a reminder to the children after the first week of practicing their secret virtue (to be repeated each time a new virtue is chosen). If you have not initiated the Secret Virtue Box yet, then do that first, and save this activity for your next meeting. Your order of doing the activities, “Secret Virtue Box” and “Guided Personal Reflection and Update Spiritual Heart Visual” will be opposite to that presented in this manual.***

Ask the children to spread out in the classroom with their Spiritual Heart Visual craft and/or journals. Ensure a serene environment perhaps with soft Islamic songs playing in background.

Provide a coloring sheet with one of the 99 Names 📚 written in Arabic calligraphy. When beginning the reflection, the children can color the “Allah” 📚. [http://freecoloringpages.co.uk/?q=99%20allah%20names](http://freecoloringpages.co.uk/?q=99%20allah%20names)

Interchange coloring with free-drawing or other forms of art in future repetitions of this activity. (Ask the children to draw something that appealed to them in the lesson and to share the meanings behind their artwork later.)

**Suggested Script:**

1. Ask the Essential Question(s) of the chapter to the children, and allow them time to ponder upon their answers with their eyes closed or write it out in a personal journal.
2. Softly and kindly say something like this to the children: “Now close your eyes and focus on breathing in and out for 7 breaths repeating ‘Al-’ as one inhales and ‘Hamdulilah’ as one exhales. Try to find the deepest part inside your heart. Tell it that you wish to clean it and make it beautiful. Ask yourself everyday, ‘Am I getting better?’ Just focus on that answer being ‘Yes.’ Focus on getting better each day by sticking to good habits of thoughts, feelings, and actions. Don’t worry about the far-off future just right now.”
3. “Open your eyes and update your Spiritual Heart Visual removing any vices that you have avoided and keeping any vices that you are still trying to improve. Do not despair if vices remain—your intention is what matters!”
4. “Write down what you would like to improve and name at least one easy way that you can improve.”
5. If possible, offer one-on-one time with each child to listen to their ideas and feelings about the class and daily activities, and reflect on their artwork.

**Chapter Two Curriculum Guidance**

**Core Lesson:** Words are incapable of explaining Who and What and Where is Allah 📚. Though we use God’s 📚 names and other words to describe Him, He is not a person and has no body…nothing at all is like Him! He is closer to us than our carotid artery and is Omniscient. Only the spiritual heart can be open to True and Special Learning. We can trust that God 📚 has put everything in perfect order for us. We must try hard to do what Allah 📚, our Protector, has asked of us.

**Essential Question:** How do you feel knowing that God 📚 is near to you all the time?
Activity 1: Connecting to the Quran

Read to your children Surah 112 and part of verse 11 from Surah 42, that states:
“There is nothing like Him, and He is All-Hearing and All-Seeing.” Explain to the children that there is nothing on earth that is like Allah ﷻ. Reflect on the meaning with them, and encourage them to memorize and recite it.

Activity 2: Getting to Know Allah’s ﷻ 99 Attributes

In this activity, provide a list of the 99 attributes of Allah ﷻ. Point out the following five attributes that are able to be practiced in one’s daily life such as:

1. Al Rahman—“The Most Compassionate”
2. Al Ghaffar—“The Repeatedly Forgiving”
3. As Shakur—“The Grateful”
4. Ar Rauf—“The Kind, The Pitying”
5. Al Wali—“The Friend, The Helper”

Each child should choose one attribute to practice in his/her daily life, looking for every opportunity to practice it. To give the children ideas, share “Jennah’s List of Ways to Polish the Heart” found in the above section entitled, “Spiritual Heart Curriculum Guidance.”

After practicing the attribute, ask the child to spend some quiet time thinking deeply about how it felt. For example, one child may choose the attribute of “Ar Rauf—The Kind, The Pitying.” The child may notice an opportunity to share a toy with his sibling or help his mother in the kitchen. The child will perform the “kind” deed and then take notice how it felt inside. After performing the act, the child can go to a quiet place to think about the good feeling, and reflect upon Allah’s ﷻ Kindness. This attribute should be practiced at least three times per day for two weeks so that nearly forty attempts to practice “kindness” have been made.

