

**MODEL UNIT  
BAND C  
LEVEL 3**

# COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS

**LIFE CONCEPT: GOD CREATES HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS**

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

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

**UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)**
**1. GOD CREATES PEOPLE TO LIVE IN A LOVING RELATIONSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER**

- 1a** examine Bible teachings about human relationships and their complexity
- 1b** explore the Christian belief that God has given the Ten Commandments to protect human relationships
- 1c** investigate the Christian belief that love and forgiveness are the basis for positive relationships

**2. GOD PROVIDES SOCIAL STRUCTURES FOR THE WELFARE OF ALL PEOPLE**

- 2a** investigate the Christian belief that social structures and authority are given by God for the welfare of human beings
- 2b** explore the interrelationship between authority and responsibility

**3. GOD WANTS PEOPLE TO LOVE AND RESPECT ALL PEOPLES OF THE WORLD**

- 3a** explore Bible teachings which direct people to love all peoples of the world
- 3b** explore causes and effects of injustice and prejudice among people
- 3c** investigate Christians who have worked towards love, respect and equality between peoples

**STUDENT ASSESSMENT**
**ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES**

Record the Bible's and the catechism's directions about relationships with family, friends and people in the community. (1a,1b,1c)

Identify the Bible's teachings about the benefits of social structures such as family, peer group and community. (2a)

Reflect on the implications of the Bible's teachings for their personal relationships. (1c,3a)

**ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES**

⇒ TRS C3/2,3,4

⇒ work sample

⇒ work sample

**UNIT SUMMARY**

Students consider the social structures they belong to and the relationships issues involved in each social structure. They reflect on and explore the Bible's and the catechism's instructions for their relationships with family, friends and people in authority.

## UNIT NOTES

This unit could be integrated with Health units about interaction and relationships.

Christians believe that God creates human relationships for the welfare of people. Difficulties and conflicts in relationships are the result of human failure and sin. God is not responsible for relationship difficulties. The students in your class will come from diverse family structures. Avoid giving a stereotypical picture of family and be sensitive to students who may be experiencing stress in their family relations.

Before discussing difficulties or conflicts which can arise in families, it is important to encourage students not to disclose sensitive or confidential information about their family to the whole class, rather to use the third person to talk about situations, eg things that happen in a family rather than **my** family. Make it clear, however, that you are available to talk to the students privately about family-related issues.

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. RELATIONSHIPS

Students identify the different social groupings or structures to which they belong, eg family, peer group, class community, school community. Distribute the different social structures among groups and ask each group to list what they see as the benefits and problems of the relationships within the social structure. Display and discuss their lists.

Provide time for students to reflect individually on these questions:

- Which relationships are most important to young people? Explain your answer.
- What do young people need in their relationships?
- Which relationships are the most complex or difficult? Why?

Tell students that Christians believe that social structures are a part of God's care for human beings. They will be investigating issues relating to the relationships within families, with friends and people in other social structures.

## DEVELOPMENT

### 2. FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Christians believe that God created families in various configurations and he also gives instructions about living in families. However, this does not mean things will never go wrong. When relationships are set in a context of love, respect and forgiveness, conflict can be resolved without damaging relationships.

In this section students explore common issues relating to young people's relationship with parents and siblings. Assist students to understand that many of the frustrations and difficulties they may face at this age are developmental and shared by others.

#### A. Our families

Students draw a picture of themselves and their family. They can include speech- and thought-bubbles to show the issues, frustrations and benefits of family relationships. (These drawings may touch some personal and sensitive issues, so it is important for the teacher to respect and support students in difficult situations.)

Students identify the most important issues relating to their family relationships during adolescence. They can pose questions for their investigation of family relationships, eg

- Why are families important?
- What types of conflict do people experience in family relationships?
- What causes conflict in families?
- How does conflict affect family relationships?
- What strategies can be used to develop positive relationship in families?

#### B. Families in the Bible

Tell students that Christians believe that families are a part of God's plan for the care and protection of people. The Bible has stories about the complexity of family relationships and the impact of sin on people's relationships. Students investigate the stories listed on TRS C3/1. Choose from the following options to explore the stories:

- The class reads and studies one story.
- Students work in groups. Each group investigates a different story and reports to the class.
- Students use a children's Bible, such as Selina Hastings' *Illustrated Children's Bible*, to read all the stories.

Discuss:

- What do these stories teach about family relationships?
- Christians believe that God has created families for the welfare of people. Why do you think the Bible includes stories about conflict within families?
- What explanation does the Bible give for conflict and problems in family relationships?
- How important is love and forgiveness in family relationships?

### C. Instructions from the Bible

Students use TRS C3/2 to explore Bible and catechism instructions for family relationships. Discuss students' findings.

When discussing the Ephesians passage, highlight the two-way nature of Paul's directions. Parents do not have absolute power over children. God does not approve of child abuse.

