



Creation



MEETING AIM

To begin to understand that God made us and loves us.



BIBLE PASSAGE

Genesis 1:1-2:4



BACKGROUND

Many children will come to the story of creation and see the differences between this account and the evidence of scientific research into how the universe began. It's important to remember that the Bible doesn't set out *how* the universe was created in mechanical or scientific terms, but looks at *why* and explores our place in it. This passage is poetic, majestic and full of truth about God. Don't get hung up on science versus religion, but help children see the love of God that lies behind the story.

+ CIRCLE TIME



As the children arrive, sit everyone down in a circle. Ask the children if they have done anything this week and encourage them to tell the group about it. Share something that you have done this week too.

+ CREATION PICTURES



You will need: books and magazines about the natural world, such as space, animals, different landscapes, people, the sea

Share out the books and magazines you have collected together. Ask the children to look at the different examples of the natural world and wonder together at the diversity that you can see in the different ecosystems, environments and creatures. Challenge the group to find their favourite picture. Once everyone has had a chance to choose, ask everyone to tell you why they chose the picture they did. If any children don't want to say anything, that's fine - don't force them to speak.

Wonder at all the different choices. Were there any pictures that the children didn't like? Why was that? Comment that we are all different and have different likes and dislikes, we all look different, but we're all loved by God. How does that make the children feel?

+ BIBLE STORY



You will need: art materials; large sheets of paper; Bibles

Ask the children to find a place in your space where they can sit or lie and listen without being disturbed or without disturbing others. Explain that you're going to read the story of the creation of the Earth from the Bible. Encourage the children to close their eyes and imagine everything taking place as they hear it.

Read Genesis 1:1-2:3 from a suitable translation. Once you have finished, ask the children what they imagined. Let everyone who wants to tell you what they thought. After a few minutes' sharing (and if children what to compare and contrast what they imagined, then let them but don't let it get competitive!), give out large sheets of paper and encourage the children to draw something that they heard God creating. This could be abstract or figurative. They may wish to draw how they felt when they listened to the Bible story.

If some children don't want to draw or paint, then ask them to write down words that describe God, their thoughts or creation itself. You could do a word picture or create a mind map with the children's thoughts. If you decide to do this, then have a leader available to instigate some ideas and scribe for any children who struggle with writing.

As the children work, chat with them about their favourite parts of the story. Which parts of creation did they like the best?

Once everyone has finished, admire the pictures, words and mind maps. Put the images and words in the order of the Bible story and read out the Bible story again.

+ CHATTING TOGETHER



Ask the children these questions, making sure everyone has the chance to contribute:

- What is your favourite part of this story?
- What do you think this story tells us about God?
- Why do you think he made so many different things?
- The Bible tells us that God made us like him. How does that make you feel?
- What do you want to say to God after exploring the story of creation?

+ CREATIVE RESPONSE



You will need: pictures and words the group created in Bible story or access to PowerPoint or similar and lots of images about creation;

Bibles; projector and screen (optional)

Explain that some people, when they hear about God's power and love in the creation story, want to praise God. Read out Psalm 146 to the group and challenge them to create an art exhibition using the artwork they created during *Bible story* to illustrate the psalm. Alternatively, using laptops or tablets, ask the group to create a slide with photos and images that match some of the words in Psalm 146.

As you work together, ask the children what they would want to say if they were writing the psalm. What would they want to praise God for? Would they want to praise God? Accept all answers and listen to what the children have to say.

Once everyone has finished, walk around the exhibition or show the presentations. Marvel at everyone's creativity. Read out Genesis 1:26 again and remind the children that God made us like him - he is creative and so we are too!

+ PRAYER



You will need: risk assessment and parental / guardian permission to go outside

Before the session, choose a place outside, near your church building, where you can go and see some of the natural world that's around you. This might be the church grounds or a nearby park. If you go off your premises, you'll need to do a risk assessment (taking into account the route and any risks in your destination). You'll also need to get permission from parents and carers.

Take the children to your outdoor location and ask them to look around and see all the things that God has made. Ask the children to pick something they want to thank God for, then encourage them to shout it out all at once, followed by: "Thank you God!" Spend some time thanking God for all these different things. If there is something in God's creation that children are unhappy about (particularly that they can see), then pray for that now too, before you return to your venue.

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