

**SUNDAY SCHOOL
CURRICULUM
AND
LESSON PLANS**



Season of Creation

2018

Introduction

Teachers information:

In a time where we have destroyed (endangered) the planet for future generation the passages around creation and care of the earth need to be read and interpreted more humbly and in a way that is less human centered. We need to read them in a way that will help us to connect with our planet, and in a way that challenges any notion of domination. We need to go back to a time where we were more connected with our plant.

This season of creation we have used a theologian by the name of Norman Habel who was part of the group that contributed to the Earth Bible series where they read the bible from the perspective of Earth.

This is in no way a new religion or a change to the bible or an undue influence of Gaianism, it is just another way to celebrate and honour our role in caring for the creation God created.

We have an obligation to care for something that gives us life, the Earth can thrive and survive without us, but we cannot live without the Earth.

For this reason, Norman Habel uses the term mutual custodianship, where we look after the Earth and the Earth looks after us.

Prayer for the Environment

This we know; the earth does not belong to us.

The earth is the Lord's and so are all its people.

This we know; we did not weave the web of life.

The earth is the Lord's and so is all that breathes on it.

This we know; we are called to till and work the earth.

The earth is the Lord's and so are all who work the land.

This we know; that we are called to take care of creation.

The earth is the Lord's yet we have polluted and abused it.

This we know; that whatever befalls the earth.

Befalls the sons and daughters of the earth.

This we know; that the heavens declare the glory of God.

The earth is the Lord's and so are all the stars, planets and galaxies.

This we know; that day after day the heavens pour forth speech.

The earth is the Lord's and He calls us to listen for His voice.

This we know; that God has called us into joint custodianship of creation.

The earth is the Lord's and we are called to bless all he has made.

This we know; that the earth is the Lord's

And so we will serve him in it.

Inspired by a prayer of Ray Simpson

Curriculum

Term 3 2016

	Date	Week in Church year	Lesson	Page
Season of Creation				
1	2 September	Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost	Dark and light - mutual custodianship	4
2	9 September	Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost	Wet and wonderful Water	13
3	16 September	Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost	Plants	25
4	23 September	Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost	It's not all about you!	34

Gauteng School Term: 17 July –28 September 2018

Dark and light: mutual custodianship

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost 4 September 2016

Reading: *Genesis 1*

Theme: *Creation – the Earth Story*

Memory verse: “God saw all that God had made, and it was very good.” *Gen 1:31*



Information for the teacher:

The Church observes season of creation as the earth is in such a state. In the introduction we noted mourned the extent to which the earth has been damaged. In our busy lives, especially for city dwellers we are often not aware of the extent of the destruction. But we need to face the possibility that the earth will no longer be able to care for future generations as the damage is so extensive. We are just so out of tune with the earth that we don't hear the cries of pain, we are ignorant of the oceans and even when we do see the pollution around us we may feel helpless in the face of the extent of the problems.

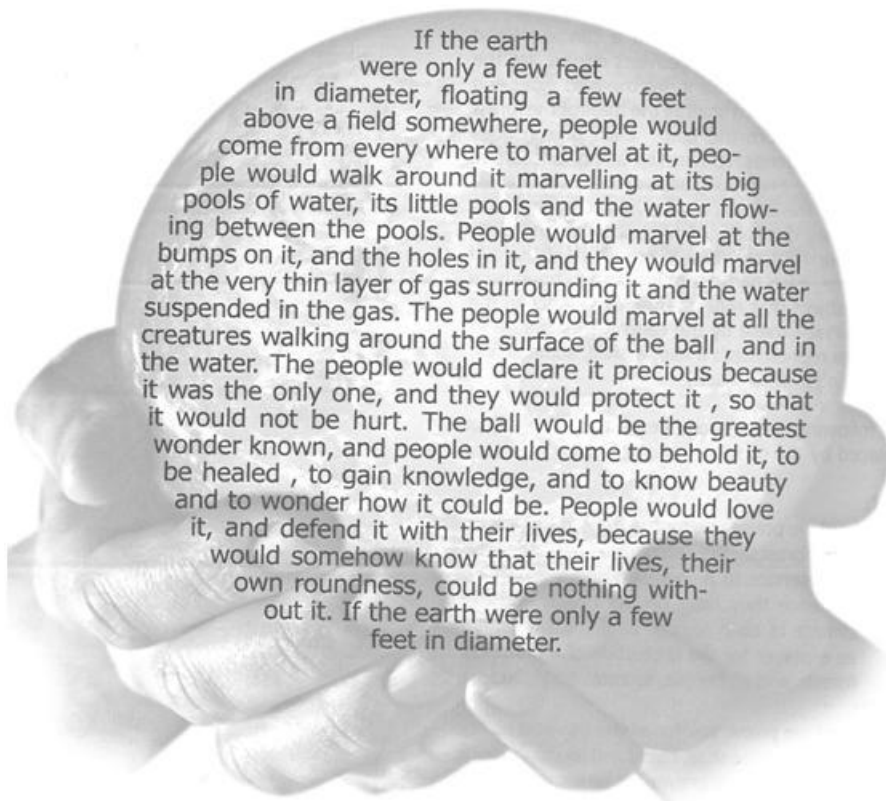
In the past Christians have been accused of aiding and abetting the destruction of the earth. For example, Lynn White accuses the anthropomorphic and exploitative attitudes of dominant Christian theology of giving religious support to the notion that the world was created primarily for the benefit of humans. He concludes that "Christianity bears a huge burden of guilt for the environmental crisis" (White 1967:1205, 1207).

Christianity alone cannot carry the blame for the destruction of earth, but we can seek to find the hidden texts that speak of the mutual custodianship and mutual dependency and the interconnection between all living creatures and the earth. We can move from a human centered interpretation of the scriptures to an earth centered interpretation. We can reject the domination paradigm and instead discover a non-hierarchical, inclusive paradigm that better fits the overall biblical narrative and our modern context.

In the beginning God created darkness and light and they were both good and both needed, Night and Day, sun and moon all vital for the well-being of Earth. God created land and sky and sea. And they were all good. They have intrinsic worth – that is not to be measured in terms of their worth for people. The world is made up of interrelated interconnected systems and we mess with or damage things at the jeopardy of many other things. Life is precarious and the earth groans in pain at the damage that is inflicted.

Today, the first lesson in our Season of Creation series for this year, we celebrate dark and light, land sea and sky. But we also develop an awareness of the danger the earth is in and the ways in which the earth has been damaged. We look at what we can do and try and give hope and a new way of seeing things

Consider this meditation entitled “Earth Ball” by Olaf Skarsholt:



Lesson Suggestions:

Lesson Objectives:

- To gain an appreciation all Creation, and think especially of dark and light
- To realise that we are dependent on the well-being of the earth.
- To introduce the concept of mutual custodianship rather than domination or even stewardship
- To realise that all creatures have a role to play in the web of life, and that we are to look after and respect all Creation



Attention Grabber:

Explain to the children that today is the beginning of spring. During September we celebrate the Season of Creation where we are reminded of the beautiful world around us. Today we are specifically celebrating light and dark and the land and water.



Bible Story: Genesis 1 (The story of Creation)

Very briefly revise the story of Creation. Perhaps have a few pictures to show the children as you revise the story. You may like to make use of the words that follow:

The Earth story

In the beginning there was darkness. God spoke and said, "Let there be light."

God made the sun to shine in the day and the moon and stars to shine in the night.

God said, "Let there be sky and land and sea." And so it was.

God made the fish and creatures that swim in the sea.

God made the birds that fly in the air and every animal that lives on the land

In the beginning, when the world was new, God saw all that was made, and it was very good!



Discussion questions

God created both light and dark. Are you afraid of the dark? Why?

