

MODEL UNIT
BAND A
LEVEL 3

PICTURES OF GOD

LIFE CONCEPT: GOD CREATES HUMAN BEINGS
YEAR: **SUGGESTED DURATION:** 4 weeks (100 minutes per week)

DATE OF USE: **FAITH STATEMENTS:** ① ② ③

UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)
**1. GOD CREATES
AND LOVES ALL
PEOPLE**
1a hear the Bible's account of the creation of people

1b investigate the Christian belief that people are male and female by God's design

1c explore examples from the Bible which illustrate God's love for people

**2. GOD CREATES
EACH PERSON AS A
UNIQUE INDIVIDUAL
WITH
CHARACTERISTICS
AND ABILITIES**
2a explore the Christian belief that God gives each person their physical and emotional characteristics

2b explore and express their creative gifts

**3. GOD CREATES
ALL PEOPLE TO LIVE
IN RELATIONSHIP
WITH HIM**
3a explore pictures the Bible uses to help people relate to God

3b investigate the Christian belief that people are unique because they can relate to God

STUDENT ASSESSMENT
ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

Respond to pictures used in the Bible to describe God. (1c,3a)

Suggest what Bible pictures say about God. (3a)

Prepare a response to the question *How would you describe God?* (2b, 3b)

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

⇒ work samples

⇒ part two of TRS A3/1, A3/2, A3/3

⇒ work samples, including written work, illustrations, models, dance, drama

UNIT SUMMARY

Students study Bible images that describe the relationship between God and people: the image of an animal caring for its young, the image of a parent and the image of a shepherd. Students consider the Christian understanding that only people can think and know about God, and then prepare their own response to the question, 'How would you describe God?'

WORDS TO KNOW

describe, parent, shepherd

UNIT NOTES

This unit investigates biblical imagery (described as ‘word-pictures’) which describes God as a loving and caring God. If students have not had experience in understanding the use of imagery, it is recommended that you prepare them for this.

Students are given the opportunity to respond to the images of God. Talk with students about their work and accept each student’s response without imposing your interpretation of the image upon the student. Students’ responses provide opportunity for them to express their creativity. Take the opportunity to acknowledge this through displaying students’ work or sharing it with an audience.

An optional activity over the course of the unit is to develop a web which describes what God is like.

INTRODUCTION

Prepare students for the concepts in this unit by reading poems or creative writing which include the use of similes or metaphors. Provide the opportunity for students to write their own descriptions. This need not be done in Christian Studies.

1. WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

The teacher begins by describing one of the students, eg *I’m thinking of someone in the class who has long dark hair and likes to make things with lego*. Students guess who the person is and then continue to play the same game as a class or in small groups.

Help students recognise that it is easy to describe people that we know and can see. It is much harder to describe someone if you can’t see them.

Tell students: *People can’t see God but they read about God in the Bible. What do you know about God from the Bible? How would you describe God?* As students give their answers, ask what makes them think that God is like this. (Be aware that some students in your class may have very little prior knowledge of God.)

Accept all students’ suggestions and record them either as notes to help you define future teaching points, or as a web to which students can refer or add during or at the end of the unit.

DEVELOPMENT**2. PICTURES OF GOD**

If students are not familiar with the Genesis 1 account of the creation of the world and the unique nature of people, you will need to revisit these stories and concepts now. (This has been done in Band A, Level 2.)

God created people who could know about him and love him. The first people, Adam and Eve had a special relationship with God. God wants all people to know about him and love him. But this can be hard because people cannot see God to know exactly what he is like. God gives some pictures in the Bible to help people understand what he is like.

A. Animal parenting images

Introduce this concept through activities like the following:

- Read fiction or non-fiction books or show a video about animal parents caring for their offspring.
- Bring an animal with its young into the classroom so that students can observe the care shown and the relationship between them.

The Bible uses some pictures of animal families to help us understand how God cares for people. Show a picture of a hen with its chickens and talk about how a hen calls the chicks to her whenever trouble is near. The Bible uses a picture of a hen with its chickens. Share the following verse with your students:

I have often wanted to gather (you) as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings. (Luke 13:34)

Ask students: What do you think this picture shows about God?

