

LESSON ONE

GOD, OUR CREATOR

Memory Verse

Jeremiah 32:17

*Ah, Lord God! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth
by your great power and your outstretched arm.
Nothing is too hard for you.*

Bible

The Story of Creation
Genesis 1:1–2:3

Questions:

• What things are beautiful?
• The Skies and the Earth
• Is Thy Father's Name Holy?
• What Is Our God?
• How Do Thou Art?
• This Is My World
• Our God, Who Is Alive
• Praise the Lord

Preparation and Considerations

1. This class will be divided into five groups. To ensure that all the material is covered, you will want to consider carefully each block of instruction in preparation for class.
2. Read the Scripture referenced in the lesson.
3. Make sure all materials are prepared for the students' use. The following materials will be required for this class:

- Visual Aids: Lesson One Memory Verse Poster; Names of God; Names of God Answer Sheet; Who Is God reproducible
- Bible
- Provision Pack (Block Four)
- butcher paper (Block Four)
- markers (Block Four)
- magazines (Block Four)
- scissors (Block Four)
- glue sticks (Block Four)
- optional: device with internet access and printer connection (Block Four)
- optional: can of spray paint (Block Four)

It's a Jungle Out There!

- Welcome students, and introduce the theme, **Untangled**.
- Establish the need to know God as our Powerful Creator.
- Introduce the Theme Verse, and discuss God's plans for us.

A. Begin by welcoming the students to the jungle. Be sure to introduce yourself and each of your co-teachers. Allow students to introduce themselves and to tell the meaning of their name, if they know. You may want to bring a book of names and meanings with you to class or a device with internet connection so that you can look up name meanings. Make sure to recognize visitors.

B. Introduce the VBS theme verse. "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope," (Jeremiah 29:11). **During this VBS series, we will be learning about God's wonderful plans for us. It can be hard to trust God's plan for us because... we don't really know God well. We might have a vague understanding of who God is, but we don't truly understand His nature. We are going to untangle our ideas about God and explore what the Bible tells us about our Powerful Creator. The more we learn about Him, the better we will be able to trust His plans for us.**

C. Have students to turn to page 1 in their Jungle Journal (Student Book) to the section titled, "Realz" where they will find a screenshot of a video captioned, "When you think you have things under control." In the frame to the right is a caption that says "...but they don't go according to plan." Have students draw a picture or write a story about what they think happened next.

D. **Can you think of a time when in your life things spiraled out of control?** In the frame to the right have students draw a picture or write a story from their own life.

Prompt discussion by asking the following questions:

- Why do you think things spiraled out of control in your lives?
- What is the most difficult part of life?
- Have you ever been in a situation that made you feel you had no control? Explain.
- How do you feel when you have no control over what happens to you?
- Have you ever felt as though the harder you tried to maintain control of a situation, the less control you had? Share an experience and explain how you felt.

- What does the Bible teach about maintaining control in our lives?
- Can we ever truly control our lives?
- When is it beneficial to have control in our lives?

E. Before class, put the *Memory Verse* poster on the wall. Direct your students' attention to the poster, and introduce the memory verse for Lesson One. "Ah, Lord God! You have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you," (Jeremiah 32:17). **The Bible tells us to take control of our lives. There are some things we cannot control. Stop, and rest secure in the knowledge that God is in everything from the atoms that make up our bodies to the stars and planets we see in the night sky. Our Creator is all-powerful and in control of the universe He created. Although things may go according to our plan, God has great plans for our life. Nothing is too hard for Him.**



In the Beginning

- Examine the story of Creation.
- Explore the power held by our Creator.

A. During this VBS, we will be untangling our ideas about God and learning more about His nature. The more we grow to know Him, the more we will grow to trust Him and His plans for us. Have students use their Bibles or devices to look up the lesson text for today. Text is taken from Genesis 1:1—2:3.