What happens in the dark? – think of good things as well as bad such as sleep, rots growing underground, etc.

What is good about the dark? What is good about the light?

If there was not electricity what would we do

All is needed – the balance of light and dark.

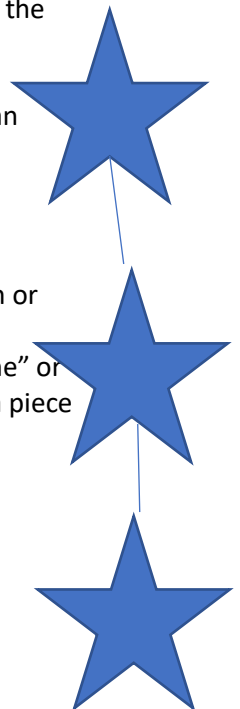


Craft activities:

There are two options for today's craft. This first one focuses on the Heavens – the sun, the moon and the stars – the lessons over the next few weeks will focus on other aspects of creation. Perhaps begin the craft session by asking the children how many stars they think are in the sky. Then ask the children to make as many dots as they can on a piece of paper in 1 minute. Ask them to count how many dots they have drawn. Explain that even if they carried on making as many dots as they could for the rest of their life, they would still not make as many dots as there are stars in the sky. Isn't that amazing!!

Children can draw stars and the moon on a white piece of paper, using a white crayon. They can then paint over the piece of paper with black or blue poster paint – the paint will reveal what they have drawn. You can emphasise with this craft that in the beginning, there was nothing, except God. God created the stars.

Another option is for children to cut out stars from paper (or Styrofoam trays) and colour them or decorate (NOT with glitter as it is plastic and bad for the environment). The children can then either add all their stars to a bulletin board with a heading such as "God made the stars to shine" or each child can make their own star mobile as shown below –attach each star to another with a piece of string.



Craft and activities:

The second craft focuses on the idea of winter being a time when the life of the tree is hidden in the dark and then in spring comes out into the light. The children can make a winter tree using sticks, twigs, sand or anything else you can think of. They could do this as a craft activity using glue to stick things and make a picture of a tree. However, they could simply make trees and then return the twigs etc to the earth, to where they found them.

They could decorate their trees with leaves or blossoms – either from paper or real leaves etc.



Snack: The children would enjoy icing biscuits and then decorating using icing and hundreds and thousands. If possible the biscuits should be shaped as stars.

Another treat is for the children to butter bread and then sprinkle hundreds and thousands – again if possible have a star shaped cookie cutter for the children to cut star-shapes out of their bread.



Physical activities: Perhaps before the lesson put a number of stars all over an area. Ask the children to find how many stars you have put out for them to find.

You could build a dark tent out of chairs, blankets etc.

Psalm 148: 1-6 reflects some of the emotions this particular psalmist felt. *Read this psalm to the children.*

And here is another psalm, again probably reflecting our own thoughts. *Read Psalm 8: 1,3-4 Allow for some quiet time as the children reflect on the lesson for today. If they wish, they may say a prayer aloud or in their hearts. Someone may also like to lead the group in a song of praise.*

And so, as you go out into the world this week, do think about the seemingly simple miracles of nature that surround you everyday – the rising and setting of the sun, the constant coming in and going out of the sea tides, the same star studded sky that our psalmists stared at so many years before. As you look at the world with new eyes this week, may all that you see around you be a reminder of God!



Songs

Your choice



Prayer



Older children (7 – 13 years)

Lesson objectives:

- To gain an appreciation all Creation, and think especially of dark and light
- To realise that we are dependent on the well-being of the earth.
- To introduce the concept of mutual custodianship rather than domination or even stewardship
- To realise that all creatures have a role to play in the web of life, and that we are to look after and respect all Creation



Older children:

Way far away - it's in Outer Space.

Outer space!! It's big and there's a lot in it!

Imagining distances is difficult – everything is so far apart

Billions & billions of stars - There are far more than you could count.

The nearest star is our sun. Did you know that if we could drive in a car to get to the Sun at 100 km/h it would take 171 years?! And to get to the next closest star, Proxima Centauri, would take 40,000 years! And most other things - billions and billions of stars - are much, much farther away than that! But back to our Solar System, which is also VERY BIG and our planet earth is actually very small.

The distance between the planets is also very big, as you will find in the following activity:

Sun – Use a soccer ball to represent the size of the sun – did you know that the sun is 300 000 times larger than earth?!

Mercury – Use a peppercorn to represent Mercury and place it 51 cm away from the “sun”

Venus – Use a peppercorn to represent Venus and place it 1.2 m away from the sun

Earth – Use a peppercorn to represent Earth and place it 2.5 m from the sun

Mars – Use a peppercorn to represent Mars and place it 4 m from the sun

Jupiter – Use a small marble and place it 15 m from the sun

Saturn – Use a small marble and place it 25 m from the sun

Uranus – Use a large bead and place it 36 m from the sun

Neptune – Use a large bead and place it 76 m from the sun

Pluto – Use a peppercorn and place it 200 m from the sun (NB: Pluto is no longer regarded as a planet but an asteroid)

Proxima Centauri – would be represented by a tennis ball and placed 700km from the sun!

You could also use playdough to represent the planets.



Bible Story: Genesis 1 (The story of Creation)

Very briefly revise the story of Creation. Perhaps have a few pictures to show the children as you revise the story. You may like to make use of the words that follow:

The Earth story

In the beginning there was darkness. God spoke and said, "Let there be light."

God made the sun to shine in the day and the moon and stars to shine in the night.

God said, "Let there be sky and land and sea." And so it was.

God made the fish and creatures that swim in the sea.

God made the birds that fly in the air and every animal that lives on the land

In the beginning, when the world was new, God saw all that was made, and it was very good!

You can then contrast this with the Human story.

What have humans created on the earth? Is it all very good?

What is good?

What is not good?

Are there some things that are both good and bad?



Discussion questions

God created both light and dark. Are you afraid of the dark? Why?

What happens in the dark? – think of good things as well as bad such as sleep, rots growing underground, etc.

What is good about the dark? What is good about the light?

If there was not electricity what would we do?

What do you think heaven looks like?



Craft activities:

There is a choice of activities. You could also do the same ones as for the younger children. Here are some ideas:

1. You may like to give the children a choice as to how they would like to respond to today's lesson. Perhaps they would like to write their own psalm or song of praise. Perhaps they would like to present a well-known song to the class that tells of God's awesome creation of stars and moon, light and dark. Perhaps they would like to create a poster with a simple message, such as the last photo in our set of pictures.

2. The following exercise will give the children an idea of how big the solar system is! You will need a measuring tape, although perhaps for the bigger distances the children will enjoy estimating the distance by "jumping" out the metres. Perhaps give each planet to a different child to measure out the distance that the planet needs to be placed from the sun. The children need to stay with their planet so that everyone can see how far away the planets are from each other. At the beginning of this exercise draw attention to the size of the planets relative to the sun.

3. Play hopscotch, with enough blocks for the number of planets in the solar system– the children need to try to remember the names and the order of the planets.



Prayer:

If possible, sit outside. Encourage the children to sit quietly and listen to the sounds around them. Try to block out “human-made sounds” – listen to the natural sounds e.g. the birds in the trees; the wind rustling the leaves.

After a while, read the meditation found in the introduction to this lesson entitled “Earth Ball” by Olaf Skarscholt.



Snack: Organise a picnic to celebrate the beginning of Spring. Play outside games if time.

The older children will enjoy the following True or False questions. They may prefer to work in groups for this activity. Each child / group can be given a piece of paper where they write down their answer for each question. (All the answers are True!!)

