

**MODEL UNIT
BAND D
LEVEL 1**

GOD CREATED YOU

LIFE CONCEPT: GOD CREATES HUMAN BEINGS

YEAR:.....SUGGESTED DURATION: 13–15 HOURS

DATE OF USE: FAITH STATEMENTS: : ① ② ③

UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)

1. GOD CREATES AND LOVES ALL PEOPLE

1a explore the Christian understanding of what it means to be human

1b examine the implications of their sexuality as a gift from God

1c examine how Jesus valued and unconditionally accepted people of all walks of life

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

2a explore the Christian belief that the diversity and complexity of human beings is part of God’s design

2b explore the gospel’s message about people’s identity and value

2c investigate ways people can use and develop their gifts and abilities

3. GOD CREATES ALL PEOPLE TO LIVE IN RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM

3a investigate biblical examples of how God forms relationships with people

3b investigate how religion responds to people’s questions about God and the meaning of life

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

Students create a pictorial representation of Bible passages that focus on the identity and personal worth of human beings. (1a)

Using the Genesis story of creation, students write their personal story from God’s perspective. (1a)

Using either poetry, art, dance, drama or music, students present a Christian understanding of the uniqueness and ‘specialness’ of people. (2a)

Students analyse how and what society communicates about human worth. (2b)

Students explore Christian teaching about the role of personal confession, forgiveness and acceptance in the relationship between God and people. (3a)

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

⇒ Class analysis and discussion of biblical passages, TRS D1/3

⇒ individual work sample

⇒ individual/group work samples

⇒ TRS D1/1, TRS D1/2

⇒ TRS D1/4

UNIT SUMMARY

Students compare and contrast factors that have contributed to their concept of self and of personal worth with the biblical understanding of human identity and worth. They explore the uniqueness of each person in a world of diverse human beings. They investigate a range of Bible passages which show that human failure does not negate human worth, since God’s acceptance and forgiveness are for all.

UNIT NOTES

Each of the four sections of the unit contains introductory, development and response activities. Where schools have a personal development program, teachers can adapt this unit to suit their existing program.

Max Lucado explores the theme of alienation and discrimination in a thought-provoking manner in his picture book *You Are Special*. It tells the story of the Wemmicks who spent their days placing stars on people whose appearance and actions were valued and placing dots on those who did not make the grade. If you have the book, it can be used throughout this unit.

1. YOU ARE UNIQUE

The God-given uniqueness of each individual student and the complexity and diversity of all human beings are the focus of this section.

[INTRODUCTION] Each student creates a profile of him/herself (either in written or pictorial format) including:

- family details
- cultural background
- how gender contributes to who they are
- thirty things they can do
- favourite foods, songs, clothes, TV programs, books
- five important friends since birth
- three life-shaping events
- thoughts on the future, money and God

Ask for volunteers to write the information for each dot point on a separate OHT. They share their profiles with the class by superimposing each of the OHTs to demonstrate the complexity of their life experience and how different that is from someone else's life experience. An alternative activity is *Different faces* in Introductory Activities Menu.

[DEVELOPMENT] St Paul's image of the Christian church as a human body can also help us understand the importance of the diversity and complexity of human life. Students examine 1 Corinthians 12:14–26 in this light. They replace the parts of the body in the passage with the various ethnic groups which exist in their country, or the various gifts and talents of students in a classroom, or the various skills and gifts of people in a community. What would happen if all people were carpenters? etc. See Romans 12:4–8, 15,16; 1 Peter 4:10,11.

Draw a large human figure on paper. Each class member writes a gift/talent/quality they have which enriches the classroom experience for all students, eg a good sense of humour, the patience to explain a maths problem.

You Are Special: read the first five pages.

Students discuss what aspects of people's diversity are valued in their society, how that sense of value is communicated, and the impact this has on an individual's sense of worth and identity (refer to Teacher Resource Sheet [TRS] D1/1). Students work in groups. To widen the discussion, each group considers a different sector of society and what it values, eg family, school, friends, media.

[RESPONSE] Students create a series of posters or human sculptures which celebrate human diversity and difference. This can also be done at the conclusion of the unit.

2. YOU ARE VALUABLE

The aim of this section is to help students evaluate the messages they receive about their self-worth. Students' privacy needs to be guarded, but at the same time discussion needs to be open and honest. For Christians, what matters above all else is that God values us so greatly that his Son died for us.

[INTRODUCTION] Students analyse who and what has contributed to their own sense of worth. Either students complete TRS D1/2 or the teacher conducts a quiet, reflective time in the classroom, guiding students through each of the situations outlined in TRS D1/2.

Create a class list of words which describe feelings people experience when they are valued and when they are devalued.

Each student creates a collage of words to describe the strongest image he/she has of his/her value as a person.

