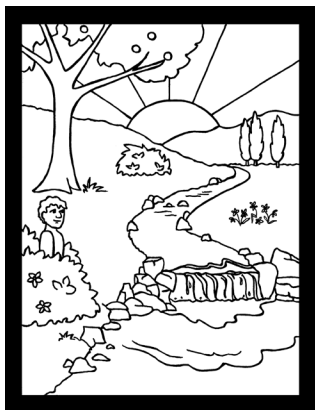




LESSON PLAN

Scripture Texts:

Genesis 1:26-29, 2:4-15

1 Corinthians 15:38-49

Session Theme:

Stewardship

a. Welcome to Class

Teachers should arrive in the classroom well in advance of class. Welcome students as they enter, and inquire about their week. Pass out name tags and record attendance on a classroom chart.

b. Icebreaker: Fruits of the Garden

Challenge kids to name ten fruits that grow on trees. Write these on the board. Answers may include:

apples	oranges	apricots	limes
pears	lemons	nectarines	mangoes
plums	grapefruits	figs	
peaches	cherries	coconuts	

Other delicious fruits, such as strawberries, blueberries, watermelons, cantaloupes, raspberries, bananas, kiwis and grapes, grow from plants, vines or bushes, not trees. *Imagine a world without fruit. We would have so much less enjoyment in eating, and fewer vitamins, too. Yet where did fruit come from in the first place? Was it always here on Earth? Let's begin our lesson to answer that question and many more!*

c. Opening Prayer

Lord God, you created every good thing — people, fruit, rivers, and much more. Thank you for all of it! May we never take these blessings for granted. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

d. SEED Video or Song (Optional)

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This time may also include an opening song or two, using a commercial Sunday School music CD.

Song suggestions for this lesson:

- "All Things Bright and Beautiful" (hymn)
- "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands" (song)

e. Brief Bible Background

Read together the introduction to the lessons for the day, and briefly summarize the context and setting:

- Today's Lesson is from the Old Testament
- Scripture Section: Creation

The very first chapters of the Bible tell stories from the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth and made all living creatures to be his own. God is the maker of all that is seen and unseen!

f. Communicate the Bible Story

Always keep in mind that the main purpose of Sunday School is to put people in contact with Bible stories. Use a version that is appropriate to the age level.

Upper Elementary: Read the Bible Story and Rhyme

Youth/Adults: Read the Scripture text from the Bible

For Upper and Lower Elementary, use the Storyteller questions to help the students think about the events of the story.

g. Complete the Worksheet(s)

Continue with the handout sheets appropriate to the age level of the students in class:

Upper Elementary: Worksheet and Drama

Youth: Bible Study (Maps, Timelines, Questions)

Adult: Bible Study Sheet (Introduction and Discussion)

h. Craft and Activity Time

If there is time after covering the Bible story, the class may move to craft and activity time, described on the following page. (Do not let the activity time supersede the actual time spent on the Scripture lesson.)

i. Summarize and Review

Before ending class, briefly summarize the day's lesson one last time. If you have not already done so, introduce the Theme Word for the week, providing the definition, and asking how the lesson connects to that theme.

Youth/Adult: Discuss "Reflection for the Week Ahead"

j. Closing Prayer

Close the session in prayer before dismissal:

Upper Elementary: Practice a prayer from memory (e.g., the Lord's Prayer, Luther's Morning Prayer, etc.)

Youth/Adult: Use the ADTRC Prayer format



Bible Study Leader's Guide

The following is a discussion and answer guide for the Youth and Adult Bible Study sheets. For all leaders, it can serve to provide some background on the Bible lesson.

Discuss: Genesis 1:26-29, 2:4-15

1. On what day of creation were human beings created? What else was created that same day? What might this tell us about ourselves?

Humans were created on the sixth day, after every other living thing was created. All of the insects and animals were created before human beings were, so we might say that God saved the most complex of the creatures for last.

2. What was unique and different about human beings and their place in creation? In whose image were we created? What do you think that means?

The unique thing about humans is that we are made in the image of God. None of the other creatures were made in God's image, so this is very special. God created humanity to have the same qualities and characteristics as himself. This means that human beings were elevated above the rest of the created order and given the task of caring for and tending to the creation.

3. What command did God first give to humanity (1:28)? What promise did he give them (1:29)?

God said to the first humans, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." They were also to lead and tend the rest of the creation. God gave the first humans all the plants and trees to eat from.

4. Genesis 2:4-7 focuses on how the first human was created. What two steps did God take to accomplish this? The Hebrew word for human (*'adam*) is related to the word for earth/soil (*'adamah*). What does this say about our human nature?

