

LESSON 2

CREATION

LESSON NOTES

FOCUS: THE DAYS OF CREATION (GENESIS 1:1-2:3)

- **SACRED STORY**
- **CORE PRESENTATION**

THE MATERIAL

- **LOCATION: SACRED STORY SHELVES**
- **PIECES: 7 CREATION CARDS, DISPLAY RACK (OPTIONAL)**
- **UNDERLAY: BLACK FELT**

BACKGROUND

With this lesson we begin to trace the elusive presence of the mystery of God in the story of God's People. We begin to play Hide-and-Seek with the Holy One and ask, "What can we know of the Giver by the gift?"

NOTES ON THE MATERIAL

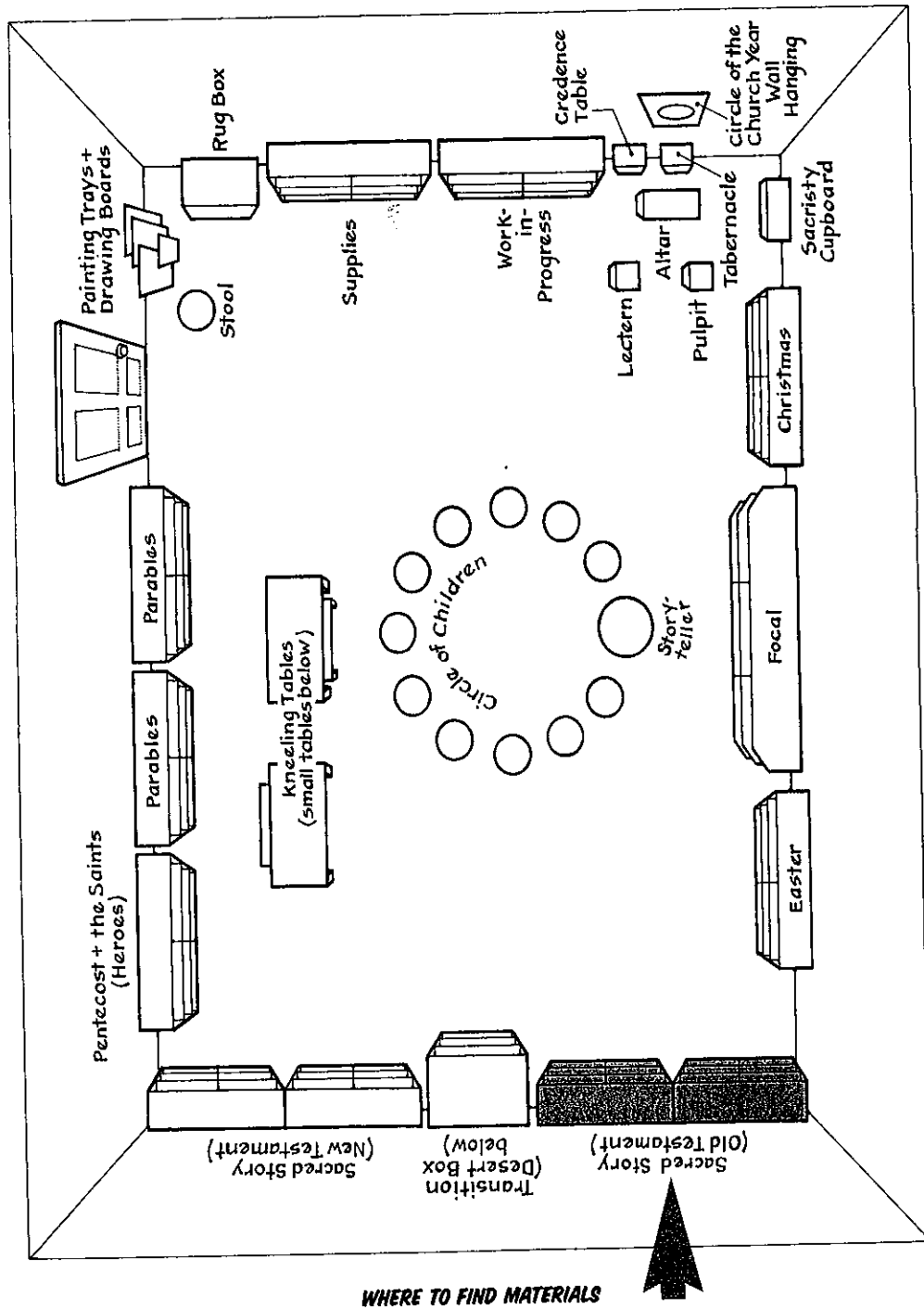
This material sits on the top shelf of the sacred story shelves. The sacred story materials form a left-to-right sequence. For the sacred stories in this guide, the materials move from Creation to the Exile and Return. Thus the Creation material is found on the far left of the top shelf, the first material in the sacred story sequence.