B. Review the Bible story by asking the following questions:

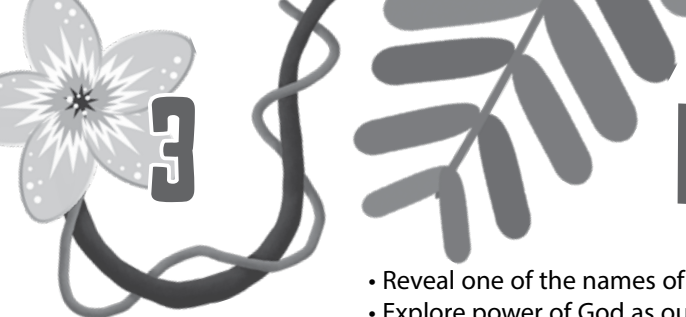
- Consider the first five words of the Bible, *"In the beginning, God created..."* How do these words stand in contrast to what the world tries to teach us?
- After each of the first five days, what did God say about His creation? It was good.
- How do you feel when you know that our Creator declared that the world He created for us is good?
- What did God say about His creation after the sixth day? It was very good.
- What was different about the sixth day than the first five days? God created man on the sixth day. How do you think it superior to the rest? God created man in His own image and likeness.
- How was the creation of mankind different from any other creation? We were made in the image of God.
- How do you see God caring for His creation during the first five days? Seeing that God created the world in six days, what do you think God would be God's ability and power to care for His special creation?
- How do you feel knowing the power of the Creator who separated light from darkness and gathered the waters together to reveal the land? How do you feel when you pray each day?

Steps of God's Plan...

Realize Jesus was with God when the world was created? Read Genesis 1:1 again. Then read John 1:1-3; 14. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." God spoke and the world was created; the Word died for our sins, giving us the chance to become a new creation in Him.

Did You Notice...

God spoke and created the earth and seas. God spoke and created the animals—birds and sea creatures, livestock and wild animals. When he created man, "He formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." God didn't speak mankind into being; He molded man from the dust of the ground and breathed His spirit into us.

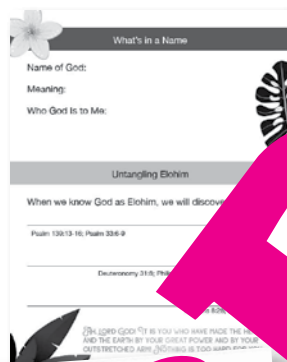


What's in a Name?

- Reveal one of the names of God, Elohim.
- Explore power of God as our Creator.
- Discover how this knowledge should affect our lives.

A. Before class, remove the *Names of God* poster and answer sheet from the Visual Aid package. Cut apart the names and their meanings. As VBS progresses, all names will be displayed on the wall. If you wish, you can display them on a bulletin board with a heading such as *What's in a Name?* Bring the *Elohim* Visual Aid and all the *Name Meaning* Visual Aids to class with you. Place the *Name Meaning* Visual Aids in a Provision Packsack.

Have students turn to page 2 in their *Jungle Journals* to the section titled, "What's in a Name?" Show the *Elohim* Visual Aid to students. **In the Bible, we discover that God has many names, each one revealing another facet of His nature. During each lesson of this VBS, we will untangle another name of God and grow to know Him better as we learn more about Who He is and what He does for us.**



One of the names of God is Elohim (eh-low-heem). Have students repeat the name, then write the name in their *Jungle Journals*. **This Hebrew word appears 2,300 times in the Old Testament, and it appears in the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis. Can you guess what it means?** Take the *Name Meaning* Visual Aid from the back of the Visual Aid package and place them around the table. Allow students to read the different meanings and see if they can guess the meaning of the word. If after five minutes they haven't guessed green, then tell them the correct meaning. If they are correct, tell them the correct meaning.

Elohim means "All-Powerful" or "All-Strong." One of the first things students learn about the definition of the word is that it means "All-Powerful." In the Bible, Elohim is often translated as "God." God's very name means power. With that power, God created everything from the beginning of time all the way up to the present. We can see His handiwork in the design around us. Even in the act of creation, we can see His meticulous planning. God provided a home for the creation before He made the world. God made a sea for the fish before He created them. God made a home for humanity before He created them. God made a plan for us before we were even born. **Seeing God's care and planning for His creation, how much more can we trust that He has plans for each one of us, to give us a future and a hope?** You can add the *Elohim* and *Name Meaning* Visual Aid to your *What's in a Name?* display now or at the end of class.