Activity 3: My Carotid Artery and the Nearness of God ﷻ

Just as in the story, tell the children to place their right hands on the right side of their necks, touching gently so that the blood can be felt passing by. Remind the children what Imam al-Ghazali said in the story, “Nearby, but deeper within your neck is the artery the Quran tells us about. Allah ﷻ says that He is nearer to those who serve Him than even this carotid artery deep inside you. But this nearness Allah ﷻ speaks of is not like any nearness you know. It is beyond what we can know…completely different!”

Activity 4: My Life Book

In this craft, the children will learn a surprising truth about their lives: that everything they feel, think, and do can be recorded in their “Life Book.” Just like a famous author writes an amazing story that the reader loves to read, each of us is also trying to write an amazingly beautiful life story in our “Life Book.” Provide the children with folded together pieces of card stock paper, construction paper, blank stationary, or a blank children’s books (which can be bought at craft stores or online). They may also use a page in their journal. The children will write the life story they would want Allah ﷻ to read about them. Depending on the age of the children, they may need one-on-one assistance to write in a story-like format. Illustrations are welcome.

The following is an example: Maryam Nur was born on January 10th, 2004, to her mother and father. As a little girl she loved to…As she grew up she learned to…“help the poor by making food for them”…“always tell the truth”…Sometimes Maryam struggled because…“it was hard to share”…“other children teased her and she became upset”…but she learned to overcome this by…“loving to make other people happy”…“forgiving other people.” When she grew up she became a…“scholar of Islam”…“doctor”…
The Book of Belief For Children Workbook

“fireman”… She helped everyone around her by…She was known to be…“kind,” “helpful,” “humble.” She lived her life in service of Allah ﷺ.

Activity 5: Children’s Poem to accompany “My Life Book”

Incorporate poetry into your classroom by simply reading a poem to the children, writing it out beautifully on the cover of their “My Life Book” craft, or even having them memorize it. Shaykh Abdal Hakim Murad has published a fantastic children’s book with classical Islamic poetry for children entitled Montmorency’s Book of Rhymes. Simply read the poem below and attribute it to the author (from p. 93 of the book):

“In Allah’s ﷺ great Book, where but angels look
On pages of spotless beauty,
Are written in letters of living light
A Muslim’s life and his duty”

Activity 6: Secret Virtue Box

After allowing the children some time (recommended two weeks if possible) to practice their virtue, offer the Secret Virtue Box to each child so that a new virtue may be chosen, read, and noted, and then the slip of paper returned to the container. Remind the children of the Pearls of Wisdom, and talk positively to them about their efforts so far. You may choose to provide healthy treats around this time to make it pleasurable.

Chapter Three Curriculum Guidance

Core Lesson: God ﷺ can See and Hear yet has no eyes or ears. He sends us Revelations through His messengers, peace be upon them all. He created everything in the heavens and worlds. His perfect Wisdom and Justice are beyond what we can understand. Each of us is made in a perfect way and given all that we need to regain our innate purity.

Essential Question: No matter what kind of life we have, God ﷺ provides blessings to help us become His honored khalifas, or representatives. What gifts have been given to me in my life to help me become the best person that I can be—my true self?

Activity 1: Connecting to the Quran

Read to the children part of verse 216 from Surah 2 and reflect on it together:

“But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And God Knows, while you know not.” Ask the children to talk about things that they might not want to do that are good for them and things they want to do that are bad for them.

Activity 2: “Ibrahim’s Acts to Better Your Heart Quiz”

Read the following quiz out loud and have the children write down their letter answer, or hand the quiz out and let the children answer on their own. The quiz was submitted by an 11 year old boy to Fons Vitae. Tell the children that the results are not to be shared with anyone else, as this is between each child and Allah ﷺ alone.

“Ibrahim’s Acts to Better Your Heart Quiz”

1. Imagine your frail, elderly neighbor is carrying several heavy bags of groceries. Yes or no, do you help her with the bags? If “Yes,” check which one of the choices below you would do.
   A. Ignore her and continue playing games with other kids.
   B. Stop and offer your help, just to be polite.
   C. Insist on carrying her bags and walk her all the way to her apartment.
   D. Choice “C” and offer to carry her bags home whenever she goes shopping in the future.
2. If you see a furry ginger colored ball of fur (a cat) stuck in a tree what would you do?
   A. Throw a stick at her to get her to meow.
   B. Ignore the cat and continue to play with your friends.
   C. Show concern, stop playing, and call animal control to make sure she gets back to her home.

