

**MODEL UNIT
BAND C
LEVEL 2**

THE WORLD — WHO CARES?

LIFE CONCEPT: GOD CREATED THE UNIVERSE

YEAR: DURATION OF UNIT: 5 weeks (approximately 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

- Read and list information from Bible passages relating to God’s relationship with his creation.(1a,1c,3a)
- Record the impact a technological or scientific development has on human life and the environment. (2b,3b)
- Research and record reasons Christians have for caring for the environment. (3a)
- Read and respond in writing to Bible passages about God’s plan for the universe. (2c)
- Plan and implement an action plan for an environmental issue in the school or community.(3a,3c)



ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

- observation, work sample
- work sample
- work sample
- work sample
- group work, work sample

UNIT SUMMARY

Students explore why Christians believe the world is ‘good’. Students investigate the impact scientific and technological change has had on the world. They consider the responsibility Christians have been given to care for the world.

INTRODUCTION

1. WHAT IS GOOD?

At this age-level students may tend to focus on the negative aspects of life today. They may need encouragement to identify 'good' things.

Display a range of pictures that present 'good' and 'bad' images of the world, eg images of pollution, starving people, untouched wilderness, animals. The pictures could be taken from the newspaper or poster packs. Also display the text:

'Everything God created is good.'
(1 Timothy 4:4a).

Students write a personal response to the verse, stating whether they agree or disagree with this verse and why.

Students discuss their responses in groups.

Discuss as a class:

- Did God create all the things pictured? Explain your answers.
- What do you consider to be 'good' in the world?
- Does God care about the world?

DEVELOPMENT

2. WHAT DID GOD CREATE?

Focus students' attention on the perfect nature of God's creation and the pleasure God expressed with regard to his creation. In God's creation everything lived in harmony.

1. Read the Genesis 1:1 – 2:4 account of creation in the CEV Bible. Students discuss in groups and record answers to the questions:

- What did God create?
- What was God's response at each stage of creation?
- Why do you think God considered the creation to be 'good'?
- Describe the relationships between people and animals and between people and the earth.
- How would you describe God's creation to someone else?

2. Look at Genesis 1:1 – 2:4 in other versions of the Bible (eg, RSV, Good News, NIV). What words do they use to describe God's reaction to his creation? (eg 'good', 'pleased')

3. Discuss in groups:

- Compare the world today with that described in the Bible story. In what ways is the world of today different from that described in the Bible?
- What do you think God would say about the world today?

3. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

Help students to understand the cause-and-effect nature of human and environmental activities. God gives people the ability to create, and technological and scientific advancements have contributed greatly to the way in which we live. However, people have sometimes failed to consider the impact this advancement may have on the world. People have lost sight of the relationships God originally intended.

Students debate the following statement:

'The evidence of all history is that science and technology have been giving us a progressively better life, rather than a progressively poorer life.' (Professor Julian Simon, co-author of *The Resourceful Earth*)

Students interview an older person, eg their grandparent:

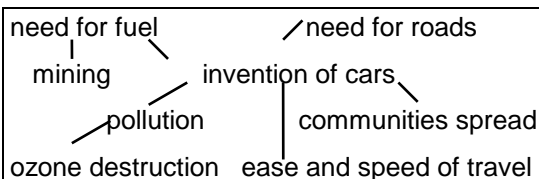
- List ways life has changed in the last fifty years, eg invention of cars and fast food, the increase in size of the town or city, medical discoveries.
- Ask: What changes do you think are improvements? Which changes have made things worse?

Students share the results of their interview.

Discuss as a class:

- In what ways have science and technology made a positive change to the world?
- What negative effects have science and technology had on the world?
- What part does God have in the scientific and technological changes?

Students choose one of the scientific or technological advancements and create a thought web of the impact this change has made to human and environmental life, eg



Students label the changes as either positive or negative. Students choose a negative change

(eg the destruction of the ozone layer, or deforestation) and research how the change affects human and environmental life. Students also investigate strategies that people can use to prevent the environmental problem.

4. DOES GOD CARE?

God does care for his creation and has given people a special responsibility to care for the earth. Abuse of this responsibility (sin) has resulted in today's environmental problems.

Students individually reflect on the questions on the top of Teacher Resource Sheet (TRS) C2/1

Students discuss the questions in groups and share responses as a class.

Students explore what the Bible teaches about God's care for the world, using the readings and questions listed in the middle of TRS C2/1.

Discuss as a class: Does God care for the universe?

Students use art materials to create a painting or sculpture which presents the students' views about the relationship God has with the world.

