

**MODEL UNIT
BAND A
LEVEL 3**

WHO'S WHO IN THE BIBLE

LIFE CONCEPT: GOD HELPS PEOPLE THROUGH HIS WORD

YEAR: SUGGESTED DURATION: 5 weeks (100 minutes per week)

DATE OF USE: FAITH STATEMENTS: ① ② ③

UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)

1. GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO PEOPLE THROUGH HIS WORD

- 1a explore Bible stories in which God reveals himself as a loving God
- 1b investigate the importance of the Bible to Christians

2. THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD, WRITTEN BY PEOPLE WHOM GOD INSPIRED

- 2a investigate the structure of the Bible as a collection of stories
- 2b investigate different types of writing in the Bible
- 2c investigate the cultural context of the Bible

3. THE BIBLE TELLS THE STORY OF GOD'S PLAN FOR THE SALVATION OF ALL PEOPLE THROUGH JESUS

- 3a investigate stories of God's chosen people in the Old Testament
- 3b investigate New Testament stories about Jesus as Saviour

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

- Investigate and record information about people in the Bible. (3a,3b)
- Identify what the Bible stories used in this unit tell about God. (1a,2a)
- Design a poster which tells what is in the Bible and why Christians believe the Bible is an important book. (1a,1b,3a,3b)

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

- ⇒ work samples
- ⇒ work samples, discussion
- ⇒ work sample

UNIT SUMMARY

Information is provided about seven characters in the Bible: Abraham, Moses, the Israelites, Elijah, Esther, Jesus and John. Students may study all or some of these characters, either by participating in activities chosen by the teacher, or doing their own simple research under the teacher's direction. At the end of the unit students design a poster which tells what is in the Bible and why the Bible is important for Christians.

UNIT NOTES

Developing Bible skills

It is expected that students will be engaging with the Bible throughout this unit. Assist them in the following ways:

- Show students where the stories are found in an adult Bible. Mark the place with a bookmark for easy reference. Do the same in children's Bibles.
- Highlight appropriate excerpts from the text of an adult Bible. Advanced readers can read these straight from the Bible.
- Show students how to use the table of contents in a children's Bible.
- Briefly explain the two parts of the Bible. Stories about God and his people will usually be found in the first part of the Bible called the Old Testament. Those that are about Jesus are found in the second part of the Bible called the New Testament.

Students investigate a series of Bible characters. Seven have been selected and are presented in chronological order. Choose those you feel are appropriate for your class. Suggestions for introducing the characters and developing the theme are given in the unit.

Students of this age are developing their reading skills and, with support, are able to undertake simple research. Provide copies of children's Bibles for students to read and use for research. *The Lion First Bible* is one recommended version. The *Children's Illustrated Bible* has a more complex text but useful illustrations and photographs. Make adult Bibles available to students also. *The Good News Bible* and the *CEV* are comparatively easy to understand and have helpful headings.

WORDS TO KNOW

Bible, children's Bible, atlas, table of contents, Israelites, prophet, gospel

INTRODUCTION

1. ALL SORTS OF PEOPLE

Collect photographs of people that most students will recognise, eg sports stars, television personalities, the principal or other teachers. Display these. Students work in groups to record the names and occupations of as many of these people as they can. Share the

answers and discuss why these people are well-known.

To assess students' understanding of the Bible, show a Bible and use questions such as:

- What do you know about the Bible?
- What is the Bible about?
- Who do you read about in the Bible?

Distribute a number of children's Bibles. Students work in groups and use the illustrations to make a list of

- people they think they recognise, eg Moses;
- different groups of people, eg women, old people, kings;
- the work they think the people are doing, eg soldiers, shepherds.

Students share their findings with the class, and the teacher collates the information under the heading '*People in the Bible*'.

DEVELOPMENT

Introducing Bible characters

- Read about the person from a children's Bible. Choose from the activities on the Teacher Resource Sheets A3/1 – A3/7 to help students investigate the characters further. **OR**
- Use the accompanying Teacher Resource Sheets to introduce each person. Enlarge these and make them into posters. Store them in a folder labelled *Who's who in the Bible* and study one at a time. Guide students into research activities choosing from the suggestions on the Teacher Resource Sheets.

Developing the theme

- Students make their own book or posters of 'Who's who in the Bible'.
- Use the text on the TRS to make an audio tape of stories used in this unit. Add appropriate music or sound effects. Make this available for students to take home.
- Alternatively, the text could be used as a basis for a video, as students act out the story.
- Use a Bible atlas, eg *Bible Atlas: A First Reference Book*, to identify where the story took place. Make a class map to which you can add illustrations and appropriate text for each story.

