

**MODEL UNIT
BAND C
LEVEL 1**

GOD THE CREATOR

LIFE CONCEPT: GOD CREATED THE UNIVERSE

YEAR: DURATION OF UNIT: 5 weeks (approx 135 minutes per week)

DATE OF USE: FAITH STATEMENTS: ① ② ③

UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)

1 GOD CREATED ALL THINGS

- 1a** identify what the biblical accounts of creation reveal about God
- 1b** investigate the vastness and complexity of the universe to consider what it reveals about God
- 1c** examine the Christian belief that God's creation is 'good'
- 1d** explore theories concerning the origin of the universe

2 GOD TAKES CARE OF HIS CREATION

- 2a** examine the Christian view of the interdependence and harmony of the universe
- 2b** investigate the place of technology and science in God's preservation of his creation
- 2c** explore the Christian belief that God is in control of the universe

3 GOD WANTS PEOPLE TO TAKE CARE OF HIS CREATION

- 3a** investigate the biblical teachings about conservation of creation
- 3b** investigate the impact of human lifestyle on the universe
- 3c** consider their personal responsibility to care for the environment

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

- List what the Bible's accounts of creation reveal about God. (1a,1c)
- Observe and record features of the natural world. (1b,1c)
- List ways living things are interdependent. (2a)
- List positive and negative results of science and technology in the world. (2b,3b)
- Read and respond in writing to Bible verses relating to God's control of the universe. (2c)

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

- ⇒ work sample
- ⇒ observation/work sample
- ⇒ work sample
- ⇒ work sample
- ⇒ work sample

UNIT SUMMARY

Students consider the Christian belief in God as Creator revealed through the Bible and his creation. Students also explore the implications of this belief for living.

UNIT NOTES

Students keep a journal in which they record their thoughts, comments and questions. You will need to provide time regularly for students to respond in their journals. See the glossary for more information about journals.

INTRODUCTION

1. CREATING AND CREATION

Emphasise: a creator has a unique relationship with the creation; human creators rely on raw materials; a creation reveals much about the creator.

Students, in groups, write definitions of the words 'creation' and 'creator' in their journals. Discuss the definitions and also situations in which students have used or heard the words.

Challenge students to create their own beautiful or interesting or amazing creation and to name it.

Students think of this creation, or of another item they have created, as they reflect on:

- Describe what it was like to 'create' something.
- How do you feel about your creation?
- What does your creation reveal about you, the creator?
- How would you now define the words 'creation' and 'creator'?

Tell students they will be exploring the Christian belief that God is the Creator of the universe and considering how this belief influences the way Christians live.

DEVELOPMENT

2. THE BIBLE REVEALS GOD AS CREATOR

Genesis 1 is not a scientific account. It reveals **who** gave life and **why** life exists, not **how** and **when** God brought the universe into existence. Our understanding of God and creation will always be limited. Assist students to grow in their awareness that God's creating was unique: God created from nothing 'by his word', God's creation was perfect, God has a special relationship with his creation.

Students read and discuss Teacher Resource Sheet (TRS) C1/1 about journal expectations. Students write a journal entry about:

- Christians believe that God created the universe. What do you understand by this statement?

Students work in groups. Using the top part of TRS C1/2 as a guide, they read and discuss the Genesis 1:1 – 2:4 account of creation.

Students use Bible handbooks and encyclopedias to explore the meaning and emphasis of the Genesis 1 account.

Read the statements in the middle of TRS C1/2 that suggest ways Christians approach the Genesis account of creation. Discuss:

- What do you think is the message of the Genesis story?
- What does Genesis 1 reveal about God?

Allow time for journal entries.

Students work with a partner to examine other biblical accounts of God as Creator listed on the bottom of TRS C1/2. Discuss:

- What does the Bible reveal about God as the creator?
- How do you think believing in God as Creator would affect the way you live?

Allow time for journal entries.

