

Upper Primary

The first in a series of five.

Aim:

To explore what we can learn from God's creative activity and remind ourselves that the same Creator can be trusted in our lives.

Scripture:

Genesis 1:1-8

Psalms 93

Memory Verse:

For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him.

Colossians 1:16

Thought for the Teacher:

A wonderful truth is that God is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. He existed before all things. He is Creator God and we want the children to celebrate this fact - that God ordered everything into being by His word. He is still God and in control of the world today. Praise His holy name!

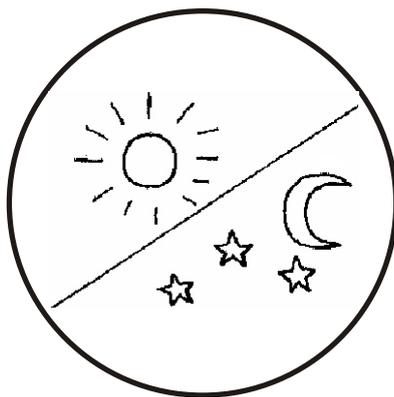
Help the children to realize for themselves that God can be trusted.

Bible focus

Just as some artists paint without including details, so do the inspired authors of Scripture sometimes paint with broad brush strokes because their message is bigger than the bare facts. This is important, as young people today may well be more interested in what holds creation together and who formed it, rather than learning how it was made. The passages in this series help us answer some of these timeless questions. So let's stand back, view the bigger picture and broad strokes, and maybe we'll feel the breath of God the Creator.

Order and stability

Today's passages focus on God himself. He is the only God, not one spirit among many. He existed before all things and is separate from His creation. He has never changed (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 93:2). He ordered everything into being by His word; He's a God of authority and power. Therefore, He can hold the world firm and secure (Psalm 93:1). He who brought order out of chaos won't let His world fall apart until the appointed time. He is a fixed reference point for life and truth.



The Bible has much to say on that side of creation that concerns light and water. Day follows night, giving a natural rhythm for life to dance to. Our global village, though, hums to the tune of turbines turning night into endless day.

Being awake at all hours, we lose the rhythm, increase the stress, and life becomes a whirl. In biblical times, light made by man was a flickering flame that was easily extinguished.

By contrast, God's created light is strong, and constant (the sun shines always somewhere) and thus is a symbol of truth, inner light, and holiness, and so it should be. . . God is light; His character is reflected in His first act of creation..

And parting the waters? On day two, God lifts the clouds of mist from the earth's surface and starts the water cycle upon which all life depends. It shows He can control the elements. Water, like fire, is wild and hard for us to tame (Psalm 93:4) (Job 38:8?) It also shows that God's first acts were to create life's building blocks of light and water. That is, He always intended the earth to be a life-support system. It's no accident. Nor are we.

Stand in awe

This should lead us to obedient worship. We need order in our chaotic lives, and an orderly God can grant it. We need continuity in our patchy society, and security when our personal world collapses, whether through a terrorist's bomb, an unfortunate accident, a business failure or an unfaithful friend. An unchanging God can hold it and us together. We often dismiss that old phrase 'As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen' as an enemy of spiritual growth, but in fact, it's a friend of faith. It's the big picture of God; praise Him!

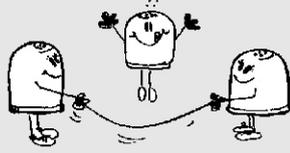
Acknowledgments to Derek Williams

Prayer

Father, in our chaos, breathe Your order.
 In our uncertainty, breathe Your stability.
 In our ceaseless activity, breathe Your calm.
 In our darkness, shine Your light.

Amen

Jumpstart



Divide the class into equal groups. Tell them that you are going to describe an item to them which they may have on them. The first person to bring the item to you receives a point for their team.

Call out the following descriptions, allowing somebody to bring the item to you before you call out the next. If no one is able to bring you the item tell them what you were looking for.

