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Inspire!

Drawing on God's Word

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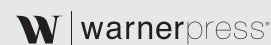
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Contents

WEEK	TITLE	SCRIPTURE	PAGE
1	God Creates the World	Genesis 1:1–2:3	4
2	God Creates Adam and Eve	Genesis 1:27; 2:4–25	10
3	Adam and Eve Disobey	Genesis 3	16
4	Abel Brings God His Best	Genesis 4:1–16	23
5	Noah Builds the Ark	Genesis 6:9–9:28	29
6	God Confuses the Language	Genesis 11:1–9	35
7	A Promise for Abram	Genesis 13:1–18; 15:1–7	42
8	A Miracle for Sarah	Genesis 18:1–15; 21:1–7	48
9	A Place for Ishmael	Genesis 21:8–21	55
10	A Test for Abraham	Genesis 22:1–19	61
11	An Invitation for Rebekah	Genesis 24	67
12	Jacob’s Dream	Genesis 27:41–46; 28:1–22	74
13	Jacob and Esau Make Peace	Genesis 32:1–21; 33:1–20	80
	Leading a Child to Christ		86
	Evaluation Form		87

Fall Upper Elementary

Volume 1 • Number 1



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Welcome



Welcome, teacher, to the Fall quarter of *Inspire*!

If you have previously taught Speed Sketch Curriculum, a lot of this material will be familiar to you! We continue to provide a step-by-step plan to get your class into, through, and beyond the lesson, along with a variety of multisensory activities that teach to all learning styles. We've adopted this new name to match our goal of inspiring kids to get into God's Word, connect to the stories of the Bible, grow in their faith, and develop life-long relationships with Jesus Christ.

We're starting with this quarter at the beginning—the creation of the world. We'll go through some of the main stories of the Book of Genesis in chronological order, so students can gain a better understanding of how the stories fit together and see where they fit in the bigger story of God's love of and redemptive plan for people.

As always, please let us know what works and what doesn't by filling out and mailing in the Evaluation on page 87.

God bless you as you teach.

Elizabeth Flinn, Editor

God Creates the World

Session Focus:

God created the earth and every living being.

Session Goals:

(1) To read about the many things God made during the creation; (2) to think about God's special attention given to creating people; (3) to express praise to our Creator.

Key Verse:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. —Genesis 1:1

Lesson Materials

Basics:

Bibles, Student Pull Out Activity Pages, pencils/pens, chalkboard or dry erase board,
Inspire! video

Step 1: Create and solve mazes.

Graph paper

Step 2: Create things found in nature.

Playdough, paper table covering

Step 3: Present the Bible story.

Inspire! video and a way to show it, block numerals, markers or colored pencils

Step 4: Play a game.

Playdough

Step 5: Create bookmarks.

Light-colored cardstock, scissors, stamp pad, antiseptic wipes, markers

Step 6: Praise our Creator.

Genesis 1:1–2:3

Experience the Story

Genesis means “beginning.” God first created light, which is energy essential to life. God’s naming of day and night showed authority over them, according to Eastern culture. Next God separated the waters with a “vault” (or “firmament,” v 6, KJV). Today we might better describe this vault as a “stretched-out thinness” of space. In two acts on the third day, God created seas and land and seed-bearing vegetation. The vegetation itself showed God’s creative power; its seeds extend that creation for all time. On the fourth day, God formed the sun, moon, and stars. These lights, which the Babylonians ignorantly worshiped, established time and seasons. On day five, birds and fish became the first living beings to have consciousness and to receive God’s blessing. God made land animals in the first creative acts of the sixth day, and then male and female of humankind.

Teacher Moments

God created. And God expressed that creativity extravagantly. When we consider the variety of flowers, or the colors and types of birds or fish, or the complexity of the animal kingdom, or our own bodies, we see this extravagance. Praise our mighty Creator!

God has given us creativity as well. We need to give children opportunities to express it. But let’s take care how we receive their creations. Consider the story of a boy who went to Bible school. His teacher, whom he liked, told the children to each take a Quaker Oats box and make anything they wanted. This farmer boy cut a piece out of the side and painted the rest. When asked what he had made, the boy said, “It’s a water trough.” The teacher suggested that it could also be a manger for the Baby Jesus. She guided him to put straw in it and make it a manger. The boy continued to attend that church because the people loved him, but forty years later he still remembers that day and being unhappy that his creation was changed.