3. Your parents are loaded with housework and are really stressed out. What will be your course of action?
   A. Use the dirty dishes as a shooting range for your ball.
   B. Not create any more work for your parents.
   C. Mow the lawn, wash the dishes, and water the plants (Okay, it may seem like too much, so just do the best you can to lighten their burden).

4. You notice one of your classmates sitting during lunch without food, and you only have enough food for yourself, what would you do? It’s a hard decision to make when you only have enough for one person, and you are hungry yourself. Let’s see what you’ll do!
   A. Pretend to not notice that your friend is not eating, and continue eating your favorite tuna croissant.
   B. Ask him if he would like to try a piece of your sandwich.
   C. Split your meal in half and sit next to him while sharing.
   D. Press a button on your magic watch and order a pizza hot from the oven straight to your lunch-room to the amazement of all your classmates.

5. A classmate of yours mispronounces a word while reading aloud, to which the class responds with roaring laughter, what do you do?
   A. Join the class in laughing harder.
   B. Stay quiet and don’t join in the laughter.
   C. Remind the class that we all make mistakes, so don’t be unkind and embarrass your friend, because next time it may be you. (Quietly whisper into his ear that you have made the same mistake several times before to make him feel better.)

6. Your aunt gives you some money for Eid, how would you spend it?
   A. Spend it all on candy and video games…Poof, gone within the hour!
   B. Spend half on yourself and spend the rest on a loving card and a scarf for your mom, and (a fix-it-yourself) book for your dad to show your appreciation for the care they give you everyday.
   C. You see a homeless person on the roadside, asking for money for food, and you give it all to him.

Check the choices you made in the table below. I hope you made great choices, but if not there are always many opportunities everyday to make wonderful choices and better your heart with each beautiful act.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Rusted Heart</th>
<th>Healthy Heart</th>
<th>Glowing Heart</th>
<th>Radiant Heart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Respect your Elders</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kindness to Animals</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Don’t be a Burden</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Show Compassion</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Show Empathy</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Show Generosity</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Activity 3: Witness Allah’s 🕌 Beautiful Creation

Promote friendship and refresh the children’s spirits by taking them on a field trip to a location with beautiful scenery. Chapter Three of the Book of Belief and the first two activities can be read at the gathering as the children sit in a circle. If you can, build a campfire, eat delicious treats, and sing beautiful songs about Allah 🕌 and His prophets, peace be upon them all.

Activity 4: Sing Silent Sunrise by Dawud Wharnsby and Yusuf Islam

Here is a beautiful song which speaks to the mission of the Ghazali Children’s Series. Perfect for children to sing along with the below lyrics. Here is the link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AIRbDQ0byV8

“Silent Sunlight”

La ilaha illa-Allah
La ilaha illa-Allah

Silent sunlight welcome in, there is work I must now begin
All my dreams have blown away
And the children wait to play
They’ll soon remember things to do
When the heart is young and the night is done and the sky is blue

La ilaha illa-Allah
La ilaha illa-Allah

Morning song birds sing away
Lend a tune to another day
Bring your wings and choose a roof
Sing a song of love and truth

We’ll soon remember if you do
When all things were tall
And our friends were small
And the world was new

La ilaha illa-Allah
La ilaha illa-Allah

Sleepy horses heave away
Put your backs to the golden hay
Don’t ever look behind at the work you’ve done
For your work has just begun

There’ll be the evening in the end
But till that time arrives
You can rest your eyes
And begin again
La ilaha illa-Allah
Silent sunlight
La ilaha illa-Allah
Morning sun
La ilaha illa-Allah
Silent sunlight welcome in

**Activity 5: Sing “Twenty-Five Prophets” by Zain Bhika**

An Islamic song in praise of all the Prophets, peace be upon them all. Lyrics are contained in the video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqr9CapvJmU&app=desktop

**Activity 6: Sing “All of the Prophets” by Yusuf Islam**

Another Islamic song in praise of all the Prophets, peace be upon them all:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ghLqyWxzKn4&list=RDghLqyWxzKn4#t=24

“All of the Prophets”