- 1 - A square piece of cotton material used to dispose of mucus from the nasal organ. (*handkerchief*)
- 2 - A thin column of graphite surrounded by a tube of wood. (*pencil*)
- 3 - A disc of metal alloy, bearing a variety of images, used for the acquiring of goods or services. (*coin*)
- 4 - A cube of coloured and flavoured confectionery. (*sweet*)
- 5 - A thread-like pigmented structure taken from the follicle of the apex of *Homo sapiens*. (*hair from your head*)

After you have finished, ask the teams how easy they found the game. The descriptions you gave were correct but probably not what they were usually called. There are many ways of describing something, all of which are right. Today we are going to look at the world and ask some questions about it.

Give out the facts cards using the ideas listed below or create your own. Ask the group to read them out. Discuss them and decide what the most amazing fact is. To conclude, you might want to say that, for you, the most amazing fact is not on the fact cards. It is that God made the world by speaking it into existence.

Today we shall find out what an amazing God we have who could make something so wonderfully complicated and accurate.

Amazing Facts:

Did you know? The sun is 149, 598 million kilometres away from the earth. That's just the right distance. If we were just 5% closer we would burn, 1% further away we would freeze. That wouldn't be very comfortable.

Did you know? Our sun is just one of thousands in our galaxy and our galaxy is just one of billions in the universe.

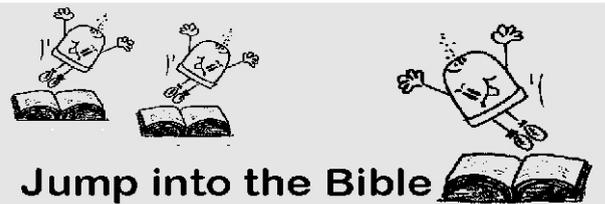
Did you know? The Gulf Stream is a deep ocean current that moves faster than any ship and transports

55,000,000 cubic metres of water per second. That is more than the total water movement of all the world's rivers.

Did you know? The sun is not an average star. Most stars have huge variations in the amounts of heat and light they put out over time, (*from 10% to 150,000% of the sun's rays so they would boil us or freeze us too. But our sun is constant, and gives us just the right amount of heat and light.*)

Did you know? The earth's oceans cover 70% of the surface of the earth. They are important for controlling the weather, setting up the water cycle and regulating temperature.

Did you know? The atmosphere on the earth is the only one in our solar system which is suitable for life.



Jump into the Bible

Divide your group into pairs or groups of three and ask them to find Genesis 1:1-8.

In their small groups, read through the Bible verses and note all the verses and verbs that refer to what God does, e.g created (*verse 1*), moving (*verse 2*), command (*verse 3*), looked (*verse 4*), saw (*verse 4*), separated (*verse 4*), named (*verse 5*).

Write the list on the flip chart.

What pictures do these words conjure up in the minds of group members? They are not words that suggest that God has withdrawn from this world: instead, they are all words that imply personal involvement. (*NB. Verses 6 and 7 reveal that the writer imagined the earth was flat, covered by a dome which held back more water. We now know the earth to be round and surrounded by its own atmosphere. The importance of the earth's atmosphere is that it allowed life on earth to be possible. Other planets without such an atmosphere would not be possible for us to live on. It is by divine intention that the earth is able to support life.*)

Bring out facts about creation from the Bible.

Read out Psalm 93, and explain that this is another description of the relationship between God the Creator and His involvement with the world. He 'fixed' the earth in its place and the order of creation is secure (*verse 1*). (*Perhaps think of the 'fixed' relationships of planetary movements within the solar system.*) He is eternal, universal and invincible (*verse 2*). He is mightier than all the forces of nature (*symbolized by the power of the oceans*) and He rules over them (*verse 4*).

Draw out that the writer of the psalm is not giving a scientific description of *how* God created the world

☞ but telling us who the Creator is, and that God, the Creator, is still in control of His creation.