1. No two zebras have the same striped patterns
2. Tapeworms can live for 35 years
3. It takes 2 years for a pineapple to grow to its full size
4. It is possible for a female cat to be responsible for the birth of 20 736 kittens in 4 years
5. The arctic tern is a bird which flies from the north pole to the south pole each year. When added up over a lifetime, the total journey of the bird is the same as a trip to the moon and back!
6. It takes 22 months for a baby elephant to be born
7. It takes 6 months for a baby elephant to learn how to control its trunk
8. A newborn giraffe is about 2 m tall
9. Dolphins sleep with one eye open
10. All ants in the world weigh more than all the people in the world put together
11. A blue whale’s tongue weighs more than most elephants
12. Snails can sleep for up to 3 years at a time
13. Gold fish need light to keep their colour

After the quiz, discuss with the children that we have learnt some amazing facts about the world around us. It is very important to realize that we look after all creatures, even those we do not like e.g. spiders, mosquitoes, lizards, snakes, bats, chameleons, owls etc. Each animal, no matter how small, is an amazing part of creation and has an important role in the web of life. We need to respect all parts of God’s Creation.

References:

Season of Creation, Anglican Church of Southern Africa

Special thanks to Noeleen Mullett – JAIE / EcoAct

www.sermons4kids.com



Scientists estimate there are hundreds of billions of galaxies in the universe.

The number of stars are estimated to be 10 billion trillion – that's more stars than the number of grains of sand on earth



The milky Way Galaxy is just one of billions of galaxies in the universe!

Wet and Wonderful Water

2nd Sunday of the Season of Creation 9 September 2018

Reading: Gen 1::20 – 23 (Preferably from The Message by Eugene Peterson)

Theme: Celebrating the gift of water and developing an awareness of our responsibility

Memory verse: “God, You started the springs and rivers, sent them flowing among the hills”
Psalm 104:10



Information for the teacher:

In the first creation story in Genesis, the waters existed before the light and the rest of creation emerged from water. Water is essential to life. It pulses through our veins, making up 70% of the earth's surface and 60% of our bodies.

We encounter water in many different forms –ocean, lake, fountain, river, rain, pool, puddle, tears. Water appears in different forms –steam, liquid, and ice. For the ancient peoples, the sea was a place of great mystery and unending horizons. Psalm 104 proclaims: *Look at the sea, great and wide. It teems with countless beings, living things both large and small.* “Water is a dominant symbol in religious practice. Ritual bathing and hand washing for purification have a place in many traditions. In Christianity, the font of holy water is the place of baptism and initiation into community. Priests wash their hands as the Eucharistic prayer begins and drop a splash of water to blend with the wine. In Jewish tradition, the *mikvah* is the holy bath, the place of renewal. On Sabbath night a bowl and jug of water is passed around the table as a part of the prayer, so that participants can wash themselves clean as a way of entering this sacred time.

Then the rain – light gentle rain has a calming rhythm of its own; black dark thunder clouds send water rushing down in torrents- rain washing our earth and filling the air with a fresh scent, restoring and giving life.

Indeed, water is an awesome gift, sadly we humans have done a poor job of taking care of it. We abuse it for other purposes. We divert rivers and streams unnecessarily, we poison it, and waste it - indifferent to the consequences. Too many people, too little water - water in the wrong places and in the wrong amounts. 1.2 billion people in the world do not have access to clean safe drinking water, and 2.4 billion do not have adequate sanitation due to polluted waters. The World Council of Churches recently found out that 80% of all disease in poor countries is related to poor drinking water and poor sanitation. As much as 40% of the world's population goes thirsty every year, with some countries consuming more and more while others get less and less. Women and children in East Africa now walk an average of 21 minutes for each trip to collect water.

The greatest threat to our gift of water is **PLASTIC**. Are you aware that-

* At least eight million tons of plastics find their way into the ocean every year. This is equal to **one full garbage truck every minute**. If no action is taken, this is expected to increase to **two full garbage trucks per minute by 2030 and four per minute by 2050**.

* This means that Plastic rubbish will outweigh fish in the oceans by 2050- unless the world takes drastic action to recycle the material,

* An overwhelming 95% of plastic packaging worth R1-1 ½ trillion a year is lost to the economy after a single use.

Today's lesson should be a celebration of the gift of water – the source of life, but also an awareness of our responsibility to look after this precious resource. Take heart too, **CHANGE IS HAPPENING!** - and we are part of the change. As Archbishop Tutu says, *“let us do our little bit where we are, it's those bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.”* Let us then continue to be inspired by other people's ideas and life style, always keeping in mind that culture can be changed and that we can help to make this happen. And let us cooperate with God, as we work to safeguard the integrity of creation and so sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

- To notice the beauty of the oceans with their diverse marine life.
- To realise the damage being caused by plastic.
- To encourage the children to look after water – our precious resource.



Attention Grabber: As children arrive, greet them but maintain an atmosphere of calm and silence as you play recorded sounds of rain, running streams, waves rolling onto the shore and washing over rock. Show the children pictures of water – waterfalls, the sea, animals and people playing in water. You can discuss the pictures with the children. Many nature magazines contain pictures of water which you can use or look for pictures on the internet. Show the children a globe or a map and have them point out the oceans and ask what creatures live in the oceans. Again use pictures to encourage them to share ideas.



Bible Story: God created the waters and everything in it (Gen 1: 20 -23)

“God spoke: ‘Swarm, Ocean, with fish and all sea life! Birds, fly through the sky over the earth!’” God created the huge whales, all the swarm of life in the waters, and every kind and species of flying birds. God saw that it was good. God blessed them: prosper! Reproduce! Fill Ocean!’”

Today we give thanks for the gift of water, we remember those who do not have sufficient water and we are going to look at the way plastic is threatening our water and how we can help to keep our water clean.



Discussion

1. Who of you have run through a sprinkler on a hot summer day? How many of you have walked in the rain, and splashed in the puddles? How many of you can swim? What else do we use water for? (To bath in and wash our hands; to drink; to cool down in; to play in.) Apart from us who and what else needs water to survive?
2. Where does the water that we drink come from? (Rivers, not just the tap!)
3. *For the slightly older children:* Did you know that the water we use is the same water that the dinosaurs swam in millions of years ago?! No water has been made or destroyed since the beginning of the world. How is this possible? (Briefly describe the water cycle – the story of a rain drop can be found at the end of this lesson)
4. Water is very precious to us – without water we cannot live. We must look after our water and not waste it. What can we do to not waste water? (Look out for leaking taps – either switch them off yourself or ask someone to do it for you. If you have running water at home, don't leave the tap running while you brush your teeth; have a shower instead of a bath full of water)
5. Did you know that we also look after water if we do not litter? We must put all our rubbish into bins and not just drop it on the ground. What do you think is the most dangerous ‘thing’ in the sea? (Allow the children to give answers.) Then show the children plastic bottle, or a

plastic bag crunched up in a tub of water. Sadly, plastic leads to the death of many sea animals every year. Even if you live far from a river or the sea, a plastic bag can easily get into a drain and make its way to a river and then to the sea. Do you think this is what God would want for creation? **Discuss the ‘Life Story of Three Plastic Bottles’** found at the end of the lesson.

6. Talk about the **Four ‘Rs’** and mention reusing plastic by making an **Eco Brick** -presentation at the end of the lesson.



Prayer: Dear God. We thank you for the precious gift of water you have given us. Without water we would not have this beautiful world. Please help us to always look after the world around us – help us to not waste water and to keep it clean. Amen



Songs



Craft: Make an ECO BRICK See Instructions at the end of this lesson.



Physical activities: Play the game “Sharkie, sharkie.” One person is the sharkie. All the others are fish who stand on one side of the play area. When sharkie says, “swim little fishies”, the fish need to make their way from the one side to the play area to the other. If a fish is caught, it becomes a shark. The game continues until there is only one fish left, who is declared the winner!