La ilaha illa-Allah

All the Prophets were brothers
Their mothers were different
But their faith was the same as each other’s
All of them said:
La ilaha illa-Allah

All of the people are part of one family; every man and woman
Belonging to humanity
Everybody knows:
La ilaha illa-Allah
La ilaha illa-Allah

All the Religions taught how to love each other;
but some people changed
And started fighting others
Then they forgot:
La ilaha illa-Allah

So God raised Prophets to guide people back;
to follow His Laws,
That’s the Straight Path
All of them said:
La ilaha illa-Allah
La ilaha illa-Allah

Adam, Idris (Enoch), Nuh (Noah), Hud, Salih, Ibrahim (Abraham), Ismail (Ishmael), Is-haac (Isaac), Lut (Lot), Yaqub (Jacob/Israel), Yusuf (Joseph), Shuaib, Ayyub (Job), Musa (Moses), Haroon (Aaron), Dhul-Kifl, Dawud (David), Sulaiman (Solomon), Ilyas (Elia), Al-Yasa, Yunus (Jonah), Zakariyyah,
Yahya (John), Isa (Jesus/Christ), Muhammad

The Prophets were brothers; their mothers were different
But their faith was the same as each other’s

La ilaha illa-Allah
La ilaha illa-Allah
La ilaha illa-Allah
La ilaha illa-Allah
La ilaha illa-Allah, No god but One God

Activity 7: Guided Personal Reflection and Update Spiritual Heart Visual

Ask the children to spread out in the classroom with their Spiritual Heart Visual craft and/or journals. Ensure a serene environment perhaps with soft Islamic songs playing in background.

Provide a coloring sheet with one of the 99 Names written in Arabic calligraphy. When beginning the reflection, the children can color the “Allah” http://freecoloringpages.co.uk/?q=99%20allah%20names

Interchange coloring with free-drawing or other forms of art in future repetitions of this activity. (Ask the children to draw something that appealed to them in the lesson and to share the meanings behind their artwork later.)

Suggested Script:

1. Ask the Essential Question(s) of the chapter to the children, and allow them time to ponder upon their answers with their eyes closed or write it out in a personal journal.

2. Softly and kindly say something like this to the children: “Now close your eyes and focus on breathing in and out for 7 breaths repeating ‘Al-’ as one inhales and ‘Hamdulilah’ as one exhales. Try to find the deepest part inside your heart. Tell it that you wish to clean it and make it beautiful. Ask yourself everyday, ‘Am I getting better?’ Just focus on that answer being ‘Yes.’ Focus on getting better each day by sticking to good habits of thoughts, feelings, and actions. Don’t worry about the far-off future just right now.”

3. “Open your eyes and update your Spiritual Heart Visual removing any vices that you have avoided and keeping any vices that you are still trying to improve. Do not despair if vices remain—your intention is what matters!”

4. “Write down what you would like to improve and name at least one easy way that you can improve.”

5. If possible, offer one-on-one time with each child to listen to their ideas and feelings about the class and daily activities, and reflect on their artwork.

Chapter Four Curriculum Guidance

Core Lesson: The Shahada is explained including the implications of Muhammad Rasul Allah. Allah has sent messengers and prophets at all times to all peoples and renews His message to humankind. The final revelation is the Quran which was transmitted through the Angel Gabriel with teachings about this life and the next.

Essential Questions: Name as many of the prophets God has sent as you can and tell anything about them that you know.

Activity 1: Connecting to the Quran

Read to the children verse 107 from Surah 21 and reflect on it together:
“And we have not sent you [O Muhammad] except as a mercy to the worlds.”

**Activity 2: Serve Like the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ!**

Choose a community project to complete every month. Here are two ideas—perhaps the children will have suggestions:

1. **Feed Your Neighbor:** Contact a local homeless shelter or orphanage and ask about their policy for bringing food to the residents. Then allow the children to plan a meal that they will drop off to the homeless shelter that same week. Find a location where the children can cook together. Small teams will allow each child to feel like he/she has an important role.

