

THE
GOSPEL
PROJECT[®]
FOR PRETEENS

IN THE
BEGINNING

VOLUME 1 • LEADER GUIDE





Unit 1, Session 1

God Created the World

Genesis 1

Story Point: God created everything, and everything He created was good.

Open your Bible and read aloud Genesis 1, or tell the story from the following Bible story script.

In the beginning, nothing existed except for God. **God created the heavens and the earth.** The earth had no shape, and darkness covered the earth. The Spirit of God was there, hovering over the waters.

God spoke: “Let there be light!” What God said happened. **God saw that the light was good**, and He separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day,” and He called the darkness “night.” **Evening came, and then morning came. That was the first day.**

God spoke again: “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate them.” What God said happened. He made a space between the water that was on the earth and the water above the earth. **God called the expanse “sky.” Evening came, and then morning came. That was the second day.**

God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear.” What God said happened. God called the dry land “earth,” and He called the gathered water “seas.” God saw that it was good. Then God said, **“Let the earth make plants and trees with fruits and seeds.”** What God said happened. Plants and trees grew, and **God saw that it was**

good. Evening came, and then morning came. That was the third day.

Next, God placed lights in the sky. God created the sun to shine during the day and the moon and stars to shine at night. God gave us lights to shine on the earth, to separate day from night, and to help us track time in days and years. **God saw that it was good. Evening came, and then morning came. That was the fourth day.**

Next, God made creatures that move and swim in the water. He made birds to flap their wings and soar across the sky. God saw that it was good. God told the animals to multiply, and they filled the seas and the sky. Evening came, and then morning came. That was the fifth day.

Then God made more animals—livestock, creatures that crawl, and wildlife—to live on the earth. When God said it, it happened. **And God saw that all of it was good.**

Christ Connection: Jesus is Lord over all of creation. The Son has always existed. The Bible says everything was created by Him and for Him, and He holds everything together. All of creation exists to bring God glory.



INTRODUCE the Story

WELCOME TIME

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to imagine a perfect world. Invite them to describe it.

OPTION 1: Instant recipes

Supplies: cookbook, paper, pencils, watch or timer

Form teams of two to four kids. Give each team a piece of paper and a pencil. Explain that you are going to name a dish from a cookbook and kids should list all the ingredients they think you need to make it.

Allow about one minute for kids to write and then call time. Invite each group to share its list. Then share the actual list from the cookbook. Play additional rounds as time allows. (Suggested dishes: buttermilk pancakes, lasagna, blueberry pie, pasta salad, caramel brownies, chicken casserole)

- When God created the world, how do you think He did it?
- Why do you think God created everything?

OPTION 2: Clay creations

Supplies: modeling clay or play dough, index cards, marker

Label index cards with the names of created things: sun, moon, star, palm tree, bird, fish, camel, and so forth. Prepare at least one index card per kid.

Mix up the cards and distribute them. Give each kid a lump of clay to shape the item on the card. Allow kids to work for several minutes. Then invite kids to take turns displaying their creations. Challenge the rest of the group to guess what the creation is.

- What would you need to create real stars, trees, or animals?



TEACH the Story

The Bible tells us what is true about God and about ourselves. All of the stories in the Bible fit together to tell us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

First we need to start at the beginning. Today we are going to hear how God created the world. Whether this is your first time or your tenth time hearing this story, there is always something new to learn in God's Word.

Read Genesis 1:1-25.

- What does this story teach us about God?

When God created everything, He made it out of nothing. Isn't that incredible? God didn't start with some materials and add glue or form something that already existed into something new. Nothing else existed. He spoke, and it happened. In this story, **we see God's authority**—His power to give orders, make decisions, and control things. As Creator and King, God has authority over everything.

- What was special about everything God created?

God saw that all of **it was good**. God created everything, and everything He created was good. Everything God created was exactly how God intended it to be. Everything God made brought Him glory.

- Form groups of two or three and practice retelling the Bible story in your own words. Think of someone you could share the story with this week.

CHRIST CONNECTION

The Bible says in John 1 that the Word was with God in the beginning, and the Word was God. All things were created through Him. "The Word" is God the Son. When God spoke things into existence, the Son was there. Jesus is Lord over all creation. He is God the Son, and God the Son has always existed. The Bible says everything was created by Him and for Him, and He holds everything together.



TEACH the Story

MISSIONS MOMENT

God created the whole universe including people, and everything He created was good. Billions of people live in the world, and God loves them all. But many people in the world today have not heard that God loves them. God's plan all along has been for people to worship Him by loving Jesus. We all have a part in sharing the gospel of Jesus with everyone, everywhere!

PRAY

God, You created everything and everything You created was good. We are thankful that You care for us. When we pray, You hear us. Draw our hearts to You. We want to give You glory because You are our Creator and King. Amen.

THE GOSPEL: GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

The gospel is the good news, the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use Scripture and the guide provided below to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.



GOD RULES. Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.



WE SINNED. Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.



GOD PROVIDED. Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.



JESUS GIVES. Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.



WE RESPOND. Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.



APPLY the Story

Big Picture Question

Who is God? God is our Creator and King.

God made everything, and He is in charge of everything. As we see and think about creation, we can remember that God rules over it all.

- How do we know God exists?
- How have you seen God's power and majesty in creation?

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to Genesis 1. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Genesis 1:1. Explain that the Book of Genesis is the first book in the Bible. The Bible is made up of 66 books, and these books are divided into two sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Book of Genesis is the first book in the Old Testament.

Point out that the word *genesis* means “beginning.” Choose another volunteer to read aloud Genesis 1:1 again. Then lead the group to discuss the following questions.

1. When God spoke, things happened. What does this tell you about His power?

Help kids recognize God's authority over all of creation. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Psalm 47:2.)

2. What makes something good? Who decides what is good?

Help kids define good as anything that is acceptable to God. As Creator and King, God sets the standard for what is good. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Romans 12:2.)

3. What are some parts of creation you enjoy?
Who deserves worship—creation or the Creator? Why?

Guide boys and girls to recognize God as the only One who deserves our worship. No one is like Him. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Revelation 4:11.)



APPLY the Story

KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

Instruct kids to open their Bibles to Colossians 1:16-17. Lead the kids to read the key passage together. Choose a kid to say the first word of the key passage. The kid to her left should say the next word, and so on around the circle until kids say the entire key passage. Repeat as time allows.

We heard in our Bible story today that God created everything, and everything He created was good. Jesus is Lord over all of creation. He is God the Son. The Bible says everything was created by Him and for Him, and He holds everything together. All of creation exists to bring God glory. Why? Well, who is God? God is our Creator and King.

PRAY

Invite volunteers to share prayer requests. Then pray, thanking God for creation that we can enjoy and that points us to Him, our Creator and King.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY: Missions map

Supplies: large world map, construction paper strips, tape, pen or pencils

Hang a large world map where kids can reach it. Cut a strip of construction paper for each kid. Ask kids to write their name in small print on a strip and put a piece of tape on the back. Ask for a volunteer. Blindfold the volunteer or ask him to close his eyes. Spin the volunteer and point him toward the map. Instruct him to walk forward to stick his paper anywhere on the map.

Give each kid a turn. Then “explore” the places kids have marked. Read the name of the country nearest each strip. Remind kids that many people living in these countries have not yet heard the gospel. Share that we can be a part of God’s mission by praying for people living in these countries. Ask kids to reclaim their paper and write the name of the nearest country on their strip.

Challenge kids to take home their strip and place it somewhere they will see it often as a reminder to pray for the people in that country this week.