A display rack holds up the seven cards so the children can see them. Also on the rack, in front of the upraised cards, is the rolled-up black underlay. This underlay is wide enough for all seven cards to be laid out side by side. The underlay is deep enough to place *two* rows of cards, one above the other. You can tape together a second set of cards to act as a self-checking set. When children work alone with the materials, they can compare their layout to the self-checking set to help them recall the order of days in creation. Store the self-checking set on a tray on the sacred story shelves, directly below the Creation material.

This lesson does not use a rug, since the material has its own underlay.

SPECIAL NOTES

At home: The days of creation make an especially wonderful story to share during a family vacation. For example, on the first day of the vacation you can lay out the first card and ask, "I wonder who saw light today?" When the family has finished sharing, you can give thanks to God for the gifts from creation you've enjoyed that day.



MOVEMENTS

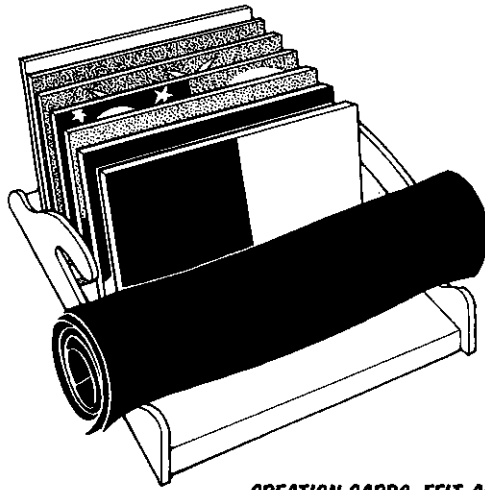
Move slowly and with deliberation to the shelf where the creation material waits.

Pick up the display rack for the creation lesson and return to the circle.

WORDS

Watch. Watch where I go.

Do you see? Yes.



CREATION CARDS, FELT AND RACK

Place the rack beside you and get settled. Look around the circle. You may need to say:

Show the children how to "be ready" by sitting with your legs crossed and your hands relaxed on your ankles. Wait until all are ready.

Look around the circle. Smile. Invite involvement by your own sense of openness. Wait. Nod your head, "Yes," as if someone is about to speak. The grand conversation has already begun!

Everyone needs to be ready.

What is the biggest present you ever got?

MOVEMENTS

The children will begin to think of things they have received. They may begin with bicycles and video games, but they also may name something alive. If this happens, comment on the distinction between a gift that is inanimate and a gift that is alive. For example, you could say:

You are not saying whether living or nonliving presents are better. You merely notice the distinction for them to comment on if they wish. Continue to affirm the children's comments.

Whatever gift that a child names, unless you sense that the child is trying to shock or disrupt the group, is "wonderful." Continue the invitation to name greatest gifts until you think that all the children who want to speak have done so.

It is not a good idea to go around the circle one at a time, taking turns. Simply acknowledge each child when he or she is ready to speak. When all who want to speak have done so, then continue:

Take the rolled-up black felt strip from the rack and place it on the floor to your right, so the children, who are facing you, will "read" the days of creation from left to right. As you speak, begin slowly to unroll the felt strip.