2. **Visit the Sick and Elderly:** Contact a nursing home for the elderly and ask about its policy for visitation. Allow the children to pick a time and activity that they would like to do with the residents. Encourage the children to be excited about visiting the elderly and reinforce how much the residents will appreciate it. However, please have a serious discussion with the children ahead of time about expectations for visiting the elderly including showing them the utmost respect and always being kind no matter what. Discuss with the children that they might see people who are very ill physically or mentally. The children should not speak loudly and should ask any questions to the teacher in the group, not the residents.

3. **Go around and collect trash wherever you can find it.**

**Activity 3: Making a Habit**

Share with the children the following hadith: Aisha said that Rasul Allah ﷺ said, “The deeds most loved by Allah (are those) done regularly, even if they are small.” (Bukhari, Muslim).

After the children have participated in both charities, have a class discussion on making a monthly commitment to at least one charity. Now is the time to use the “Good Habit Calendar” that you may have made earlier in the Series. Assign each child or team a task to commit to in order to make it a team effort. Encourage the children to keep up both charities if desired or split up and rotate. Assigning groups may help everyone feel included.

**Activity 4: Secret Virtue Box**

After allowing the children some time (recommended two weeks if possible) to practice their virtue, offer the Secret Virtue Box to each child so that a new virtue may be chosen, read, and noted, and then the slip of paper returned to the container. Remind the children of the Pearls of Wisdom, and talk positively to them about their efforts so far. You may choose to provide healthy treats around this time to make it pleasurable.

**Chapter Five Curriculum Guidance**

**Core Lesson:** After we die and are questioned about our faith, accountability is taken about our lives and doings. Children are encouraged to make toy scales in order to help practice self-observation and correction (rather than judge and be critical of others—judge themselves). This will help “polish the heart.” After crossing the narrow bridge, from which only the worst slip off, the immense Pool of Muhammad is reached where ALL thirst is quenched forever. This milk-white drink comes from one of the rivers of Paradise—al-Kauthar. Another aspect of faith is certainty of the excellence of the Prophet’s ﷺ Companions.

**Essential Questions:** Although the afterlife cannot be fully imagined, what would I like to happen as my scales of judgment are weighed and I am crossing the bridge to the Pool of Muhammad? Can I imagine how I might feel drinking from al-Kauthar?
Activity 1: The Balance Scale

Suggested supplies:
- A clothing hanger with notches
- String or yarn
- A single-hole puncher
- Two identical paper cups or other light household containers
- Scissors
- Measuring tape
- Masking tape
- Heavy white marbles or some other heavy and attractive item
- Light black objects like buttons or rocks

Directions:
1. Measure two pieces of string to be exactly two feet long each. Cut.
2. Make marks in the same place on each cup or household container and punch a hole into the marks.
3. Stick string through a hole and tie off the end with a knot so that it does not slip out of hole.
4. Loop the string over one side of the hanger in between one of the notches.
5. Drape the string down to the other side of the hanger and put the other end of the string through the second hole in the container.
6. Tie another knot so that the string does not slip out of the hole.
7. Repeat same process on other side of hanger.
8. Hang the scale on a cup hook in the wall, a doorknob, or any level bar in the home.
9. Ensure that the cups are hanging at the same level. If not, readjust them.
10. Once the cups are even, use tape to secure the string in the hanger’s notches.
11. Allow the children to experiment with placing the heavier white marbles on the right scale and the lighter dark objects on the left scale.

Activity 2: Making Amends in Daily Life

Ask the children to spend a few minutes in silence thinking about something that happened in the past that they do not feel good about, and for which they want to ask for forgiveness. For example, if a child yelled at his mother last week, but still had not apologized. Encourage the children to make a secret plan between them and Allah to ask for forgiveness from the person they hurt, try to fix the problem if possible, and then ask forgiveness from Allah. Get the children excited about asking for forgiveness for their bad deeds so that they will not be on the scale on the Day of Judgement and their good deeds will be even heavier! Begin to incorporate this practice into their daily “Heart Checks” so that asking for forgiveness becomes a habit.

Activity 3: Forgiveness Notes

Provide construction paper or blank notes and colored pencils for the children. Ask them to design notes in which they can ask for forgiveness from a person they have hurt. Mention to the children how happy the person will be when they receive the note. Help the children send the note to the person or ask their parents to help them do so. It’s all right if it is someone they live with. They can hide it under the person’s pillow or put it on their seat at the dinner table.
Activity 4: Guided Personal Reflection and Update Spiritual Heart Visual

Ask the children to spread out in the classroom with their Spiritual Heart Visual craft and/or journals. Ensure a serene environment perhaps with soft Islamic songs playing in background.