- Make a series of wall panels with pictures and appropriate text. Join these together to make a frieze of 'People in the Bible'.

2. WHO'S WHO IN THE BIBLE

Christians believe that through the stories of the Bible God reveals his love for people. Apart from Jesus, the people in the Bible were ordinary people, chosen by God to do special things for him.

'Something to talk about' on each TRS gives students an opportunity to reflect on what the story tells about God.

Use the following information to help you select people you wish your students to investigate.

A. Abraham

Lion First Bible, Story 4; TRS A3/1. See Bible References Menu for selected passages.

Christians believe that God always keeps his promises. The Bible tells of God's promise to Abraham that he would be the father of a great nation and that God would bless all people through Abraham's family. After waiting many years Abraham and Sarah were eventually blessed with a son. (At this level avoid the stories of Sodom and Gomorrah and Abraham sacrificing Isaac).

B. Moses

The Lion First Bible, Stories 10, 11, 12; TRS A3/2. See Bible References Menu for selected passages.

The Bible records the story of the life of Moses, chosen by God as one of the great leaders of the Israelite people. Throughout this story God supports Moses as he struggles to lead the people to the land that God had promised.

C. The Israelites

The Lion First Bible Stories 13,14,15; TRS A3/3. See Bible References Menu for selected passages.

The Bible frequently refers to the people called the Israelites. These were Abraham's descendants, now numbering many thousands of people. Throughout the Old Testament the Israelites follow a pattern of falling away from God and then turning back in repentance. The Bible describes how God remained faithful to his chosen people because he wanted to bless all nations through them.

D. Elijah

The Lion First Bible, Stories 26 and 27; TRS A3/4 See Bible References Menu for selected passages.

The Old Testament records the stories of the prophets. It describes how prophets were chosen by God and given the task of warning the Israelites of their sin and calling them back to repentance. The Bible stories of the prophets show God's continual desire to call his people back to him because they had an important part in God's plan to save all people.

Esther

TRS A3/5. See Bible References Menu for selected passages.

Esther was a young Jewish woman, chosen by the king of Persia to become queen. The king's official, Haman, hated the Jews and planned to have them killed. The book of Esther tells how she risked her life to save the lives of her people. The biblical account of Esther is an example of a significant woman, chosen by God to protect the people through whom God would bless all nations.

F. Jesus

TRS A3/6. See Bible References Menu for selected passages.

(The amount of time you devote to the life of Jesus in this unit will depend on work that you have done or plan to do in other units. A detailed investigation of the life of Jesus may be done in *God saved people through Jesus*.)

Christians believe that Jesus is the central person in the Bible. He is the descendant of Abraham through whom God blesses all people. Jesus' life on earth, his death and resurrection all happened because of God's love for people.

G. John

The Lion First Bible, Story 64, TRS A3/7. See Bible References Menu for selected passages.

Christians believe that the writers of the Bible were inspired by God and wrote the message that God wanted people to know. John recorded the story of Jesus' life and also wrote four other books of the Bible.

RESPONSE

3. WHAT WOULD YOU TELL OTHERS ABOUT THE BIBLE?

Allow time for students to discuss questions like the following:

- What have you learnt about the Bible?
- If someone asked you what was in the Bible, what would you tell them?
- Do you think the Bible is an important book? Why?

Remind students that for Christians the Bible is important because it tells about God's love.

Students design a poster which tells others what they will hear about in the Bible and why

the Bible is important for Christians. Display these posters in the classroom or school.

YOU WILL NEED

- a collection of children's Bibles (students could be encouraged to bring these from home)
- adult Bibles in a translation suitable for student use, eg TEV,CEV
- non-fiction material suitable for use by students in this band (see Recommended Resources Menu)

- materials for the responses that you choose
- copies of the Teacher Resource Sheets for the characters that you choose to investigate

INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

ENGLISH: *Literature:* Relate what is read and viewed to students' own knowledge and experience; identify the setting, characters and plot of the story; choose own reading material from a range of books with large print, predictable structure and illustrations. *Everyday Texts:* Question peers and others to gain information; plan written texts to achieve their purpose; gather and sort information from a range of sources.

THE ARTS: *Drama:* Use given stories as the basis for drama. *Visual Arts:* Draw and paint to record observations; use simple skills of visual communication, eg lettering, layout.

SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT: *Investigation, Communication, Participation:* Decide on and ask questions from peers and adults to get information; record observations through drawing, writing or using technology; interpret and make models or collages. *Time, Continuity, and Change:* Investigate a community's past, gather and present information.

from the National Statements and Profiles

UNIT EVALUATION

Which activities worked well in this unit?