5. SHOULD PEOPLE CARE?

Emphasise that Christians believe that God's care for the world includes giving people responsibility to care for the world.

Students brainstorm responses to:

- Why do people care for the world?

Students survey their families to compile a list of ways families are demonstrating their concern for the welfare of the world. Students could use the following questions:

- What does our family do to care for the world?
- What is the motivation for our family caring or not caring for the environment?

Locate the home pages of different environmental organisations on the Internet to explore what motivates the groups to take care of the world.

Students follow the top half of TRS C2/2 to read and discuss Bible passages and record what the Bible says about people and their role in the world.

Tell students that the Bible provides another motivation for Christians. Students use the *But*

there's more! section of TRS C2/2 to explore Bible verses which indicate the motivation Jesus gives people to care for the world.

Emphasise that in Jesus God is bringing the universe together in a new creation. Christians already can work towards the new creation by living in harmony with the world. Christians are the world's first glimpse of God's restored and redeemed creation.

Display books by Christian conservationists such as Aub Podlich. Show images from the books. Read the poems on TRS C2/3a,b. Discuss:

- What are the messages of the poems?
- What do you think Aub Podlich believes about Christians caring for the world?

Students use TRS C2/4 to reflect individually on what they can do to care for the world and to respond to the statement:

'God cares for the world.
We don't have to!'

Students share their responses in groups.

RESPONSE

5. MISSION STATEMENT

As a class develop an environmental mission statement. Display this statement and refer to it throughout the year.

5. ACTION PLAN

The action plan provides the students with the opportunity to take responsibility for a school or local community environmental issue. Encourage them to choose something practical that will involve the whole class.

Students choose and investigate a way they could care for the environment in their school and local area, eg invite a guest speaker from the local council or an environmental organisation to share information, or research the issue in non-fiction texts.

Students develop an action plan (see TRS C2/5) that enables them actively to care for their local environment.

YOU WILL NEED

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> a variety of versions of the Bible<input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Lion Bible Encyclopedia</i><input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Lion Handbook to the Bible</i><input type="checkbox"/> art materials<input type="checkbox"/> resource sheets<input type="checkbox"/> mission statements from various environmental groups (locate home pages on the Internet) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> videos featuring aspects of caring for the natural environment<input type="checkbox"/> posters and non-fiction texts about the positive and negative impact of scientific and technological change on the natural environment<input type="checkbox"/> Christian and secular poems and literature with an environmental theme |
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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.

SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT: *Investigation, Communication, Participation:* Reflect on knowledge and understanding, formulate questions; gather, organise and interpret information. Draw conclusions. Identify, analyse, clarify values. Negotiate and agree on roles, contribute to decision-making. *Natural and Social Systems:* Identify people's impact on environments. Plan and work on environmental improvement projects.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION: *Environmental interaction:* Links between energy and resources consumption and living conditions, ways to reduce environmental hazards.

SCIENCE: *Earth and Beyond:* Impact of human activities on land, topical issues, how life on earth has changed over a long period of time, extinction of species.

TECHNOLOGY: *Design, Make and Appraise:* Work with others, plan solutions from information. Share ideas, assess effectiveness of processes, make modifications.

(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' attitudes towards God's care for creation?

How did I respond to the range of students' understanding of the impact of human lifestyle on the environment?

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?

DOES GOD CARE?

Do you think God cares for the world? Why or why not?

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Do you think the world is out of control? Why or why not?

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How do you think God feels about the state of the world?

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Read the following Bible passages to find out about God's care for creation.

Write key words in the boxes.

Psalm 65:9-13



Psalm 95:3-5



Matthew 6:26-34



Matthew 10:29-31



Psalm 145:15,16



How do you think believing that God is in control of the universe would affect the way you live?

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Design a painting or sculpture that presents a visual image of God's relationship with the world.

SHOULD PEOPLE CARE?

Do you think people should care for the world? Why or why not?

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Work **with a partner** to read the following passages and find out what the Bible says about people caring for creation. List the important points.

Genesis 1:26,28 Genesis 2:15,19,20 Genesis 9:2,3 Leviticus 25:1-7 Psalm 8:3-9	
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Discuss **with another pair** the following questions. Be prepared to share your responses with the class:

- What phrases in the Bible readings describe people’s role on the earth?
- People are ‘put in charge of . . .’ or ‘have power over’ other parts of creation. How does power over something mean having responsibilities? (eg parents, principal, politician)
- In what ways could this responsibility towards the rest of creation be abused?
- Describe the responsibilities you think God intended for people when he gave them this role.

But there’s more!

Christians believe that their relationship with Jesus also affects the way they live in the world. Read the following Bible passages to explore how Jesus can affect the way people view and take care of the world.