Provide a coloring sheet with one of the 99 Names ੾_written in Arabic calligraphy. When beginning the reflection, the children can color the “Allah” ੾. http://freecoloringpages.co.uk/?q=99%20allah%20names

Interchange coloring with free-drawing or other forms of art in future repetitions of this activity. (Ask the children to draw something that appealed to them in the lesson and to share the meanings behind their artwork later.)

Suggested Script:

1. Ask the Essential Question(s) of the chapter to the children, and allow them time to ponder upon their answers with their eyes closed or write it out in a personal journal.

2. Softly and kindly say something like this to the children: “Now close your eyes and focus on breathing in and out for 7 breaths repeating ‘Al-‘ as one inhales and ‘Hamdulilah’ as one exhales. Try to find the deepest part inside your heart. Tell it that you wish to clean it and make it beautiful. Ask yourself everyday, ‘Am I getting better?’ Just focus on that answer being ‘Yes.’ Focus on getting better each day by sticking to good habits of thoughts, feelings, and actions. Don’t worry about the far-off future just right now.”

3. “Open your eyes and update your Spiritual Heart Visual removing any vices that you have avoided and keeping any vices that you are still trying to improve. Do not despair if vices remain—your intention is what matters!”

4. “Write down what you would like to improve and name at least one easy way that you can improve.”

5. If possible, offer one-on-one time with each child to listen to their ideas and feelings about the class and daily activities, and reflect on their artwork.

Chapter Six Curriculum Guidance

Core Lesson: True ideas are like seeds planted in our chests which can be nourished by Special Learning from family and teachers. These ideas become beautiful doings which finally grow into “a goodly tree whose roots are firm and branches in Heaven” (Quran 14:24). The fruits of our learning are our good deeds which polish our hearts and serve others. Children can help the seeds to grow by learning Quran and Hadith. Over time the deeper meanings of these studies will become clearer. It is important to watch the “seeds” grow by doing good deeds and weed our “gardens” by constantly observing and correcting our lower doings. We all need to copy good people.

Essential Question: When I correct myself when I am wrong and do good deeds instead, how do I feel inside? Who are some people that I want to copy? Why?

Activity 1: Plant a Tree

Reach out to families of the children, community members, or your local City Hall to ask if anyone would like and permit the children to plant trees on their property. Permission for one tree is sufficient, but the more the better allowing each child to plant a tree.

Vegetable seeds can also be planted if trees are not possible. For families that have the capability, allowing the child to plant a tree or vegetable seeds in their own yard would give the child the possibility of developing a habit of caring for the plant as it grows by watering it, propping it up, and removing any weeds.
Explain to the children that the plant needs to have good soil and clean water, correct propping, and removal of any weeds in order to grow and produce food God-willing. Emphasize to the children that the good ideas they are learning are like the seeds, and they need to take care of them just like the plants in order to produce the fruits of good character. Nourishing oneself with Real knowledge, performing good deeds and removing bad habits, and remembering Allah much, will make them grow into good people with beautiful characters.

**Activity 2: Honor Your Elders**

Remain in contact with the respected elders in your community who first visited the classroom. The children will now be paired off with an elder whom they will need to shadow during a special activity such as completing a charity project together. After the charity project, the children can interview the elders about their lives focusing on good advice that the elder learned in his or her lifetime. Speak to the elders ahead of time about ideas they might have to teach the children lessons about developing good habits and building virtuous character.

**Activity 3: The Blessed Tree Film**

Refresh the children’s spirits with this astounding film which speaks about a miraculous tree which loved the Prophet Muhammad . It can be downloaded at this link for reduced price:

http://www.tenthousandfilms.com/The_Blessed_Tree.html

Questions for children about the film:

1. Why did the tree grow to become so strong even in the harsh desert?
2. How can love of the Prophet Muhammad help you to grow into the best person possible?

