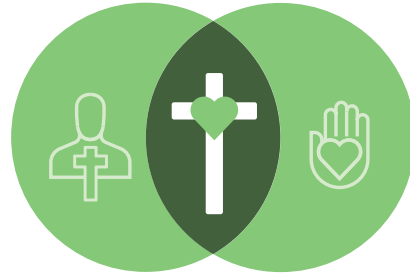


## APOLOGETICS HELPS

### DEFEND THE FAITH

Scientists can't explain how everything came together in the perfect way to support the land, plants, animals, and human life. The only reasonable answer is that an intelligent Creator made and finely tuned our earth, solar system, galaxy, and universe.



### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- ▶ **Are the six days of creation literally “days”?**
  - The Hebrew word for “day” is *yom*, which means a twenty-four-hour period, especially when you read the context of “evening and morning” for each of the six days of creation.
  - Other sections of Scripture, such as Exodus 20:9–11, refer to a six-day creation.
- ▶ **How old is the earth?**

Although we can't accurately date events before the time of Abraham (2166 BC), Moses described what may be called a “young earth.” The age of the earth is closer to thousands of years than an immense period of time.

- ▶ **What do we know about evolution?**
  - Microevolution is the observable limited variation among individuals of a species that produces variety (such as types of dogs).
  - Macroevolution is the theory that one kind of organism changes into an entirely different organism (such as reptiles changing into birds). **This has never been observed or proven.**

### CONNECTING IDENTITY & CALLING

#### IDENTITY: WHO AM I?

God has made me His human creature: created, loved, and chosen by Him to be His own.

#### CALLING: WHY AM I HERE?

I can love God and my neighbor. I do this by worshiping and praising God and taking care of His creation.

### GROWING IN FAITH FOR LIFE

See how this lesson builds on learning for each age.

#### ADULT

I can share what God designed me for as His human creature.

#### YOUTH

I can identify examples of God's work in creation.

#### ELEMENTARY

I understand that God made the universe and everything in it, including me.

#### YOUNG CHILDREN

I know God created everything.

ENDURING  
FAITH™  
Sunday School • Midweek  
Bible Curriculum

# A MIGHTY WONDER

Creation  
Genesis 1:1–2:3  
Beginning of time

## OVERVIEW

#### BIBLE TRUTH

God created the heavens and the earth.

#### BIBLE VERSE

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.  
Genesis 1:1

#### LEARNER GOAL

I can identify examples of God's work in creation.

#### LAW & GOSPEL

We forget or even refuse to believe that God is our Creator and the giver of all good things.

**God gives us faith to believe that He created the heavens and the earth and that He continues to provide us with all good things, especially life and salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.**

#### SCRIPTURE SNAPSHOT

“In the beginning, God created . . .” (1:1). The One who exists outside ordinary time designates the beginning of His created order. In six days—through His spoken Word alone—the heavenly Father creates a universe so vast and complex it defies our limited human understanding. Humankind, the crown of His creation, made in His own image, comes to be through the intimate work of His hands and with His own breath.

## LESSON PREP

**BASIC** Read Genesis 1:1–2:3 and study notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

**MORE TIME** Read “Apologetics Helps” on the back page in preparation for the “Live” section.

**IN DEPTH** Read the First Article of the Apostles' Creed, its explanation, and questions in *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (2017).

## SUPPLIES

#### FOR THIS LESSON

- 6 paper clips for each person
- Watch or timer
- Large sheets of paper or a whiteboard
- Markers or dry-erase markers
- Masking tape (if using large paper)

#### FOR EVERY LESSON

- Student copies of *Defend Journal*
- Bibles
- Pens
- Shareable images from digital resource center
- Supplies for bonus activities

## BONUS ACTIVITIES

#### EVOLUTION CHAT

10–15 minutes

Discuss student experiences when evolution has been presented as a truth. Then discuss why evolution is a theory, not a proven fact. Encourage youth to speak the truth in love when talking with others about creation and evolution.

#### CREATION VIDEO

15–20 minutes

Look online for a short video that describes scientific reasons for believing in creation instead of evolution. Preview the video beforehand to make sure it is biblically sound. Afterward, let youth share ideas for how they can talk with others about creation and evolution.

#### STAR-WATCHING

Outside of class

Sponsor a star-watching evening. Invite local stargazers to assist, and use telescopes, if possible. Invite friends, family, and other church members. Read psalms that rejoice in God's creation, such as Psalm 8, 33, 147, and 148.



### LEADER NOTE

If you're short on time, ask the youth to describe the most incredible creation they've ever seen, either natural or man-made.



### DEFEND JOURNAL

Hand out journals and turn to Lesson 1.



### LEADER NOTE

Some people appreciate time to think before speaking. Give time for learners to write responses before discussing.



### BONUS ACTIVITY

Give youth some food for thought with "Creation Video."



### LEADER NOTE

Divide into pairs or trios and assign a day or two of creation for each group to visualize.

