Creation

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: God made everything by His word and made you in His image, so your life has worth and purpose, and you can trust the One who made you.
Bible passage: Genesis 1:1–2:3. Students read the whole passage out loud themselves.
Memory verse: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." *Genesis 1:1 (KJV)* and "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." *Hebrews 11:3 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, a few made things (a pencil, a watch, a phone, a leaf, a photo of the night sky), and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read Genesis 1:1–2:3 and Hebrews 11:3. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a few verses each.

1. Opening game: Who Made It? (5–10 minutes)

Hold up each object one at a time. Students call out who made it and how they know someone made it. Save the leaf and the night sky for last. Ask: *A pencil needs a maker. What about a leaf, or the stars? What can you tell about a maker by looking at what he made?* Read Psalm 19:1: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." *(KJV)* Say: "Today we read the first page of the Bible, where God tells us Himself that He made it all."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: Genesis 1:1–19. Students take turns, a few verses each. Old words in this passage:

- **created** (1:1): made something new; **the heaven**: the sky and everything above us
- **without form, and void** (1:2): with no shape and with nothing on it; **the deep**: the deep waters
- **firmament** (1:6–8): the wide open space of the sky; God called it Heaven
- **herb yielding seed** (1:11): plants that make seeds; **after his kind**: each one makes more of its own kind
- **for signs, and for seasons** (1:14): to mark time, so people can count days, years and seasons
- **the greater light** and **the lesser light** (1:16): the sun and the moon

After the reading, have students list on the board what God made each day so far. Point out the pattern: "And God said… and it was so… and God saw that it was good… and the evening and the morning were the first day" (1:3–5).

Read out loud: Genesis 1:20–2:3. Old words in this passage:

- **abundantly** (1:20): in huge numbers; **fowl**: birds
- **great whales** (1:21): big sea creatures
- **be fruitful, and multiply** (1:22, 1:28): have young and fill the earth; **replenish** (1:28): fill
- **creeping thing** (1:24): animals that crawl or creep along the ground; **beast of the earth**: wild animals
- **image** (1:27): God made people to be like Him in a way no animal is; every person carries God's image
- **dominion** (1:28): the job of ruling over and caring for creation; **subdue**: bring under control and put to good use
- **meat** (1:29–30): food (here, plants and fruit)
- **all the host of them** (2:1): everything God filled the heavens and the earth with
- **sanctified** (2:3): set apart as holy

Finish the list on the board for days 5, 6 and 7. Ask: *Which day is the only one where God made something "in his own image"?* (Day 6, people, 1:27.)

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. Genesis 1:1 starts with God, not with the world. What changes when you start your view of life with "In the beginning God"?
2. Hebrews 11:3 says the worlds were made by the word of God, and what we see was not made out of things we can see. What does that tell you about God's power? Is there anything too hard for Him in your life?
3. Genesis 1:27 says God made people in His image. How does that change the way you see yourself on a day you feel worthless? How does it change the way you see the person nobody likes?
4. God gave people dominion: the job of caring for His creation (1:28). What does taking good care of God's world look like for someone your age?
5. God saw everything He had made and called it "very good" (1:31). Why do you think the Bible tells us God looked at His work and called it very good? What would it look like for you to enjoy and thank God for what He made this week?
6. God rested and made the seventh day holy (2:2–3). He was not tired (Isaiah 40:28). Why do you think He set apart a day? What gets in the way of you stopping to remember God?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words in Hebrews 11:3: **framed** means made and put together. **By the word of God** means God spoke and it happened, just like Genesis 1. **Things which are seen were not made of things which do appear** means God did not build the world out of things that were already there; He made it from nothing we can see.

Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say Genesis 1:1 this week; keep working on Hebrews 11:3 next week too.

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5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "The Bible tells us more about the Creator. John wrote about the Word: 'All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made' (John 1:3, KJV), and then 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us' (John 1:14, KJV). The God who made everything came to earth as a man, Jesus. God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. If God made me in His image, what is one lie about myself I need to stop believing?
2. Who is one person I need to treat better, because God made them in His image too?
3. Write a short prayer thanking God for three things He made that you love.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: spend five minutes outside, or at a window, looking at what God made. Thank Him for it, and say Genesis 1:1.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, You made everything by Your word, and You made us in Your image. Thank You that our lives have worth because of You. Help us see others the way You see them, take care of Your world, and stop to remember You. Thank You for loving us and making a way to save us through Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a student asks how long ago creation happened, or how long the days were: keep the lesson on what the text says: God made everything, in the order Genesis 1 gives, and called it very good. Encourage bigger questions to go to their parents and pastor.

If a student asks "Who made God?": answer honestly. Nobody made God. He was there "in the beginning" (Genesis 1:1), before anything was made. He is "the everlasting God" (Isaiah 40:28, KJV), with no beginning and no end. That is one way the Creator is different from everything He made.

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