Share information about the way an eagle supports, protects and teaches its young as they learn to fly. The Bible uses a picture of an eagle teaching its young to fly to describe God. Share the following verse with your students:

The Lord (is) like an eagle teaching its young to fly, always ready to swoop down and catch them on its back. Deuteronomy 32:11

Ask students: What do you think this picture shows about God?

Students choose from the activities on TRS A3/1a and complete the response on TRS A3/2. If you have begun a web, add further descriptions to this.

B. A shepherd image

TRS A1/2 in the concept *God saves people from sin and evil* contains information about sheep and shepherds. Select information from the TRS to share with your students about the role and responsibility of shepherds in Bible times.

Jesus used the picture of a shepherd in the stories he told to help people understand how God cares for people. Select images from the following Bible references to share with your students:

The story of the lost sheep Luke 15:3–7

The shepherd and his sheep John 10:1–5

Jesus' words 'I am the good shepherd . . .'
John 10:14

The Lord is my shepherd Psalm 23

Use activities on TRS A3/1a and TRS A3/2 to help students reflect on this image. Add further descriptions to the web.

C. Human parenting images

Be sensitive to students in your class who may have a negative experience of parenting. The emphasis is always that God is the best parent that one could ever have.

Select from activities like the following to develop an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of parents. Avoid creating a stereotypical image of the role of fathers/mothers. Lead students to identify both the strengths and the shortcomings of parents.

- Read fiction books which depict the roles of fathers/mothers. Discuss these with the students.
- Invite a father/mother into the class to talk about what he/she enjoys about being a parent, what he/she sees as being important in this role and the challenges that he/she faces.
- Students suggest what they think are important jobs of parents. Record and discuss these.

The Bible uses pictures of parents to help people understand the love that God has for people.

Jesus told a story about a father. Tell or read the story of *The forgiving father* (Luke 15:11–24). Discuss, using questions like the following:

- How would you have felt if you were the boy in the story?
- How would you have felt if you were the father?
- Do you think the father did the right thing?
- What do you think this story tells about God?

The Bible also talks about God being like a mother. Share the following paraphrases of Bible verses with your students:

When I am with you, God, I feel safe and satisfied, just like a young child on its mother's lap. Psalm 131:2 (GNB).

When children are young, a mother feeds and cares for them. When they are older she doesn't forget them. But even if a mother did forget, God will never forget you. Isaiah 49:15.

Ask students: What do these pictures show about God?

Use TRS A3/1b and TRS A3/2 to help students reflect on the images of God as a parent. If you are using a web add further descriptions to it.

RESPONSE

5. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE GOD?

Remind students of the original question from the start of the unit, *How would you describe God?* If you have not been using a web, discuss the question as a group. If you have a web, review what is recorded and ask students what else they would add.

Give students the opportunity to record their individual response to the question through activities such as:

- a written response. This could be in the form of sentences, story, a poem or song.
- an illustrated response. This could be in the form of a painting or collage.
- a response in the form of a model using clay or playdough.
- a response through dance or drama.

Students prepare and present their responses to an audience. Some responses will require that students be prepared to explain how their response describes God.

YOU WILL NEED

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| <input type="checkbox"/> optional: large paper on which to record students' suggestions in the form of a web | <input type="checkbox"/> TRS A1/2 from <i>God saves people from sin and evil</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> books or a video which illustrate how an animal cares for its young | <input type="checkbox"/> fiction books which illustrate the roles and responsibilities of parents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> optional: a live animal with its young | <input type="checkbox"/> optional: a parent as a guest speaker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pictures of a hen and chickens and an eagle (with an eaglet if possible) | <input type="checkbox"/> paintings or illustrations of a shepherd |
| <input type="checkbox"/> information about the way an eagle supports its young as they learn to fly | <input type="checkbox"/> materials for students' individual responses |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> copies of TRS A3/2 for students |

INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

ENGLISH: *Literature:* Through discussion relate what is read and viewed to own knowledge and experience; appreciate that people can have different interpretations of the same text; recognise the way imagery is used in language.

SCIENCE: *Life and Living:* Recognise the relationship between living things and their dependence on each other for survival.