When the strip is unrolled completely, you move your hand across its surface to show "nothing," moving from your right to your left, smoothing out the felt in one sweep.

WORDS

☞ Listen. There's something different about that gift. (Wait to see if the children respond by describing the gift as alive. If necessary, describe that difference yourself.) That gift isn't like a bicycle. That gift is alive.

☞ Listen. Listen to your friends. These are all big gifts. They are wonderful presents.

☞ Yes. Yes. That is a wonderful present.

☞ Did you know that there are some presents so big that nobody notices them? They are so huge that they are hard to see. They are so hard to see that the only way to know that they are there is to go clear back to the beginning, or maybe a little before the beginning.

☞ In the beginning...in the beginning there was... Well, in the beginning there wasn't very much.

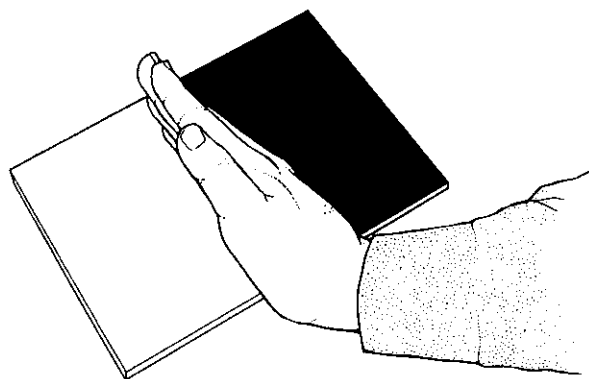
☞ In the beginning there was...nothing.

MOVEMENTS

From the children's point of view, you will now trace a "smile" from the children's upper left, down to the center and back up again to the children's upper right. (To you, these movements begin in the lowest right corner, move up to the center and end in the lowest left corner.)

Wait a moment and then take out the first card from the rack. This card shows the pictures of "light" and "dark."

Place the light card on the black underlay to your right so that the "dark" side of the card is closest to the right edge. Turn your hand so that the edge of your hand is perpendicular to the card and put it over the line between the light and the dark. Move your hand across the picture of light as you speak of that gift. When you name "light" or "dark," point to each.



LIGHT AND DARK (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)

As you say, "It is good," place your hand flat on the card, as if blessing it. This is probably the most important gesture in the whole lesson. Lean back, sit a moment and then begin the next day.

WORDS

Except, perhaps, an enormous smile...but there was no one there to see it.

Then on the very first day God gave us the gift of light. So now there is not just darkness, but there is light and dark.

Now, I don't mean just the light in the light bulb or in the car lights at night. I don't mean just this light or that light, but I mean all of the light that is light. God gave us the gift of the light that all light comes from.

When God saw the light, God said, "It is good." And that was the end of the first day.

MOVEMENTS

Place the second card to your left of the first day.

Move your hand across the card. You can trace the thin, white arc with your finger, or you can leave out this gesture and wait until the children ask about the line.

Touch the card like a blessing.

Take out the third card and lay it to your left, so that it touches the second card. Take your time.

Place the edge of your hand vertically on the card's line that divides the water and land as you say "divide." Move it to the right as you "uncover" the dry land. Point to the "green and growing things" on the card as you speak of them.

Put your hand on the card like a blessing as you say, "It is good." Wait a moment. Enjoy all that was given on the third day.

Take out the fourth card and place it to your left, so that it touches the card for day three.

Point to the lights as they are spoken of.

WORDS

On the second day God gave us the gift of water. Now, I don't mean just the water in a water glass or the water in a bathtub or shower. I don't even mean just the water in a river or a lake. I don't even mean just the water in the ocean, or the water that comes down from the sky in rain. I mean all of the water that is water. This is the water that all the rest of the water comes from.

This is the firmament. It divides the waters above and the waters below.