Students examine people's interpretations of the Genesis accounts. Groups of students select a picture book that retells the creation story, eg

- *Wonderful Earth* by Butterworth and Inkpen
- *The Creation* by Brian Wildsmith
- *When God Was All Alone* by Norm Habel
- *The Story of Creation* by Stephanie Jeffs.

They examine both the text and the illustrations using these questions:

- What images of the Bible's account of creation are presented?
- What kind of creator does the book present?
- In what ways have the picture books influenced your understanding of the Bible's creation story?

Groups report their findings to the class.

Allow time for journal entries.

3. THE CREATION REVEALS GOD AS CREATOR

The activities could be integrated with Science to help students to understand that science and religion can complement each other. Science is the means through which people investigate and explain the systems and order of the universe. Science explains *how*, and religion explains *why*.

The natural environment Remind the students of the creations they made and reflected on at the start of the unit, and what their creations revealed about them as creators. Read Romans 1:20 and Psalm 8:1 as a class. Discuss:

- What do you think we can learn about God from studying the universe?

Students choose from activities listed on TRS C1/3 to explore aspects of the universe. The teacher determines the time allowed and how activities are to be completed, eg groups, partners. Discuss:

- What is the purpose of the systems and order of the universe?
- What do the interdependence and complexity of nature reveal about God?

Allow time for journal entries about:

- As God created the universe, he stated that it was 'good' (Genesis 1:1 – 2:4). After investigating some aspect of the universe, how would you respond to the statement?

Show students photographs from books such as *Kakadu Reflections*, *Barrier Reef Reflections*, *Outback Reflections*.

Read and discuss the response to nature of Australian Christian poets such as Bruce Prewer and Aub Podlich, eg:

- 'The Man Who Saw' and 'A Prayer about Stars' by Aub Podlich from *Australian Images*. See TRS C1/ 4a,b.

Students individually choose a natural setting near the school to sit and reflect on nature. Students write in their journals. They may write poems modelled on poems they have read.

Technology and Science

God actively involves people in preserving his creation. Science and technology can be a part of God's ongoing care and preservation of creation.

Christians believe that human creativity is a part of being made in God's image. God has given people the ability to make scientific discoveries and to create technology.

Students may tend to highlight the destructive use of technology and science. Emphasise that technology in itself is not destructive, but can be used either to preserve or to destroy.

Provide students with a range of pictures showing results of scientific discovery and technological developments. Discuss:

- Are technology and science part of God's creation? Give reasons for your response.

Remind students of their creating experience earlier in the unit. Discuss:

- In what ways are people different from other creatures? (Review Genesis 1:26–28. Like God, people have the ability to create.)
- Genesis 4:20–22 and Exodus 31:3,4 show that people have been creating and advancing life since the beginning of time.
- Why do you think God has given people the ability to create?

Groups of students find pictures of recent scientific and technological advancements. Students list the positive and negative results of each discovery. Discuss:

- What are the positive and negative results of science and technology in the world?
- How and why do people misuse science and technology?
- Do you think science and technology could be part of God's plan for people to care for the world? Why or why not?

Read Psalm 8:1; Psalm 16:1,2 and James 1:17. What do these Bible passages say to you about the role of science and technology?

God's relationship with his creation

Students each think of the thing they created:

- What relationship will they have with it in a week's time? . . . in a year? . . . in ten years?
- With which of these two statements do they agree more?

'God created the universe and has left it to keep spinning in space until it falls apart.'

'God created the universe and still takes care of it.'

Students investigate Bible passages to explore God's relationship with his creation.

Psalm 24:1	Psalm 36:5–9
Psalm 95:3–5	Psalm 145:15,16
Matthew 6:25–34	Matthew 10:29–31

Allow time for journal entries responding to:

- How does the Bible describe the relationship God has with creation?
- How could these Bible verses affect the way someone might live?

RESPONSE

4. CELEBRATE AND REFLECT

Discuss TRS C1/5. Students in groups choose a presentation suggestion from the TRS to celebrate and reflect on what they have learnt.