Offer the children a glass of water to drink when they are finished with this game to refresh them!



Older children (7 – 13 years)

Lesson objectives:

- To notice the beauty of the Oceans with their diverse marine life.
- To Realise the damage being caused by plastic.
- To encourage the children to look after water – our precious resource.

Before the lesson, look for a dripping tap on the church property or open a tap slightly so that it starts to drip. Put a bucket below the dripping tap. At the end of the lesson, you will measure the amount of water wasted from the dripping tap. This activity is in line with one of our overall objectives for the Season of Creation which is to instil in our children an awareness of our responsibility to look after water – our precious resource.



Attention Grabber: As children arrive, greet them and offer them a glass of water, all the while maintaining an atmosphere of calm and silence as you play recorded sounds of rain, running streams, waves rolling onto the shore and washing over rock. Show the children pictures of water – waterfalls, the sea, animals and people playing in water. You can discuss the pictures with the children. Many nature magazines contain pictures of water which you can use or look for

pictures on the internet. Show the children a globe or a map and have them point out the oceans and ask what creatures live in the oceans. Again use pictures to encourage them to share ideas.



Bible Story: God created the waters and everything in it (Gen 1:20 -23)

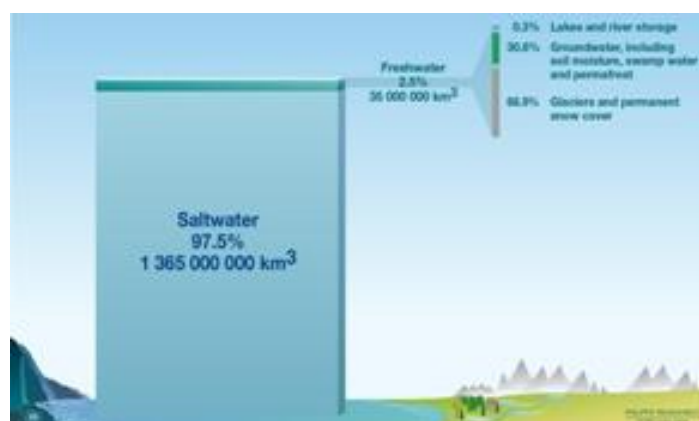
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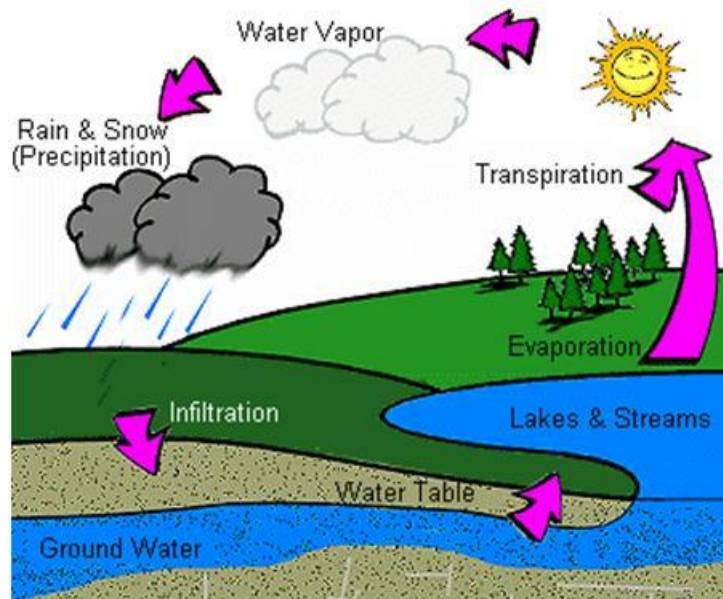


Discussion

1. Here are some amazing facts about water:
 - a. How much of the earth is covered in water? *(Answer is 70 %)*
 - b. How much of the earth's water is sea water? *(Answer is 97%)*
 - c. So, only 3 % of the earth's water is fresh water – water we are able to drink. How much of this fresh water is locked up in the ice caps? *(Answer: 66% of all fresh water can be found in the ice caps. Therefore only 1,2% of all the water on earth is in fact available for us to drink – You can demonstrate this using a 1 litre coke bottle –you can put 12 ml of water into the bottle – if all the earth's water could be represented by 1 litre of water, then only 12 ml of that 1 litre is drinkable!)*



Did you know that the water that God created at the beginning of time is still the same water that we use today? – No water has been created or destroyed over all these years. We are using the same water that the dinosaurs swam in millions of years ago! Isn't that amazing?! (You may need to briefly discuss the water cycle with your class as shown in the diagram below.)



2. Sadly, however, much of our fresh water is no longer drinkable. Who knows why? (Pollution of rivers due to sewerage and litter; Chemicals, insecticides, poisons, paint, oil is emptied into drains or enters the waterways via storm water drains – if you are not careful as to how you get rid of your waste, this will also end up in rivers.)

Show the children pictures of rivers, dams and the sea which reflect the effect of pollution. Pictures can be found at the end of this lesson. Do you think this is what God had in mind for his Creation?

Explain to the children that pollution of our waters is not only a threat to God's Creation, but to humankind as well! God's world is perfectly balanced – if part of it is disrupted, we are all affected – this is serious for us all!

Ask the children what they think is the most dangerous sea creature. This is, in fact, the plastic bag – it causes the death of many sea animals every year.

Discuss the '**Life Story**' of **Three Plastic Bottles** found at the end of the lesson.

Many of the reasons for our rivers and seas being so polluted is not something we can do anything about – we can only hope that the government, local organisations and companies manage their waste to ensure that our environment is not harmed. However, we can all play our part in caring for the environment. After today's lesson, is there anything that you should change or that you should encourage those around you to change so that we can better look after our water systems? (Don't litter because when it rains, this litter can end up in rivers, even if you don't live close to a river or the sea. Also encourage those around you to behave responsibly when it comes to looking after our water supplies)

3. Something else we all need to do, especially in South Africa, is to save water wherever we can. South Africa is one of the 20 driest countries in the world. It is predicted that if we continue to use water in the way we do, South Africa will run out of water between 2020 and 2040. How much water do you use every day? If you have running water at home, do you leave the tap running while you are cleaning your teeth? Do you take a shower, which uses 30 litres, a full bath which uses 150 litres, or wash in a basin which uses 10 litres? Do you make

sure that you have properly closed the tap when you are finished with it? Do you report any taps that are leaking to your teacher, parent etc?

At this point you can take the class to check how much water has landed in the bucket under the leaking tap – take a measuring cup with you. Discuss how long it has been since you started measuring the leak. Discuss how much would therefore drip into the bucket in 1 day, 1 week, 1 month, 1 year. Once you have completed this discussion, throw the water into the garden, not down the drain!

4. Homework!! According to the World Health Organisation, people need a minimum of 7,5 litres of water per day, although 20 litres is recommended to take care of basic hygiene and food needs. Just for 1 day this week, make a list of how much water your family uses. When you flush the toilet, 7 litres of water is used – how many times a day do you flush the toilet? Try to work out a way to calculate how much water flows out of a hosepipe every minute when washing a car or watering the garden or how much water is used to wash dishes or clothes?

A famous person once said, “Only when the well is dry – then we will know the worth of water!



Prayer: Today’s lesson should be a celebration of the gift of water, but also an awareness of our responsibility to looking after this precious resource. Perhaps begin the time of prayer with Psalm 104: 5-18. The children can then be encouraged to say a prayer in response to what has been discussed today.

