

storymakers

NYC



creation

teacher's guide

creative director

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editors

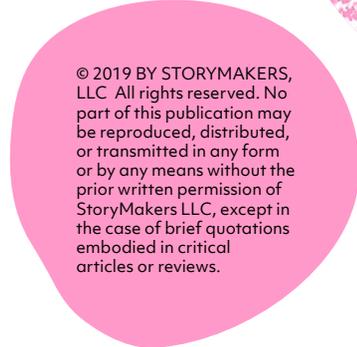
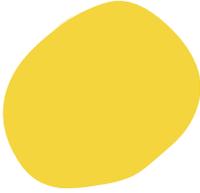
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special thanks

*SPECIAL THANKS TO MOCKINGBIRD MINISTRIES FOR
ALL YOUR GUIDANCE, EDITORIAL SUPPORT, AND LOVE.
OUR TEAM IS FOREVER GRATEFUL FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP.*



Hello

Our hope is to breathe new life into the old stories by engaging the imaginations of our readers and teachers. The Bible is beautifully written—peppered with drama, rebellion, and real humanity. Scripture does not shy away from the full breadth of human experience, and as the stories progress from beginning to end, humanity's need for divine intervention becomes abundantly clear.

Guide to Creation

The Creation story is vast, poetic, and awe-inspiring. We find ourselves marveling at God's imagination and creativity. As we learn the story, humans are made in God's image. It's a natural human impulse to see something beautiful or awesome and want to respond in a creative way. That's why we're all about the imagination at StoryMakers!

Being creative means much more than drawing or painting. It means following our imaginations as we allow our minds to explore beyond what we see in front of us. Sounds a lot like FAITH, doesn't it? Our job as grown-ups is to allow the imaginations of children to become an entry point into stories of the Bible.

To make space for each StoryMaker's unique imagination, this guide contains fun facts and deeper thoughts to share with your children at home or in class. Do not feel pressure to use it all or create an information buffet; rather think of yourself as a boutique curator, identifying and tailoring content for your specific audience based on what you know about them. As a StoryMaker guide, your job is to encourage a creative connection to the Bible through play, imagination, and meaningful engagement.

Sometimes grown-ups feel intimidated by this kind of role. They worry that they won't "do it right." That's not how we think at StoryMakers. We believe that all the children we work with and love belong to the Creator of all. He is working out his redemption plan for each of us, so our only job is to share what has been given to us in love and mercy. We can leave the heavy lifting to God.

Let's get started!

Elements of the Zine

Hook:

A way to catch the attention of your StoryMakers, these are short prompts at the beginning of each chapter to get their minds ready to engage God's story.

Story:

The Bible story is written in the form of a script. Your StoryMakers can play the parts and dig into the biblical narrative.

Field Notes:

A place to consider the implications and meaning of each story. The field notes guide the StoryMaker along their way.

Fun Facts:

Humans love information and making new discoveries. Fun facts are built in to help your StoryMaker dig deeper.

Activity:

Each activity is intended to help children begin to exercise their imaginations. Remember there are no rules, only guidance and support. We want each child to feel successful and to express him- or herself in a unique way. [heading]

Toolbox:

You will need to fill your toolbox with the following supplies: *pencil, pastels, markers, glue, tape, scissors, sponge, crayons, pens, colored pencils, paint, magazines, tissue paper, flashlight, craft sticks*

Chapter 1: Light + Darkness

Genesis 1:1-2

Today's story presents the created order. Each creature and its place in the world have inherent dignity because they are made by a good and holy God. As a result, all creation is good, whole, and appropriate for its purpose.

The Book of Common Prayer: "At God's command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home."



A Little History

Moses shared a story, an account that was both creative and merciful. It was written to establish the existence of ONE God. Many other peoples had theories about how all life came to be, but no other account made the claim that all of creation came from ONE Creator. Throughout Genesis, the author, Moses, makes the case that God is GOOD and all he creates is for his purpose.

God always existed; therefore, the implication is that God is the Originator of all—the ultimate StoryMaker!

Field Notes

How does God work and how did he create it all? The Genesis account does not give us a scientific blueprint. Instead, we learn that God has the ability to create through his Word. God spoke, and out of the chaos of nothingness, light came into existence.