God took the dust of the ground and then breathed life into the dust to make man. This tells us that we have been made from dust, and, one day when our lives are over, we will return to the dust of the earth. We are mortals, not immortal like God the Creator. Our lives here on the earth are finite.

5. How did the first human come alive and become a living being? The Hebrew terms for wind, air, breath, and spirit

are all the same word (*ru'ach*). In what way(s) does God's Holy Spirit give us life?

The first human came alive by the very breath (*ru'ach*) of God. God's breath is the life force that caused the dust to become a living man. The Holy Spirit is the source of our life of faith. As we confess in the Apostles' Creed, we believe that the Holy Spirit brings us to faith, encourages and guides us, forgives our sins, and grants us life everlasting. When Jesus promised the disciples he would send them an advocate and guide, he was talking about the Holy Spirit (John 14:16). The Holy Spirit came to the disciples at Pentecost, after Jesus had ascended to his Father in heaven.

6. How does the Bible describe the Garden of Eden? What do you imagine life was like there? What job was the man given in the garden?

The Bible describes the Garden of Eden as a beautiful place with lush, green vegetation and also describes a river with four tributaries that watered the garden. We can imagine it being more beautiful than any garden we've ever seen. It was holy ground! God gave the man the task of tending the garden by "working it and keeping it" (Genesis 2:15).

7. Which of the two rivers mentioned in 2:10-15 still exist on Earth today? Why do you think this general region is known as the Cradle of Civilization?

The two rivers mentioned in Genesis 2 that still exist are the Tigris and the Euphrates. Those two rivers run through parts of the modern-day countries of Turkey, Syria, Iran, Iraq, and Kuwait and flow into the Persian Gulf. This area is known as the "fertile crescent." Since the Garden of Eden was located there somewhere, we call it the Cradle of Civilization because that's where humanity was formed and placed.

8. According to 1 Corinthians 15:38-49, what was the nature of humanity ("the old Adam")? What is our fate? How does the "last Adam" (Christ) give us eternal life? What will be different about us then?

Humans were given an earthly body which is different than the heavenly body we will receive at the resurrection. The old Adam signifies our sinful nature that is in need of transformation. Jesus transforms us through his life, death, and resurrection.

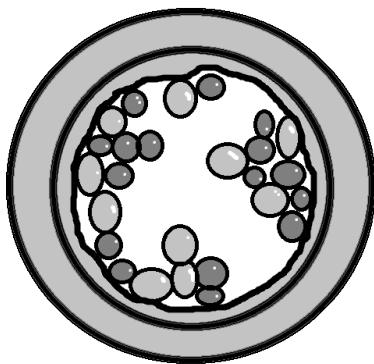
Classroom Craft and Activity Page

Listed below are in-class activities and craft projects related to the theme for the day. Choose one of the following based on the age and capabilities of the students. (Never let the activity or craft time take precedence over the biblical story.)

Activity 1: Around the World Snack

Materials Needed:

- A mixture of small fruits, such as blueberries, red and green grapes — enough for each child to have about a cup
- Whipped cream
- Paper plates (two per kid)
- Large serving spoon
- Plastic spoons and napkins



Instructions:

Before class: Wash and/or slice fruit.

When ready to start: Invite kids to wash their hands. Give everyone two paper plates, a plastic spoon and a napkin.

For each person, spoon about a cup of mixed fruit on one paper plate, and drop or spray some whipped cream in the middle of the other plate.

Invite kids to spread out the whipped cream, making a large circle. This will represent the globe or the world. Challenge them to use fruit to form “continents” on the globe. If they want to make it look realistic, allow them to look at a picture of a globe to help them get their design somewhat accurate. (This is more difficult than it seems!)

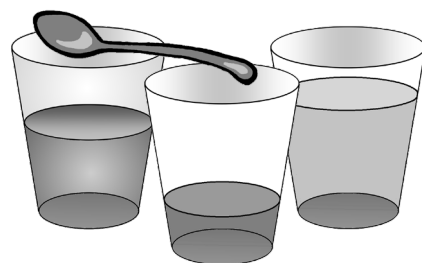
Explain that this snack is somewhat like the earth, itself. As Genesis says, God made our world, made us, and made plants and trees (including fruit-bearing ones!) for us to tend and eat. Human beings could never create the world; only God could do such an amazing thing. (We can’t even make a very accurate snack version of it!) However, when we care for the earth and enjoy its fruits and its blessings, we are being good stewards of God’s creation.

Which fruit or other natural food would you miss the most if it didn’t exist? Which fruit would you most like to try growing or tending? We have much to thank God for, including for food that is both nutritious AND delicious!

