God creates human beings

LIFE

1

God creates and loves all people

Creation of people
Genesis 1:26–31  Genesis 2:7, 18–25
Psalm 8:3–9  Psalms 139:1–18
Ephesians 4:17–32

Bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit
1 Corinthians 3:16,17  1 Corinthians 6:19,20

Jesus teaches us how to love and respect others
Luke 5:26–5:36

New creations in Jesus
2 Corinthians 5:17–19

God’s love for people
Psalm 91:14–16  Psalm 118
Isaiah 43:1,2,4  Isaiah 54:10
John 1:12  Romans 3:22–24
Romans 8:31–39  1 John 3:1,2
1 John 4:7–10
The forgiving father  Luke 15:11–32

God shows love in Jesus
Matthew 18:12–14  Luke 12:6,7
John 6:37b  John 14:6
John 15:13  Romans 5:6–11
Romans 8:38  Ephesians 3:17–19
Galatians 2:20

2

God creates each person as a unique individual with characteristics and abilities

God’s attitude to human life
Isaiah 49:15,16  Exodus 20:13
Matthew 5:21–24  1 John 3:14–17

God’s chosen people
1 Peter 2:9

God’s view of people
Genesis 1:27,31  Psalm 139:13,14
Romans 3:21–24  Isaiah 43:1
Galatians 3:26–29

3

God creates all people to live in relationship with him

God’s relationship with people
Moses and the Israelites  Exodus 13:17 – 14:31
Elijah  1 Kings 18
Jonah  Jonah 1:1 – 4:11

God guides people
Psalm 23:3,4  Psalm 63:1–8
Proverbs 3:5  Matthew 6:25–34
John 14:27  Colossians 3:12–15

Peter’s relationship with Jesus
Matthew 14:22–33  Matthew 16:13–19
Matthew 26:31–35  Matthew 26:69–75

Talents
Matthew 5:14–16  Matthew 25:14–30
1 Peter 4:10,11  1 Corinthians 10:31,33
1 Corinthians 12:4–7

God provides for people’s physical needs
1 Samuel 16:7  1 Corinthians 6:19,20
Matthew 5:45b  Matthew 6:25–34

God provides for people’s emotional needs
Isaiah 43:1–4  Isaiah 54:10
Psalm 22  Psalm 23
Psalm 31  Matthew 10:29,30
Matthew 11:28–30  John 3:16
Romans 5:8  2 Corinthians 4:8–10

God provides for people’s intellectual needs
Proverbs 14:6  Proverbs 14:33
Proverbs 18:15  Proverbs 26:16
Ecclesiastes 4:13  Ecclesiastes 12:12–14

God provides for people’s spiritual needs
Ecclesiastes 11:9 – 12:13
1 Corinthians 13:1–13  Colossians 2:6,7
Romans 12:1,2  Galatians 2:16

New commandment
John 13:34
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**KEY BIBLE VERSES TO HEAR AND REMEMBER**

Jesus answered him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one goes to the Father except by me.’
John 14:6 (GNB)

‘The mountains and the hills may crumble, but my love for you will never end; I will keep forever my promise of peace.’ So says the Lord who loves you.
Isaiah 54:10 (GNB)

‘I have come in order that you might have life — life in all its fullness.’
John 10:10 (GNB)
INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

1. **God creates and loves all people**

**HUMAN BEINGS** Students brainstorm responses to the following questions:
- What is a human?
- In what ways are humans similar to and different from other living creatures?
- What is unique about humans?
Students share responses and record them on a cut-out outline of one of the students. Go on to investigate what Christians believe about human life. (1a)

**ATTITUDES TOWARDS SEX** Students work in gender groups to look through teen magazines such as *Dolly* magazines or skim through a TV Guide and list or cut out the messages they receive about sex from the magazines or programs listed in the guide. Groups report to the class and discuss how students feel about the messages and attitudes towards sex. Ask students to think about: What do Christians believe about sex? (1b)

**HUMAN LIFE** Each student draws or finds a picture in a magazine that depicts, for them, the meaning of human life. Students brainstorm questions they have about life, its meaning and purpose. (1a)