Which resources were useful in the implementation of this unit?

How did I respond to the range of students' knowledge of Bible characters?

How did I respond to the range of students' attitudes to the Bible?

What would I do differently if I was teaching this unit again?

How will I use and build on knowledge, understandings, skills, attitudes, and values students have developed in this unit?

ABRAHAM

I am Abraham.

Many years ago I lived in the town of Ur with my wife Sarah. We had no children and this made us both sad.

God spoke to me and said, 'Abraham, you must leave your home and go to a new land. Do not be afraid. I love you and I will be with you. I have chosen you to be the father of many people. I will do great things for many people through your family.'

Sarah and I did as God told us. We left our home and travelled through the deserts to our new land. Many years went by, but we still had no children.

One night as I was sitting outside, God spoke to me again: 'You can believe that I will give you and Sarah a child. Your family will be so big that you will not be able to count them. You will have as many children as there are stars in the sky.'

Sarah and I were very old by now. It was hard to believe that God would still give us a baby.

Even more time passed, but finally, after many years of waiting, Sarah had a baby boy. We were so happy and we knew that God always keeps his promises.



Questions and activities

Use a children's Bible or other books to find out about

- how Abraham and Sarah travelled from one place to another;
- Abraham and his nephew Lot;
- three strangers who came to visit Abraham with a special message;
- the name of Abraham and Sarah's baby.

Ask your teacher to help you find Genesis chapter 15, verse 5. Illustrate this verse. You could use pencils, paints or make a collage with coloured paper.

Something to talk about

Imagine you were Abraham. What would you tell someone about what God had done for you?

MOSES

I am Moses.

I was born in the land of Egypt. When I was born my mother needed to protect me from a wicked king. She made a basket from reeds. Then she put me in the basket and hid it in tall grass by the river. The king's daughter found me, and I went to live in the palace with her.

When I grew up, I left the palace and worked as a shepherd. One day while I was looking after my sheep, God came and spoke to me. He told me that he had chosen me to lead his people to a new land that he would give them.

At first I was afraid and didn't want to go, but God promised that he would always be with me. The king of Egypt did not want the people to leave. God sent many troubles to the land, and finally the king let my people go. When the king changed his mind and chased after us, God kept us safe.

I led God's people through the desert for forty years. It was hard being the leader, but all the time God stayed with me and helped me. God helped me to lead his people safely because God had chosen them to bring his love to everyone.



Questions and activities

Use a children's Bible or other books to find out more about Moses. Find out

- how God helped his people escape from the king and his soldiers ;
- what Moses did when the people needed food or water in the desert ;
- how God's people lived while they were in the desert. The illustrations in children's Bibles will give you some information.

When the king did not want to let God's people go, God sent many troubles to the land of Egypt. Make a series of illustrations or paintings which show what these were.

Make a diorama which shows scenes from Moses' life.

Something to talk about

Imagine you are Moses. Your job is to remind the people about how God has shown his love for them. What would you say?

THE ISRAELITES

We are God's people and we are called the Israelites.

Years ago God gave Abraham a son. When his son grew up and got married, he had children. Then his children had children and that's how it went for many years. One of them was given the name 'Israel' and after that we were called the Israelites. There are thousands of us now.

We were living in Egypt when God chose Moses to be our leader. Moses led us out of Egypt into a new land called Caanan.

While we were travelling to our new land, God came and spoke to Moses. He gave Moses some instructions that would help us in our lives. He promised that he would be our God and that we would be his people – the ones who would bring God's love to everyone in the world. We did not always obey God's instructions. Often we grumbled and complained but the best thing about being God's people is that he kept on loving us.

After Moses died, Joshua became our leader. He took us into our new land called Caanan.



Being chosen to be God's people is something very special for us. We know that he will always be with us, that he loves us and he wants us to bring his love to everyone.

Questions and activities

Use a children's Bible or other books to find out more about the Israelites. Find out

- what the instructions were that God gave to Moses;
- about a time when the Israelites did not trust God and grumbled and complained;
- how God helped Joshua capture the city of Jericho.

Make a painting or illustration of the Israelites going into their new land of Canaan.

Work together to make up a play about Joshua and the soldiers capturing the city of Jericho.

Something to talk about

Imagine that you are one of the Israelite parents. What would you tell your children about God's care for you as you travelled to your new land?

ELIJAH

I am Elijah.

God chose me to be a prophet. That means that God wanted me to remind his people that he is the true God and that they must not worship other gods.