Students examine what the Bible presents as God's view of differences in people. See
 Genesis 1:26,27 Exodus 23:9
 Numbers 15:15,16 Deuteronomy 10:17–19
 Matthew 25:34–46 Acts 10:34,35
 1 Corinthians 9:19–22 Galatians 3:26–28
 Galatians 5:6 Hebrews 13:1–3
 James 2:1–9.

You Are Special: finish reading the story.

Students work in pairs. Give each pair a Bible passage (refer to TRS D1/3) which points to the value God places on each person. Each pair creates and displays a visual representation of the message contained in the Bible verses.

Students listen to songs by Christian artists, eg Michael W Smith *Never Been Unloved*. How does the song interpret biblical teaching on the worth of a person? See Recommended Resources Menu for more titles.

Alternatively, students read the explanations to the three parts of the creed in *Luther's Small Catechism*. They underline words and phrases which show that God values people.

[RESPONSE] Students refer to TRS D1/1 and TRS D1/2 and write messages of encouragement they think God would send to people who feel hurt, disillusioned, rejected, etc. Messages can be displayed in the room.

3. YOU ARE MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE

[INTRODUCTION] Students draw an outline of themselves. Within the outline students create a collage of words, pictures of clothes, people, possessions, jingles, sayings, beliefs that are helping to form their self-image. Students discuss how other people's words, actions and attitudes are mirrors of self-worth for a person. Referring back to TRS D1/1, they discuss how advertising and cultural influences act as mirrors of people's self-worth.

[DEVELOPMENT] Students explore insights that can be gained about the identity and personal worth of human beings from an analysis of Bible passages such as
 Genesis 1:26–31 Genesis 2:7–25
 Luke 11:1–13 John 3:16
 Acts 17:16–32 Romans 5:8.

Students identify words and phrases which point to the Christian belief that people are created to be in relationship with God. What does Romans 1:18–23, 28–32 say happens when people cut themselves off from God?

Students either interview Christian people or read biographies of Christian people to assess the link between a person's sense of identity and worth and their relationship with God, eg how did a relationship with God help Joni Eareckson Tada deal with her disabilities? In what different ways does former top jockey Darren Beadman see himself since he has become a Christian? (Note: the Bible Society CEV edition of the New Testament *Towards the Goal* contains short biographies of contemporary Australian Christian athletes.)

[RESPONSE] The Genesis story of creation is the story of all people. Every person is invited to see themselves in this creation story. Students write their own personal story from this perspective, ie as a human being who has been created by God.

4. BUT WHAT IF I FAIL?

God remains committed to the people he creates. A person's failures, wrongs and weaknesses do not negate their importance to God or in themselves destroy their relationship with God, although it can alter their perception of themselves and others.

[INTRODUCTION] Students discuss the difference between people failing (doing wrong) and people being seen as failures. They identify ways in which people are either helped or not helped to deal with failure.

[DEVELOPMENT] Students read the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9–14). They analyse

- what is of greatest concern to each of the characters in the story;
- the views of human failure which are expressed in the story;
- how individual concerns and bias influence the way other people's failings are treated;
- what Jesus means when he talks about being 'humbled' and being 'exalted' (v14b).

Bible stories listed in *Jesus breaks the barriers* (Development Activities Menu) can also be analysed in a similar way.

Students read Psalms 32, 51 and 103, to explore how people (including themselves) can approach God with their failings and wrongs, how God responds to confessions of failure, and on what basis a relationship between God and people is possible (refer to TRS D1/4).

[RESPONSE] Students consider how Jesus' death is an affirmation of people's importance to God (see John 3:16; Romans 3:23,24; Romans 5:8; 1 Timothy 1:15; 1 John 3:16; 1 John 4:10).

5. UNIT RESPONSE

Individually, in pairs or in groups, students celebrate people's 'specialness' and the relationship that God offers all people through Jesus, eg

- Write a personal psalm of praise, thanksgiving or confession.
- Create a liturgical dance based on any of the stories studied in the unit.
- Focusing on aspects of school life which value or devalue people, write a psalm of praise, confession or thanksgiving that can be included in school worship.
- Create a collage of movement, mime, Bible readings, personal reflection, Christian testimonies and songs.

YOU WILL NEED

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> OHT transparencies and pens | <input type="checkbox"/> TRS D1/1, TRS D1/2, TRS D1/3, TRS D1/4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NIV Study Bibles | <input type="checkbox"/> collection of songs by Christian artists (see Recommended Resources Menu) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> large sheets of paper | <input type="checkbox"/> a selection of Christian biographies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Max Lucado's picture book <i>You Are Special</i> (optional) | |

INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

Find out what students are doing in other curriculum areas in relation to

Topics

- self-image
- diversity of human beings

Skills

- analysing texts and applying concepts to personal experiences
- expressing ideas and feelings through visual arts, movement, music

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' levels of self-esteem?

How did I respond to the range of students' attitudes towards God and the possibility of people having a personal relationship with God?

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?