When God saw the water, God said, "It is good." And that was the end of the second day.

On the third day God gave us the gift of the dry land. God divided the water and the dry land, and gave us the gift of green and growing things.

When God saw the dry land and the green and growing things, God said, "It is good." And that was the end of the third day.

On the fourth day God gave us the gift of the day and the night. God gave us a way to count our days.

Here is the great light that rules the day, the sun, and here are the lights that rule the night, the moon and the stars.

MOVEMENTS

Touch the card like a blessing as you say, "It is good." Wait a moment. Don't hurry. Enjoy the fourth day.

Take out the fifth card and place it to your left, so that it touches the card for day four.

As you mention the flying creatures and the swimming ones, touch each figure.

Touch the card like a blessing as you say, "It is good."

Please remember to relax and enjoy each day after it is presented.

Take out the sixth card and place it to your left of the fifth one.

Touch the creatures as you name them.

As you say "all the gifts of the other days," move your right hand over all of the card. Then touch the sixth card like a blessing as you say, "It is very good."

Take out the seventh card and place it to your left of the sixth one.

WORDS

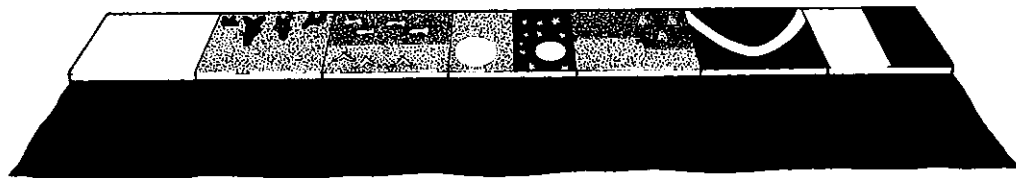
When God saw the day and the night, our way to keep time, God said, "It is good." And that was the end of the fourth day.

On the fifth day God gave us the gift of all the creatures that fly in the air. Not just the birds but all of the creatures that fly. And all of the creatures that swim in the water. All of them.

When God saw all of the creatures that fly and all of the creatures that swim, God said, "It is good." And that was the end of the fifth day.

On the sixth day God gave us the gift of all the creatures that walk upon the earth: the creatures that walk with two legs, like you and like me, and all the creatures that walk with many legs.

When God saw the creatures that walk with two legs and the creatures that walk with many legs and all the gifts of the other days, God said, "It is very good," and that was the end of the sixth day.



THE SEVEN CARDS (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)

MOVEMENTS

As you say, "all the other days," sweep your hand across the whole line of cards.

Point to the seventh card.

As you say "mark it with a cross," you can use your fingers to trace a cross on the card. As you say "mark it with a star," you can use your fingers to trace the star of David on the card.

As you introduce the wondering questions, you can point to each card slowly as the question is introduced. For the last wondering question, you might pull one or two of the cards toward you so they are clearly out of line with the others. This is to suggest that these or others might be taken out for consideration.

When the wondering draws to a close, turn the children's attention toward getting out their own work.

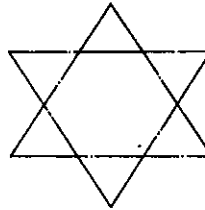
You might also explore the sequence of the days. Can they be changed? The more years you present this story, the more powerful it becomes.

WORDS

On the seventh day God rested and gave us the gift of a day to rest—and to remember the great gifts of all the other days.

There is nothing here, because people go to different places to remember the great gifts. You can put something there to show your favorite place to remember. It might be in your backyard by a tree, in a church or in your room. It might be in the mountains or by the ocean or a lake. I don't know where your place is. Only you know.

What I do know is that this day is so special, that sometimes the Christian people mark it with a cross and the Jewish people mark it with a star, the star of David.



STAR OF DAVID

Now, I wonder which one of these days you like best?

I wonder which day is the most important?

I wonder which day you are in or which one is especially about you?

I wonder if we can leave out any one of these days and still have all the days we need?