

**MODEL UNIT
BAND B
LEVEL 2**

FRIENDS WITH GOD

LIFE CONCEPT: GOD CREATES HUMAN BEINGS

YEAR:SUGGESTED DURATION: 5 weeks (135 minutes per week)

DATE OF USE: FAITH STATEMENTS: ① 2 ③

UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)

1 GOD CREATES AND LOVES ALL PEOPLE

- 1a investigate the biblical focus of people as God's unique creation
- 1b explore the Bible teaching that male and female are equally valuable to God
- 1c explore the Christian belief that God loves and values all people

2 GOD CREATES EACH PERSON AS A UNIQUE INDIVIDUAL WITH CHARACTERISTICS AND ABILITIES

- 2a explore the Christian belief that each person's talents and abilities are God-given
- 2b investigate ways Christians use their talents to serve God and others

3 GOD CREATES ALL PEOPLE TO LIVE IN RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM

- 3a investigate Bible stories of the friendship God initiates with people
- 3b investigate ways people express their relationship with God

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

- List features of God's relationship with Adam and Eve. (1a,3a)
- List and illustrate features of God's relationship with people as expressed in Bible stories. (1c,3a)
- Illustrate the ways people in Bible stories responded to God's friendship. (3b)
- Describe the Christian belief of how Jesus made it possible for all people to be in a relationship with God. (3a,1c)

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

- ⇒ work sample TRS B2/1
- ⇒ work sample TRS B2/2
- ⇒ work sample
- ⇒ work sample

UNIT SUMMARY

Students identify features of the perfect friendship God initiated with Adam and Eve as described in Genesis. They explore Bible stories of God's continual friendship with people despite the fact that people had ruined the perfect friendship. They identify the ways people in these Bible stories expressed their friendship with God. Students explore the Christian belief that Jesus performed the ultimate act of friendship so all people can be friends with God forever. Students interview people who share information about their personal friendship with God.

UNIT NOTES

One way of presenting the information in this unit would be for students to compile a photo album from God's perspective of 'God's Friends'. The students could make individual albums or the class may make one large class album. Alternatively, the teacher could encourage a variety of responses for each section, eg journal, storyboard, retell story, painting, chart, dramatisation.

Keep in mind when teaching this unit that the Bible describes God's relationship with people as much more than human friendship. God commits himself totally and forever to 'friendships' with people.

INTRODUCTION

1. FRIENDS

The teacher shows the students photographs of a person(s) who is a good friend of the teacher. Tell students about this person, how you became friends, the things you enjoy doing together and why they are such a good friend.

Encourage students to bring photographs of their special friend or of someone who is important to them. Students describe the things they do together with their friend and the reasons they enjoy being with this person.

Make a class list *Features of a good friend* which summarises the qualities students appreciate in their friends, eg listening to you, helping you, having things in common with you, liking to be with you, being someone you can trust, accepting you for who you are.

Make a class display of photographs or drawings of friends with accompanying captions which describe features of their friendship and why they are good friends.

DEVELOPMENT

2. THE PERFECT FRIENDSHIP

Ask students to describe what they know about the biblical creation stories. Teacher records information on the board.

Students read Genesis 1:26–31, 2:7 to discover how God was a good friend to Adam and Eve. Students discuss the following questions before completing Teacher Resource Sheet (TRS) B2/1.

- What does Genesis 2:7 tell us about how God began this friendship? (God 'breathed into him life' which made people different from the rest of creation.)

- What did God give to his friends? (food, a wonderful home, animals, companionship)
- How did God feel about his friends? (God was very pleased.)
- What things did people have in common with God? (They were like God, they were able to talk to each other and with God.)

Students imagine what life might have been like in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve had perfect friendship with God. What might they and God have done together? What might they have talked about? How might they have shown that they were friends?

