

*JUNIOR CERTIFICATE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICE
SAMPLE LESSON PLAN RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR ELEMENTS OF SYLLABUS*

SECTION D: THE QUESTION OF FAITH PART 5: CHALLENGES TO FAITH

Syllabus Aim	To examine challenges to religious faith today
Syllabus Objective	As a result of studying this section the students should <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to identify points of conflict and points of contact between the scientific and religious world views of creation
Key Concepts	Reflection, world view; creation.
Description of Content	The variety of world views in modern culture, including their origin The scientific worldview – at odds with religion? The question of creation.
Methodology	These Lesson Plan Resource Materials are designed using methods such as presentation and interpretation of data, discussion, concept formation and case study. These methodologies are used so as to give students an opportunity to identify, explore and clarify the concepts and to structure and elaborate on their existing knowledge and understanding of the content.

Procedure

Introduction

Reflection Exercise:

Read William Wordsworth’s poem “To Daffodils” and look at a scientific account of a daffodil.

Discuss:

- What is the difference between the way the poet and scientist describe the daffodil?
- Imagine you had never seen a daffodil. Explain which account the poet’s or the scientist’s would give you the most vivid image of the flower?
- Can something be true yet not scientifically true?
- Take feedback from students and conclude that both the scientific and poetic account are helpful in giving a person a true idea of what the flower is like.

OR

Myth Exercise: Read the following SANTA CLAUS story:

Each Christmas Santa Claus comes from his toy factory at the North Pole, bringing presents to all good children. His sleigh glides through the sky, pulled by Rudolph, the red-nosed reindeer. He comes down the chimney and fills the stockings of little boys and girls, provided they are asleep. He is a very happy man and wants all children to be happy too at Christmas..

Discuss:

- What is the message in the story of Santa Claus? Is the message true?
- Are the details or framework of the Santa Claus story true?
- If someone asked you is the story of Santa Claus totally false, what would you say?
- The story of the Santa Claus is a myth yet, many young people regard it as real. At what age do you think children would discover that Santa Claus does not drive reindeers through the sky? Why would they eventually make this discovery -even if they were not told?

The scientific theories about the origins of the world and the beginnings of human life are very different from what the Book of Genesis tells us about the creation of the world in six days. Up until the scientists got to work people did not have sufficient background information about what the Book of Genesis describes to realise that it was not actual history. The Genesis accounts of creation are not concerned with science or history but with religious truths.

World views of creation

Picture Assignment:

How would you picture the world if you had to base your view entirely on your personal observation or experience (i.e. you cannot base your view on anything you know from science, history or geography)? Imagine you set out from your home to find out what is under, over and around the world.

- As you walk across the earth is it flat or round? (valleys & mountains)
- When you reach the edge/end of the land on which you walk would you find water? (lakes & seas)
- As you cross the land would you see anything that would indicate there is water under the earth? (rivers & lakes)
- As you cross the land would you see anything that would indicate there is water above the earth? (rain)

Take feedback from the students referring to the diagram on *Student Work: PRIMITIVE WORLD VIEW*

Scripture Assignment: Read Genesis chapter 1 and give students time to discuss:

- Are there similarities between this Genesis Story of Creation and the primitive world view?
- For each of the days of creation in Genesis Chapter 1 – 2:4 describe the objects or spaces created. Do you see a pattern in days 1-3 and 4-6?
- What does this Genesis Story of Creation tell us about the relationship between God, human beings and creation?
- Compare the two creation accounts in Genesis. How are they alike and how are they different? In what ways do they complement each other?

Take feedback from the students. Conclude by identifying the essential similarities between our scientific knowledge of creation and the Genesis accounts.

i.e. Humankind is the highpoint of creation.

The existence of God is not disproven by science e.g. First Cause etc.

OR

Read the Muslim & Hindu Creation Stories from “Worlds of Difference” by M. Palmer & E. Bisset and give students time to complete the assignment and discuss:

- How do these accounts explain creation?
- How are the accounts related to the religions from which they come?
- Are there similarities between these creation accounts and the primitive world view?