Leading into the Session

Step 1: Create and solve mazes.

- Pass out sheets of graph paper and pencils. Instruct each student to create a word maze using different creations of God. The students might like to turn to Genesis 1 in their Bibles to find various creations. They can make a list of the things God created in the different days of creation.
- Instruct the students in how to get started with the maze. **On your graph paper, write down the first letter of one creation and circle the letter. Write out the rest of the word, but don't write it in a straight row; instead go in one direction for one or two squares, and then change direction. Repeat this process and work your words around some of the words you've already listed—but don't cross back over words you have already used!** If they have trouble getting started, you might write the word *creation* on the board for them. Write *c* and *r* across from each other; next go up for *e* and *a*; then go down to the right diagonally for *t* and *i*; and finish by going straight down with *o* and *n*. When the students are finished, they can pass their mazes to a friend to solve.

Upper Student Pull Out Activity Page: Look at “Amazing Word Maze.” It is the same kind of maze the children created, but it spells out Isaiah 42:5–6. Let students work together to solve the maze. Then read the verses together.

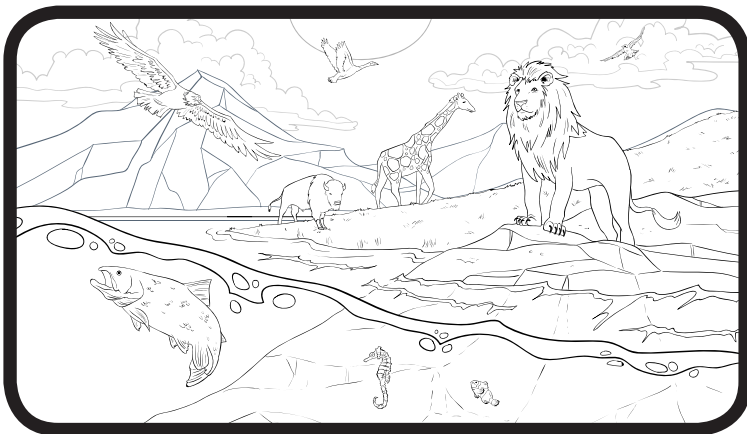
Step 2: Create things found in nature.

- Cover your table with paper table covering and set out playdough. Say, **Today we are going to start talking about the beginning of the world. In the beginning God created everything, and he said it was good.**
- Ask students to think about what God created and choose something to mold with the playdough. Say, **Playdough is a lot of fun to play with because you can create all sorts of objects. What will you create with your playdough? Will you make an animal, a tree, a star, or something else?** Give students some time to be creative.
- Call on volunteers to tell the class about their creations. Then ask, **What was the most difficult part of creating something from nature? How is our creation of a fish or a bird different from God's creation of a fish or a bird?** Our creations are not alive or real. They are imitations of the real thing. Say, **Today we are going to look at God's creation of the earth and everything in it. Only God could have created such marvelous things.**

Leading through the Session

Step 3: Present the Bible story.

- Show **Inspire!** Bible Story video: God Creates the World.



If you do not have the Inspire! video today, you might read the story aloud from *Egermeier's Bible Story Book*.

- Review the story with these questions:
 - » **What is the name of the book in the Bible that has the story of creation?** Genesis.
 - » **Who was there in the beginning?** God.
 - » **What did God create first?** Light.
 - » **What did God create on the fifth day?** Living creatures in the air and in the sea.
 - » **What did God create on the sixth day?** Living creatures on the land, including people.
 - » **What did God do on the seventh day?** He rested.
 - » Life application: **How can you take care of God's creation?** Recycle, plant trees, pick up trash, etc. **And how can you follow God's example of keeping a special, seventh day of rest?** Go to church and Sunday school, rest from school, be with family, etc.
- Ahead of time, create large block numerals labeled 1 to 6 on separate sheets of paper. Assign pairs of students to draw on the numerals with markers or colored pencils some of the creations from that day. When they are finished, let them talk about their drawings and then display them on the wall.

Step 4: Play a game.

- Gather students in a circle or around a table. Bring a ball of playdough to the circle. Say, **Today we have been thinking about all the things God created. We're going to play a game to name some of these specific creations. The playdough ball is our symbol of creation.** Tell students you will begin the game by saying, **When God created everything, he created _____**, and say something beginning with the letter *A*. Then you will pass the ball of playdough to the person next to you. He or she will say, "When God created everything, he created _____," and then your creation beginning with the letter *A* and add something beginning with the letter *B*. Then this person will pass the playdough to someone else. Each person will repeat what each previous

Write the Session Key Verse on the board and read it together.
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
—Genesis 1:1

person said and add a creation starting with the next letter. You will probably want to skip the letter X. Continue to play until you've gone through the alphabet.