**Activity 4: My Growing Tree Craft**

Suggested materials:

- Durable sheets of construction paper, cardboard, etc.
- Markers
- Paste
- Scissors
- Cut-outs of trees, leaves, and fruits from durable craft materials mentioned above
- Small drawings illustrating good virtues (can also be written out)
- Small drawings representing good fruits which arise from virtuous habits. For example, happy faces; a picture of poor children being fed and smiling; a picture of a child with his parents smiling at the child proudly. These ideas could also be written out in words.

Each child is asked to draw a bare tree with many roots and leafless branches reaching Heavenwards. The teacher could offer a cut-out that could be traced.

Children can paste drawings, pictures, or words of good habits on the roots. These are things that would grow into beautiful trees, like those mentioned in Chapter 6, such as “Memorize Quran,” “Make Five Daily Prayers,” “Honor Elders,” “Be Truthful” etc.

Now decorate the tree with leaves and fruits using markers or paste cut-outs of leaves and fruits made from a durable material.

Finally, write words or paste pictures and drawings of the “good fruits” that will come from their virtuous habits onto the tree limbs.

**Activity 5: Secret Virtue Box**

After allowing the children some time (recommended two weeks if possible) to practice their virtue, of-
fer the Secret Virtue Box to each child so that a new virtue may be chosen, read, and noted, and then the slip of paper returned to the container. Remind the children of the Pearls of Wisdom, and talk positively to them about their efforts so far. You may choose to provide healthy treats around this time to make it pleasurable.

Chapter Seven Curriculum Guidance

Core Lesson: Arguing must be avoided. By attempting to “win out” over others, the lower self is strengthened with increased pride and showing off. It is ugly to watch and to engage in. It is the opposite of being humble and empty when one can reflect God’s Light.

Essential Questions: Who do I hurt most when I argue? Can I be strong enough to stop myself from arguing? How?

As this is the last class of the book, you might make this session into a celebration with small, inexpensive gifts for the children if possible. These gifts should be wrapped in attractive gift wrapping paper and will be used in the skit and activity.

Activity 1: Connecting to the Quran

Read to the children Surah 8 verse 53, and reflect upon its meaning:

“God would never change the blessings with which He has graced a people unless they change their inner selves: and (know) that God is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.”

Activity 2: Losing Blessings Skit

Suggested supplies:

- Examples of blessings written out on construction paper such as “happiness,” “love,” “delicious food,” “money,” “nice house,” “lots of friends”
- Attractively wrapped small, inexpensive gifts
- Waste basket lined with a clean bag

Develop a skit in which two adults start off as good friends sitting down for a cup of tea together. Lay the words and/or gifts out in front of the adult actors so that the children can see them. Assign each child a number and tell him or her that if they notice any arguing come in the order of their numbers and pick up a “blessing” from the pile and drop it into the waste basket.

The purpose of giving the children assigned numbers is so that they do not all rush up at once to throw away the blessings. Tell the children that if they notice arguing but the next person in line has not noticed yet, they can kindly whisper a reminder into that person’s ear. At the end of the skit, the adults will notice that all of their blessings are gone because they argued, and they will feel remorseful and ask forgiveness from each other.

Activity 3: Prayer to Avoid Anger

Bring the children the good news that there is a prayer to fight off anger that may lead to arguing. You may have the children memorize it, and they can use it in the next activity to win back the gifts.

“A’oothu billaahi minash-Shaytaanir-rajeem.” I take shelter/refuge with God from the accursed Shaytan.

Activity 4: Hasan and Hossein’s Winning Method

Share with the children the story of Hasan and Hossein (may Allah eternally bless them) in which the two boys saw an older man making ablutions incorrectly. Instead of correcting him, they asked him to watch each of them make wudu and be a judge as to who made wudu the best. In this way, the man realized his own mistakes without being humiliated. Ask the children to act out this scenario, and come up with
different ways in which they could gently teach someone who was doing something incorrectly the proper way of making wudu. Then have them do it in an impolite manner and ask them how it felt.

Next ask the children to use the same method of gentleness to avoid arguing in a pretend scenario. Some ideas for pretend scenarios:

1. Two children are playing tennis. One person hits the ball, and the other person says that the ball landed out of bounds.
2. A family is going on a trip. Two siblings both want to sit in the front seat.

If you do not choose to do “Activity 5: Stop, Drop, and Roll!” the children could also win back the gifts in this activity by successfully completing this exercise without arguing.