Students make the first page of a *God's Friends* photo album. Put in photos/drawings that they imagine God might have in a photo album of the first people. Include captions describing what they did together, eg *This is Adam and Eve exploring the garden with me.*

3. PEOPLE SPOIL THE FRIENDSHIP

Students discuss and list things which can spoil or break up a friendship.

Students read Genesis 3 to identify what people did that broke the friendship. The Bible describes how people ruined the perfect friendship with God because they wanted to be as important as God. They disobeyed him, refused to listen to him and went their own way.

Ask students to imagine how God would have felt on this very sad day. Discuss some of the ways God could have responded to this situation, eg destroy the people he made. The Bible tells that instead of deserting the people God continued to be their friend, even though the friendship was not perfect any more. Students make the second page of the *God's Friends* photo album, which shows what happened when people spoiled the friendship and how God felt about this situation.

4. GOD IS A GOOD FRIEND

The students investigate Bible stories where God demonstrates that he was a good friend to people. Students work in pairs, in a small group or as a class. Stories could include:

Noah	Genesis 7 – 9
Gideon	Judges 6:11 – 7:25
Solomon	1 Kings 3:1–15
Elijah	1 Kings 17:1–16
David	2 Samuel 7:8–16; Psalm 16
Three men in Babylon	Daniel 3
Daniel	Daniel 6
Jonah and the people of Nineveh	Jonah 1:1 – 4:11.

Students should use children's Bibles or Bible story books to research the longer stories. Students use TRS B2/2 to help them with their investigations and refer to the *Features of a good friend* chart.

Students add pages to their *God's Friends* photo album, showing God's friends from these stories and how God showed that he was a friend to them. Consider using captions to describe what happened in each story.

5. PEOPLE RESPOND TO GOD'S FRIENDSHIP

Students return to the Bible stories they investigated earlier and identify the way the person(s) responded to God's friendship.

Noah	Genesis 6:22, 8:20
Gideon	Judges 6:24
Solomon	1 Kings 3:15
Elijah	1 King 17:5
David	Psalms 16:7–9
Three men in Babylon	Daniel 3:16–18
Daniel	Daniel 6:10
Jonah and the people of Nineveh	Jonah 4

As a class, list the various ways the people responded, noting that not all people responded positively, eg Jonah.

Students add someone from the Bible stories to their *God's Friends* photo album. Include the person's response to God's friendship.

5. THE ULTIMATE ACT OF FRIENDSHIP

Tell students the Bible says that God did a very important thing to make people friends with him forever which isn't on our *Features of a good friend* chart. Students read John 15:13 and add the new feature of friendship to the list. Choose from the following activities:

- Read Romans 5:6–11. Students discuss what the Bible passage means for them and write it in their own words.
- Examine Luther's explanation of the second part of the Apostles' Creed. Students summarise in their own words how God made it possible for all people to be friends with him.
- Revise the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus, using an illustrated Bible story book or a video.

Students add a page to their *God's Friends* photo album. Use illustrations showing 'all people', with captions telling why God allowed his Son Jesus to die. Students may want to include themselves in the illustration.

6. FRIENDSHIPS WITH GOD

Invite two or three people from a variety of age groups, eg a Year 7 student, the principal, a grandparent, to speak to the students about their friendship with God. The teacher may wish to include his or her own story. Ask the speakers to tell

- why God is their friend
- what their friendship with God is based on
- why their friendship with God is important to their life
- how they respond to God's friendship.

Allow students to ask questions.

Students add a page to their *God's Friends* album, illustrating the person(s) who has spoken about their friendship with God.

RESPONSE

7. MY RESPONSE

Students respond to the Christian belief about God's desire to be in a relationship with all people. They may choose **one** of the following activities:

- Add a final page to their *God's Friends* album. They illustrate how they think God feels about them. They include a caption with the illustration, eg *Tim is a great friend. I love it when he talks to me.*
- Write a journal entry giving their response to the Bible stories and passages about God's friendship with people. Include a response about how this information affects their life.
- Make a tract which summarises the Christian belief about the way God demonstrates his friendship. Use the information from the Bible stories/passages and the personal testimonies as a guide.