**CREATING LIFE** View a video about conception, eg *An Every Day Miracle* (from *The Human Body* series, available from ABC shops). While viewing, students list comments and questions they have about procreation. Go on to explore what Christians believe about procreation. (1b)

**LIFE EXPERIENCES** Students brainstorm the three best and worst things that could happen to them in the next ten years. Discuss their fears and hopes.
- Are there common ideas?
- What do the hopes say about the students’ views of life?
- What do most people hope for in life?
Go on to explore what Christians believe gives life purpose and meaning. (1a,2c,3a)

**WHAT’S IN AND WHAT’S OUT** Students develop a list of what is ‘in’ and what is ‘out’ for students their age. Discuss:
- Is something ‘in’ that used to be ‘out’?
- Who decides what’s in and out?
- How does doing/being what’s ‘in’ affect the way people respond to you?
- Is it important to follow what is ‘in’?
Students may interview their parents to develop an understanding of what was ‘in’ and ‘out’ in their day.
Go on to look explore the Bible’s message about ways God views people. (1c,2b)

**MASKS** Show the students a range of masks (or pictures of masks). Discuss how people use ‘masks’ to cover up and hide things about themselves.
Ask the students to consider:
- What are some of the common ‘masks’ people wear?
- Why do people rarely let others see the real person behind the mask?
Explain that Christians believe that masks don’t hide us from God, and people don’t need masks, because God loves all people unconditionally. Go on to explore the Bible’s message of love for people. (1c,2a,2b,2c)

**DESERT ISLAND** Look at pictures of a variety of people, eg well-dressed, teenager, punk. Discuss: Which person would they like to be trapped with on a remote island? Why?
What generalisations do the students make based on appearances? (1c,2b)

2. **God creates each person as a unique individual with characteristics and abilities**

**MY LIFE** Students make personal time lines using photos and captions to show experiences in their lifetime. Students discuss similarities and differences in their time lines.
- Who or what has influenced your life?
- How do you feel about your life so far?
- In what ways have you changed?
- What does the time line of your life say about your abilities?
Go on to investigate the way Christians view their talents and abilities and investigate the Bible’s message about people’s responsibility to use their talents. (2a,2b,1a,1c)
I AM UNIQUE  Students write their name in the centre of a sheet of paper. In each corner they draw a symbol that reveals something about themselves or represents something that is very important to them. Encourage students to include their physical, emotional and intellectual characteristics. Discuss and display the sheets. Are any students exactly the same? Use this activity to lead into an investigation of Christian beliefs about people’s abilities and their responsibility to use their abilities. (2a)

MYSELF  Students list five things they like about themselves and five things they dislike about themselves. Discuss which list was easier to write. Why do we find it easy to be critical of ourselves? Go on to explore factors which influence adolescents’ self-esteem and the Bible basis for self-esteem. (2a,2b,1c)

MY TALENTS AND ABILITIES  Students make a list of what they believe to be their strengths and abilities. Encourage the students to think about all aspects, eg physical, emotional or social, intellectual and spiritual. Discuss:
- How do you use your strengths and abilities?
- How does listing your strengths and abilities make you feel about yourself?
Go on to explore the abilities of the students and what Christians believe about their responsibility to use their abilities. (2a,2b, 2c)

INHERITED ABILITIES  Students interview their parents to find out about characteristics they have inherited, eg I have my dad’s eyes, I am short like Mum’s family. Discuss how much control people have over physical attributes that they have inherited. Why do people have the attributes they have? How do these attributes affect self-esteem? (2a,2b)

ME-CUBE  Discuss how people may be considered to have an inside (personality and character) and an outside (body).
Students make cubes from paper or card. Students write or draw things they like about their outside (I have a great smile. I have long legs that help me run fast.) on the side that will become the outside of the cube. They write things they like about their inside (I am a loyal friend. I am fun to be with.) on the side that will become the inside of the cube.
Make up and display the cubes. Use the activity to lead into exploring students’ abilities and the Bible’s message of love for each individual. (2a,2b,1c)