Activity 5: Stop, Drop, and Roll!

Most of the children will know this catchy saying from learning about fire safety. In this case, you will be teaching them to use it for “arguing safety.” Tell the children that they will have an opportunity to win back all the blessings lost in the first skit if they can complete a team task without arguing. Give advice about how to avoid arguing such as listening respectfully to other people’s ideas, staying quiet, smiling, and staying positive. If a person begins to argue, they must “Stop, Drop, and Roll”—really meaning to pause, let go of the issue, and keep on working as a team. But if the children can get giggles out of actually dropping to floor and rolling around, why not?

The environment should be as spacious as possible with supplies provided for the children that require teamwork appropriate for the group size, such as setting up a tent, building a fort, completing puzzles, or playing a board game. Stay nearby and call out “Stop, drop, and roll!” if you notice any bickering beginning. As long as the children make a sincere effort to avoid arguing and complete the task, even if they have to correct themselves by apologizing, everyone should win a small gift and celebrate their hard work to avoid arguing.

Activity 6: Open Microphone Assignment

One way to bring closure to the Book of Belief from the Ghazali Children’s Series is to end with a story-telling/poetry/art ceremony. Ask the children to write a short story or poem or create a piece of art that demonstrates an important lesson they have learned in this Series. Let the children know that at your next meeting they will be celebrating the end of Book Two and inviting guests to witness their closure ceremony. More for the closure ceremony is found below.

Activity 7: Guided Personal Reflection and Update Spiritual Heart Visual

Ask the children to spread out in the classroom with their Spiritual Heart Visual craft and/or journals. Ensure a serene environment perhaps with soft Islamic songs playing in background.

Provide a coloring sheet with one of the 99 Names written in Arabic calligraphy. When beginning the reflection, the children can color the “Allah” in Arabic. [http://freecoloringpages.co.uk/?q=99%20allah%20names](http://freecoloringpages.co.uk/?q=99%20allah%20names)

Interchange coloring with free-drawing or other forms of art in future repetitions of this activity. (Ask the children to draw something that appealed to them in the lesson and to share the meanings behind their artwork later.)

Suggested Script:

1. Ask the Essential Question(s) of the chapter to the children, and allow them time to ponder upon their answers with their eyes closed or write it out in a personal journal.
2. Softly and kindly say something like this to the children: “Now close your eyes and focus on breathing in and out for 7 breaths repeating ‘Al-’ as one inhales and ‘Hamdulilah’ as one exhales. Try to
find the deepest part inside your heart. Tell it that you wish to clean it and make it beautiful. Ask yourself everyday, ‘Am I getting better?’ Just focus on that answer being ‘Yes.’ Focus on getting better each day by sticking to good habits of thoughts, feelings, and actions. Don’t worry about the far-off future just right now.”

3. “Open your eyes and update your Spiritual Heart Visual removing any vices that you have avoided and keeping any vices that you are still trying to improve. Do not despair if vices remain—your intention is what matters!”

4. “Write down what you would like to improve and name at least one easy way that you can improve.”

5. If possible, offer one-on-one time with each child to listen to their ideas and feelings about the class and daily activities, and reflect on their artwork.

**Closure Ceremony Guidance**

**Activity 1: Open Microphone Storytelling or Poetry**

Arrange a stage with a real or pretend microphone and seating arrangements for invited families, teachers, and friends. Each child will have their turn at the microphone to read a short story or poem to the audience showcasing an important lesson they have learned during this Series.

**Activity 2: Award Certificates**

Create or purchase formal award certificates for the children. It may read something like, “Congratulations Fatima Shah for your hard work completing the Book of Belief from the Ghazali Children’s Series. May Allah guide you always. Ameen.”

**Activity 3: Islamic Song Concert**

Along with the Open Microphone segment, the children can share the spirit of the lessons they have been learning by singing the Islamic songs for their parents, teachers, and friends.

**Activity 4: Memory Lane**

Collect all the photos and recordings taken of the children during class time and community service projects. Print the photos to be displayed at the closure ceremony or create a picture slide show with a beautiful Islamic song playing in the background.

**Activity 5: Parting Blessings**

Ask a respected elder or scholar in your community to join the ceremony in order to make the final parting words and say a *du’a* for the children and their families.