Thoughts to Ponder

1. What do you think it would have felt like to be the only thing that existed?
2. Why do you think light came first?
3. Why do you think God didn't give us every detail about how the world was created?
4. If God was able to create everything just by speaking it into being, what does that tell you about who God is?

Activity

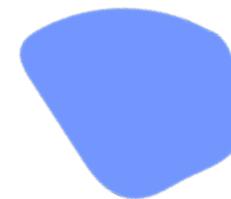
Toolbox: pastels, markers, pens, colored pencils, crayons

Instructions:

Color Value: Light and darkness are opposites. Together they create a clear picture of something, and in art we call that “value.” These opposite elements make it easier for us to see what is in view. Each StoryMaker will find many black shapes on the page. Encourage your makers to color in the shapes so they are able to see how black makes color pop and how light comes through darkness.

Deeper Meaning:

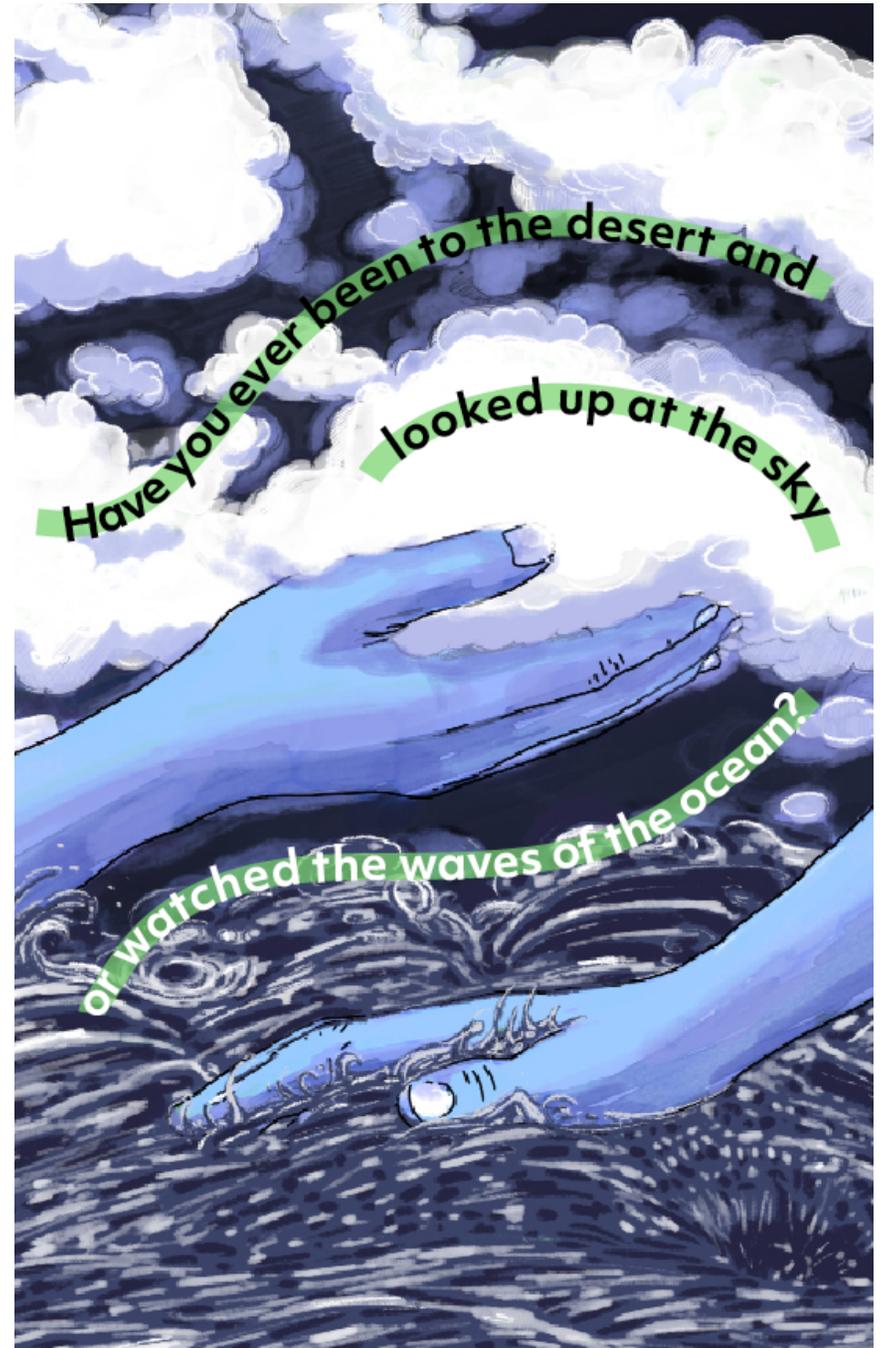
Emphasize the roles of the two elements of light and dark to show the function and purpose of the seemingly opposing elements that God creates and calls good.