Romans 8:21,22 Ephesians 1:9,10	What is God’s plan for the universe?
Revelation 21:1-5 Isaiah 11:6-9	What will the ‘new creation’ look like when God brings it all together?
2 Corinthians 5:17,18 Ephesians 2:10 Colossians 1:20	What does the Bible say Jesus has done for people and the universe?

The Bible says that Jesus has made people ‘new creations’. In what ways do you think Christians can work towards God’s ‘new creation’ in the world?

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What motivation do Christians have for taking care of the environment?

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THOUGHTS FROM PSALM 8 AND JOB 25

Great God, my Brother,
when I look at your artwork —
from satellite shots on the moon,
and the glossy pictures of Venus,
with her million-million kin,
unthinkable light-years away —
I feel like an ant, a microbe,
the tiniest speck of dust.

How can I absorb then
that you have placed
all things under me,
all creatures great and small,
even the moon itself?
I am speechless
with the responsibility
and the risk
of your faith in me!

What have I ever done
to deserve your sacred trust?
I have exploited your creation,
ground my heel on its face,
littered your moon with junk.
Call me a maggot in a peach,
call me a worm . . .
no, not even a worm,
for worms are gifts to the earth!

How can I speak to you,
or ever see your face?
Even the precious moon is pimped,
the stars all covered in grime,
in the search-light of your gaze.

Yet you love me,
even to death.
Great God, it blows my mind!

Aubrey Podlich, from *Australian Accents* by Bruce Prewer and Aubrey Podlich
Lutheran Publishing House, 1988

ALL THE KING'S TREES

The nations are busy as ants,
assembling their mushroom work,
cultivating their precious cloud
to rain down fiery hell.
And you know full well
where that mushroom swells
no-one can plant again.

But we have a God who is really alive,
who even split open a grave.
He strews the Dead Heart with daisies,
and sows the old rock-holes with fish.
He sets up his sentries, the ghost gums,
tall and straight on their rocks.
He opens sightless city eyes
to the glory hid outback.
He fills the deaf suburban ears
with the throbbing of the bush,
that even stunted tourists
want to dance.

Come on, then, and plant a tree,
a good Australian tree,
something evergreen, a wattle or a gum,
or a honeyed grevillea, anything
to recall birdsong.
It will be our symbol of his power.

Let them boast their mushrooms in the sky,
the price of children starved for love and bread.
Let the factories spew out cancer in their wake,
and madmen herd the clouds of yellow rain,
while those who plant a tree, and sing,
are called insane . . .

If all whose God is greater than a grave,
everyday could plant a tree,
everywhere a new-born scrub
would raise its symbol arms and shout:
God is not useless yet!
If he can make a desert bloom
and even open eyes to see,
then hope will rise like branches
green to the sky.

Aubrey Podlich from *Australian Images*, Lutheran Publishing House. 1985

DO I CARE?

Do you think you should be doing anything to take care of the world?

Why or why not?

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What can you do to care for the world?

List specific activities. Be prepared to share these with group members.

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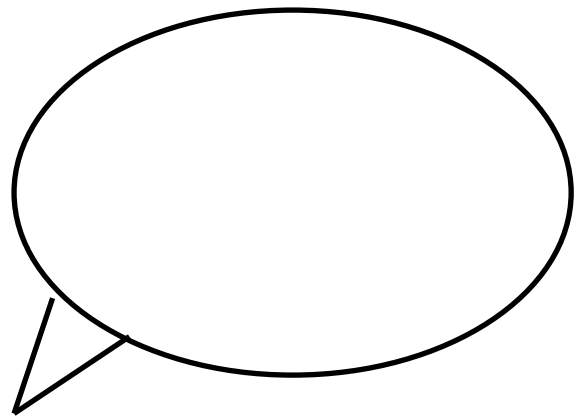
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You hear this:

Your answer:



List ideas you think should be included in a class **MISSION STATEMENT** about caring for the world.

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Our action plan has the code name:

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Our group members are:

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ISSUE ♦ ISSUE ♦ ISSUE ♦ ISSUE

The issue/problem we are addressing is:

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GOALS ♦ GOALS ♦ GOALS ♦ GOALS ♦ GOALS

We aim to:.....

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What we need to find out before implementing the action plan:

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Do your **RESEARCH** before going any further.

TASKS ♦ TASKS ♦ TASKS ♦ TASKS ♦ TASKS ♦ TASKS

What	Who	When

We will promote/advertise our action plan in the school/local community by:

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We will involve the school community in the action plan by:

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We will evaluate the effectiveness of the action plan by:

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