

Unit 1 The Beginning

Week 1 In the Beginning

Information for Leaders

Bible Reference: Genesis 1-2

Main Teaching Points

- God’s creation is amazing, and he takes delight in it.
- God made us to be like Him, so we are creative too.
- We should be thankful for the wonderful world we live in.

Themes to discover

Christ in Creation

The children may think of the world being created by God the Father and that Jesus didn’t have a role in creation, but the bible makes it clear that this isn’t the case.

All things were made through the Word (Jesus) and nothing God made was made without him. (John 1:1-4) Jesus Christ was an active force in all of creation. Everything was made through Him. Paul states that He is not like anything or anyone else in creation, because He existed before all of creation. He is not “part” of the creation but is the Creator.

Colossians 1:15-17

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can’t see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together.

People are God’s most treasured creation

God made all other living creatures in various forms but when he made humans, he made them in one form only, in the image of God.

When God created Adam and Eve, He did not create two independent beings. From the dust of the ground God created one living being, Adam. Then he took a rib from Adam and made his companion Eve. So, the two, male and female, were both of one flesh and equally in God’s image. (Genesis 2:7,18,21-24)

The **Introductory activity** helps introduce the children to the idea that God created every living thing.

The **Story** and **Challenge** tell and reinforce the biblical story.

The **Prayer activity and Game** encourage the children to think about all that God has made and be thankful.

Additional discussion questions

Ages 4-7

- The bible says that Adam picked all the names for the animals (Genesis 2:19-20). Think of 3 well known animals and have a go at picking new names for them. How hard was it to think of new names?
- What your favourite animal in God’s creation?

Ages 7-11

- Why do you think human beings are so special to God?
- When you think about God’s creation, what are you thankful for?
- How can you help look after God’s world?

Week 1 Session Outline

Welcome and Intro

Registration/Welcome/Prayer

Intro Idea

You will need

Playdough

A variety of items such as googly eyes, pasta, coloured matchsticks, pipe cleaners, stones, feathers, cotton buds, buttons, beads etc.

What to do

Ask the children to create a unique creature using the materials provided and encourage them to make their creature good at something. What feature/s will help it to be good at the chosen thing? Allow feedback at the end so that any child who wants to talk about their creature can have the chance to do so.

Talk about

Today's bible story is about how God created the world and everything in it.



Story telling suggestions for unit 1

Choose some of these options to help tell the story.

1. Read the story from the Lion Storyteller bible using the visuals provided in the PowerPoints to enhance your storytelling. (see digital resources for this unit).
2. Use the short videos provided to tell the stories. (see digital resources for this unit)
3. Active listening – see the ideas on page 158 of the Lion Storyteller Bible to encourage active listening. The children are given sounds to call out or movements to make during the story.
4. Use a science experiment to bring out a truth from the story [see Week 3 -Noah's faith science experiment].

Story

pages 8-9 from The Lion Storyteller Bible

See Story suggestions for this unit

Challenge

Younger Children (3-6yrs)

You will need

Rule sheet

Junior Creation Cranium cards

A large dice or move cube

Playdough

Flipchart (or similar) and markers

A timer

Creation Cranium

What to do

Cut up the Junior Creation Cranium cards and keep them in 3 task piles. Divide your group into two teams. Play according to the rules given. Keep scores as you go along.

Older children (7-11yrs)

You will need

Rule sheet
Creation Cranium cards
Score sheet (1 per team)
Playdough
Flipchart (or similar) and markers
A timer

What to do

Cut up the Creation Cranium cards and keep them in piles for each day. Divide your group into two teams. Pin up score sheets somewhere visible. Play according to the rules given.

Prayer Activity

Thank you for creation

You will need

Flipchart or large sheet of paper
Marker pens

What to do

Chat to the children about what they love about God's creation. Create a skeleton for the prayer and put it up for everyone to see, then write the prayer together. E.g. a thank you prayer using the senses.

Thank You God for making

Amazing	<i>sunsets, waterfalls, rainbows</i>
_____ things to see like	_____
_____ things to hear like	_____
_____ things to smell like	_____
_____ things to touch like	_____
_____ things to taste like	_____ AMEN!

The children could come up with their own adjectives and ideas about what they are grateful for in each category. Once it is written everyone could say the prayer together with a big shout out AMEN! at the end.