GROWING UP  Students interview a group of adults of different ages to explore their experiences of growing up. What issues did they face? What factors influenced their self-esteem? (2b)

adolescence  Students define the term ‘adolescence’. Discuss common physical, social, spiritual and emotional experiences of adolescence.
Students draw a typical adolescent in the centre of a page. Surround the drawing with words and pictures that show the changes occurring during adolescence.
List what’s good and what’s bad about being an adolescent. Explain to students that adolescence is characterised by growth and change. Go on to explore the Christian belief that growth and development in adolescence is part of God’s design and plan. (2b)

PERSONALITY TRAITS  Brainstorm a list of qualities that people can have, eg patient, intelligent, modest, artistic, caring, dramatic, optimistic, eloquent, outgoing, friendly.
Each student lists the qualities they believe they have. They reflect on how they came to have the qualities, eg Were they born with them? Students list ways they can use their qualities to help others. (2a,2c)

God creates all people to live in relationship with him

SEARCHING  Students listen to I still haven’t found what I’m looking for (by U2). What does the song reveal about life questions? Does it appear that fame and wealth provide the answer to life questions? What do people search for? (3a,3b)

PEOPLE ARE RELIGIOUS  Students use dictionaries to define the word ‘religious’. In groups students list ways people show they are naturally religious, eg people have a desire to worship, praise and trust something, eg a football team, a hero. Skim through magazines to gather evidence of people’s religious nature. (3a)

WORLD RELIGIONS  Students work in groups to brainstorm a list of as many religions as they can.
- What does the fact that there are so many world religions reveal about people?
- Why do you think the many world religions have developed?
Go on to investigate a world religion in detail as one way people express their desire to be in relationship with God. (3a,3b)
ARE YOU SPIRITUAL? Write the statement 'He/she is a spiritual person' on the board. Students discuss what the statement means and develop their own definition of the word 'spiritual'. Discuss

- What are some ways people show they are religious?
- Do you think all people are spiritual? Why or why not?

Go on to explore the spiritual searching of human beings. (3a,3b)
GOD CREATES HUMAN BEINGS

GOD'S IMAGE Read Genesis 1:26-31. Ask the students what they think it means that people were made in God's image. You may need to highlight:
- the ability to think and reason
- creativity
- a need to love and be loved
- conscience and a sense of moral right and wrong
- the original holiness of human beings (see Background Notes)
- a desire to be in relationship with God.

Provide experiences for the students to explore basic human abilities. Students draw or find pictures to create a collage entitled: Made in God's image. (1a,3a)

HUMAN BEINGS What do all people have in common? Provide the students with information about the complexity and intricacy of the human body. View Life Story (from The Human Body series, available from ABC shops).

Investigate the bodily functions and systems. Compare thumb prints. Students read Bible passages to explore the way Christians might view the human body. See Bible References Menu. Students work in groups to consider the way Christian beliefs might influence other contemporary issues, eg anorexia, drug abuse. Discuss irresponsible and responsible ways of using the body. (1a)

THE FIRST HUMAN BEINGS Students read the two accounts of the creation of human beings in Genesis 1:26-31 and Genesis 2:7,18-25. Students record the key events of each account. Discuss:
- What are the similarities and differences in the two accounts?
- What is the purpose of each account?
- What does the Bible teach about the creation of human beings?
- What is special or unique about humans when compared with other creatures in the Genesis account?
- What do you think the Bible means when it says that people were made in God's image?

Read Psalm 8:3–8, Psalm 139: 13–18 and add any further information about the Bible’s teaching about the creation of people. (1a,1b)

PROCREATION Present information about the human reproductive system. The teacher could organise a video, guest speaker, fact sheets, non-fiction texts. Discuss different attitudes towards sex. Read God's blessing of people's sexuality in Genesis 1:27,28. Highlight that God gave people the ability to reproduce in order to continue his creation and express love in the closest of relationships. Students use Christian texts to explore what Christians believe about sex. (1a,1b)

HUMAN LIFE Students use a concordance to explore Bible readings about life. Students use this information and the catechism to identify what Christians believe about:
- Who created human life?
- How valuable is human life?
- What brings fulfilment to human life?
- What happens after life on earth is finished? (1b,1c)

GOD’S LOVE CHANGES LIVES Students read and study a Bible story about Jesus’ acceptance of an outcast, eg Zacchaeus, a Samaritan woman, a man with leprosy.