Chapter 2: Sea + Sky

Genesis: 1:6-8

God created the sea and sky. God is at work creating order within the chaos of the void (a word that means “nothing”). Unlike the Greek gods, who were destructive in nature, our God does not create to destroy, but for the purpose of bringing life and a home to his creation. We know that the sky will be filled with birds of the air and the sea will be full of sea life. God is beginning to create a thriving habitat for his creation to live and grow in.



A Little Science

The earth has an atmosphere on day two. The atmosphere is very important because it contains the air we need to breathe. God continued his work of preparing the earth so that plants can grow and people and animals can live in it. The water we drink and the air we breathe are essential to all living creatures and vegetation.

Field Notes

God is always preparing a way for his creation. So on the second day, he provides the air and water that creation needs to sustain life. God acts with a purpose.

Thoughts to Ponder

1. Name a time you made something you thought was good. What did that feel like?
2. How are humans similar to and different from God in this way?

Activity

Toolbox: pastels, sponge, markers, colored pencils, crayons

Instructions:

Using pastels, the children will create the sea and sky. Encourage your StoryMakers to layer their skies with different colors. Encourage them to use as many colors as they want!

Deeper Meaning:

Water is an element we need every day. It is hard to imagine life without water. As God creates on day two, He makes the waters and skies because He is at work preparing a way for His living creatures.



Chapter 3: Lands

Genesis 1:9-13

God begins to add life to his creation. He separates LAND through bodies of water. Then plants and vegetation are put into place. God is creating habitats and ecosystems for his creation to thrive.



A Little Science

Did you know we have over ONE MILLION plant species on earth? Every day new plants are being discovered. Today scientists categorize seven types of habitats: tropical rainforests, savannas, deserts, grasslands, deciduous forests, coniferous forests, and tundras.

Field Notes

We have a God who speaks life into being, and each type of creation does not come in only one form. God is so creative that we don't just have one type of land; we have a variety of lands, from deserts, jungles, tundras, and so much more.

Ask Your Storymakers

1. How do you think God thought up so many types of plants and habitats?
2. Which one do you think was the most fun to imagine?
3. What or who do you think God created all these plants and homes for?

Activity

Toolbox: pastels, colored pencils, markers, tissue paper, glue

Instructions:

Share your own habitats. Ask your Storymakers to create their current environments, and then encourage them to draw their very own imagined ecosystem. Remind your StoryMakers to add food plants like apple trees, berries, and maybe a few donut bushes?

Deeper Meaning:

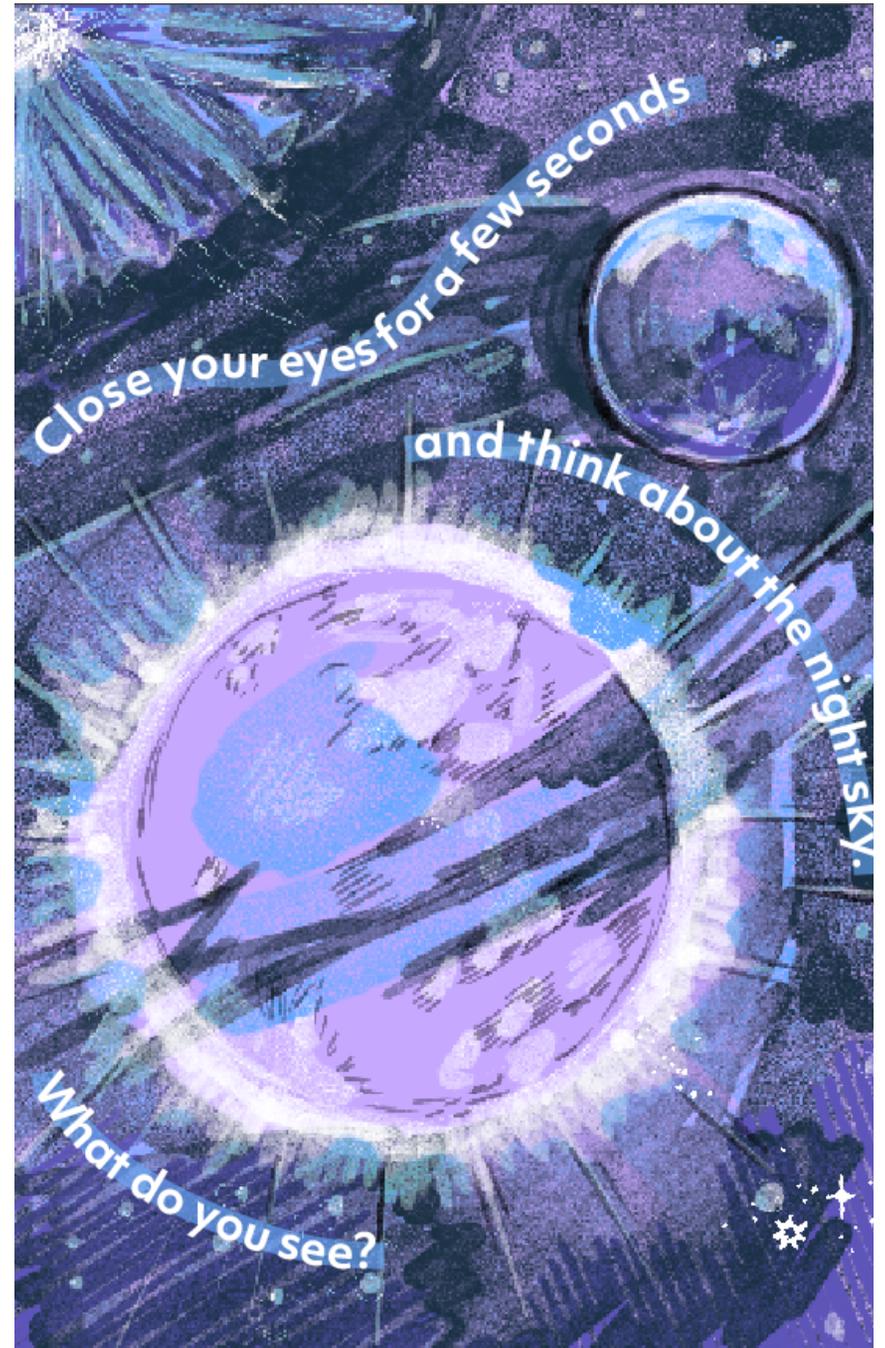
Each activity opens our StoryMakers imaginations further. Giving children license to create their very own environments will open their creativity and connect to the depth of God's greater imagination. Encourage your StoryMakers to be as creative as they like.



Chapter 4: Space

Genesis 1:14-19

On day four, God put the stars in the sky and the planets into motion. The universe is a large and mysterious place even for scientists.



A Little Science

1. The sun gives life to the earth. The earth would have no life at all without the energy it receives from the sun.
2. The sun is only one of millions and millions of stars in the galaxy.
3. We see the sun as a large round red ball because we are much closer to the sun than to any other stars.
4. Other stars may be larger, brighter, smaller, or fainter than our sun, but they are so far away that we only see them as points of light in the night sky.
5. The earth is one of eight planets that orbit round the sun in the solar system.

Field Notes

1. The first person to make proper maps of the moon was Galileo. Galileo did not invent the telescope, but by 1609 he had developed a telescope that could magnify objects 20 times. With this telescope he began his careful study of the moon's surface.
2. The first person to walk on the moon was the American astronaut, Neil Armstrong, who stepped out of his space landing craft, the Eagle, on July 21, 1969. He said these famous words, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Ask Your Storymakers

1. Imagine you are a star in the sky and look down at earth. What would you see? What would you be most interested in?
2. Why do you think God made stars that were different sizes?
3. What are some questions you have for God about the Sun, moon, and stars?
4. What or who do you think God created all these plants and homes for?