### D. Strategies for families

Choose activities to help students develop strategies for their family relationships:

- Invite a Christian counsellor as a guest speaker to share information about the importance of love and forgiveness in family relationships.
- Gather a range of non-fiction resources about the adolescent years. Students research to gather information and strategies for family relationships.

## 3. FRIENDS

### A. My friends

Students draw a picture of themselves and their friends, using speech- and thought-bubbles to reveal the frustrations and rewards of friendships.

As a class identify the most important issues relating to adolescents' friendships. Students use the issues to develop questions to guide their investigation, eg

- How do friendships change in the adolescent years?
- What causes conflict in friendships?
- What is peer pressure?
- What are the positive and negative effects of peer pressure?

### B. Bible stories about friends

Students read the story of David and Jonathan in a Bible story book and discuss what it reveals about friendship.

### C. The Bible's instructions

Students explore the Bible and catechism information about friendships. See TRS C3/3. Discuss the students' findings and what they believe is the Bible's greatest challenge.

### D. Strategies for friendship

Choose activities to assist students to develop positive strategies for their friendships:

- Invite a guest speaker from an organisation such as *Family Life* to share information about and strategies for friendships in the adolescent years.
- Gather a range of non-fiction resources about the adolescent years. Students research to gather information and strategies for friendships.

## 4. LIVING IN A COMMUNITY

During adolescence it is normal for young people to challenge and question people in social structures as they clarify their values and attitudes. Explore the Christian belief that social structures have been given by God for the welfare of people.

### A. My community

Students make a list of the social groupings they belong to beyond family and friends, eg school community, sporting teams, local community member. Discuss with students the issues they face in these relationships, eg

- What issues do you face in your relationships with people in the community?
- What are your responsibilities as a member of various community structures?

### B. The Bible's instructions

Students investigate Bible and catechism messages about living in communities. See TRS C3/4. Discuss, and students record:

- What message does the Bible have for people living in today's social structures?

### C. Strategies for living in a community

Students interview a member of the local council to explore ways in which they can be active and positive community members.

## RESPONSE

## 5. SUMMARY

Students choose one of the activities listed on TRS C3/5 to summarise and share what they have learnt.

## YOU WILL NEED

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| <input type="checkbox"/> to arrange guest speakers or resources to provide information and strategies about developing positive relationships with family, friends and people in authority | <input type="checkbox"/> copies of TRS C3/1,2,3,4,5<br><input type="checkbox"/> Children's Bibles<br><input type="checkbox"/> Luther's <i>Small Catechism</i> |
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## INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

**ENGLISH:** *Literature:* Explain and justify own opinions about texts. Find and cite elements of a text to support a point of view. Directed reading, reading alone. Editing skills. *Everyday Texts:* Consider needs of audience when speaking. Develop discussion and problem-solving skills. Use strategies for gathering, recording and reporting data. Report findings in speech and writing.

**HEALTH:** *Interaction, Relationships and Groups:* Explore family roles. Read, listen to and create stories about relationships. Express feelings, listen to others, develop friendship skills.

**SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT:** *Investigation, Communication, Participation:* Formulate questions, reflect on knowledge and understanding. Identify information sources. Gather, organise and interpret information using diagrams. Identify similar data. Draw conclusions. Identify, analyse and clarify values. Consider audience in presentation. Cooperation skills.

from the National Statements and Profiles

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## UNIT EVALUATION

Which activities worked well in this unit?

Which resources were useful in the implementation of this unit?

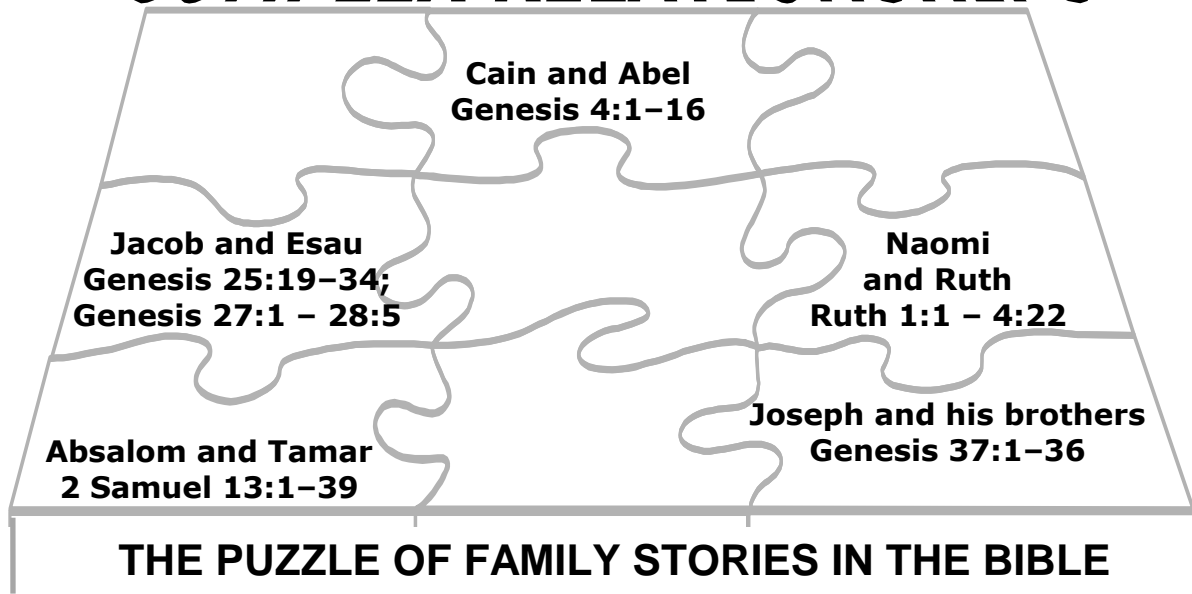
How did I respond to the range of students' relationships with family, friends and people in the community?

