



God Created the World

Unit 1 | Lesson 1 | Preteen Lesson

Bible Study Aims

Students will:

- realize that God is the Creator of everything.
- understand that everything belongs to God.
- desire to worship God as the Creator.

Key Idea

God created everything for His glory.

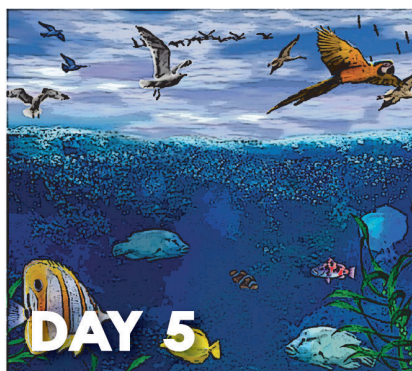
Bible Passage

Genesis 1

Memory Verse

Genesis 1:1

SIX DAYS OF CREATION





BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

God exists outside of time and always has. In His goodness and power, He created the heavens and the earth. He is the one true God, the Creator of all things, and continues to care for and sustain the universe He had designed perfectly.

- On Day 1, God created light and separated light from darkness, giving us day and night.
- On Day 2, God made the waters and separated the seas and the sky.
- On Day 3, God made dry ground appear and filled the earth with plants. He gave each kind of plant its own seeds and fruit.
- On Day 4, God filled the heavens He had made with the sun, moon, and stars—establishing seasons and weather. These acts of creation show us that God set up weather and time under His control, creating a system of order and making the world a sustainable place to live.
- On Day 5, God filled the seas with fish and other animals that live in the water and filled the air with birds!
- On Day 6, God filled the land with all kinds of creatures!

Everything God made was good and perfect.



LEADER DEVOTIONAL

Read Psalm 19:1 and 33:6-9. God is the Creator of the universe, yet He knows and cares for us intimately. As you have time this week, stop and praise God for all that He has made. Take a walk or sit outside, if possible. Dwell on the majesty and power of God. Are you in awe of Him?



SOCIAL MEDIA POST

This week our students will explore the very first story in the Bible in Genesis 1. They'll learn that God created everything for His glory. He is worthy of our worship!



Supply List

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WELCOME TIME

BUILD A CREATION

- Building blocks

SHOW & TELL

- Handcrafted item that you or someone you know made (pottery, carved wood, knitted item, etc.)

LARGE GROUP TIME

GETTING STARTED

- None needed

BIBLE EXPLORATION

- Bible
- Building blocks
- Shoebox

RESPONSE TIME

- None needed

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Bible

CREATION STUDY

- Bible

NAME GAME

- Box or bag (that students can easily reach in and grab items from, without seeing what they are grabbing)
- Small items in a large variety of colors (crayons, pom poms)

REVIEW

- None needed

BIBLE MEMORY

- Bible

MENTORING MOMENT

- None needed

PRAYER TIME

- Leaf or other nature object



Welcome Time

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ARRIVAL

Follow your church's safety procedures as you welcome and greet students. Use this time to build relationships and help new students connect to your group.

OPENING ACTIVITIES • 5-15 MINUTES

Option #1: Build a Creation

Give students building blocks like Legos and allow time for them to work together in pairs to create something. After a couple of minutes, invite some of them who are willing to present their creations to the group. Be mindful of the time. *Option:* Share creations after the large group time.

You made some pretty unique creations! Some of you created a model of something that already exists like your favorite animal, and some of you used your imagination to make something you've never seen before. One thing you all had in common is that you used the blocks to make your creation.

- **How many of you made the blocks that you used for your creation?** (No, someone else made the blocks.)

Today, we're going to learn how God made everything—out of nothing!

Option #2: Show & Tell

Show a handcrafted item that you or someone you know made. Explain briefly what materials and skills were used to make it.

- **What have you made that you were really proud of or pleased with?** (Take responses.)
- **Tell us about making it. What did you use, and how long did it take?** (Take responses.)

Making these good projects took a lot of time and energy and planning and creativity. Imagine what it took for God to make the world. Let's find out what the Bible says about creation.

TRANSITION

Transition to large group.

GETTING STARTED • 5 MINUTES

Greeting

Welcome! I'm so glad you are here today. My name is _____, and I'm so excited to be able to explore the Bible and grow to know and love God more with you.