- Lead into a time of thinking about the awesomeness of God as Creator. **How did you feel trying to remember what everyone else had mentioned? And these are only a few of the many creations of God. Isn't it amazing that all God had to do was speak and whatever he spoke came into being?** Ask the students to think about the many different kinds of birds or flowers or fish there are. **Why do you think God made so many kinds? Why not just one kind of flower or bird?** Let students respond. **Seeing such a variety helps us see the awesome creativity of God. God must like variety and colors.**
- Invite the students to think about the order of the created things. For instance, God separated the land from the sea before he put animals on the land and fish in the sea. **Isn't it amazing that before God made people he knew everything we would need so that we could live on the earth? Only God could know that. Creation shows us that God is orderly and purposeful. Everything God made had a purpose, especially when God made people. And what purpose was that?** If they say to take care of creation or to love one another, remind them that even more than that God made us to have a personal relationship with him.

Leading beyond the Session

Step 5: Create bookmarks.

- Give each student a half sheet of cardstock and scissors. Invite each to cut out a bookmark in whatever shape he or she wishes. Tell students they will need room to write some words, add their fingerprints, and decorate. Say, **Whenever God made something, he looked at it and said it was good. When God made people, he made them in his own image. The good news is, God didn't make everything alike. God likes variety. He made us all different. Twin children may look alike, but there are a lot of ways they are different. One of those ways is their fingerprints.**
- When the students have their bookmarks cut out, instruct them to press their thumbs against a stamp pad (or color their thumbs with washable marker), and then gently press their thumbs on their bookmarks to make a print. They may need to practice on a sheet of paper first. Caution them that if they press too hard, the ridge detail of their fingerprints will be blurred. They should write their names somewhere on their bookmarks. They can also write some words about God our awesome Creator. Then they can finish decorating their bookmarks. Encourage their creativity.
- Say, **As you grow older, your hair color may change, your face may look different, you will grow taller, and several other features will physically change. One thing that will not change is your fingerprint. In God's great love, he created each of us for a relationship with him. Just as your fingerprint will not change, God's great love doesn't change.** Encourage the students to take their bookmarks home to remind them of their awesome Creator.

Remember, when you turn children loose to use their imaginations, show acceptance for whatever they come up with, the strange as well as the wonderful. Resist the urge to "fix."

Step 6: Praise our Creator.

- Say, **God sees everything we do and knows us better than we know ourselves. We were created to be in relationship with God. In that relationship we give God praise; we tell him how wonderful he is. We can do that with our voices any time; we can do it as we sing songs. We read in the Psalms a lot of praises to God. We can even write our praise to God.**

Upper Student Pull Out Activity Page: Direct the students to “Praise Letter to God.” You may want them to spread out as they fill out their letters. This will be a time of silent reflection for them.

- Call students together in a circle. Read Isaiah 42:5: “This is what God the LORD says—the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it.” Say, **This verse gives us some poetic word pictures about what God did in creation.** Tell students that you will read this verse in sections and after each section they should say, “God, you are awesome” (or another similar affirmation). Read through the verse again, pausing after each line for students to respond:

This is what God the LORD says—

“God, you are awesome.”

the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out,

“God, you are awesome.”

who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it,

“God, you are awesome.”

who gives breath to its people,

“God, you are awesome.”

and life to those who walk on it.

“God, you are awesome.”

- Afterward say, **Now we’re going to add some actions to go with our words.** Read the verse again line-for-line, pausing so students can act these words out and say, “God, you are awesome.” Ideas for actions would be cupping a hand over an ear, pretending to stretch something out, pretending to spread something out, blowing air out of the mouth and drawing back in, and moving arms and legs up and down.
- Ask everyone to hold hands (or link arms). Say, **We are going to pray around our circle, thanking God for what he has made.** Start the prayer yourself, then go around the circle with each student voicing a prayer of thanks for something God has created and then squeezing the hand of the next person when done. If a student does not wish to pray out loud, he or she may just silently squeeze the next hand, and the prayer will move on. When all the students have had the opportunity to pray, close with thanks for God’s love for us and his desire to have relationship with us.