Activity 2: Water Music Activity

Materials Needed:

- 5-8 clear glass cups or jars (not plastic)
- Pitcher of water
- Two metal spoons
- Food coloring



Instructions:

Set out five to eight clear glasses or jars. Tap them with a spoon while they are empty and point out that they all make the same basic sound.

Pour different amounts of water in each glass — for example, about an inch of water in the first glass, two inches in the second, three inches in the third, and so on. Add a few drops of food coloring to each, using a different color for each one. Stir.

Invite kids to predict what they will hear when you tap each glass with a spoon. How will the different amounts of water affect how each glass might sound?

Ask a volunteer to lightly tap each glass. Kids will notice that the jars with less water make the higher sounds and the ones with more water make the lower sounds. This is because when we tap the jars, it makes a vibration or “sound wave” that travels through the water. The amount of water affects the wave, which affects the sound that we hear!

Try to play a tune by hitting the different jars. Invite kids to take turns doing the same thing. Can anyone play a full song? Challenge kids to figure out the tune of a Sunday school song or nursery rhyme!

In today’s story, the book of Genesis described a river that flowed out of Eden to water the garden. God wants human beings to care for the earth — and that includes water. We can do our part to keep the water in our community clean and healthy by not littering in it or wasting it.

It’s easy for us to take water for granted. Yet it is important for so many things in life! Not only can water quench our thirst and keep things clean, as we saw today, it can even make music! Thank God for the miracle of water!

Worksheet Answer Key

Shown below are the solution and answers to the children's worksheet for this week's lesson:

Stewards of God's Creation

What are some things for which you are thankful?

Fill in each shape with a word.

Answers will vary.

Consider things Luther mentioned in the Small Catechism:

"I believe that God has created me and all that exists, that he has given me and still preserves my body and soul, my eyes and ears, my reason and all my senses, together with food and clothing, home and family, and all my property.

"Every day he provides abundantly for all the needs of my life. He protects me from all danger and guards and keeps me from every evil.

"He does this purely out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, though I do not deserve it. Therefore I ought to thank, praise, serve, and obey him. This is most certainly true!"

Yes and No Questions

YES: Plant seeds in good soil.

NO: Walk on top of the new plants.

YES: Pull any weeds that start to grow.

YES: Let the plants get enough sunlight.

YES: Make sure to water the growing plants.

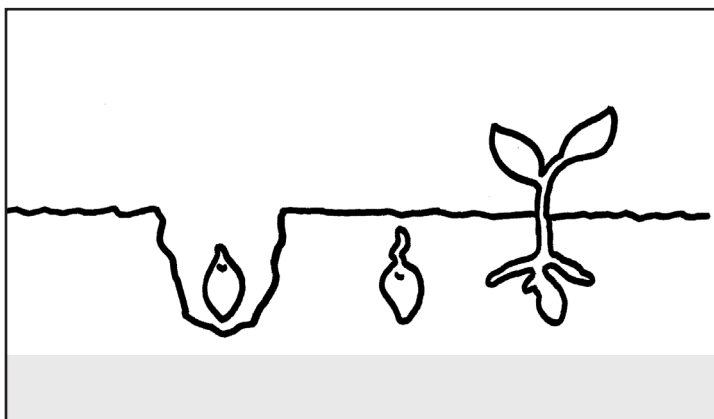
NO: Dig up seeds every day to check on them.

NO: Let bugs chew up the leaves of the plants.

NO: Allow the large plants to tip over and break.

YES: Use good fertilizer to feed plants in the garden.

NO: Flood the garden with water until it is all mud.



Vocabulary Word for the Week

Teachers may want to introduce the theme word for the week to help expand students' biblical vocabulary.

Stewardship

taking care of our world
and all that God has given us

*Tending to a garden shows
good stewardship of the earth.*

Reflection for the Week Ahead



God created the heavens and the earth in those first six days of creation. On that last day of creating, God made human beings. The author of Genesis tells us that

God created them "in his own image." This may not mean that God has blonde or brown hair like many kids do, or that the first human was as tall as God, but that God gave humans traits that are part of who God is — things like loving, loyal, faithful, steadfast, understanding, caring, etc.

Talk together about what you think are each other's best qualities. What are the things you admire in each other? What character traits do you want to develop more?

God gave the created order to Adam and Eve to tend. When we are given something to care for and maintain in good condition, our caring work is called "stewardship," and we are called "stewards."

Talk together about the things that you care for and steward. What things are harder to care for than others? How might you work together to care for what you've been given?

The Practice of Prayer

On the lines below, write a prayer thanking God for his good creation, and for making human beings in his own image. Ask God to help you care for all the good gifts he has given you so that you would be a good steward.

Practice using the ADTRC Prayer Form: Address, Description, Thanks, Request, Conclusion.