Teach the Memory Verse: For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him. Colossians 1:16

Highlight God created it **all**. He created it for himself.

📖 To review the lesson, have some appropriate music if possible.

- ☞ Explain to the group that we often spend our days being so busy that we do not notice the creation around us. It takes passages like Genesis 1 or Psalm 93 to make us think and draw our attention to the wonder of God's work.
- ☞ Ask the children to close their eyes and imagine the very beginning of time when God created the world. The music and the Bible words you read will help them imagine and 'paint pictures' in their minds. As the music plays, read Genesis 1:1-8. Follow this by reading Psalm 93.
- ☞ Let the music continue playing and ask the children to describe what they 'see'.

Jump into Life



😊 Present the children with the following statements written in pairs:

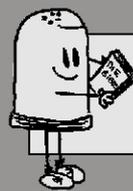
- (a) Eating eggs is good for you; Eating eggs is bad for you.
- (b) The sky is blue; The sky is grey.
- (c) I came here in the bus; I came here to meet you.
- (d) The universe began when there was a massive explosion which scientists call the 'big bang'; The universe began when God created the heavens and the earth.

Ask which statement in each pair the children think is true and why. Ask, 'Can both be true?' In each case, they should see that both could be true:

- (a) Many nutrients in eggs are good for us, but eating too many might increase cholesterol levels;
- (b) The sky is blue, but when obscured by clouds appears grey.
- (c) One statement explains how I traveled and the other why.
- (d) One states a theory of how the universe came into existence, the other (*the overwhelmingly important truth*) informs us who made it happen.

Sum up by saying that God has revealed lots of true things in the Bible. One is that He made the world. Science is busy trying to find out how He did it. But the 'why' is important too.

(Continued in next column)



Words of Life

Memory Verse:

Colossians 1:16

For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him.

Talk about the children's favourite natural creation e.g sun shining, beautiful flowers, the seaside etc. Encourage children to tell you why they enjoy it so much. After each child has the chance to share their favourite creation, say the verse together, reminding each other that God is the creator of the world. Simple actions could be used too.

For by Him - *point heavenward.*
all things - *a circular motion of the arms.*
were created - *pretend to make something.*
things in heaven - *point to heavens.*
and on earth - *point around yourself.*

Resource pages:

- 1A - Amazing facts; memory verse.
- 1B - Music of time crossword.



You will need:

Jumpstart: Handkerchief, pencil, coin, sweet, piece of hair.

Jump into the Bible: Flip chart.

Song suggestions:

- ♪ God is great
- ♪ My God is King
- ♪ He made the stars to shine
- ♪ This is the day
- ♪ Sing, shout, clap your hands.

(Continued from previous column)

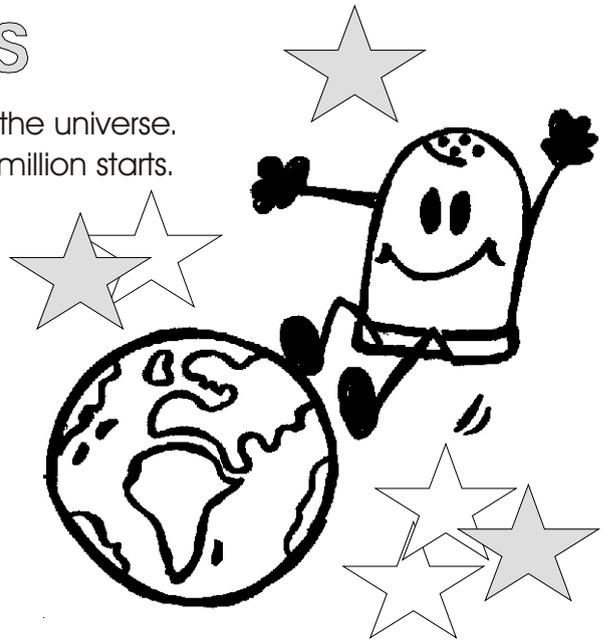
Why did God make the world?