Game Race around the World

You will need

Masking tape /chalk
Names of 4-6 countries on cards

What to do

Draw a square in the middle of the hall with chalk or mark out with masking tape. It should be big enough for all the children to fit into. It represents Northern Ireland. Place cards with the names of different countries around the world around the room stuck on the wall.

Begin with everyone in the square representing N. Ireland. When you call out the name of a country, the children should run to it. Call out places randomly and let the children run from country to country. After a few practices, the last child to reach the destination is 'out.' To make it harder, you could choose more than one country at a time e.g. go to Australia via America. (You might need to explain to younger children that that means go to America first and then Australia)

Talk about

Remind the children how huge and diverse planet earth is and all of it is God's creation.

Week 2 A Sad Day

Information for Leaders

Bible Reference: Genesis 3

Main Teaching Points

- Adam and Eve were tempted and disobeyed God.
- God takes sinning against him seriously.
- There are consequences when we sin against God.

Themes to discover

The Snake's temptation

Satan tempted Eve to disobey God by casting doubts in her mind about whether God's word was true (Gen 3:4) and questioning whether God's motives were really in her best interests (Gen 3:5).

With these thoughts swirling in her mind she looked at the fruit and saw that it looked and would surely taste delicious and best of all would make her wise like God himself. At this point she was sold, so she took the fruit and ate it. Satan had appealed to her vanity and pride and caused her to doubt God's goodness and truthfulness. Adam then listened to his wife and followed her instructions instead of listening to God and remembering his commands.

The consequences

One of the saddest verses in the bible is Gen 3:9. God calls out 'Where are you,' because for the first time, Adam and Eve have hidden away from God in shame and fear.

God's love for Adam and Eve didn't in any way eliminate his holy hatred of sin. 1 John 1:5 *This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.*

Though not immediately, Adam and Eve would die, returning to the dust from which they were made (Gen 3:19). For now, they were cast out of Eden and their life in the beautiful garden was replaced with a life with much toil and pain.

- The **Introductory activity** and **game** help the children think about how we can be tempted to do the wrong thing and how others can lead us into sin.
- The **Story** and **Challenge** tell and reinforce the biblical story.
- The **Prayer activity** focuses on how God forgives and wipes out our sins.

Additional discussion questions

Ages 4-7

- How do you feel when you do something wrong (perhaps like break something) and your parents are about to come in find out?
- Why do you think Adam and Eve hid when God called them?
- How do you think they were feeling as they left the beautiful garden?

Ages 7-11

- If you could make your own perfect world, what would you have in it?
- Why did Adam and Eve eat the fruit from the forbidden tree when they could have any other fruit they wanted?
- What do you think the snake looked like before it had to crawl on its belly?

Week 2 Session Outline

Welcome and Intro

Registration/Welcome/Prayer

Intro Idea

You will need

Intro talk idea
2 dolls (I used Mr Potato Head characters)
2 balloons
String
Drawing pins
Blu Tack

What to do

Blow up 2 balloons and attach them to your dolls with string. Have around 20 drawing pins facing upwards on a nearby table. (I pushed them into Blu Tack to make sure they stayed in place. If one shifts or moves out of place it might burst the balloon so make sure they are secure).

Use the scenario in the talk idea or modify to suit. Explain that everybody is tempted at times to do the wrong thing. Use the balloon to show how giving in to temptation and doing what we know is wrong will make us feel bad (the one drawing pin will burst the balloon easily). However, continuing to do wrong can harden our hearts and it won't make an impact on our conscience. (Lots of pins won't burst the balloon).

In our story today Adam and Eve face temptation. I wonder if they manage to do better than Bert and Sally.

Story

pages 10-11 from The Lion Storyteller Bible

See Story suggestions for this unit

Challenge Make Newspaper Clothes

Newspaper shirt

Younger Children (3-6yrs)

You will need

2 large sheets of newspaper
Felt pen or marker
Scissors
Sticky tape or masking tape

What to do

Younger children will need some adult help.

Ask a child to lie down with their back fully on a sheet of newspaper. Trace around torso, arms and shoulders, leaving about 6cms extra space on all sides.

Put two newspaper sheets together and cut through both on the marked outline.

