

THE GENESIS 1 QUESTION

1. Think about evolution and creation and answer the following questions.

What makes the **most sense** to you about the theory of evolution?

What makes the **least sense** to you about the theory of evolution?

What makes the **most sense** to you about the theory of creation?

What makes the **least sense** to you about the theory of creation?



2. What do you think—**Y (yes)** or **N (no)**?

- An open-minded person has to accept evolution as truth.
- The Bible and evolution are compatible.
- Schools should teach both creation and evolution as theories in their science courses.
- The Bible provides Christians with a scientific account of the origin of the world.
- A person can't be a Christian and still believe in evolution.
- Christians shouldn't study science.

3. Answer each of the following questions the way you think the Bible teaches and then the way you think science teaches.

a. **Is there a God?**

The Bible says—

Science says—

b. **How was the world formed?**

The Bible says—

Science says—

c. **How unique are people?**

The Bible says—

Science says—

d. **How do the laws of nature work?**

The Bible says—

Science says—

4. Each of the following statements summarizes a belief about the origin of life. Choose the one that comes closest to what you believe.

- Life evolved through naturalistic processes over a long period of time with no creator involved.
- God made life, then allowed it to evolve through naturalistic processes over a long period of time.
- God made life and directed its evolution toward a purpose over a long period of time.
- God made life as it exists today and designed all of it for a special purpose.

5. Check out each of the following verses that describe God in relationship to the world and everything in it. What does each of these passages suggest how people should interpret scientific data?

Psalm 19:1-6

2 Peter 3:13

Colossians 1:16, 17

Revelation 14:7

THIS WEEK

Christian young people in public schools are confronted with questions and doubts about the validity of their religious faith when it appears to conflict with their science classes. This TalkSheet encourages an open and honest discussion on the subject of science and creation.

This may be a sensitive topic in some churches. It's important that you be familiar with the group's beliefs before starting this discussion. And be sure to create an environment of safety where the kids in your group can openly express their opinions and get concrete feedback from you or your leaders.

OPENER

To start, you may want to show a video on creation or evolution—or bring some articles, facts, or information to discuss with your group. You can find articles on creation versus evolution, critiques from scientists, engineers, archeologists, and more! Check out these Internet resources—the Creation Research Society (www.creationresearch.org), Answers in Genesis Ministries International (www.answersingenesis.org), Christian Answers Network (www.christiananswers.net), and Creation Science Home Page (<http://emporium.turnpike.net/C/cs/index.htm>).

Then ask your kids what they have learned in school about how the earth was created. Make a list of all the different ideas, theories, or stories that your kids have learned or heard about. Maybe ask a couple of them to bring in their school science textbooks to read bits on the creation story. Then read Genesis 1 to your group and ask them to listen closely while you read. How drastically do the two theories compare?

THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. Give volunteers the opportunity to share their answers. Keep the discussion participants from dis-counting or putting down the views of individuals.
2. Discuss each statement, allowing time for debate. Christianity focuses on the why and what should be, while science leans toward the how and what is. Science examines and tries to explain data—usually with competing theories, rather than one certain explanation!
3. The following are brief comments about each statement. (a) The Bible says there is a God who is both infinite and personal. Science says the existence of God can never be proved. (b) The Bible says God created the world fundamentally as it appears now except for the distortion sin has created. Science generally says that the world

evolved over millions and millions of years. (c) The Bible says that people have been created in the image of God, making them unique. Science says people are linked to all creation through an evolutionary process that makes all living things similar. (d) The Bible says God created and controls his laws of nature. Science says that nature is controlled by laws that aren't influenced by any outside force or power.

4. Allow the young people to share their views. If they come up with an additional view, ask them to write it on a whiteboard or on newsprint for everyone to examine.
5. Each passage describes God as the Creator. Explain to the group that all people interpret any information they receive through the filter of their beliefs. If someone is an atheist that person will interpret data differently than a Christian or a pantheist. If someone believes God created the world, that person's view of the world will be affected by that belief.

THE CLOSE

It's beyond the scope of this TalkSheet to discuss the details of the theories of evolution and creation. You may want to debate the relevance of creation versus evolution. However, the point that needs to be made is that God is involved in creation—in its beginning, sustenance, and end. He still is creating today—new people, plants, animals, and more! Scientists are still learning new things about the earth and the species on it.

You may want to point out the awesomeness of God's creation. What have your kids experienced that has put them at awe? A sunset? A sunrise? A new baby brother or sister? You may want to close by reading Psalm 100.

MORE

- If you have someone available, you may want to invite a science teacher, professor, or researcher to come into your meeting for discussion. Allow your students to ask questions, but encourage them also to listen carefully. Be careful to mediate the Q&A.
- Ask each of your kids to find two facts either for evolution or creation. Encourage them to search the Internet, check out their science textbooks at school, or ask their teacher. What information did they find? How does this information compare with the biblical account of creation? How have their beliefs been shaped from this discussion?