Stress that God made the world because He enjoyed creating it. Science couldn't discover that; only God can tell us.

Finish by asking the group to consider what difference it makes if people know that life didn't happen by chance, that there is a caring Creator in control of the world, and that any of the problems we face are as a result of our broken relationship with Him. Aim to bring out that such beliefs make us more confident and more secure, and show us the way to become part of the solution.

Amazing facts

- ☆ Our galaxy is just one of 400 million galaxies in the universe.
- ☆ Our galaxy, the Milky Way, contains over 3,000 million stars.
- ☆ Our galaxy of stars is 100,000 light years wide.
- ☆ The observable universe, when viewed from earth, is at least 25,000 million light years in diameter.
- ☆ One second of the energy given off by the sun is 1.3 million times greater than the average amount of electricity used each year in the USA.



For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him.

Colossians 1:16a

God was around before the earth was formed. He put the universe together piece by piece. Check out what God did first in Genesis 1:1-8

Find these words (their first letters have been given) then **write them in the spaces.**

- B** _____ (verse 1)
D _____ (verse 5)
C _____ (verse 1)
N _____ (verse 5)
E _____ (verse 2)
W _____ (verse 6)
D _____ (verse 2)
D _____ (verse 6&7)
L _____ (verse 3)
S _____ (verse 8)
S _____ (verse 4)
M _____ (verse 8)

T C R E A T E D C
 H R O H H Y S A W
 G M N G T A K R M
 I K I N R A Y K O
 N L O Y A D A N R
 R W A C E O W E N
 S S E N I M S S I
 R E T A W E G S N
 B E G I N N I N G

Now look for the words in the wordsearch.
 (Remember you will have to look up, down, forwards, backwards and diagonally.)



In the prayer below, write something you want to thank God for and why.

Thank you, Lord, for creating

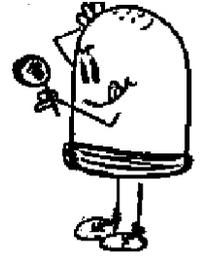
I like it because

Thank you, Amen.