Provide background information about the person and what life might have been like before they encountered Jesus.

Ask the students to lie on the floor and to imagine themselves in the story as you read it. Ask them to imagine that they are the person and Jesus is speaking to them. How would they feel? What would they do? Encourage them to listen to Jesus' words and repeat them in their heads.

Tell students Christians believe that Jesus knows and loves them completely, just as he understood and loved the person in the story.

Students retell the story from the person's perspective. (1c)

GOD’S LOVE Study chapters 3,5,6,8 of the book of Romans to find a message that reveals how much God loves and values people.

Groups of students could be assigned different chapters to summarise and report on. Students could also include their favourite message and explain what this message says to them and why they have chosen it. (1c)
God creates each person as a unique individual with characteristics and abilities

**MYSELF** Use sex education resources to investigate the physical, emotional and spiritual changes that occur in adolescence. Discuss how these changes can affect the students’ self-esteem.

Students read stories about Jesus’ interaction with people (see Bible References Menu). They choose a story that has a message for adolescents and write about the meaning and value of the story for adolescents. (2a,2b)

**MY TALENTS** Read the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14–28. Ask students to consider that the silver coins represent people’s talents. In that case, what is the meaning of the parable?

Students work in groups and individually to list their physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual abilities. They then consider ways in which they could use their talents in love and service.

Students may work in groups to organise a school worship time, design a mural or develop a community service project, using their individual talents and abilities in love and service. (2c)

**SELF-IMAGE** Students make a list of things that influence how they feel about themselves, eg friends, family, peers.

Conduct a survey of the media, looking at the images of teenagers presented, eg TV soap operas, advertising and teenage magazines. Consider the effect the images have on teenagers’ self-esteem.

Explore a range of readings from the Bible References Menu about God’s love for each person. How does this affect our self-concept? (2a,2b)

God creates all people to live in relationship with him

**GOD AND THE FIRST PEOPLE** Use Genesis 2:4–25 as the basis for a meditation on the creation of the first people and the relationship God had with them. Highlight that God formed them in his image and breathed life into them. (3a)

**A CHANGING RELATIONSHIP?** Read Genesis 3 to explore how sin affected the relationship God had established with the first people.

Students investigate stories from the Bible which show ways in which people have tried to replace the relationship with God with other things.

- A golden calf  Exodus 32
- Elijah and the prophets of Baal  1 Kings 18
- A golden statue  Daniel 3:1–30
- Paul in Athens  Acts 17:16–34

Use Bible handbooks and encyclopedias to research the gods of the Canaanites, Babylonians and Egyptians. Why did people worship these gods? What type of relationship did they have with them? How were these gods different from the God of Israel? (3a)

**THE FORGIVING FATHER** Read the parable of the forgiving father (Luke 15:11–32). Discuss:

- What type of relationship does God want to have with people?
- What does God do to maintain that relationship? (3a,3b)

**GOD’S JOURNAL** Students read and discuss a range of Old Testament Bible stories to trace God’s relationship with his people, eg Moses and the Israelites  Exodus 13:17 – 14:31

- Elijah  1 Kings 18
- Jonah  Jonah 1:1 – 4:11

As they read, students imagine they are God keeping a journal of his experiences with people and write journal entries.

Read about and discuss God’s ultimate effort on behalf of his people: Luke 23:26–49.

Students write a final journal entry. (3a)

**WORLD RELIGIONS** Students investigate the beliefs and practices of two world religions to explore the way in which people express their desire to be in relationship with God. Students could visit places of worship or invite guest speakers to help them develop an understanding of the religion.

Investigate the sacred texts, places of worship, beliefs and practices of each religion and record the information on charts or displays about each religion.