Students assess the effectiveness of their presentation, using TRS C1/6.

YOU WILL NEED

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> different versions of the Bible | <input type="checkbox"/> videos featuring aspects of the natural environment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bible encyclopedias and handbooks | <input type="checkbox"/> living things (students can collect or bring from home) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> craft and art materials | <input type="checkbox"/> magnifying glasses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> posters and books with pictures of creatures, living things and places in the natural environment | |

INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

THE ARTS: *Dance:* Choreograph short dance sequences. *Media:* Use media technology, participate in production work. *Music:* Use various methods of producing sound. Select, match, combine sounds and silence to create musical statements. Listen, perform. *Visual Arts:* Make, design, arrange works, discuss visual arts works of others

ENGLISH: *Literature:* Explain and justify own opinions about texts. Consider how socio-cultural values, attitudes, beliefs are represented, awareness of the features of a picture book. Compare different versions of traditional stories, write own story, writing for specific audiences. *Everyday Texts:* Develop discussion and problem-solving skills. Plan, prepare and present short talks, record and report data.

SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT: Reflect on knowledge, understanding; formulate questions; gather, organise, interpret information; draw conclusions; identify, analyse, clarify values; choose appropriate ways of presentation.

SCIENCE: Present findings in an orderly, sensible way; make inferences. Investigation of earth and universe, spatial relationship of sun, earth, moon, space. Study plants, animals in local habitat, map food-chains.

TECHNOLOGY: Use appropriate resources, techniques, equipment. Follow specifications, work with others, devise alternatives.

UNIT EVALUATION

Which activities worked well in this unit?

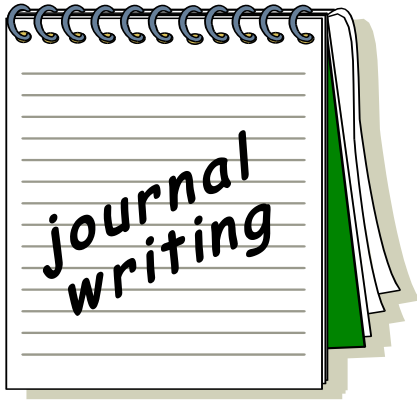
Which resources were useful in the implementation of this unit?

How did I respond to the range of students' attitudes towards the natural environment?

How did I respond to the range of students' prior knowledge of the creation story?

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 the Creator







***What do you think
about the Christian belief
that God is the Creator of all things?***

What do you think this belief means?

***How would having this belief impact on
the way a person lives?***

In Christian Studies we will explore these questions. You will be keeping a journal in which you can record your thoughts, comments and questions.

The following questions may guide your journal writing:

-  What do you think about the ideas presented?
-  What did you learn about God?
-  What did you learn about the universe?
-  What do you find interesting/challenging/troubling?
-  How could what you have found out affect the way people live in the world?
-  How does what you have found out influence the way you live in the world?

In the Bible God Reveals Himself as Creator



In groups: Read Genesis 1:1 – 2:4 and discuss the following questions:

- What did God create?
- What relationship did God, the Creator, have with his creation?
- What questions does the Bible passage raise for you?
- Describe what God’s creating was like.
- Compare God’s creating with any ‘creating’ you may do. How are they similar? How are they different?
- What does the Bible’s account of creation reveal about God?
- What do you think God wanted people to know about his creating the universe?

‘The story of creation should lead us to praise God, to wonder at his marvellous works. This is the reaction found in such psalms as 8 and 104, which express awe and adoration of God for what he has done. To argue about individual details in the stories of creation is to run the risk of missing the point to which they want to lead us: thankful praise.’

Dr Vic Pfitzner, in Masterplan

‘[We] may have many questions about the how and when of creation. We may wonder, for example, about the age of the earth and about how scientific discoveries and Bible statements relate to each other. The Bible does not answer all our questions. It is more concerned to lead us to know the Creator of all things than it is to teach us to know everything about the creation.’