Be prepared to accept honest responses from students, including those which show that they do not feel as though they are friends with God. Continue to keep these students in your prayers.

Students could share their *God's Friends* photo album with each other, with students in other classes and with their family. Encourage students to write a thankyou note to people who spoke to the class about their relationship with God and to invite those people to look at the album(s) the students have made.

A guided meditation is provided on TRS B2/3 which could assist students to reflect on their relationship with God. This could be used as a part of a worship session.

YOU WILL NEED

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> photocopies of TRS B2/1, 2/2, for students<input type="checkbox"/> paper or cardboard to make a chart:
<i>Features of a good friend</i><input type="checkbox"/> teacher's photographs of friends<input type="checkbox"/> to remind students to bring photographs of their own friends | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> materials necessary to make a class album or individual photo albums<input type="checkbox"/> arrangements made for two or three people from a range of ages who are willing to talk to the class about their relationship with God |
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INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

ENGLISH: *Literature:* Consider how socio-cultural values, attitudes and beliefs are represented. Teachers pose questions for discussion. Plan, draft and revise writing. Explain and justify own opinions about texts. Map plot structure of story. *Everyday Texts:* Consider features of everyday texts, including structure, layout and vocabulary.

THE ARTS: *Media:* Experiment with words and images to present different points of view. *Visual Arts:* Make, design, arrange works for a specific purpose.

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 stories of God's friendship with people?

How did I respond to the range of students' attitudes towards the ways people respond to God's friendship?

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?

GOD'S FRIENDS PHOTO ALBUM



THE PERFECT FRIENDSHIP

1. Describe the ways God showed that he was a good friend to Adam and Eve.

2. Use the class chart **Features of a good friend** to identify those features God demonstrated to Adam and Eve.



3. Describe what you think a 'perfect' friendship would be like, eg no arguments.

GOD'S FRIENDS PHOTO ALBUM



GOD IS A GOOD FRIEND

- 1** Name the Bible story you are investigating

- 2** Write a brief description of a character in the story to whom God was a friend.

- 3** What 'need' did this person have?

- 4** Describe how God showed that he was a good friend to this person?

- 5** Check the class chart *Features of a good friend* and record those features God demonstrated.

- 6** Use this information to help you make a page of your *God's Friends* photo album about this person.

MEDITATION

In this meditation the teacher assists students to focus on their relationship with God and to think about how God wants to share in all aspects of their life.

You may wish to use one (or a combination) of the following strategies to help create a positive atmosphere and to assist the students to relax.

- Play some quiet music.
- Move into a room with no distractions.
- Tell the students to sit in a comfortable position, close their eyes, breathe slowly and forget about the people and things going on around them and focus on the quietness.

When reading the meditation guide, allow appropriate pauses to give the students time to reflect. If the students are unfamiliar with this sort of meditation, keep the pauses fairly brief.

MEDITATION GUIDE

Think about a friend you love to be with.

Imagine you are with that friend right now.

Imagine the place you like to go to together.

Think about the things you would be doing together in that place.

Think about the things you would be talking about.

How does it feel to be with this person?

Think about how much this person enjoys being with you,

playing with you,

talking to you,

listening to you,

caring about you.

Now imagine God is with you.

Tell God about your friend.

Tell God about the things you enjoy doing with your friend.

Tell God how you feel when you are with this person.

God loves to hear your stories and to see you happy.

Hear God tell you: 'You are important to me'.

'I'm glad that you have a good friend in your life.'

Hear God tell you: 'I am your friend, too.

'I love spending time with you

talking to you,

listening to you,

caring about you.'

Hear God tell you: 'I'm glad we are spending this time together now'.

Tell God anything else you want to tell him. You might want

to thank God,

to ask God for help,

to tell God how you feel about him

or to tell God how you feel about spending this time with him.

When you are ready, open your eyes, and sit quietly until others are ready.

