

THE BEGINNING OF LIFE AS WE KNOW IT

Bible Basis: Genesis 1:1–3:24

Key Verse: So God created man in his own likeness. He created him in the likeness of God. He created them as male and female. —Genesis 1:27, NIRV

Bible Point: God made everything there is. He made me to know him.

Resource: *The Story for Kids*, Chapter 1: “The Beginning of Life As We Know It”

STEP 1: COME TOGETHER

Stuff You Need: Optional: PowerPoint slide entitled Space View, computer and projection equipment

Say, **Let me ask you some challenging questions and see what you know.** Display the Space View slide and invite kids to tell you what they see. Then ask these questions. (If you’re not using the slide, go straight to the questions.)

- **What is the speed of light?** (186,286 miles per second)
- **Which planets can you see without a telescope?** (Depending on the time of year—Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn.)
- **What is the largest object in the universe?** (Abell 3266, a comet-like ball of gas that is a thousand million times bigger than the sun.)
- **How many stars do scientists think there are?** (70 sextillion; for added effect, write the number on the board—70,000,000,000,000,000,000,000.)

After the questions, wrap up with a brief discussion:

- **How do you feel when you think about how huge and amazing the universe is?**
- **What’s the most amazing fact about the universe that you know?**

Say, **We are such a small part of the universe God created, but we are the part he cares about the most. He created us to know him and be like him.**

STEP 2: HEAR THE STORY

Stuff You Need: copies of *The Story for Kids*, Bibles, *The Story Elementary Trading Card 1*

Tell the story from *The Story for Kids*, Chapter 1. You can also have the children find Genesis 1 and mark it in their Bible. Either you or a child in your class can read the Scripture passages listed throughout the story.

In the Beginning

The Bible story has three parts, each with a different interaction from the children. Begin the Bible story by explaining that the children will do an “anti-echo.” You will whisper a word, and they will shout it back to you. Practice with any word you choose, then begin the story.

God made the world in six days. He made the (whisper) light and darkness. (Pause for kids to echo.) He made the (whisper) seas and the sky. (Echo.) He made the (whisper) dry ground and plants. (Echo.) He made the (whisper) stars and sun and moon. (Echo.) He filled the water and the sky with (whisper) living things. (Echo.) God made every kind of creature on the Earth. But he had one more thing to create.

In the second part of the story, children will mirror your actions.

Stand facing the children. If you move your right arm, they will move their left. If you turn to your right, they will turn to their left. Choose any actions you like for kids to reflect. Have a child read *Genesis 1:26–27*.

He created Adam and Eve and gave them the Garden of Eden to live in. God wanted people—us—to reflect his glory. We can have many of the same qualities God has—like love, kindness, creativity, and generosity. Let’s practice being mirrors to remember that we are made in God’s image and reflect God’s glory.

In the final story section, the children will respond to cue words by saying, “Oh no!”

The time came when Adam and Eve had to make some choices. When I say, “Was that a good choice?” You answer, “Oh no!”

God told Adam and Eve they could eat from anything in the garden except one tree. But the serpent hated God and wanted Adam and Eve to think God lied. He told Eve she could eat from that tree and she did. Was that a good choice? (Oh no!) Then Eve offered Adam some fruit. Was that a good choice? (Oh no!) Then Adam ate the fruit. Was that a good choice? (Oh no!) Then Adam and Eve tried to hide from God because they knew they had disobeyed. Was that a good choice? (Oh no!)

God sent Adam and Eve out of the garden after that. But he never stopped loving them, and he never wanted them to stop reflecting his glory. Even now, we still reflect God’s glory, and every day we can choose to be more like him.

After you have told the Bible story, give each child a copy of *The Story Elementary Trading Card 1*. Ask children to describe the picture on the card and tell what part of the story the picture shows. As a class, read the key verse from the back of the card or from the Bible. Ask:

- **How did God feel about Adam and Eve?**
- **What does it mean that God made us in his own image?** (*We reflect his glory; we have the ability to be like God in our characteristics.*)

Collect the cards for now. You’ll send them home with the children later.

STEP 3: EXPLORE MORE

Choose any or all of these activity options to help your class explore the lesson further.

OPTION 1: RIGHT AND WRONG

Stuff You Need: index cards

Before class, write one true or false sentence about today's lesson on each card, or you can have children write their own true or false sentences in class.

In class, have the children stand in the middle of the room. Explain to the children that you will read one card at a time. If they think the statement is true, they should move to the right. If they think the statement is false, they should go to the left. If children get the answer incorrect, take time to look up the answer in the Bible. For more of a challenge, add sentences about the Bible passages covered in *The Story for Kids*, Chapter 1.

OPTION 2: GARDEN OF EDEN

Stuff You Need: construction paper in a variety of colors, paper plates, glue, tape, scissors.

Optional: toothpicks, paper clips, other small tactile items

Say, **God created the Garden of Eden as the perfect place for Adam and Eve to live. Let's make our own 3-D versions of the Garden of Eden.** Give each child a paper plate. Challenge them to cut shapes from paper to represent items in the Garden of Eden and stand them up in a three-dimensional picture on the plate. One method is to fold paper and cut the shape out of two layers at once, leaving the fold uncut at the top of the shape. Bend the bottoms into short tabs that can be taped to the plate to make the figure stand sort of like a pyramid. As the group works, engage them in discussion.

- **How do you think the world might have been different if Adam and Eve had not disobeyed God?**
- **What will you remember most about today's Bible story?**

As you wrap up, say, **Our God created an exciting world for us to live in. He made us to be like him in many ways. No matter how many stars are in the universe, they can't know God the way we can.**

OPTION 3: MY GARDEN OF EDEN

Stuff You Need: My Garden of Eden Activity Sheet, crayons

Optional: poster board, art supplies, markers

Give an activity sheet to each child. Talk about the idea of a perfect world. Brainstorm the types of things that might be in a perfect world. Have the children draw a version of their perfect world, created by God, not man! Send home to share with their family.

OPTION 4: CARING FOR CREATION

Stuff You Need: poster board, art supplies

God gave the world and all creation to us to use and care for the best we can. What are some parts of creation that you use daily, that you feel you cannot live without?

How do you care for that creation?

How do you show God your appreciation?

Can one or two people make a difference?

Break the group into smaller groups of three or four students. Have each group choose one part of God's creation that needs more of humanity's care and concern. Challenge each group to write up a plan to present to God—showing him how they would protect creation.

Direct the group to describe the creation, name how and why it might need our attention, and three to four ways they plan to carry out their plan.

Use poster board, markers, or other art supplies if needed to help illustrate their project. Present the projects to the larger group.

STEP 4: GOING HOME

At the end of the lesson, pray together, praising God for his creation and asking God to help you know him more. Make sure each child takes home a copy of *The Story Elementary Trading Card 1*, Activity Sheet(s)/Crafts, and the Parents' Page.