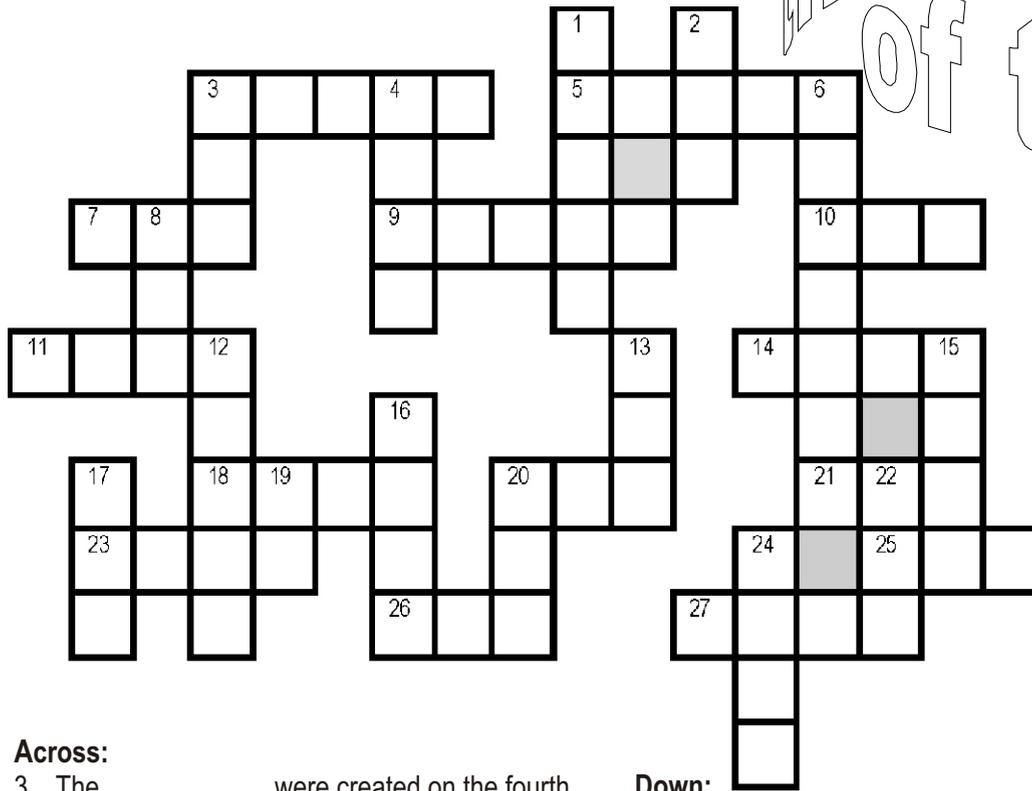


We all know the story of the creation of the world but have you stopped to think of all God made - a perfect world which He brought into being.

the music of time



Look up the verses in the first chapters of Genesis to find the answers.



Across:

- 3. The _____ were created on the fourth day, after the moon and the sun. (*Genesis 1:16*)
- 5. Human beings were made in God's _____ and likeness (*Genesis 1:26*)
- 7. *Short for Thomas*
- 9. God first said, 'Let there be _____!' (*Genesis 1:3*)
- 10. God made _____ to be a companion for Adam. (*Genesis 3:20*)
- 11. The birds _____ up into the sky. (*Genesis 1:20*)
- 14. F ____ were created to swim in the seas.
- 18. God m _____ Adam out of the dust of the earth. (*Genesis 2:7*)
- 20. The _____ was called the 'greater light to govern the day'. (*Genesis 1:16*)
- 21. In the beginning, _____ created the heavens and the earth. (*Genesis 1:1*)
- 23. God brought all the animals to _____ to name them. (*Genesis 2:19*)
- 25. God said, ' _____ there be an expanse between the waters'. (*Genesis 1:6*)
- 26. On the third day God said, 'and let _____ ground appear.' (*Genesis 1:9*)
- 27. God saw that His creation was _____! (*Genesis 1:24*)

Down:

- 1. God called the darkness _____ (*Genesis 1:5*)
- 2. God formed a _____ from the dust. (*Genesis 2:7*)
- 3. Short for Samuel.
- 4. God made man to _____ over the fish, birds and living creatures. (*Genesis 1:28*)
- 6. The _____ and the morning were the first day. (*Genesis 1:5*)
- 8. It only took God _____ day to make all the animals. (*Genesis 1:24*)
- 12. Adam was the first man and Eve was the first _____.
- 13. Adam and Eve were sent out of the garden because of their _____.
- 15. Adam and Eve tried to _____ from God. (*Genesis 3:8*)
- 16. God made plants and trees bearing fruit with _____ in it. (*Genesis 1:12*)
- 17. Evening and morning together were called a _____. (*Genesis 1:5*)
- 19. Short for morning: __ _ (*the opposite of PM*)
- 20. On the fourth day, God put lights in the _____. (*Genesis 1:14*)
- 22. The creation story is told in Genesis, the first book in the _____ Testament.
- 24. The _____ was called the 'lesser light to govern the night'. (*Genesis 1:16*)

For by Him all things were created; things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him.
Colossians 1:16

Answers:
Across - 3: stars, 5: image, 7: Tom, 9: light, 10: Eve, 11: slew, 14: fish, 18: made, 20: sun, 23: Adam, 25: Let, 26: dry, 27: good.
Down: 1: night, 2: man, 3: Sam, 4: rule, 6: evening, 8: one, 12: woman, 13: sin, 15: hide, 16: seed, 17: day, 19: AM, 20: sky, 22: Old, 24: moon.