Stick on a couple of pieces of tape at the shoulders to join the two sheets of newspaper together and then slip sheets over the child's head. Use tape to seal up the rest of the "seams". This is much easier than taping together before putting on.

Tip

If you want to make a shirt for each child but need to save time, choose the largest child to draw around. Then stack several news sheets together (as many as you can cut easily). Use the template to cut out more



shirts until you have enough. Children can decorate their newspaper shirts with felt pens until you are ready to fit them.

Older children (7-11yrs)

You will need

Sheets of newspaper
Felt pens or markers
Masking tape or sticky tape
Scissors (optional)

What to do

Split this group into at least 2 teams and instruct them to make an item of clothing (or if time permits, a whole outfit) from newspaper. One of their team models the clothing at the end. Judge the results and if you like give a small prize for the best design. If you have a very small group, just ask them all to work together collaboratively.

Talk about

Adam and Eve suddenly felt embarrassed about being naked and covered themselves up. They used leaves to make some clothes. How hard would it be to make clothes out of leaves? How comfortable would the clothes be?

Prayer Activity

You will need

Small sheets of paper
Pencils/pens
Shredder

What to do

Remind the children that everyone who has ever lived beginning with Adam and Eve have done wrong things. We all mess up and let God down. Even though sin is very serious to God as we saw in the story today, God had a rescue plan in mind. He sent his son Jesus to die for us on the cross.

The bible says in 1 John 1:9 'But if we confess our sins to God, he can always be trusted to forgive us and take our sins away.'

Talk to the children about things they want to say sorry to God for and ask for his forgiveness. The children can write or draw a sorry prayer on a piece of paper. The paper is then given to a leader and put through a shredder to show how Jesus dealt with our sins for good at the cross.

Game Avoiding Sin

You will need

Masking Tape

What to do

Mark out a rectangle on the floor with masking tape. Stand in a circle around the marked area holding hands. The size of your group will determine the size of the marked rectangle. Explain that the marked area is the sin pit, and the aim is to avoid going into it yourself but to try to drag others into it using your arms only. The children pull each other to try and get someone to step on the marked area. Anyone who steps on the area is eliminated. Anyone who breaks the circle is also eliminated.

Talk about

How it can be difficult at times to avoid sin. Some friends can be a bad influence on us and encourage us to do the wrong thing. Other friends can be a good influence on us and help us to do the right thing. What kind of friends do you have? What kind of a friend are you?

Week 3 A Special Promise

Information for Leaders

Bible Reference: Genesis 6-9

Main Teaching Points

- Everyone else had forgotten God, but Noah and his family were faithful.
- Noah obeyed and persevered even though the task was very hard.
- Noah trusted God and his whole family were saved.

Themes to discover

Obedience

Noah was obedient and did everything God commanded him to. (see Gen 6:22, 7:5, 16). In James 1:22 we are told that we must not only listen to the word of God but actively do what it says. It would not have been easy for Noah to steadfastly follow God when everyone else around him was ignoring God, doing evil and pleasing only themselves, but now Noah had to stand up for his faith and be different from the rest in a very visual way. It must have made people very curious to see Noah building this huge vessel. It is likely that Noah was ridiculed by others when he explained that he was building it on God's command. No-one believed Noah's message of warning and no-one repented. Noah and his family alone were saved from the flood.

Perseverance

Building the ark was a mammoth challenge for Noah. The ark was huge (135 metres long x 23 metres wide x 14 metres tall -Gen 6:15). There is lots of speculation about how long it took to build the ark, but it is thought that it took Noah around 70 years.

Can you imagine sticking to a task that God has given you for 70 years? What made it even harder was that Noah and his family didn't get any support from anyone else around them. How remarkable Noah's faith and perseverance was.

- The **Introductory activity** introduces the idea of following God in a visible way.
- The **Story Challenge (4-7s)** and **Game** tell and reinforce the bible story.
- The **Challenge (7-11s)** helps the older children think about how our actions have consequences.
- The **Prayer activity** helps the children understand that God will help and guide us through difficult times.

Additional discussion questions

Ages 4-7

How many days and nights did it rain for?

What did Noah send out of the ark to see if the earth had dried up?

What did God put in the sky as a promise not to flood the earth again?