Psalm 104

O my soul, bless GOD!
You blanketed earth with ocean,
covered the mountains with deep waters;
Then you roared and the water ran away—
your thunder crash put it to flight.
Mountains pushed up, valleys spread out
in the places you assigned them.
You set boundaries between earth and sea;
never again will the earth be flooded.
You started the springs and rivers,
sent them flowing among the hills.
All the wild animals now drink their fill,
wild donkeys quench their thirst.
Along the riverbanks the birds build nests,
ravens make their voices heard.
You water the mountains from your heavenly cisterns;
earth is supplied with plenty of water.
You make grass grow for the livestock,
hay for the animals that plow the ground.

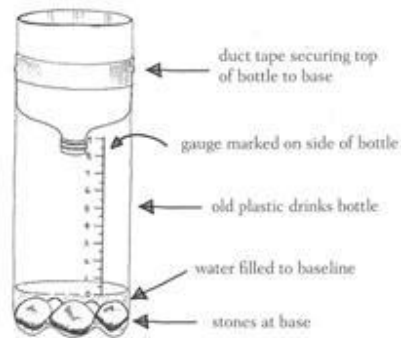
Extract taken from “The Message”



Craft ideas:

- Make a rain gauge, as shown in the diagram below.
- Make an **Eco Brick** as explained at the end of the lesson.

To make your rain gauge...



Take an old plastic bottle – remove the lid. Carefully cut off the top third of the bottle. Place some stones in the bottom – this will stop it from blowing over and then fill with water until the stones are covered. Carefully mark this point with your pen. Use a ruler to mark up from this point, in centimetres, to make a scale. Place the upside down part of the top of the bottle into the bottom part, as shown in the diagram. Your rain gauge will need to be placed outside, somewhere in the open where it's not under any overhanging trees or buildings. Check the rain gauge after it has rained and see if the water level has risen. Record the amount of rain water that has collected, then empty out and refill to the base level again. You can use your rain gauge to check whether we are receiving above or below average rainfall for a given month.



Physical activities: As mentioned before, today's lesson should also be a celebration of the gift of water, so play water games. Playing outside waters the garden and helps to beautify our surroundings. Don't forget to offer the children a glass of water when they are hot to freshen them up!

References:

<http://www.firstpalette.com>

Season of Creation

The Message

101 things for kids to do

Special thanks to Noeleen Mullet

Painter, C.V 2010. *Water, Wind, Earth and Fire* USA: Sorin Books

The Little Drop of Rain

Once upon a time there was a little drop of rain. It was floating around up in the sky with a whole lot of other drops of rain. This little drop of rain said, "I'm tired of hanging around up in this grey old cloud. I'm going down to earth!"

And this little drop of rain fell Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeh right down to the earth and into a puddle. It landed - splash - right next to a tadpole.

"Oh! who are you?" said the tadpole.

"It's all right," said the raindrop, "I'm just like the rest of the water in this puddle."

"Good" said the tadpole, wiggling it's tail, "I like lots of good, fresh water."

"I wish, I wish my friends up there in the cloud would come down and join me," said the raindrop. There was a whoosh of wind, a flash of lightning, a rumble of thunder and down came the rain. Soon hundreds and hundreds of the raindrop's friends were splashing down into the puddle. It wasn't long before there were so many rain drops in the puddle that they flowed out of the puddle and started to run down the hill.

"Weeeeeeeh! Let's go!" said the little raindrop.

They flowed through some moss, over tree roots and rocks and into a creek. In the creek there were crayfish, and frogs, eels and tortoises.

"Oh. Look. There's a otter. Oh it's so nice," said the little raindrop. "Let's stay here."

"No. Come on. It's downhill all the way to sea. Come with us." cried the other raindrops.

They flowed with the creek down over waterfalls and rapids, "Yahoo!" and into a river.

"Oh we're going slower now," said the little rain drop.

With the river they went past fish and ducks, boats and ships, and out into the great, salty sea.

"Oooh. All this salt. I bet the otter wouldn't like this," said the little raindrop.

"No but other animals do. Look at that shark and there's a whale," said an old raindrop who had been in the sea before.

The whale swam up and breathed out with a great wsssssssssh! The little raindrop went flying up into the air and splashed back down into the sea again.

"That was fun," said the little raindrop, "how can I get up into the air again?"

"Oh, just you wait for the sun to shine. Then some of us will float up again," said the old raindrop.

And sure enough when the sun came up it shone down on the sea and all the drops of water got warmer and warmer and started floating up into the air.

"Higher, higher, higher the water droplets floated right up into the sky.

"We're back. We're back up in the sky. We're in a cloud again. Hooray!"

And do you know what? It wasn't long before that little raindrop decided to fall right back down to the earth again.

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To give us a better understanding of the damage caused by plastic let's take a look at the
'Life story' of three plastic bottles...

BOTTLE ONE: Like 100's of millions of tons of its brethren, this bottle ends up in a landfill, this huge dump expands each day as more trash comes in and continues to take up space. As plastics sit there, being compressed among layers of other junk, rain water flows through the waste and absorbs the water-soluble compounds it contains, some of those are highly toxic. Together they create a harmful stew called Leacheate that moves into the groundwater, soil and streams poisoning ecosystems, and harming wildlife. It can take this bottle an agonizing 1000 years to decompose.

BOTTLE TWO: Floats on a trickle that reaches a stream, a stream that flows into a river and a river which flows into the ocean. After months lost at sea, it is drawn into a massive vortex, where trash accumulates – a place known as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Here the ocean's currents attract millions of pieces of plastic debris. These areas are called GYRES; there are at least 5 Plastic filled Gyres in the world's seas. Places where the pollutants turn the water into a cloudy plastic soup. Some animals, like sea birds get entangled in the mess, they, and other sea creatures, mistake the brightly coloured plastic bits for food. Plastic makes them feel full when they are not, and so they starve to death and then pass the toxins from the plastic up the food chain. Lantern- squid -tuna – us. Most plastics don't biodegrade which means they are destined to break down into smaller and smaller pieces called micro plastics, which might rotate in the sea eternally. Yes, we are using too much plastic, the main problem being that of 'single use' plastic

BOTTLE THREE: This bottle is spared the cruel purgatories of the first two. A truck brings these into a plant where it is squeezed flat and compressed into blocks. The blocks are shredded into tiny pieces which are washed and melted so they become the raw materials which can be used again. Now ready to be reborn as something new, like a rain coat, an umbrella, or a storage box.....

REMEMBER the FOUR 'Rs'

Refuse to buy bottled water, and refuse to use a plastic straw.

Reduce the use of plastic shopping bags by taking a material bag for shopping.

Re-Use a yoghurt pot in which to store pencils and crayons.

Re- Cycle plastic, collect and know where this should be taken.

Ecobricks and Adva YSD



What is an Eco-Brick?

A tightly-stuffed plastic bottle filled with clean and dry plastic that is used as a low-cost, environmentally friendly substitute to bricks.

What is it used for?

The idea originated in Guatemala, as a response to their growing waste problem. It was here that the first school was built entirely from plastic! These days, communities around the world are using eco-bricks to build innovative structures such as benches, classrooms, vegetable beds, play-structures or walls! One village in the Phillipines has become a zero waste village thanks to ecobricks and other recycling projects. One of the eco-bricks best properties is its insulation, allowing buildings to keep cool during the day and warm at night- much the same function as the foam that is used in conventional building!

What can/can't go inside an ecobrick?

All clean plastic packaging: Straws, chip packets, cling wrap, plastic foil, stickers, candle wax, pet food plastic bags, polystyrene trays, old cable ties and industrial plastic packaging. Remember, you cannot put any food waste or paper in your eco-brick. Harder plastic can be cut into strips and fed into the bottles.

How do I make an ecobrick?

Step 1: If needed, wash and dry your plastic items.