Introduction

Let's play a nature-themed "Would You Rather?" Game. If you would prefer the first option, stand up. If you prefer the second option, sit down.

- Would you rather climb to the top of one of the tallest mountains or relax on the beach?
- Would you rather explore the depths of the ocean or the far reaches of space?
- Would you rather see a giant waterfall up close or go deep into a cave?
- Would you rather be in a field with all kinds of beautiful flowers or a field with delicious fruits and vegetables you could harvest and eat?
- Would you rather be in a treehouse or ride an innertube down a stream or river?

The world is full of amazing places that we can see and explore. Close your eyes for a moment. I want you to picture the most interesting or amazing thing you've ever seen in nature. Can you imagine it? Have you ever wondered how that place came to be? How was it made? How long has it been there? Open your eyes. We can go to the Bible for all kinds of questions we have about the world around us and how we live in it. The Bible is true and tells about God and His story. Today we'll see what God's Word says about how the world and everything in it came to be and why. We'll learn that *God created everything for His glory*.

Pray

Let's pray. Dear God, You are the incredible Creator and Sustainer of the universe. Please grow our awe and wonder of You as we explore what You have made. Give us a desire to love and obey You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

BIBLE EXPLORATION • 15-20 MINUTES

Bible Skills

- **Did everyone bring their Bible today?** Have students get out their Bibles and pass out Bibles to any students who need one.

The Bible is God's Word or message to us. God is true and trustworthy, and everything in His Word is too. The Bible tells us about who He is and what He has done. It teaches us the way to know, love, and follow Him.

Our Bible Exploration today takes place at the very beginning of God's story with humanity. It is in the first book of the Bible, Genesis. Help students turn to Genesis 1 in their Bibles. Assist them using the Table of Contents, if needed.

Scripture

Have a helper turn off the lights. As you read the verses in the darkness, ask students to picture in their minds what is happening. When you come to verse 3, turn on the lights or have them open their eyes.



Read Genesis 1:1-8.

The Bible says that God spoke, and the world was made. Set out some of the extra blocks from earlier on a table in the front where students can see.

- **If I say, "Make a tower!" to the blocks, what would happen? Why?** (Nothing. We can't create from just our speech.)

Most scientists will admit that they can't prove how man got here or how the world began. They try to give an explanation, but they aren't really sure and can't be. They are only guessing because they were not there when the world began and they don't know anyone who was.

You and I were not there either, but we know Someone who was. God has told us in His Word what happened. We believe what He says because we know He would not lie.



Read Hebrews 11:1, 3.

If you trust a person, you believe all he says, not just some things. If we really trust God, we will believe all of His Word. Imagine what a mess a traveler would be in if he did not trust his road map. He would get lost. Even if he believed some parts and not others, it wouldn't be much help to him; he wouldn't know where to go. But, if he knew it had been made by someone he could trust, he would trust the map and follow it faithfully.

Without the Bible, our guidebook, we would get lost, too. If we trust God who wrote it, we will believe what it says. As we get to know God better, He helps us trust Him more.



Read Genesis 1:9-13.

God tells us that He made all kinds of plants and He tells us what the plants do.

- **How do we get new plants from plants that are already here?** (I take responses.)

God has made plants so they can reproduce themselves. (If you are using a Bible version that uses the phrase, "after its kind," explain what this means.)



Reread Genesis 1:12.

Imagine what would happen if apple seeds grew tomato plants or tomato seeds grew onions. Farmers depend on each seed growing "after its kind."

- **Why do you think God make plants before animals?** (Animals need plants to eat in order to live.)
- **Why did God make light before plants?** (Plants make food with light using a process called photosynthesis. Plants can't live without light.)

Imagine how bare and muddy it would be without plants. It would also be lifeless—animals and people cannot live without the food and oxygen they provide.

God planned His creation carefully. He did everything in the right order. He did not make plants until the air and light and land and water were ready for them. He did not make animals until the plants they needed were ready and waiting.

Take the blocks for example. If I just drop them randomly (do so while you continue talking), they won't form into anything. There is an order to how they connect and build together.

Think about it: Does God still work in an orderly way today? Consider how things grow and seasons come and go. This shows that God is still controlling things.