The Wemmicks in *You Are Special*, by Max Lucado, give yellow stars (★) to other Wemmicks that they think are important, clever, talented, valued. They give grey dots (●) to Wemmicks they think are unimportant, foolish, untalented and worthless.

Think about the system people in our society use the way Wemmicks use stars and dots.

What do people say or do to compliment other people?	What do people say or do to ridicule other people?
Who receives 'stars'?	Who receives 'dots'?
Who gives the stars?	Who gives the dots?
How do people feel when they receive stars?	How do people feel when they receive dots?

RED ALERT Beside each star or dot that you identify write the criteria people have for giving either the star or dot.

What do you think? Do stars and dots make you who you are?



WRITE ABOUT A TIME WHEN YOU . . .

Think about what happened, who was there, what was said and done, the feelings you experienced, how any of your future actions were influenced by this situation.

Write about as many as you can.

. . . WERE RIDICULED



Message about my value

. . . WERE PRAISED



Message about my value

. . . WERE PRESSURED TO DO OR SAY SOMETHING THAT MADE YOU UNCOMFORTABLE



Message about my value

. . . WERE INCLUDED IN A GROUP OR ACTIVITY



Message about my value

. . . WERE IGNORED



Message about my value

. . . SUCCEEDED



Message about my value

. . . FAILED



Message about my value

. . . MADE AN INDEPENDENT DECISION



Message about my value

. . . WERE USED



Message about my value

. . . WERE SHOWN CARE AND CONCERN



Message about my value

Which of the messages about your value as a person are . . .

true? stereotypes? false? about your appearance? cultural expectations?
how others see you? how you see yourself? your inner being?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ GOD VALUES YOU ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

GENESIS 1:26,27,31	EXODUS 3:4-14; 4:1-17	1 SAMUEL 16:7
PSALM 8:3-6	PSALM 139:1-18	PSALM 147:10,11
ISAIAH 43:1,2	JEREMIAH 1:4-12	LUKE 12:22-29
LUKE 19:10	JOHN 1:12	JOHN 3:16
JOHN 13:2-5	JOHN 15:5	ACTS 2:36-39
1 CORINTHIANS 3:16	1 CORINTHIANS 6:20	1 CORINTHIANS 12:27
2 CORINTHIANS 6:1	GALATIANS 3:26	EPHESIANS 1:5
EPHESIANS 2:4,5	EPHESIANS 2:10	COLOSSIANS 1:14
1 TIMOTHY 4:4,12	1 PETER 2:9,10	1 JOHN 3:1

Draw around one of your hands and write five things which show God values you.



Why not make a book mark? Write on it a Bible verse that speaks to you. Use it yourself or give it to someone who needs encouragement.

REFLECTIONS ON A PSALM

PSALMS

- are songs or musical poems
- are addressed to God OR to God's people
- are designed to help people express themselves to God
- are designed to help people reflect on the ways of God
- are designed to help the worshipper connect with God

Psalm 32 is a psalm which acknowledges what God has done, especially his forgiveness.

Psalm 51 is a psalm of confession, a prayer for forgiveness and healing.

Psalm 103 is a hymn of praise, explaining why God is worthy of people's praise.

Use the activities below to help you understand and reflect on one of these psalms. Record your responses in your books.

1. Read the study notes on each of the psalms in a study Bible.
2. Psalms use emotive language (words that appeal to the emotions) and symbolic language (metaphors and similes) to express the relationship between the writer/worshipper and God. Complete the following table:

WORDS USED TO DESCRIBE THE WORSHIPPER'S FEELINGS	EMOTIVE WORDS USED TO DESCRIBE GOD
METAPHORS AND SIMILES USED TO DESCRIBE THE WORSHIPPER'S CONDITION	METAPHORS AND SIMILES USED TO DESCRIBE GOD'S ACTIONS

3. Psalms often use a device known as *synonymous parallelism* where the second line repeats or reinforces the meaning of the first line, eg

Then I acknowledged my sin to you
and did not cover up my iniquity. Psalm 32:5

 Find several of these in the psalm you are studying. Summarise in your own words the point the writer wants to emphasise.
4. Draw up two columns. In one column list everything that the writer/worshipper does or has done. In the other column list all that the psalm says God does or has done.
5. List all the words and ideas in the psalm which indicate that a relationship exists between the writer/worshipper and God.
6. Answer the following questions:
 - a. How does the writer/worshipper view himself before God?
 - b. What makes a person's relationship with God possible (according to the writer/worshipper)?
 - c. How do people's wrongs against God affect their relationship with God?
 - d. List things that can be barriers between God and people.
 - e. What is the value of people confessing their wrong before God?
 - f. With what attitudes do people need to approach God?
 - g. What in the psalms tells you that people's wrongs and failures do not alter God's value of people?

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY Rewrite any one of the psalms giving them a contemporary context, using words and images that your peer group is familiar with.