Pastor David Strelan LIFE

The Bible has other images of God as Creator.

With a partner, read:

Job 38:2 – 39:29

Psalm 104

Psalm 136:1–9

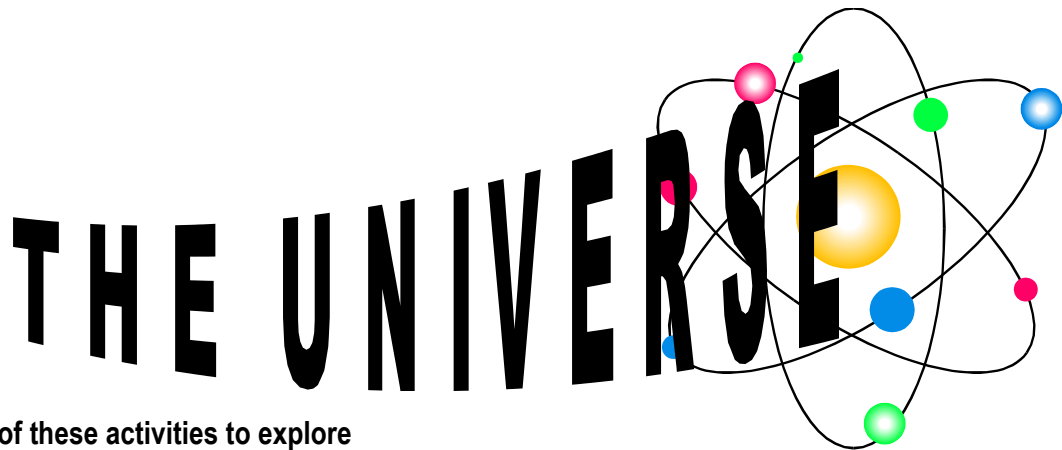
Psalm 148

Isaiah 44:24

Isaiah 45:12

- How does the writer describe God as Creator?
- Why do you think the writer describes God in this way?
- How does this writer describe God’s relationship with his creation?
- What does this passage add to your understanding of God as Creator and his relationship with creation?

THE UNIVERSE



Choose one of these activities to explore the vastness, minuteness and complexity of the universe.



Use non-fiction texts to gather information about the size of the universe and our **solar system**. How does the solar system operate? Investigate the size of the planets in our solar system. How would you describe the size of earth when compared with other aspects of the universe?



Use non-fiction resources to find ten important facts about **stars**. Stargaze one night for homework and record your feelings and thoughts as you study the stars. What do you think the stars reveal about the universe?



List as many **animals** as you can that are native to Australia. Use non-fiction resources to gather statistics about the number of different species of plants and animals in Australia. Make a collage to show the diversity of living creatures in Australia, eg from insects to plants to animals. Find pictures in magazines such as *National Geographic* or picture packs.



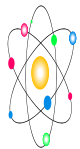
Using magnifying glasses, examine a range of **small living things**, (leaves, ants, worms, flowers, mushrooms). Draw and label the details observed. Investigate the function of the things observed, eg stamens on flowers, veins in leaves, antennae on insects. Discuss: What are the purposes of some of the intricate aspects of the environment?



Gather non-fiction resources about **butterflies**. Examine the patterns visible on their wings. Describe the patterns and sketch them. Investigate the life cycle of butterflies. What can be learnt from examining such a creature?



Plants are vital to all living creatures. Plants supply energy directly to those creatures that eat them and indirectly to those creatures that eat creatures that eat plants. All animals need plants. Use non-fiction resources to investigate **photosynthesis**. Write a report on what it is and how it helps the earth.



Set up a display showing the **relationships** among various elements of the natural environment, eg the tree provides a home for the bird > the bird eats the fish > the fish lives in the water > the water supplies drink for the kangaroo. Use pictures, string and labels to create the display. Consider what happens when one of the things is withdrawn from the chain by tracing the string back to all the interrelated items.