- How would you feel if when you went to bed, you could never be sure the sun would come up the next day? (Take responses.)
- What if the weather could change from summer to winter at any time? How would you know what to wear or when to plant gardens? (Take responses.)

Let's continue with our picture of the blocks for a minute. As you are talking, put some blocks in a shoebox.

- If I dropped the blocks into this box, closed the lid, left it in a secure place, and never unlocked it, would it ever turn into a design on its own? (Take responses.)
- What if we shook the box? Shake the box. Would the pieces connect and form something on their own? Why or why not? (Take responses.) Have a volunteer come look in the box to see what happened. Let them share with the group.

God created intentionally and intelligently. He created with order, not chaos. Because He did, we have a beautiful world filled with variety that continues to exist, many, many years after it was made.



Read Genesis 1:20-25.

We could name animals all day and never name them all. Even if we just tried to name animals mentioned in the Bible, it would take a long time. The Bible mentions 38 mammals, 34 birds, 11 reptiles, and 16 insects by name.

Let's think back to our block creations. We all used the same kinds of blocks, but we all made something unique. God's creation is filled with even more beauty and variety! In fact, scientists are still discovering creatures and plants that we haven't seen before in places like the rainforests and the depths of the oceans. God has made some incredible living things! And He has placed each one in the best environment to have all of its needs met. For example, animals who live in cold climates have thicker skin or fur, and animals who live in warmer climates require less water to survive, or are able to store water for longer periods of time. God is an amazing creator!

On day 6, God also made people in His image, and gave them the responsibility to care for His creation. We'll talk more about that next week.



Read Genesis 1:30-31; 2:1-3.

We've talked about how God made the world. Let's think for a minute about why God created the world.

- Did God need the world? (No. He existed before He made the world. He is not dependent on the world in order for Him to exist.)



Let's find out what the Bible says about this in Colossians 1:16. Read the verse.

The world was created by Christ, for Christ. *God created everything for His glory!*

Application

- If I had come up and destroyed your block creations, how would that have made you feel? Why? (Take responses.)

You probably would have been upset because it belonged to you since you were the one who made it. It wasn't mine to do with however I pleased. In an even greater way, creation belongs to its Creator—God.

- What do you think this means? (Take responses.)

- **How can we show God through our words and actions that we believe that *God created everything for His glory*?** (Thank Him; Praise Him; Give Him credit for the things He has made; Obey Him; Take care of the things He has made; etc.)

God created everything for His glory!



RESPONSE TIME • 2-10 MINUTES

Worship

Sing songs about God as our Creator and the creation He has made.

Prayer

Pray a praise litany together based on Psalm 136:1-9.

When you pause, have students say the phrase "His steadfast love endures forever."

- Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.** (His steadfast love endures forever.)
- Give thanks to the everlasting God.** (His steadfast love endures forever.)
- Give thanks to the Lord of lords.** (His steadfast love endures forever.)
- God alone does great wonders.** (His steadfast love endures forever.)
- By His understanding, God made the heavens.** (His steadfast love endures forever.)
- He spread out the earth above the waters.** (His steadfast love endures forever.)
- He made the great lights.** (His steadfast love endures forever.)
- The sun to rule the day.** (His steadfast love endures forever.)
- The moon and stars to rule over the night.** (His steadfast love endures forever.)
- He provides a home to all the animals.** (His steadfast love endures forever.)
- He gives food for all the animals.** (His steadfast love endures forever.)
- He alone is worthy of our praise.** (His steadfast love endures forever.)
- He is our sovereign Creator.** (His steadfast love endures forever.)



TRANSITION

Transition to small groups.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS • 5-10 MINUTES

- **List what God created, in order.** (Take responses)
- **If you've heard this story before, did anything new stick out to you this time?** (Take responses)
- **If you could have been there, which day of creation would you have wanted to see and why?** (Take responses.)
- **Is it easy or hard for you to believe that God made the world out of nothing? Why?** (Take responses.)
- **The phrases "God said" and "God said it was good" are repeated often in this chapter. What does this repetition emphasize?** (God is powerful and spoke creation into being. God declares what is good.)
- **What are some things we learned about God?** (God is the Creator; God spoke all creation into existence; God declares what is good; He blesses what He creates; God brings everything into fullness, as He showed by resting on the seventh day; etc.)
- **Why did God bless the seventh day? How do we recognize or celebrate the seventh day now?** (Take responses)
- **Why did God create the world?** (*God created everything for His glory.*)



ACTIVITY OPTIONS • 10-15 MINUTES

Pathway #1: Creation Study

Look up the following verses to see what else the Bible says about Creation. Have each student look up and read a different verse. Write the key idea from each verse on a dry erase board or sheet of paper. Once finished, review the ideas together. Are any of these ideas new or difficult to understand for the students in your group? How do they help us understand the creation story in Genesis 1?