## LAUNCH

### WALK-IN QUESTION

What's the best thing you've ever made?

### CREATORS

Give each person six paper clips. Tell learners they have two minutes to create a sculpture. After two minutes, call "stop" and ask learners to tell about what they made.

**SAY** What kind of sculpture could you make with no materials?

Lead the discussion to how God created the universe out of nothing.

**PRAY** Lord God, thank You for the beautiful world You created for us. Guide us as we read Your Word and learn more about You and Your creation. Amen.

## LEARN

### READ "THE BIG PICTURE" AND TALK IT OUT

► What does the account of creation tell you about God?

#### DISCUSSION POINTS

- God is powerful—He created all things with His Word.
- God is orderly—He created ways to measure time and space, then a place for His creation to live, then the creation, and finally the caretakers of the creation, humans.
- God is creative—think of the variety of landforms, plants, and animals God made.
- God is loving—God planned for care of humans through His creation and also for the care of creation through the humans He made.

### LEARN ABOUT "THE WONDERS OF CREATION"

Read and visualize what God made each day on large sheets of paper or a whiteboard. Or have youth write and draw in their journals.

#### DISCUSSION POINTS

- **Day 1: Genesis 1:1–5** God made matter (heavens and earth) out of nothing; the earth was empty and formless, with darkness over it; God created light and separated it from darkness.
- **Day 2: Genesis 1:6–8** God created an expanse (heaven/sky) to separate the waters under it from the waters above it.
- **Day 3: Genesis 1:9–13** God created dry land (earth) by gathering the waters (seas); He also created plants and trees.
- **Day 4: Genesis 1:14–19** God created lights (sun, moon) in the expanse (heavens) to separate day from night and for signs and seasons; He also created stars.
- **Day 5: Genesis 1:20–21** God created and blessed sea creatures and birds.
- **Day 6: Genesis 1:24–31** God created and blessed land animals (livestock, creeping things, beasts) and humans, who were made as male and female in God's own image.
- **Day 7: Genesis 2:1–3** His work finished, God rested.

When time is up, gather everyone together to share their work.

► What questions do you think people have about the creation of the world?

Jot down questions and concerns to discuss later in the lesson or at another time.

## LIVE

### DISCUSS "THE WONDERS OF THE UNIVERSE"

Turn to the journal section "The Wonders of the Universe." Give time for learners to consider the question there and below. They may also want to write their own questions, thoughts, or concerns prompted by the lesson. See the back page of this guide for tips to help equip the youth for some frequently asked questions.

► How do we know that God really created the universe?

#### DISCUSSION POINTS

- Many scientific facts of planet Earth point to a divine designer. When you look at the complex workings of our universe, the theory of evolution is even more unbelievable.
- Earth is the only planet in our solar system to have liquid water, and it has the perfect amount to sustain life.
- Earth sits a perfect distance from the sun to keep it from burning or freezing up.
- Earth's magnetic field shields it from solar wind and cosmic rays. Earth's atmosphere contains oxygen and other gases essential to life. It protects Earth from the sun's harmful rays, burns up meteors headed for Earth, and keeps temperatures even.
- In contrast, the "Big Bang" theory states that hot gases from a huge explosion cooled to form our present universe. This idea breaks the second law of thermodynamics (the law of decay), that things in our universe go from a state of order to disorder.
- While facts prove many aspects of Scripture, we do not base our faith on validation of facts. Instead, the Holy Spirit leads us to believe the Genesis account of God's creation. God's Word is without errors.

### CONSIDER "IN THE BEGINNING"

We often talk about God the Father, the First Person of the Trinity, as the Creator. But who was there "in the beginning"? Why is this important? Look up the following verses. Which persons of the Trinity are mentioned?

**Genesis 1:1-2**

**John 1:1-3, 14**

#### DISCUSSION POINTS

- The "Spirit of God" in Genesis 1:2 is the Holy Spirit.
- In John 1, "the Word" is the Son of God. All things were made through Him. The Word became flesh; He is our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.
- The Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—was there at the beginning of our created universe. Our triune God is eternal, without beginning or end.

### CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Check for understanding by asking youth to finish this sentence: **I see God's work in creation through . . .** Thank those who share.

## LEAVE

Read the Bible Verse, written in the *Defend Journal*:

**In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:1.**

Ask for prayer requests. Offer to pray, or invite a student to pray for everyone.



### CHRIST CONNECTION

Our triune God created all things, including the crown of His creation, humankind. Human sin destroyed the perfect world God created, but God sent Jesus, the Word made flesh, to redeem us and restore our relationship with Him.



### LEADER NOTE

Use "Apologetics Helps" on the back of this leaflet for support as you discuss this question and related topics of interest.



### BONUS ACTIVITY

Use "Evolution Chat" to equip youth to defend what they believe.



### SHAREABLE DOWNLOAD

Connect with youth before and after the lesson by using the shareable images from the digital resource center.