

CREATION OR EVOLUTION?

1. Look at the order of the days of creation in Genesis 1. When was light created?
2. When were the "lights in the firmament" created?
3. What confusion do you see here? How can this confusion be explained?
4. What is a "firmament?"
5. In Genesis 1:6, what does "let it separate the waters from the waters" mean?
6. What was the ancient view of the world--the heavens, the Earth and the underworld?
7. Do either of the two Genesis stories allow for a process of creation, or is the creation of animals and man an instantaneous act? Explain.
8. Many people say Darwin taught that we descended from apes and monkeys. What does the theory of evolution actually teach?
9. Why did the Churches react so intensely to Darwin's theories?
10. Do you think it's possible to believe in both evolution and the Bible? Why or why not?
11. Some scientists become overzealous in their support of the theory of evolution and other claims of science. In some cases, science becomes their religion or faith. Why are science and religion separated the way they are today?
12. Some theologians teach that we must approach the world with two basic types of knowledge: scientific and religious. Science deals with observable "facts"; it describes *how* things operate. Which is the more reliable perspective: science or religion? Explain.

The above can be xeroxed for use in the classroom.

CREATION OR EVOLUTION? ANSWERS

Some questions on the "Creation or Evolution?" handout have specific answers. Some do not..
Only questions with specific answers are listed here.

8. All species of plants and animals developed from earlier forms through a process of natural selection.
7. The "days" of creation do imply a process, but the specific creative acts imply instantaneous actions.
6. The Earth was the center of the universe. the universe was composed of three layers--the heavens above, the Earth below and the underworld.
5. The Earth's atmosphere separates the waters on land from the waters in the heavens.
4. Space.
2. The fourth day.
- The first day.



TEEN BIBLE STUDY: The Creation vs. Evolution Controversy

Is evolution really "evolution?" Some say Charles Darwin's evolution theory is the result of a humanistic attempt to explain the origin of life without God. Others say Darwin had no intention of opposing the Bible with his theory.

Once people accepted the biblical account of creation in Genesis as the way the world began.

Then came Darwin, who suggested that everything in the universe came about by a random process of chance. Life somehow evolved out of primordial ooze and first appeared as one-cell organisms.

Use this Bible study to help kids wrestle with the evolution theory from a biblical perspective.

OBJECTIVES

In this Bible study, participants will:

- understand the basic teaching of creationism;
- understand the basic teaching of the theory of evolution;
- explore both sides of the creation/evolution controversy;
- discover how science and faith can work together; and
- seek God's wisdom and insight about creation and evolution.

BEFORE THE BIBLE STUDY

Read the Bible study and collect supplies.

Ask kids to bring science textbooks that deal with the theory of evolution. Examine the textbooks for different approaches to evolution, and mark the pages. Read the content and be prepared to help your young people deal with the material.

Ask for permission to use three textbooks for the Bible study.

THE BIBLE STUDY

1. *Confronting the Controversy*

Opener--You'll need posterboard, magazines, glue, markers, paper, pencils, a Bible and one of the school textbooks with a marked section on evolution.

Ask: How many of you believe God created the universe? How many of you believe in the theory of evolution? How many see a conflict between the two?

Say: Christians have been divided on this issue for years. Some say the theory of evolution is an atheistic attempt to explain how the universe was created without God's influence. Others say scientific facts don't back up the creation story. And still others say evolution, the way Darwin presents it, does not conflict with Christian beliefs.

Form three groups. Have one group read the creation story in Genesis 1. Have that group use magazine pictures, posterboard, markers and glue to create a poster of what God created and called good.

Ask the second group to read Genesis 2. Give that group paper and pencils. Ask group members to rewrite Genesis 2 into a rap. An example: "Once upon a time, God was lonely. So he formed us out of dust--said we'd be his kids only."

Have the third group read the textbook account of the theory of evolution. Then have group members create and perform a skit called "Darwin on Trial." Have one person in the group play Darwin, and have the rest play a panel of Christian leaders who are challenging his theory on a national TV program. The person playing Darwin might begin his comments by explaining how he sees his work in relation to his faith. "I never intended to offend anyone, especially my church, but I needed different answers. The ones I received just didn't fit with what I was learning in my research."

After 25 minutes ask the groups to share their creations. Have the kids talk about anything they learned that was especially meaningful to them, or any changes in perspective.

2. Scriptures Search--You'll need three Bibles, three "Creation or Evolution?" handouts, three pencils and three school textbooks with marked sections on evolution.

Have kids stay in their three groups. Give each group a Bible, a "Creation or Evolution?" handout, a pencil and a textbook. Ask groups to each use the Bibles and textbooks to answer the questions on the handout. Tell the groups to research their answers rather than depend on their immediate, emotional responses.

Gather together and have a representative from each group talk about the group's answers.

Say: Religious knowledge gives meaning and purpose to life. Science may tell us details about how the world and humanity were created, but our faith tells us why they were created. Even more, our faith helps us discern where we're headed.

Ask: Is it possible to accept both the scientific and biblical perspective of creation? (Yes.) Does science generally support or refute the Bible? Discuss.

3. *God's Good Creation*

Closing--You'll need a song about creation, a textbook, and a Bible for each person.

Have the group sing a song about creation, such as *Norasdeghdzyal* (page 64 of *The Divine Liturgy* book.) Give kids each a Bible and read Psalm 8 responsively.

Hold up a Bible and a textbook and say: No matter how we interpret each of these, we must continue to wrestle with our understandings and our faith to bring the two together. The most important thing is to believe that God is our Creator, regardless of the details of how the world and humanity were made.

Close with a prayer thanking God for His creative genius in forming the world and all that lives in it.

Edward McNulty
Group Magazine
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Teacher's Corner:

WAYS TO WALK

My family developed a variety of adventure-observation walks named by the children. Then, when we decided to go for a walk, we'd choose one that fit the day and our mood. Some days we'd take a "color walk." We would choose a