Ages 7-11

How did Noah gather all the animals? (See Gen 6:20, 7:8-9)

How long did Noah and his family stay in the ark? (See Gen 7:11 and Gen 8:14-16)

Why did God put the rainbow in the sky?

Week 3 Session Outline

Welcome and Intro

Registration/Welcome/Prayer

Intro Idea

You will need

Large sheet of paper

Blu tac

Pencil, biro, crayon, Sharpie permanent marker

Video clip -Sharpie advert

What to do

Divide the sheet into 4 equal sections by ruling lines. Stick it up on the wall at a height that your children can reach easily. Choose 4 volunteers and ask them to write their name on the paper using whatever writing implement you have given them. Tell them to write nice and big so everyone can see. Afterwards let everyone look at the 4 names written in pencil, biro, crayon and Sharpie marker and decide which name stands out the best. Sharpie pens had an advert a while ago called 'Write out Loud' [play clip]. God wants us to live our lives of faith 'out loud' too. Not to hide away and be ashamed of what we believe in, but to stand out from the rest of the crowd, and make a permanent, positive mark on the world around us.

Somebody who did that was Noah, who was asked to do a task that needed a lot of faith and perseverance. Let's hear his story now.

Story

pages 12-13 from The Lion Storyteller Bible

See Story suggestions for this unit

The science experiment 'Noah's faith' is a good way to help the children understand why Noah was different to everyone else and why he was saved [see resources for this unit].

Challenge

Animal Round up

Younger Children (3-6yrs)

You will need

Balloons in different colours

Markers

Crepe paper/fun foam/ paper

Glue sticks

Bamboo sticks

What to do

Make some balloon animals with the children. Have one of each already made and help each child to make other so there is a pair of each kind of animal.

Once the animals are made, ask the children to take their pair of animals and line up along one wall of the hall. Each child should place their balloon animals on the ground in front of them. Give each a bamboo stick and tell them they must round up the animals onto the ark which is the far wall. On 'go' the children attempt to move their animals along with the stick until they reach the 'ark.'



Talk about

Noah and his family had to keep trying and work hard until they had completed the job God gave them to do. It took many years to build the huge ark and it must have been hard work to gather all the animals and herd them safely inside the ark before the flood came.

Actions and Consequences

Older children (7-11yrs)

You will need

Actions and consequences sheet

Glue sticks

What to do

Divide your group into pairs. Cut up the consequences cards beforehand and give each pair a glue stick, a set of consequences cards and the actions and consequences sheets. Working together the pairs must figure out which action and consequence go together. They stick the correct consequence card beside each action, working as quickly as they can to see which pair finishes first. Leaders make a note of who are finished first, then go over the answers together and see who has them all correct. The team with all the correct answers in the shortest time, wins.

Talk about

Remind the children that everything we do, both good things and bad things have consequences.

Prayer Activity

You will need

Psalm 27:1 colouring sheets (4-7s and 7-11s)

Felt tips or colouring pencils

What to do

Ages 4-7

Explain to the children that when we follow God, it's like having a torch in a dark night, He shines a light on things for us and helps us know the right things to do and the right decisions to make. God is our salvation because he has saved us by dying on the cross for us so we can live with him for ever. We have nothing to fear when we are on God's team. Pray together, then allow time to colour the sheet or take it home to colour if time is short.

Lord Jesus,

Thank you for Noah. He followed you when nobody else did.

Thank you for loving us and wanting to be our friend

Help us to love you and follow you every day.

Amen

Ages 7-11

The LORD is my light and my salvation;

Whom shall I fear?

The LORD is the strength of my life;

Of whom shall I be afraid? **Psalm 27: 1**

Read Psalm 27:1 to the children and talk about how we have nothing and no-one to fear when we are on God's team. No-one is stronger than God. Noah believed this and he chose to follow God even though everyone else ignored Him.

Pray together, then allow time to colour the sheet or take it home to colour if time is short.

Lord Jesus,

Help us follow you like Noah,

who was prepared to be different from everyone else,

if it meant being faithful to You.
Help us to worry less about pleasing others,
and care more about pleasing you.
Help us not to mind what other people think,
but to stand up for what is right in Your eyes Lord,
Amen.