- Romans 1:20—We can learn about God through what He has made.
- Jeremiah 32:17—God made the world, so nothing is too hard for Him.
- Romans 11:36 or Colossians 1:16—All things that are made are from Him, through Him, and for Him. He deserves glory!
- Isaiah 40:28—God created everything. He doesn't grow tired or weary, and He is beyond our understanding.
- Revelation 4:11—God is worthy of glory and honor because He has made everything.
- Isaiah 45:18—God formed the earth and made it to be inhabited.
- Psalm 19:1—The heavens show the glory of God.

Pathway #2: Name Game

Fill a container with small items in a variety of colors (crayons, pom poms, etc.). Pass the container around. Have students pick out an item at random and quickly name an object that God created in that color. Repeat as time allows.

We've spent a few minutes naming different things God has made. We could play this game for years and not run out of things to name. Take beetles for example. Scientists say there are at least 350,000 types of beetles. So if you named one type of beetle every 3 seconds for 10 hours a day, it would take you almost a month just to name all the beetles!



REVIEW • 5-10 MINUTES

The first two students will pair off against each other. Ask the two players a question, and whoever rings the bell or hits the buzzer first wins. The winner stands and moves to the next player. The goal is to move as many seats as possible before losing, at which point the student who lost that round sits in the seat of the person who won that round. The game ideally continues until one student makes it "around the world" and gets all the way back to his own seat. Often, though, the game simply ends when time is up, and the person who traveled the farthest wins.

- **How many days did God take to create the world?** (6)
- **What did God create on the first day of creation?** (Light—night and day)
- **On what day of Creation did God create man?** (6)
- **What was the first thing God created?** (Light)
- **Which day did God create palm trees?** (3)
- **Which day did God create camels?** (6)
- **Which day did God create eagles?** (5)
- **What was formless and empty in the beginning?** (Earth.)
- **What did God call the light?** (Day.)
- **What did God call the darkness?** (Night.)
- **What did God separate on Day 2?** (Water.)
- **What did God call the area above the water?** (Sky.)
- **What did God do on the seventh day?** (Rest.)
- **When did God create the heavens and the earth?** (In the beginning.)
- **What is the phrase that is repeated at the end of each day of creation?** (There was evening, and there was morning.)
- **How was everything made?** (God spoke it into existence.)
- **Which day did God make seasons?** (4)
- **Which day did God create whales?** (5)
- **Finish this sentence. "God saw . . ."** (That it was good.)
- **Which day did God make ants?** (6)
- **Which day did God make apple trees?** (3)
- **Which day did God make hummingbirds?** (5)
- **Which day did God make lions?** (6)
- **Which day did God create stars?** (4)
- **God gave people dominion over what?** (All creatures.)

- **What did God give people for food?** (Plants and fruit from trees.)



BIBLE MEMORY • 5-10 MINUTES

Memorize Genesis 1:1. Read the verse together. Teach the following hand motions to help students remember the verse.

- **"In the beginning"** (*with index finger, point to the opposite wrist as if tapping a watch*)
- **"God"** (*point up*)
- **"created"** (*use hands to motion words coming from mouth*)
- **"the heavens"** (*stretch hands high*)
- **"and the earth"** (*touch the ground*).
- **"Genesis 1:1"** (*hold up one finger on each hand*)



MENTORING MOMENT • 2 MINUTES

Share an example of how spending time in creation has helped you recognize and worship God as your Creator.



PRAYER TIME • 5 MINUTES

Pass around a leaf or another item from nature. Whoever has the leaf can thank God for one thing that He has made. If a student feels unsure about praying out loud, they can pass the leaf to the next person. Close in a prayer of thanksgiving when your group is done.



DISMISSAL

Follow your church's security procedures as you release students to their families.