



YEAR LEVEL	1 & 2
TITLE	Creation
STRAND	TRINITY
SUGGESTED DURATION	4 - 6 weeks
ENDURING QUESTIONS	Who is God? Is God alive in me?

Unit Focus

In this unit the students will focus on exploring the wonders of creation and grow in appreciation of the wonder of our Creator God.

Achievement Standards

By the end of Year 2:

Students describe where they see wonder and awe in creation. They identify how they are able to care for aspects of creation.

Unit Outcomes

By the end of this unit students should be able to:

1. Describe where they see and experience the wonder of God's Creation.
2. Express why it is important to care for Creation.

Key Understandings for Students

- Our Creator God has gifted each of us.
- Our senses enable us to experience the beauty and delights of our world.
- We can experience God in the wonders of creation.

Student Context

Students in Years 1 and 2 possess a great capacity for awe and wonder. Growing in independence and showing increasing competence in a range of skills they are strongly influenced by the significant adults in their lives.

As the students are better able to understand concepts such as cause and effect and symbolism, there is a window of opportunity to develop in them a heightened awareness of their world and the God who created it.

Religion can be integrated across the Key Learning Areas as the students use their senses to develop a range of skills including: classifying, describing, expressing, listening, gathering and role playing.

Theological Background for Teachers

- Christians believe that God created the universe and holds it in existence at every moment. We believe that God delights in all the creatures of the Earth (Prov 8:30-31) and finds the whole of creation good (Gen 1:31).
- St Bonaventure described the universe as being like a book reflecting, representing, describing its maker (Breviloquium, 2.12); Pope John Paul II used the same image, commenting that *creation ... is almost like another sacred book whose letters are represented by the multitude of creatures present in the universe* (General Audience Vatican City 30 January 2002).
- A relationship of kinship exists among all of God's creatures. This is what St Francis of Assisi, patron saint for ecology, celebrated in his life and in his Canticle. He sang of the sun, the moon, the stars, the wind, the water and fire as brothers and sisters, and of our sister, Mother Earth.
- Because we are part of God's creation, human beings are connected with all creatures, the natural world, indeed the whole universe. The two accounts of Genesis show that human beings are made in the image and likeness of God, and are to be responsible for the care of all creation, a God-given role which, as Christians, we must take seriously.
- In justice, it is an urgent task for Christians today to be reconciled with all creation, and to undertake faithfully our responsibility of stewardship of God's gifts. To achieve reconciliation, we must examine our lives and acknowledge the ways in which we have harmed God's creation through our actions and our failure to act. We need to experience a conversion, or change of heart. God calls us to turn away from wrongdoing and to behave in new ways. As the Bishops Committee for Justice, Development and Peace explained in their 1991 statement, *Christians and their duty towards nature*:

Catholics believe that the Bible sets out to give religious truth, not exact scientific data. It does not intend to give an approved cosmology or a correct scientific account of the world's origins. We have to look to science for these ... We believe that, however the universe came into being, however the human race began, God is the creator of the universe and of the human race. In this belief we find the origins of our conviction that, as Christians, we have an ethical duty to respect the gifts of creation, to give thanks for them, and to use them in accord with the will of God, as best we can interpret it.

(ACSJC Occasional Paper No 7, 1991).

(Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, 2002, p 3-6.)

Scripture

Psalm 104: 1,24, 31, 33

I praise you, Lord God, with all my heart.
Our Lord, by your wisdom you made so many things;
the whole earth is covered
with your living creatures.

Our Lord, we pray that your glory will last forever
and that you will be pleased
with what you have done.

As long as I live,
I will sing and praise you, the Lord God

Major Assessment Task

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Students will design a presentation that shows their appreciation for God's creation and that suggests ways that they can care for Creation. Student's presentation is titled 'How Amazing is God's Creation!'

Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences

Focusing Activity:

Take the students for a "Wonder Walk" where they can see various aspects of nature. If possible, using an iPad or iPhone, take photos of the different things the students see such as leaves, gumnuts, moss, tree bark, etc. Include some close up images and some scenery.

Back in the classroom, create a 'Wonder Wall' where the photos can be displayed and examined. Discuss with the students the wonder of creation and all the different things we can see, e.g. shapes and colours of leaves, texture of bark, etc.

- Read and discuss the illustrations and questions posed in KWL Book 2, Ch. 13, pp 138-140.
- Read 'In the Beginning' by Andrew Chinn. Discuss the story of creation in this book, using some 'I Wonder' questions.

I wonder...

- Which one of these gifts you like the best?
- How we can look after God's creation?

N.B. There is a CD that accompanies the book and is the sung version of the story by Andrew Chinn

- Students draw a series of pictures: Things I like to Hear/ See/ Touch and Feel/ Taste/ Smell in God's creation.

- What is your favourite place in creation? Why is your favourite? Draw your favourite place in creation with a photo frame around it and hang it in a class art gallery of creation.
- Read the adaptation from Psalm 104. Explain that this is part of a song of praise to God for all the wonderful things in creation. Discuss different aspects of creation: sky, sea, rivers, forests, jungle, gardens etc. What do we see in these different parts of creation? Create a mural of these aspects of creation. Along the top of the mural students write describing words about God's Creation (eg. magnificent, beautiful etc.)
- Discuss how we are part of creation and just as God cares for us, God wants us to care for creation. Ask students "Why must we care for Creation?" "What are some ways we can care for Creation?"
Make a class list of responses.

Prayer Ritual

Students gather around the class prayer focus in a circle.

With them students bring their completed pictures of things they like to hear/see/touch and feel/taste/smell in God's creation.

Begin with the Sign of the cross.

Leader: God has created many wonderful things in our world for us to enjoy. Taking care of all these wonderful things helps us to make sure other people can enjoy them, too.

Select a song to play (eg Andrew Chinn [In the Beginning](#) (start at 3:10))

Each student in the circle is invited to share their completed pictures and display their image around the prayer focus.

Leader: We thank you God for all the wonderful things we enjoy each and every day.

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Amen