How did I respond to the range of students' attitudes towards learning about strategies for developing positive relationships?

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?

# COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS



Colour in (lightly) the puzzle piece for the story you are reading and studying.

What is the relationship between the key characters in the story? \_\_\_\_\_

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Summarise the key events in the story. \_\_\_\_\_

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What does the story demonstrate about family relationships? \_\_\_\_\_

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Christian believe that God created families for the welfare of people. Why do you think stories like this are included in the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_

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# COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS

## THE BIBLE'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR FAMILIES

The Bible has information or instructions for living in a family.

- List what these proverbs teach about family relationships.

**Proverbs 1:8,9**

**Proverbs 29:15,17**

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- Imagine you are a child in Paul's time. You are the possession of your parents, you have no rights and are totally subject to your parents' decisions. The statement 'children shall be seen and not heard' applies totally. Your parents love you and will decide your career, your partner in life and much of your future. Imagine you hear Paul's words:

**Ephesians 6:1-4**

What did this mean for a family in Paul's time? \_\_\_\_\_

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- What might Paul write to make a similar point for families today? \_\_\_\_\_

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- What does Jesus say is important in family relationships? **Matthew 5:23,24**

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- Read **Colossians 3:12-15** and **Ephesians 4:26,29,32**

List the qualities described in the verses which would help your relationship with your parents. \_\_\_\_\_

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- Use a dictionary to define the words:

**respect**

**love**

**honour**

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- Read the Ten Commandments and their explanation in Luther's *Small Catechism*.

What instructions does the catechism give for family relationships?

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# COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS

## FRIENDS

- The best-known Bible story about friends is about **David** and **Jonathan**

Read about it in **1 Samuel 18:15**, **1 Samuel 19:1–7** and **1 Samuel 20:1–42**.

What does this story teach about friendship? \_\_\_\_\_

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- Here are some proverbs about friendship. Use a CEV Bible to look them up. What instruction does each one give?

### Proverbs 16:28

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### Proverbs 18:24

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### Proverbs 22:24

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### Proverbs 17:17

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### Proverbs 19:4,6

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### Proverbs 27:6

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- Check who is speaking in **John 15:13**.

What is the special significance of this verse about friendship? \_\_\_\_\_

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- Read **1 Corinthians 13:4–7**. List qualities from the verse that you value in a friend

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- Highlight or circle in the list the qualities that you bring to your friendships.

- Read **1 John 4:19–21**. What does this verse say about all human relationships?

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- **The Ten Commandments** in Luther's *Small Catechism* have instruction for relationships. What instruction for friendships can you find in the commandments?

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# COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS

## LIVING IN COMMUNITIES

All people live in social structures and communities. Christians believe that social structures are a part of God's care for people and the Bible has some instructions for living in a community.

- Read Romans 13:1–7. Paul was writing to the Christians who were facing persecution from their government. What are Paul's instructions for living with government authorities?

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- Read Acts 5:29 and record when it would be justifiable to disobey people in positions of authority.

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- Read Romans 13:8–14 which is Paul's instruction to Christian communities such as the school community. What do you think is the most important part of Paul's instructions?

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- Skim through the commandments in Luther's *Small Catechism* to explore what it says about living in relationships with people in the school and local community.

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# COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS

## HELP FOR LIVING IN RELATIONSHIPS

Choose from one of the following suggestions to summarise what you have learnt in the unit.

- Create an informative video- or audio-tape for young people about positive relationships with family, friends and authority figures.
- Write and publish a 'Dear Dora' column in which students write and respond to relationship issues facing young people.
- Prepare a series of overheads and role-plays for a parent information evening about adolescent relationships. Students could invite a guest speaker for the evening.
- Design and write an information pamphlet for people their age including information and strategies for developing positive relationships.

What are the most important things you wish to include about:

- Family relationships

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- Friendships

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- Relationships with people in the community

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