Activity

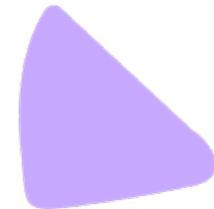
Toolbox: pastels, paint, pens, markers

Instructions:

Encourage your StoryMakers to finish the constellations and draw a solar system.

Deeper Meaning:

The universe is vast and scientists are constantly learning new things about the world beyond the earth. Through these activities, we hope to emphasize God's creativity, his order, and purpose in "the vast expanse of interstellar space."



Chapter 5: Birds of the Air + Fish of the Sea

Genesis 1:20-23

So far God has created the universe, lands and bodies of water, sea and sky, light and dark. He has created living environments for his creation. On day five, he now creates the birds of the air and the beasts of the sea to fill those places. Our God creates with order and purpose.



A Little Science

The ocean is one of many ecosystems. Within each ecosystem there are plants, animals, and lands. Each of these creatures serve a purpose to keeping the ecosystem healthy and functioning. Scientists believe one million different species live in the ocean, and two-thirds of which have not yet been discovered.

Birds have so many functions, and birds also pollinate. To pollinate means to spread seeds to flowers. Birds function as gardeners. They have feathers, wings, lay eggs, and are warm blooded. There are around 10,000 different species of birds worldwide.

Field Notes

By day five God has created homes for all living creatures and he is ready to populate the earth with the creatures above and below. We see how thoughtfully in God designs everything. He could have created the animals first, but then they would have had no home. See how detailed God is in his preparation for all living things!

Ask Your Storymakers

1. Why do you think God created sea life that humans would never even know about?
2. Why would God create 10,000 different species of birds? What does that tell you about him?

Activity

Toolbox: tape, tissue paper, magazine, scissors, crayons, colored pencils, markers

Instructions:

Your StoryMaker will be asked to create their own birds and sea creatures. Using cut paper, colored pencils, markers, and glue, encourage your kids to get creative.

Deeper Meaning:

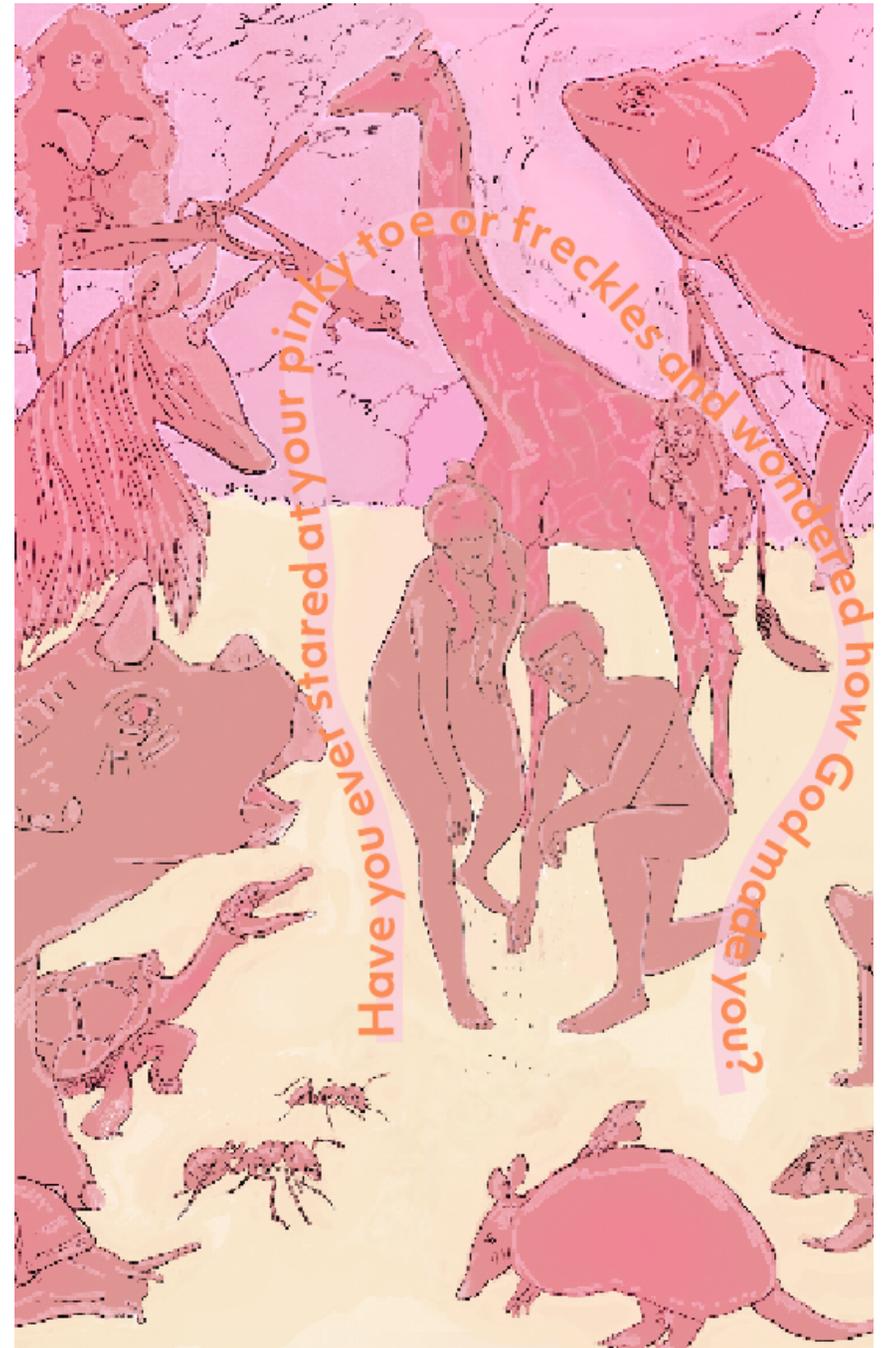
Again, as we move through creation, we are emphasizing God as Creator of all. He is detailed and has a purpose in all his activity. God's actions are never random.