A wicked king and queen were ruling our country. They did not believe in the true God. Instead they prayed to idols made out of wood and stone. They believed that if they prayed to one idol called Baal he would help them. And they wanted God's people to pray to Baal, too!

The wicked king did not listen to what I said, so God sent a drought to our land. For many years the rains did not come. Many people were hungry, but still the king would not believe in the real God.

Finally, we had a competition. The people who believed in Baal made an altar and put wood on the top of it and prayed that Baal would set the wood alight, but of course he couldn't. Then I made an altar, prayed to God, and God did set fire to the wood.

That helped all of God's people remember that God was the one who could help them.



Questions and activities

Use a children's Bible or other books to find out more about

- the names of the wicked king and queen;
- how God cared for Elijah when he was alone and without food;
- what happened when Elijah stayed with a poor woman;
- what Elijah wanted the people to know about the true God.

Find out about idols:

- What were they made from?
- What did people think idols could do?

Read the story of Elijah and Baal's prophets praying for rain.

- Make a painting, or
- act out the story.

Something to talk about

Imagine you are Elijah. You are telling people what happened

when you made an altar and prayed to God. What about God?

ESTHER

I am Queen Esther.

I am one of God's people, the Israelites. When I was born, we no longer lived in our own land because enemies captured our towns and took our people to work as slaves in another country. This made us very sad, but we still believed in God and knew that God loved us.

I was chosen by the king to be his wife. The king loved me but he did not know that I was one of God's special people.

God chose me to help his people when a wicked man named Haman made a plan to kill the Israelites. I was very scared, but I went to the king and said, 'If you kill God's people, that means that you will also have to kill me'.

When the king heard that, he made a new rule that said none of God's people should be hurt. God used me to save the lives of many Israelites, because he wanted them to be the people who would bring his love to everyone.



Questions and activities

Use a children's Bible, an adult Bible or other books to find out more about Esther.

Find out about

- the wicked plan that Haman made;
- the way Esther planned to ask the king to save her people.

Read Esther chapter 1, verses 5 to 7. Draw the way the palace was decorated. Add your own drawings of how you think the king's guests would have looked.

Find out about these people and what they did in the story of Esther. Illustrate each one.

- Xerxes
- Mordecai
- Esther
- Haman

Something to talk about

Imagine you are Queen Esther. What would you tell people about how you felt when you

went to the king and how God helped you?

JESUS

I am Jesus.

I am the most important person you will learn about in the Bible. I am the person that God promised would come to help all people.

I was with God when the world was made, but God chose me to come to earth and live just like an ordinary Israelite person would.

I was born in a stable in Bethlehem. When I grew up, I left my home and travelled around the country.

Wherever I went I could see that many people needed help. I helped people who were sick, I was a friend to people who had no friends and I told many people about God's love for them.

I let my enemies capture me and nail me to a cross. I died on the cross and was buried in a cave, but after three days I came alive again. This was part of God's plan.

Then I went back to heaven where I live with God my father.

I am in heaven now, but I am also with my people on earth. I know that people still need help and I am with my people even if they cannot see me.



Questions and activities

Use a children's Bible, an adult Bible or other books to find out more about Jesus.

Design a bumper sticker which tells that Jesus is the most important person that people need to know about.

Imagine that you are Jesus. Write and illustrate important things that happened in your life.

Something to talk about

What things did Jesus do which showed how he loved people?

Why do people say Jesus is the most important person in the Bible?

JOHN

I am John.

Jesus chose me to be one of his disciples and I travelled with him when he lived on earth.

Jesus taught me about God and about loving other people. When he went back to heaven, I wanted to tell more people about Jesus, so I started writing down what I knew. I believe that God helped me know what to write.

You can read my books in the Bible. I wrote one book called the gospel of John that tells about the life of Jesus.

I wrote three other small books that tell people how important it is to love others, just like Jesus loved us.

God also showed me many things that other people have never seen. He showed me what it would be like in heaven. I wrote these things down in a book called Revelation. It is the last book in the Bible.



Questions and activities

Use an adult Bible and find the gospel of John. Use the headings to help you make a list of at least five things that John wrote about Jesus.

Read the last verse in the gospel of John.

Use an adult Bible to find the books of 1, 2, and 3 John.

John wrote: *You show love for others by truly helping them and not just by talking about it (1 John 3:18 CEV).* Copy these words and illustrate them.

Find the book of Revelation in the Bible. Look at the very end. Find words like *Jesus, please come soon* or *Come, Lord Jesus*. The Bible tells that when Jesus comes he will take the people who believe in him to be with him in heaven. Illustrate what you think it will be like in heaven.

Something to talk about

Imagine you are writing down what you know about God? What would you say?