Contact the zoo in your capital city for information about the reasons species become **endangered**. In what ways are the interrelationships between living things intricate?

Discuss in groups and record in your journal:

- What is the purpose of the order and systems of the universe?
- What do you think the interdependence of the universe reveals about God?
- How does the vastness, complexity and interdependence of the universe make you feel?

The Man Who Saw

Once there was a man
who wanted to see God.
So he asked the wise men of his town
where he might find God.
‘Go to the forest’,
the wise ones said.
‘God is to be found there.’

For many months he tramped the forests
in search of God.
He lifted every stone,
turned every leaf,
examined every flower.
But the more he searched,
the more it seemed
that God was hidden from him.

At last, greatly disappointed, he said:
‘I do not believe I will ever find God.
I will content myself with the trees of the forest,
for they are more beautiful
than anything I’ve ever seen.’

He went back to the forest,
and no sooner had he sat himself down
under a mighty spreading tree,
and peered up through its arches and leaves,
than he was struck as if by lightning
with such an urge to thank someone
for such a wonderful sight,
that he was powerless before it.

At that very moment
his eyes were opened,
and the Creator of all
stood before him.

Aub Podlich from *Australian Images*, Lutheran Publishing House



A Prayer About Stars

* Carl Sagan of 'Cosmos' *
numbers stars like sand.
Take a handful of sand,
let's say, from Bondi Beach.
Run it through your hand.
Ten thousand grains
have passed before your eyes.
Now scoop up all the sand
of the Gold and Sunshine Coasts,
throw in the 90-mile Beach,
Coorong, the Great Australian Bight —
no — take the sand
of every beach around this land.
And more — every grain,
of every shore,
of every land
in all the world —
now, count them if you can!

Now – wait for it!
There are more
stars in the sky
than grains of sand
on all the shores.

Father-God:
How can we tell your greatness?
We haven't words
for majesty like that!

Only grant us this little grace:
As we gaze in awe
of what you set before us
in the overarching sky,
and understand so little
of how all things
embrace and twine —
do not let us bow our knees
to creatures of your hand.

And though the sky
is thronged by stars
in countless swarms,
and a question, every one,
let the mystery of your greatness
overshine them all:
that you who made the universe
became, with us, a Man.

Aub Podlich from *Australian Images*, Lutheran Publishing House



Choose one of the activities listed at the right to **reflect** on what you have learnt about God and the universe.

Circle the activity you will complete and list your group members.

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God the Creator


- **Design a wall hanging** for the classroom, based on the images presented in Genesis 1:1 – 2:4 and Psalm 104. Consider your use of colour, texture and symbolism.
- **Prepare and present a computer slide show** or photo or video show entitled ‘God the Creator’. Choose appropriate music for your presentation and synchronise your visual images to the music. Write a prayer or reflection on this theme to conclude your presentation.
- **Write and illustrate a picture book** that retells the biblical story of creation. Use your own words and images. Consider how you will launch your book for its intended audience.
- **Choreograph** a dramatic movement or dance sequence to celebrate creation or tell the creation story. Plan music, costumes, backdrops and props.
- **Create a display** for the worship centre around the images in one of these psalms:
 - Psalm 19:1–6 (God’s glory in creation)
 - Psalm 65:9–13 (God’s care for the earth)
 - Psalm 104 (the glories of creation)
 - Psalm 145 (praise of God the creator).
- **Compose a song** about God the Creator. Read other hymns and songs with this theme to start you thinking. Write your own tune, or use an existing melody.





SELF-ASSESSMENT OF PRESENTATION

Skills required (eg researching, organising, speaking, performing)	Competent	Needs developing


 What message do you hope others gained from your presentation?


 What do you consider to be the most effective part of your presentation?


 What would you improve next time? Why?


 What is the most important thing you have learnt through this unit?