This is an important step as dirty plastic inside an ecobrick can lead to microbiological growth and methane gases forming inside the ecobrick- these could cause it to pop! I

Step 2: Find your bottle and stuff it with plastic.

You can use either 500ml water bottles or 2 L cooldrink bottles. If we get many different shapes and sizes it makes it difficult to build with them. However, if you have 12 of the same kind of bottle we can make a chair. Tips and tricks: If your item is quite big, try twisting it so it fits in easier or cut into smaller strips. You can also use the end of a wooden spoon to help you. You can create specific colours by putting specific coloured plastic in the base of the bottle.

Step 3: Firmly compact the waste with a stick to ensure there are no air gaps.

It is important to do this right from the beginning otherwise you will find that the top section of the brick is compact while the base is weak. Remember to fill the “bumps” at the bottom of the cooldrink bottles as well as the top end under the lid so that they are particularly hard. When the brick is complete, you should be able to stand on it without it losing its structural integrity. A properly packed 1.5/2 L ecobrick should weigh around 500g, and a packed 500ml bottle should weigh 200g.

Your EcoBrick is complete! What now?

Get it to us so we can use it in building

What is Adva YSD?

Adva YSD was started about 2 years ago to bring the benefits of Scouts to children in disadvantaged communities. The structure and program of Scouts ensure that children feel that they belong to a group, learn skills and develop into active citizens with an attitude of service to their community. True to scout traditions we go camping while learning business skills and how to survive in the urban jungle. Our long term community service / environmental project is making ecobricks to build benches for school playgrounds. We have also partnered with another organisation who are trying to create 100 new pre-schools in the North and West rand area so that every young child can be in a school! The preschools need chairs and often extra walls and fences so the children can be secure. We need 12 x 500ml bottles to make one chair and around 50 x 2 L bottles to make a bench. We are also teaching our high school scouts how to do the actual building so that they learn a new skill.

Although there are many other structures that can be built we will dedicate our bricks to these two causes until we have finished them (which may be never) or unless we get many more ecobricks than we need. Then we will find something else to build.

How else can you get involved?

We would love to put covers and seats on all chairs. We would love to pay R25 for people from our disadvantaged areas where unemployment is high to make the bricks and R25 for someone to make the cover. Maybe you would be interested in sponsoring these costs and put your company's logo on them? If you would like to sponsor a pre-school chair for R50 please send us an email.

How long will it take me to fill a 2L Eco-brick?

Bachelor: 1 month / 1 week for a 500ml bottle

Couple: 3 weeks

Family: 2 weeks – but it does depend on your consumption

Thank you very much for helping the environment and our preschools. To see what happens to your bricks and what and where we build please follow us on Facebook or Twitter @AdvaYSD or contact us on advaysd@gmail.com

How to Make an Eco-brick

Choose one kind of bottle that is in abundance in your community and stick to it – generally this will be 2lt Coke bottle.

What can go into an Eco-brick?

- Cling wrap
- Aluminium foil
- Photos and transparencies
- Polystyrene chips
- Plastic fruit punnets (shredded)
- Silvery packets (from chips to chocolates)
- Wax paper
- Dogfood bags
- Plastic packaging & packets
- Anything that cannot be readily re-cycled in the normal way.

NB – only use *clean, dry plastics and fillers*

DO NOT USE:

- Glass
- Paper
- Any Biodegradable items (eg. Wet waste and food scaps)

Pack the bottle tight, mix plastics as you go

- Use a dowel stick to compact the plastics/filler around the inside of the bottle and ensure that the entire bottle (right to under the lid) is firm and dense. You should be able to stand on the completed brick without it distorting in any way.
- Weigh the brick – it should be a minimum of 450-500gms



Land and Plants

17th Sunday after Pentecost

16th September

Readings: *Genesis 1:11-13*

Theme: *land and plants*

Memory verses:



Information for the teacher:

Let the earth bring forth—The bare soil was clothed with verdure, and it is noticeable that the trees, plants, and grasses—the three great divisions of the vegetable kingdom here mentioned—were not called into existence in the same way as the light and the air; they were made to grow, and they grew as they do still out of the ground—not, however, by the slow process of vegetation, but through the divine power, without rain, dew, or any process of labour—sprouting up and flourishing in a single day. (Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible commentary)

1:6-13 The earth was emptiness, but by a word spoken, it became full of God's riches. Though the use of them is allowed to humans, they are from God, and to God's service and honour they must be used. The earth, at God's command, brings forth grass, herbs, and fruits. God must have the glory and we must remember we are dependent on the earth (Matthew Henry concise commentary).

South Africa is so rich in both plant and animal diversity. We have over 1000 kinds of trees, while the whole of Europe has fewer than 700. The Cape Fynbos is one of the world's most diverse floral kingdoms – Table Mountain alone hosts as many plant species as in the U.K. – all 1500 species of them – making the Western Cape more botanically diverse than the richest tropical rain forest in South America. Furthermore, the Cape Fynbos is a totally unique kind of vegetation – it is found nowhere else on earth!

We need to nurture and protect our environment. With growing urbanisation there is the tendency to remove the green belts of our surroundings. With that, millions of animals lose their habitat. The removal of grasslands and large forest areas is a worldwide phenomenon. Since the industrial era, more than half the world's original forests have been destroyed and millions of animals have been endangered. If this encroachment of the natural habitat is not regulated, more than half our plant and animal species will be extinct. And with that humans will become extinct. Remember we need the earth to live but if humans had to disappear the earth will carry on without us.

Today's lesson aims to instil within us all an appreciation for the nature around us, and an awareness of the plight of our fauna and flora. As a Childrens ministry, you may consider planning a hike or a picnic for the children to a nearby nature reserve or botanical garden, for it is in nature that we feel oneness with all creation!

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

To learn more about the trees, plants and grasses.

To love and care for God's creation.



Attention Grabber:

This is an interactive way of telling a story. Have your children act out a certain aspect of the story, encourage them to go all out and include sound effects etc. Perhaps have each grade act out a different aspect.



The Bible reading (Gen 1: 11 - 13) for today is incorporated into the attention grabber.

10 God called the dry ground “land.” **(have a grade pretend to be land)**

God called the waters that were gathered together “oceans.” **(have a grade pretend to be the ocean)**

And

God saw that it was good.

11 Then God said, “Let the land produce plants.

(ask a certain grade to pretend that they are growing plants)

“Let them bear their own seeds. And let there be trees on the land that bear fruit with seeds in it. **(have another grade pretend to be trees)**

Let each kind of plant and tree have its own kind of seed.” And that’s exactly what happened.

12 The land produced plants. Each kind of plant had its own kind of seeds. The land produced trees that bore fruit with seeds in it. **(have a grade pretend to be different kinds of fruit)**

Each kind of tree had its own kind of seeds.

God saw that it was good. 13 And there was evening, and there was morning — It was day three. **(have one grade be evening and another morning).**



Discussion questions

What is your favourite fruit to eat?

What is your favourite vegetable?

Do you have a favourite tree or plant? What are they?

Do you have a favourite animal?

Today we will begin our lesson by going outside to look at the beautiful plants that God has created. Take the children outside to collect as many different green leaves as possible or, if your church does not have many plants, or diverse types of plants, then bring a collection of leaves with you to your lesson.

Ask your children if they realised that there were so many different types of leaves, colours of plants or if they saw any insects or birds.

Do the children also know that plants are the homes to millions of animals? Discuss which animals they think live in trees and amongst plants.



Craft:

Organic planting pots using old newspapers

This is a fantastic way of making your own organic planting pots. The final product (ie the pots) are great for your small plants, they can be put very tightly together and when the plant is ready to be put into the ground you can plant it with pot still on. The paper will gradually break down in the ground.

