



A time for celebration and care

School assembly plan



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Introduce the theme of Creation Time¹ and explain that in the Bible, the special book for Christians, the story of creation is described in 6 days with the 7th day being a day of rest.

Produce pictures of the following:

- Yellow and black to represent light and dark
- Sea and sky
- Plants and trees on land
- Sun, moon and stars to represent day and night
- Sea creatures
- A variety of land animals

Ask six children to come and hold each of the pictures out of sequence. Then ask the volunteers to put themselves in what they think is the correct order, according to Genesis 1. Give the children 30 seconds to do this, then read Genesis 1:1-26 and re-organise the pictures if necessary.

Send the children back to their seats and read Genesis 1: 27-31. You may prefer to use a children's Bible version or *The Message* for this activity.

Re-iterate the point that humans were not only given all plants and animals, but also given responsibility to care for all plants and animals.

Introduce the term Biodiversity as the variety of life on earth. How many different plants and animals do they think there are? No one knows for sure the exact number although scientists think there are between 10 and 30 million different species.

Ask the children why we need plants and animals. Scribe their answers on a "thought shower" using a large sheet of paper, a flip chart or smart board. Answers may include food, medicines, materials such as rubber and oil, ecological services such as oxygen, water, and nutrients for fertile soil, as well as the cultural and aesthetic value of the natural world e.g. inspiration in music and art, leisure activities, observing and enjoying nature.

Although God placed humans in charge of all living things, many of the choices we make mean that biodiversity i.e. the range of living things, is decreasing. Discuss "What actions may affect biodiversity?" Main threats to biodiversity are loss of habitat e.g. through forest clearing, over-exploitation for food e.g. over fishing areas of the sea, pollution, climate change and introducing invasive species that take over a habitat and kill off native species.

Invite the children to close their eyes and picture their favourite place in the world. Now think of one thing each one of us could do to take care of this world e.g. recycling, wasting less water, switching off electrical appliances instead of leaving on stand by, not dropping litter etc. Even the small changes we all make can make a difference.

Pray: Thank you, God, for this beautiful world and everything in it. Help us all to take care of the living things, plants and animals, entrusted to our care. Amen

¹Churches are encouraged to observe a Time for Creation each year, between 1 September and 4 October (St Francis' Day). This year's theme links into the United Nations International Year of Biodiversity. (See <http://www.biodiversityislife.net/>)