Students consider in what ways each religion is seen by its followers to fulfil people’s desire to know God. Discuss:

- How do the people who follow each religion see their desire to know God fulfilled by their religion?
- Why do you think each religion is appealing to its followers? (3a,3b)
THE PSALMS  Conduct a study of selected psalms to explore God’s relationship with people. What are the recurring themes and messages? Students choose a psalm or part of a psalm and explain what it reveals about God’s relationship with people. Students give reasons for their choice. (3b)

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

BIBLE VERSE  Students learn an appropriate Bible verse (see page 12)

SONGS  Students learn songs related to the concept (see Music and Worship Ideas in the appendix).

TIME LINE  (A recommended activity for Level 1) If the class is developing a time line for Christian Studies, put on the time line any Bible stories/characters discussed.

If the time line continues to the present, you might also add (in studies related to Society, Science or Technology) information about discoveries which have helped people understand human growth and development, or about evidence of God’s ongoing care for human beings.

GOD FILE  (A recommended activity for Level 2) If the class is developing a God File, add information to the file about God’s creation of human beings, his continuing care for them, and his relationship with them.
GOD CREATES HUMAN BEINGS

**GOD CREATES HUMAN BEINGS**

LIFE

**1. God creates and loves all people**

**POEMS** Students write poems (eg acrostics, diamante) about themselves. They include passages from Bible verses that present the Bible’s message about people being unique creations of God. (1a,1c)

**CONTEMPORARY ISSUES** Students choose a current news item that relates to human life. Students apply Christian beliefs about human life to consider how a Christian might respond to the issue. Students write a letter to the newspaper as a response. (1a)

**LET’S TALK ABOUT SEX** Students design their own ‘Let’s Talk About Sex’ manual for adolescents that provides a Christian approach to sexuality. Students use other non-fiction texts as models and consider what students their age need to know. (1b)

**I AM LOVED** Make a graffiti sheet for each student. Students paint or draw a wall-like pattern on their sheet and include their name. Pass the sheets around the class and ask the students to write an affirming statement on each one. Demonstrate appropriate comments and suggest comments about things other than appearance. Have the students write Isaiah 43:4 as a ‘God says . . .’ statement on their sheet also. (1a,1c)

**GOD LOVES ME** Students choose a Bible verse that expresses a message of God’s love for people. Students design and make a plaque featuring this Bible verse. (1c)

**2. God creates each person as a unique individual with characteristics and abilities**

**GOD’S SUPPORT FOR ADOLESCENTS** Using verses read during the unit or a concordance, students locate Bible verses which may be significant for young teens. Some Bibles have lists of verses appropriate for different occasions. These may provide students with a starting point and students may consider cross references. They publish these in individual or class books which students can borrow from the class library.

**3. God creates all people to live in relationship with him**

**GOD AND PEOPLE** Students create a sculpture or picture showing their idea of the relationship between God and people. (3a)

**PAUL’S SPEECH** Students read Paul’s speech to the people in Athens (Acts 17:16–34). In the speech Paul talks about the God the Athenians had been searching for. Students imagine they are Paul visiting their local area for the first time. What would Paul observe? What would Paul say to people? Students work in groups to prepare a message Paul might give to people today. (3a,3b)

**GOD AND ME** Students find a special place in the schoolyard where they can be alone and reflect on Psalm 139:1–18. Students write their own prayer or poem expressing their thoughts and feelings about God. (3a)

**WORLD RELIGIONS** Students reflect on what they have learnt about people’s spirituality and world religions. They design a home page about people’s natural desire to be in relationship with God. Students include the diverse ways in which people express their spirituality. (3a,3b)

Passages might include:

1. when you feel afraid: Psalm 91:14–16
2. when you feel useless: 2 Corinthians 4:8–10
3. when you feel lonely: 1 John 3:1,2.
The introduction to LIFE contains suggested general resources for all LIFE concepts. Some of these resources may be out of print. They are listed because they (or others similar to them) may be found in school libraries. Preview these and any other resources you intend using to be sure that they are appropriate for your students.