You will need:

Newspaper
Bottle (tomato sauce bottle or similar)
Pair of scissors
Soil
Seed / cutting

Instructions:

1. Use your bottle as a guide to see where you should cut the newspaper. Place the bottle just more than halfway on the paper. You can cut several pages each time.
 2. Wrap the paper around the bottle
 3. Using your fingers, fold excess paper towards bottom of bottle and flatten
 4. Carefully remove pot from bottle. If you look inside the pot the bottom will be raised. Use fingers or knuckles to press bottom flat.
 5. Fill your pot with soil (This is what makes the pot steady. Without soil it will disintegrate in a few second.)
 6. Plant your seeds, giving them a little water.
 7. Make a tag to remind you what seed is in your biodegradable pot
- When your seeds have grown and you are ready to plant it into the garden – plant the seeds in the little pot – this will provide some compost while it is growing!



Or you could use old egg shells



Or if you have Checkers Little Garden that would also be a wonderful craft



Follow this link to see how to regrow fruit and veggies from scraps!

<https://www.facebook.com/officialgoodful/videos/1890922724311518/UzpfSTewMDAxNDA4ODgyNDk0ND00NDZMDI5MDk3ODI2NjY/>





Physical activities:

What you need:

a large sheet or old newspaper (depending on how big your group is)
or you can draw a large circle in the sand if paper is not available

Take a sheet and lay it flat on the ground. You could also draw a large circle on the ground with a stick.

The children must stand on the sheet or circle drawn in the earth – if you have a large group of children, perhaps just select a few to be part of this activity.

Explain that they must imagine they are animals, birds and insects, living in a beautiful place with streams and food. Perhaps ask each child which animal they are in this game.

Notice how close together they are standing.

Slowly fold parts of the sheet over to make it smaller as you tell about what humans do to the natural habitat of animals:

- People decide to build a road (fold over part of sheet, or make the circle smaller)
- They then build housing (fold over part of the sheet, or make the circle smaller)
- They then need a huge shopping mall (fold over part of the sheet, or make the circle smaller)
- They then need a big farm to grow cattle for them to eat more beef burgers (fold over part of sheet, or make the circle smaller)

Ask the children how they think the animals feel about being squashed together. Is it comfortable?

Can they move? Can they breathe?

Did some of them fall off the sheet?

Explain that, sadly, this is what we are doing to animals, we are moving into their land and some of them die because they don't have enough food any more or space to grow.

Discuss that people remove or clear large areas of grassland or forests and related eco-systems. Often trees are not planted to replace the trees that have been cut down.



Prayer: God you created all things. Thank you for all of nature. Please help us look after what we have and to leave an area in better condition than when we arrived! Please guide us through this week and help us not waste what we have. We love you amen.



Older children (7 – 13 years)

Lesson objectives:

To gain an appreciation for our natural surroundings and the diversity of God's Creation

To encourage our children to provide an environment which encourages plants and wildlife



Attention Grabber: you can use the same as above.



Bible Story:

Genesis 1:11-13



Discussion questions

Why do we need trees?

Why do we need animals?

What does indigenous mean? (originating or occurring naturally in a particular place; native)

Why is it important to grow indigenous plants? (Restoring native plant habitat is vital to preserving biodiversity. ... Native plants are those that occur naturally in a region in which they evolved. They are the ecological basis upon which life depends, including birds and people. Without them and the insects that co-evolved with them, local birds cannot survive.)

What would happen if all the plants and animals had to disappear from earth?

What do you think would happen if only humans were to disappear from earth?

Did you know:

Guess how many plant species there are in the world? No-one knows for sure, although some estimate the number to be about 450 000. Isn't God amazing?!

☐ Did you know that there are over 1000 kinds of trees in South Africa? (The whole of Europe has fewer than 700.)

☐ Did you know that Table Mountain alone has as many plant species as in the U.K?

☐ Furthermore, did you know that the Cape Fynbos is a totally unique kind of vegetation – it is found nowhere else on earth except in the Cape?! (Pictures of fynbos can be found at the end of this lesson)



Craft: follow this link to see how you can make your own compost!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kA3q07paNbE>

what you will need:

2L plastic bottle

Sand from your garden

Food scraps
Plant scraps
Paper scraps
Scissors
Spray bottle
Drawing pin
Tray

How you make it:

1. Rinse your plastic bottle and take off any labels
2. Cut the top off the bottle
3. Pierce the bottom of the bottle with the drawing pin for drainage
4. Place onto a tray
5. Now take the sand and place it inside your bottle
6. Then add your shedded paper and plant scarps like leaves or grass cuttings
7. Spary a little water inside your bottle
8. Now add any food scraps.
9. Mix this all up.
10. You can use the top of the bottle that you cut as a lid (upside down) which can be used aas a funnel when you water your compost.
11. make sure to water often.
12. Keep in a warm sunny space. You need to mix and water often and can add more food/plant /paper scraps as time goes on.



Songs:



Worksheet:



Physical activities:

Trees and squirrels

What you need:

Children in groups of 3.
2 children will need to be a tree
1 will need to be the squirrel

What you do.

In your groups of 3. 2 children are the trees. The face each other and hold hands. The lift the hands up like a bridge.

1 child is the squirrel. When the squirrel comes 'home' to the tree the children lower their arms and close the squirrel inside.

The teacher then says time to find a home and the trees lift their arms and the squirrel finds a new tree. The can either run or walk. Last group is then 'out' but to keep the game going they will then all turn into squirrels. The last group standing is the winner!

To make this game more fun you can add music. When the music stops the squirrels need to be with their trees.



Prayer: God you created all things. Thank you for all of nature. Please help us look after what we have and to leave an area in better condition then when we arrived! Please guide us through this week and help us not waste what we have. We love you amen.

GAUTENG VEGETABLE PLANTING CHART

To find charts for your area visit [seedsforafrica](http://seedsforafrica.org) online.

Print out copies for your class so they can grow their own veggies at home in the right season!

Vegetable Planting Chart

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Beans (Broad)												
Beans (Bush)												
Beans (Climbing)												
Beetroot												
Broccoli												
Brussel Sprouts												
Cabbage												
Carrot												
Cauliflower												
Celery												
Corn												
Cucumber												
Eggfruit (Brinjal)												
Lettuce												
Melons												
Onion												
Parsnip												
Peas												
Peppers												
Potatoes												
Pumpkin												
Radish												
Swiss Chard / Spinach												
Tomato												
Watermelon												

It's not all about you

Sunday after Pentecost

22nd September

Readings: Gen 1: 24-31

Theme: Choices – Diversity of Creation and how we cannot survive without it.

- **Memory verses:**



Information for the teacher:

For many eco-theologians these verses of problematic for the environment. In these verses God makes all living creatures, everything from domestic live stock to wild animals and things that creep. God then goes on to make humans, in God's image and humans are given dominion over all creatures. Humans are also told to multiply and to subdue the earth. Another word for subdue is to defeat or overpower.

The New Jerome Biblical commentary speaks about that humans were to bring forcefully under control, to make untamed land serve humans. It goes on to say that Humans nonetheless are to respect the environment; they are not to kill for food but are to treat all life with respect.

The problematic parts of this passage are the parts where humans are above the creation and because we are made in the image of God we then are like God. The other issue is we are told to multiply. When this passage was written the population was not at the size that it is now and there were many more resources than what we have now.

Many have used the term stewardship, being good stewards of the Earth. The Cambridge Dictionary defines Stewardship as: Someone's Stewardship of something is the way in which the person controls or organizes it. The issue with the use of Stewardship is that we see ourselves as being above or in control of the Earth and we have not done a very good job of taking care of it so far.