B. Also on page 2 in their *Jungle Journals* is a section titled, "Untangling Elohim." This section contains partial statements that they will complete. Once completed, these statements will show them how they will discover as they come to know Him. In class, look up and read aloud each statement and the verses. **The more we learn about God as our powerful Creator, the more our outlook on life changes. When we know God as Elohim, we will discover...**

We can see the miracles of yesterday. Psalm 16; Psalm 33:9. We can see the heart how God created the world in six days, parted the Red Sea, and tumbled the walls of Jericho. We never stop to consider the miracle of the universe? When we ponder the design of the universe and the complexity of the human body, we should be amazed at the wisdom and power of God.

We can see the circumstances of today. Psalm 138:8; Philippians 4:6-7. We can see how God always control our circumstances, but we can also be assured that God is in control, despite what our circumstances may be.

We can see the outlook of tomorrow. Isaiah 8:28; Ephesians 2:10. Though the world was created in six days, God has not yet stopped working on His creation. God has wondrous plans for each of us. We can find joy in the fact that He will not stop working on us until His plans have been fulfilled.

C. Give each student a copy of the *Who God Is* reproducible page from the Visual Aid package as well as a pair of scissors, a sheet of blank paper, and a pen. Have them cut the words apart. **Throughout the Bible, we can find stories and psalms in which people have proclaimed who God is to them. Paul called Him, "the Father of mercies and God of all comfort," (2 Corinthians 1:3). Jesus called Him, "Lord of heaven and earth," (Matthew 11:25). This page has many of the titles, roles, and attributes of God. Think about what you have learned about God as our Creator. What does that mean to you? Who is God to you? Use these words as a starting point, add your own, and create a name that shows who God is to you.** When students are done, have them write the name in the space for Who God Is to Me under the "What's in a Name?" section of their *Jungle Journal*. Have the students put the pieces of the *Who God Is* reproducible page in an envelope to use in the next lesson. Or you can make extra copies of the page to be used in each lesson.

Expedition Exercises

- Reinforce the lesson.
- Create a hands-on learning experience that will solidify the lesson in the students' minds.
- Have fun!

Wall of Wow!

Materials needed: butcher paper
markers
magazines
scissors
glue sticks
optional: device with internet access, computer connection, can of spray paint

Before class, cover one wall or bulletin board with butcher paper. **Share about God's creation for a moment. Is there an aspect of creation that just blows your mind? You pause and say, "Wow! The individuality of fingerprints? The fact that we have a blue sky? A gorgeous sunset? Let's create a Wall of Wow with some Creation God facts!"** Share down the wall. **Share facts about creation you can think of (or use your device to find facts about creation) (or cut and paste from a magazine) a picture of a beautiful, wondrous creation. Just plan to share it. Bonus points if you can add the day on which it was created.**

You may want to protect the wall with plastic tablecloths before hanging the butcher paper in case the markers bleed through the paper.

Option

You could also use a chalkboard and chalk or a white board and erasable markers.

Example

Start this activity by showing students a picture of a creation. SAY: **Wow! The individuality of fingerprints? The fact that we have a blue sky? A gorgeous sunset? Let's create a Wall of Wow with some Creation God facts!"** Share down the wall. **Share facts about creation you can think of (or use your device to find facts about creation) (or cut and paste from a magazine) a picture of a beautiful, wondrous creation. Just plan to share it. Bonus points if you can add the day on which it was created.**



Out of Control

For this activity, you will need 8-10 people to create a safe environment. If you don't have enough people, recruit reliable help.

Have your students stand in a circle in a large, open space. Ask for a volunteer to take their place in the center of the circle, then have the circle tighten until they are standing shoulder to shoulder around the volunteer. The circle will then put their hands up, open-palms facing the volunteer in the center. They will act as "bumpers" to protect and keep the volunteer upright.

Have the volunteer cross their arms over their chest, lift their hips, and wait until their lower body doesn't bend. The volunteer should then close their eyes and lean backward (or forward, if they prefer), and fall against the protective hands of the circle. The circle should gently support and push the volunteer upwards so that they fall against the hands on the other side of the circle. Continue until the volunteer has been caught several times.

ASK: How did it feel to have no control? Did you need the circle to catch you? Just think, your Creator Who had the power to speak light in to darkness also has the power to catch you when you fall. If we can trust Him to catch us, we can trust Him to help us trust Him for our future.



Jungle Journals

Allow the students to complete the activities from Lesson One in their Student Books.