**LITERATURE — NON-FICTION**

**General**
- Hastings S *The Children's Illustrated Bible* 1994
- Dorling Kindersley
- Morgan *Children's Daily Devotional Bible CEV* 1996 Thomas Nelson
- Luther's Small Catechism Openbook Publishers 1996
- Weiss N *Follow Me* 1982 Lutheran Publishing House

**World religions**
- Kadodwala D *Celebrate Series* 1995
- Heinemann (Titles: *Hindu Festivals, Christian Festivals, Jewish Festivals, Islamic Festivals*)
- Kanitari V *Discovering Sacred Texts Series* 1994 Heinemann (Titles: *The Qur’an, The Torah*)
- Lawton C *My Belief Series* 1984 Watts (Titles: *I am a Muslim; I am a Jew; I am a Hindu*)
- Penney S *Discovering Religions Series* 1995 Heinemann (Titles: *Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism*)
- Prior K *Understanding Religions Series* 1992 Wayland
- Stopleman M *Beliefs and Cultures Series* 1996 Watts (Titles: *Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist*)
- Rosenberg L *Keystones Series* 1997 A & C Black (Titles: *Jewish Synagogue, Christian Church, Hindu Mandir, Muslim Mosque*)
- Sutcliffe S & B *Faith and Commitment Series* 1994 Religious and Moral Education Press (Titles: *Committed to Christianity, Committed to Judaism, Committed to Hinduism*)

**Christian reference titles**
- Knowles A *Finding Faith* 1983 Lion Publishing
- Schwarz B (ed) *Good Question* 1995 Openbook Publishers

**Sex education and adolescence**
- Graver J *Learning about Sex Series* 1988 Concordia Publishing House
- Harris R *Let's Talk about Sex: Growing Up, Changing Bodies, Sex and Sexual Health* 1995 Walker Books
- Sanders P & Myers S *Love, Hate and Other Feelings* 1996 Franklin Watts

**Biography**
- Goode B *Too Tough for Tears* ANZEA
- Wilkerson D *The Cross and the Switchblade* 1967 Lakeland

**LITERATURE — FICTION**

**Growing up**
- Blume J *Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret* 1980 Piccolo
- French S *All We Know* 1987 Angus and Robertson
- Gleeson L *Eleanor Elizabeth* 1984 Angus and Robertson
- Hathorn L *Thunderwith* William Heinemann
- Klein R *Hating Alison Ashley* 1986 Kestrel
- Klein R *Come Back to Show You I Could Fly* Viking Kestrel
- Marsden J *So Much to Tell You* 1987 Walter McVitty
MAGAZINES

Australian Sports Focus published quarterly by Sports and Leisure Ministries (PO Box 229 Moruya NSW 2537) Australasian Sports Focus (PO Box 6044 Highton Vic 3216)

MUSIC

Gospelling to the beat Scripture Union
Scripture in Song Book 3 1988 Australian Print Group

VIDEO

The Human Body (series) ABC Television 1998 (includes: An Every Day Miracle, Life Story, The Raging Teens)
Dobson J How to Prepare for Adolescence, Peer Pressure and Sexuality Distributed by Word Australia
Training Health & Education Media (3-part series) Crossing the Adolescent Bridge 1990
The Human Life Machine 1992
Countdown to Baby 1993

TEACHER RESOURCES

Bretherton B You and Me, God 1997 Social Science Press.
Horne, G Teenager 1982 Family Life Movement
It’s OK to Be You: Feeling Good about Growing Up 1988 Simon and Schuster
Lang G All Children Are Special: Creating an Inclusive Classroom 1995 Eleanor Curtain
Lawson Michael & Skipp D Sex and That: Taking Charge of Your Life 1992 Lion
McGrath H & Franchise S Friendly Kids, Friendly Classrooms 1991 Longman Cheshire
Szirom, T Teaching Gender? Sex Education and Sexual Stereotypes 1988 Allen & Unwin
Van Wyk K Fulfill Your Life Rev Gateway Series, Adult Christian Education Foundation of Australia (This is an excellent course for teachers’ personal spiritual growth.)
Wingfield, D & A Growing Up Now 1992 Lion

Lutherans for Life can provide up-to-date information about, and a Christian viewpoint on, current human life issues.

Put a plastic sleeve in this section of your LIFE binder to keep your own collection of clippings, cartoons, stories, photos, etc which you can use for these units. Add to your collection whenever you come across something that might be useful.