ARTS: *Visual Arts* Draw, paint, manipulate or construct to express feelings or thoughts; demonstrate simple manipulative skills; show works to others; discuss own work and give simple reasons for the idea interpretation.

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' understanding of the imagery used? What did I do to help them understand this imagery?

How did I respond to the range of students' attitudes and understanding as they described God in their own words?

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?

PICTURES OF GOD'S LOVE

ACTIVITIES

Choose from the following suggestions. The teacher could either select activities that he/she would like the students to undertake, or copy and cut the activities as task cards. Students then select the activities they would like to do.

The reflection task (TRS A3/2) is an essential part of this unit and is not considered to be optional.

(A) ANIMAL IMAGES

Draw a picture of a hen and its chickens, or an eagle teaching its eaglet to fly. Around your picture, write words that describe the way these animals care for their young ones.

Use craft paper or cotton balls to make models of chickens, **or**, make a picture of a hen with its chickens. Label each chicken you make with words that describe a time when people might want God to care for them.

Paint a picture of an animal with its young. Write about how it cares for its young.

Think of an animal that reminds you of God. Use clay or playdough to make a model of this animal. Write or tell why it makes you think of God.

(B) SHEPHERD IMAGES

Use a children's Bible or a Bible story book to read the story of *The lost sheep*. Make up a play about the story. At the end of the play tell the audience how the picture of the shepherd can help people understand about God's love.

A shepherd's job was to take care of the sheep. Think of some people today whose job it is to care for others. Record and illustrate what these people do.

Write your own story about sheep in Australia and the people who care for them.

Look at some paintings people have made which show Jesus as a shepherd. Illustrate or paint your own picture of a shepherd. Write words or sentences that describe how the shepherd cares for the sheep.

(C) PARENTING IMAGES

From magazines cut out pictures of parents or people who care for children. Paste the pictures into your book or onto paper to make a poster. Around the pictures write words that describe the way these people care.

Interview your parents or the people who take care of you to find out what they think is important about their job. You could ask questions like:

How did you feel when you first began to care for me?

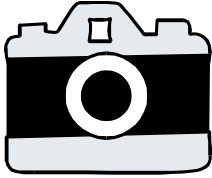
What is hard about caring for a child?

What do you enjoy most about your job of caring?

Think of the best thing your parents could ever do for you. Write about or illustrate this.

Christians believe that God loves them more than the best parent could ever do. How do you think God shows his love for people?

Draw or paint a picture of your parents or the people who care for you. Write and explain how these people show that they care for you. What do they do or say to show that they care?



PICTURES OF GOD'S LOVE

The Bible uses word picture to help us understand how God loves people.

Animal parents like eagles and chickens

What do these word pictures tell you about God?

Shepherds

What do these word pictures tell you about God?

Human fathers and mothers

What do these word pictures tell you about God?

ADAM AND EVE

The Bible tells us that God made the first person from the ground.

This person could do more than the animals. He was able to think and talk, and God put him in charge of the world that God had made.

The name that the Bible uses for this person is Adam. *Adam* means 'man'.

But Adam was lonely by himself. So God made a friend for him.

When Adam was asleep God took one of the bones from his body and used it to make a new person. This person was a woman. She was named Eve. *Eve* means 'life'.

Now there was a man and a woman in God's world. The Bible tells us that Adam and Eve had children, and grandchildren, and great grandchildren, and . . . and that all the people of the world are part of their family.



ACTIVITIES

1. Use clay or play-dough and mould it into the shape of a person. Write a label for your model.
2. Imagine that you are Adam and Eve living in the garden of Eden. Do a drawing or painting, or use a box to make a model of what you think their home in the garden would have looked like. If your classroom has a computer, you may be able to use this to make your picture.
3. You can read about Adam and Eve in the first book of the Bible. It is called Genesis. You can find the story of Adam and Eve in chapter two. You will also find this story in a children's Bible or a Bible story book.
4. Make a picture of a family tree. Draw Adam and Eve at the top and then illustrate or paste on pictures of people who have come from the family of Adam and Eve.
5. God made Adam and Eve to be friends and to help each other. Write and illustrate ways that boys and girls can be friends and help each other.
6. Make up a play that tells the story of Adam and Eve. Use music, mime, or dance in your play, as well as words.