The scientific worldview – at odds with religion? The question of creation

View a video or read an article about the scientific world view (e.g. The Christian Way Book 2 Teacher Guide page 8 or The Irish Independent of April 24th 1992) and identify the ways in which this piece of Scripture contradicts scientific knowledge by comparing the events with an evolutionary perspective.

Discuss: What are the similarities and differences between the scientific and religious view of creation?

Take feedback from the students and conclude by reference to the following chart:

<i>CREATION</i>	<i>BIBLE</i>	<i>SCIENCE</i>
<i>APPROACH</i>	Reveals the unobservable	Probes the observable
<i>AIM</i>	To teach about our relationship with God and each other.	To understand and provide explanations for what is observed
<i>STYLE</i>	Uses a variety of literary styles eg: history, poetry, songs, prophecy....	Reports in a dry factual manner
<i>DEFINITIONS</i>	Human beings – Adam and Eve, creatures into whom God breathed and stamped God’s own image. – male and female.	Humankind – Homo faber or Homo sapiens, making tools, using fire, burying their dead

(Adapted from *Creation & Co-Creation* – New Zealand National Centre for Religious Studies)

Resources which teachers have suggested include:

All About Faith 2 Gill and Macmillan Series, pages 39-40, 226-227, and 243-251.

Believe the Good News – The Light of the World Series 2 Unit 1

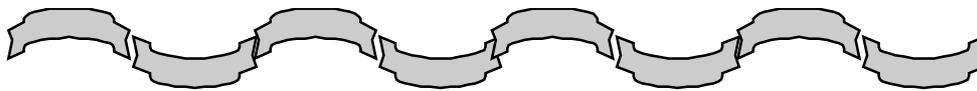
Logos Website

Show Us The Way New Christian Way Series 2 Veritas, pages 6-15.

Student Work: Primitive World View

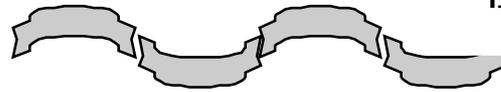
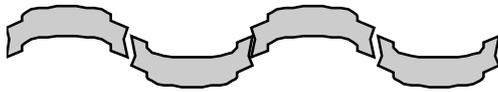
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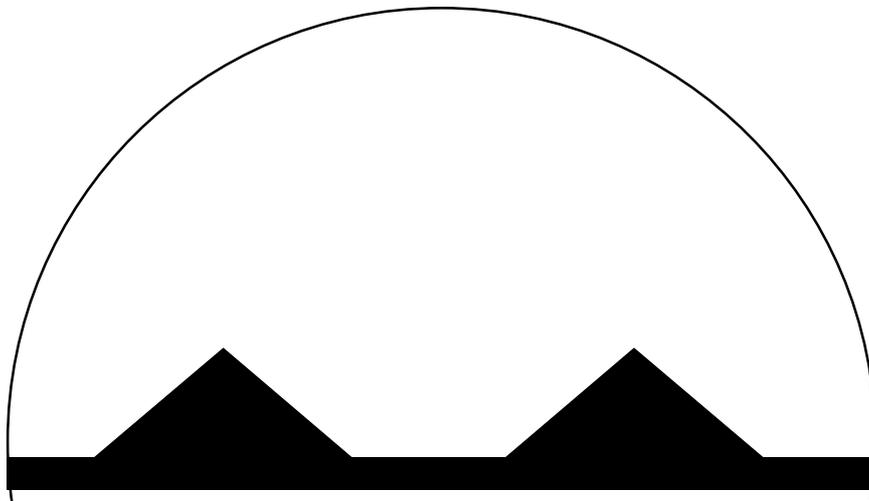


As you cross the land would you see anything that would indicate there is water above the earth?

B

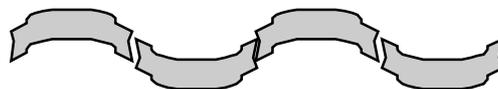


As you walk across the earth is it flat or round?



When you reach the edge/end of the land on which you walk would you find water?

B



B As you cross the land would you see anything that would indicate there is water under the earth?