This lesson has been called "its not about you" and its been called this because we often see this story of creation as being created by God for the benefit of humans. And for that reason, we can do what we like with it. We have used this scripture to manipulate and pillage the Earth for our own gain and it has come at a massive cost.

Everything in the Earth needs another component in the Earth to survive and thrive, the only thing the Earth does not need to survive is Human's. In fact, humans have become the disease or parasite that is destroying the planet.

In this lesson, we are teaching a term called mutual custodianship which means that we look after the Earth so that the Earth can look after us. We are also looking at how everything is important even if it doesn't appeal to humans e.g. the Parktown prawn. And by changing or removing one spices form the eco system it destroys an eco-system.

Lesson Suggestions:



Younger Children (3 – 6 years):

Lesson Objectives:

To know that everything in God's creation is important than us.

What is our part in all of it.



Attention Grabber:

Jenga is a game of skill and strategy. In the game, you build a tower, move the pieces and hope that you aren't the one who makes it fall.

Jenga is played with 54 wooden blocks. Each block is three times as long as its width, and one fifth as thick as its length $1.5 \times 2.5 \times 7.5$ cm.



Put down placing three blocks facing down. Make three blocks face the left. Keep on doing this until for all blocks.

Jenga played with 2 or more players.

Once the tower is built

Let's start game

1. Try to take a block out by tapping the short side of it, or by pulling it out.
2. Once you pull it out, place the block on the top of the tower - either facing left of the blocks, or facing down, or vice versa.
3. Repeat step #1 until someone makes the Jenga Tower fall

Once you see that the tower has a lot of gaps in it you will see that the structure starts to look unstable, explain that the eco system is like this at first it seems that the structure is stable but the more we destroy and take things out the more likely it is to fall or collapse.

If you don't have the game Jenga you can take yogurt cups, you'll need 10. Each cup represents a different aspect of the environment. Make one of the cups humankind. Then stack the cups in the shape of a pyramid so four on the bottom layer then three, then two and the top one to be humans. Now ask a child to remove the human cup from the pyramid and notice the pyramid still stands but if you remove any of the cups from the rest of the layers it collapses. Illustrating that humans need the environment, but the environment doesn't need humans.



Bible Story: Gen 1:24-31

In the bible story today, we read about how God created all creatures.



Discussion

1. Why do you think God created different types of creatures?

The Earth needs all creatures in which to survive some are there to eat other creatures, or to break down bacteria, or to bring good soil to the top of the pile to help plants grow. All creatures have a role to play in the running of the environment.

2. What about a creature like a frog, what do you think God made frogs for?

They play an **important** role in consuming insects and are an **important** food source for birds, snakes, and other animals throughout the food web.

3. Should we kill animals or insects that can hurt us like bees?

No Bees are an important part to our existence, not only do they make honey they also pollinate plants so without them our food wouldn't grow.

Today's lesson

The Earth is a wonderful and interesting place, it has lots of things that live in it that we wouldn't necessarily see on an everyday basis unless you look hard to see it. Often things live underground or high up in trees and unless you're really looking hard you don't see it. Sometimes we don't like some of the creatures and we don't think they serve a purpose for us humans like what's the point of having mosquitos?

The thing is mosquitos and ants and even cockroaches are just as important as cows and chickens and rhino's they are just if not more important than us...

When we think we don't need a certain type of creature and we get rid of it, it does a lot of damage to the other creatures we do need. And if we take one creature away the other creatures then don't have food, or they are not food, so the balance then isn't there and like the Jenga blocks everything collapses.

If we don't have the earth if the Earth doesn't work, we can't live.



Physical activities:

Go outside and see how many different creatures they can find. Tell them to look for certain creatures (you will need to look first before, so they know what to look for). So, ask them to find an ant (they must not try to pick up or kill the ant but let you know that they found it). Ask them to find a beetle or maybe a worm or a bee or a lady bug and then see if they can find something that you didn't ask them to find.

Another game you can play is the name game. Have the children stand in a circle and each child must choose a different animal (no two children can have the same animal) once everyone has a different animal the game can begin. One person starts they need to say their animal's name

so for e.g. they will say cat and then they must call another person's animal so elephant. The person who is the elephant then needs to say their name elephant and then call someone else's animal like frog and so the game continues. If someone makes a mistake like not saying their animal first or calling an animal that is not in the circle or an animal of someone who is out that person must sit down.



Prayer: Dear God please help me to remember that your whole creation needs every creature to exist, help me to play my part in the environment.

Amen



Older children (7 – 13 years)

Lesson objectives:

To understand that we need to take care of the Earth for the Earth to take care of us.



Attention Grabber:

Jenga is a game of skill and strategy. In the game, you build a tower, move the pieces and hope that you aren't the one who makes it fall.

Jenga is played with 54 wooden blocks. Each block is three times as long as its width, and one fifth as thick as its length $1.5 \times 2.5 \times 7.5$ cm.



Put down placing three blocks facing down. Make three blocks face the left. Keep on doing this until for all blocks.

Jenga played with 2 or more players.

Once the tower is built

Let's start game

1. Try to take a block out by tapping the short side of it, or by pulling it out.
2. Once you pull it out, place the block on the top of the tower - either facing left of the blocks, or facing down, or vice versa.
3. Repeat step #1 until someone makes the Jenga Tower fall

Once you see that the tower has a lot of gaps in it you will see that the structure starts to look unstable, explain that the eco system is like this at first it seems that the structure is stable but the more we destroy and take things out the more likely it is to fall or collapse.

If you don't have the game Jenga you can take yogurt cups, you'll need 10. Each cup represents a different aspect of the environment. Make one of the cups humankind. Then stack the cups in the shape of a pyramid so four on the bottom layer then three, then two and the top one to be humans. Now ask a child to remove the human cup from the pyramid and notice the pyramid still stands but if you remove any of the cups from the rest of the layers it collapses. Illustrating that humans need the environment, but the environment doesn't need humans.



Bible Story:

Gen 1: 24-31

In this lesson we learn about how God creates all creatures, domesticated, wild those that creep and humans. In this weeks passages we are told to respect the Earth, and to take care of it.



Discussion questions

1. Do you think that we take care of the Earth?
2. Why do you think God made different types of animals?
3. Why do you think God made the animals that doesn't seem to have a purpose?
4. How much do you know about different types of creatures?

Lesson

Sometimes we only see what we think we need, like for example when you get into a car all you see is what is in front of you, the key turns and the car starts, and you move forward. However, there is a lot more that goes into the running of a car and when things go wrong with the car the car will just stop running.

The environment is like this we see what we think we need to survive and nothing else really matters until that little thing that keeps it running dies out and then so does the environment.

The truth of the matter is the Earth doesn't really need us if humans were to for some reason disappear off the earth, the earth would survive in fact it would probably thrive. We need the Earth to survive if the Earth dies so do we, if we lose different species (not just the rhinos) the Environment gets weaker and eventually will collapse. All species depend on each other for survival and so do we.



Physical activities:

Elimination tag

Start a normal game of tag. Have one person who's one who needs to catch the people around them. Once you have been caught you need to sit out. Once everyone has been caught play the game again only this time the person who is on my only touch someone on the elbow for them to be out. Play until everyone is out. Play the game again this time the person who is on my not use their hands they can only get people out by touch people on the knee but must use their shoulders to touch them. Play until everyone is out. The play again and the person who is on must touch people to get them out but may not physically touch them in any form. (the game cannot be played from this point on.) This is to illustrate that you need all components to play the game correctly and you can make adjustment but eventually it can't be played which is just like the environment eventually we will have destroyed so many aspects of the environment that it will not be able to survive.



Prayer: Dear God, thank you for your diverse creation. We pray that we remember that we are only one part in this very large eco system, please help us to remember where we fit into this system. We pray this in your name.

Amen