Game Noah's Ark

You will need

Chairs in a circle

What to do

Seat everyone in a circle in their own chair. Give everyone one of the following animal names e.g. tiger, meercat, penguin, mouse (or pick your own). Make sure there are 2-3 children with each animal name. Choose a volunteer to stand in the middle of the circle and call out an animal name. When the animal name is called out, the people with that name must move and find another seat. The player in the middle will try to get into one of the seats. If they succeed the person without a seat is the new caller, if not the original caller stays in the middle and calls again. When a caller shouts out 'Noah's Ark' everyone must change seats.

“Dive In” Activity Week

Welcome and Intro

Recap briefly on the stories covered in the last 3 sessions using some of the recap ideas at the beginning of the programme.

There is an information sheet to go along with each activity. It is helpful if leaders talk about the story as a reminder to the children when they are explaining the activity.

Get sensory with the Story Adam and Eve

You will need

Air drying clay
Clay tools /implements

What to do

Make Adam or Eve out of the clay. Add the finer details such as hands, feet, facial features, hair, etc. Use tools to make impressions in the clay. Try to make your figure unique.



Make the story

You will need

Junk materials such as plastic bottles, egg boxes, cardboard tubes, etc.
card,
paper
googly eyes,
glue/ glue dots/ glue pads
glue gun (optional)
sticky tape
paint
scissors

What to do

There’s lots of ideas online about how to make animals from junk materials. Print out some pictures to give the children ideas. Allow them to use the ideas provided or use their own imagination.

Tip

A glue gun or glue dot/pads can help join materials securely without much waiting time.



Play with the Story

You will need

Mammals Birds and Bugs game sheets
Pencils and Erasers
Timers

What to do

Give each person a sheet which they must complete in as quick a time as they can. They can ask around for help if they need it. Record times on a large sheet. They can repeat the activity with a new game sheet if they want to beat their time.

Mammals Birds and Bugs

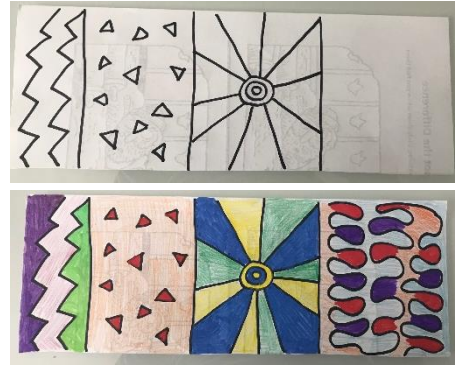
	mammal	bird	bug
b			
p			
g			

Build the story

Paper chain snake

You will need

A4 scrap paper
Coloured pencils, crayons
Felt pens or paint pens
Black markers
Googly eyes
Glue sticks
Scissors



What to do

Supply a pile of A4 scrap paper blank on one side cut and length ways into strips and black markers. Children can take a strip of paper and make a pattern on it using the marker. They can then use a mixture of felt or paint pens for strong colour and coloured pencils/crayons for background colour. Provide some glue sticks and make a group snake by joining the patterned strips into a big paper chain. To make the head, use one of the patterned strips and fold in half. With scissors, cut the non-folded end into a rounded shape. Add a big forked tongue and googly eyes.



Explore the story

Indoor Rainbows

You will need

Bowls
Water
Mirrors
Tape or Blu tack
Torch or phone
White paper

What to do

Place the mirror into the bowl at an angle. You may want to tape or stick it in place.

Fill the bowl about half full of water so that half the mirror is submerged.

Shine the light into the water where the mirror is under water

Hold the white paper above the mirror; adjust the angle until you see the rainbow appear!



What is going on

When you shine the white light of your torch into the water, the light bends. But white light isn't just one colour: instead, it's a combination of all the visible colours. So, when white light bends, all its components (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and indigo light) also bend. Each of these colours bends at a different angle because each colour travels at a different speed inside water or glass.

When you reflect the light back out of the water using the mirror, you're reflecting the white light that has been broken up (from refraction) into the full rainbow of colours, and a rainbow appears!

Design the Story 3D Rainbow

You will need

Materials of your choice to make the rainbow, e.g.
Foil, pipe cleaners, card, paints, play dough, construction blocks etc.
Glue sticks
Scissors
Blu Tack

What to do

Allow the children to work with the materials provided to come up with a 3D rainbow design.
You could provide a few pictures or make a few samples to give ideas.