Chapter 6: Humans

Genesis 1:24-31

God's idea for day six was BIG and in his likeness. His last creation would share everything he made. From the primal elements God brought forth the human race, giving us reason, memory, and creativity. God created his own children and made EARTH their home.



A Little Science

When God created humans he had so much in mind.

1. Did you know that human brains are sometimes more active asleep than awake?
2. The human can smell up to 50,000 different scents.
3. 206 bones make up the skeletal system
4. The brain stops growing at age 18, but our ears and noses continue to grow our whole life!

Field Notes

When God created humans, he made HIS humans CLEVER, BEAUTIFUL, DETAILED, and CREATIVE, because they are made in his image! We can conclude that we have been made with a diverse range of skills and creativity. Some of us are good at visual arts, others at math, some in science, and more.

Ask Your Storymakers

1. What does it mean that we have been created in God's likeness?
2. What is something that you are uniquely good at doing?
3. What is something that a friend of yours is good at doing in a way that's different from you?
4. Why would God make people with different gifts? What does that tell us about him?

Activity

Toolbox: markers, colored pencils, crayons, pencil, pens, mirror

Instructions:

Self-Portraits: Ask your StoryMaker to consider how they see themselves. Help loosen up your artists! First encourage children to think of a silly version of themselves, and then an emotional self (happy, sad, worried, etc.). Lastly, ask your StoryMakers to draw an image in which they imagine how God sees them.

Deeper Meaning:

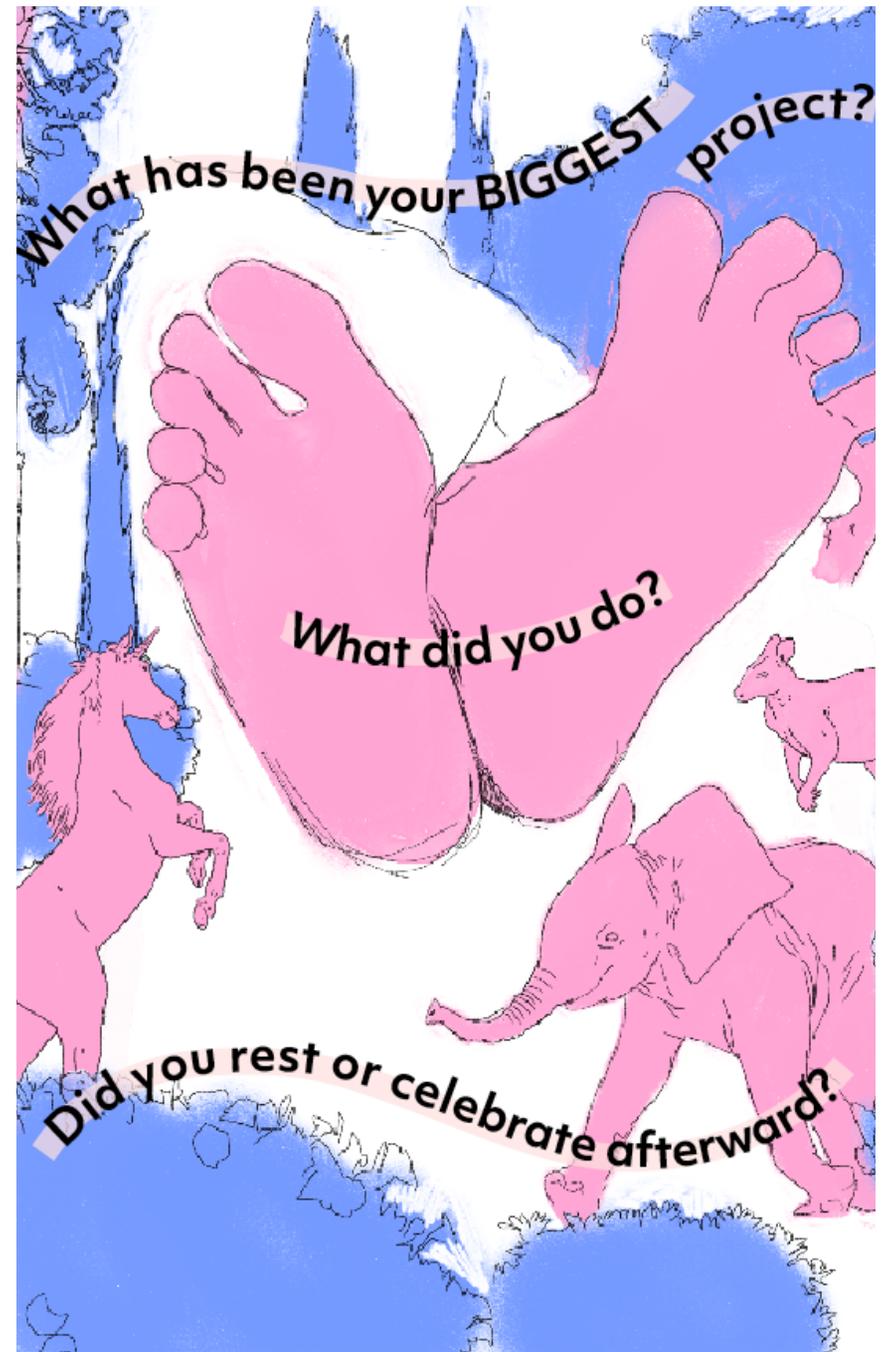
As your StoryMakers consider creating their self-portraits, ask them to think about what it means to be "image bearers." Ask each participant to consider how detailed God was in creating the world and all living creations.



Chapter 7: Snooooze

Genesis 2:1-3

After God's elaborate work of creation, God created another day solely for resting from his labor.



A Little Science

Did you know that when humans are well rested they are more focused, tend to be better at physical activities, and experience better moods. God knew our brains and bodies need good rest so we are able to play, create, and connect when we're awake.

Field Notes

God gave us the gift of rest. When we take rest, we are reminded that we are humans that find joy in creating AND resting. God knows that we all need rest to feel good and be healthy.

Ask Your Storymakers

1. Were you surprised that God rested? Why or why not?
2. Next time you have to rest, how can you use that rest to think about what God is like?

Activity

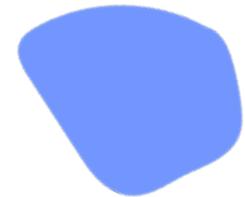
Toolbox: markers, pens, pencil, colored pencils

Instructions:

Comic Strip: Now it is the StoryMakers' turn to create their very own comic strip of the seven days of creation.

Deeper Meaning:

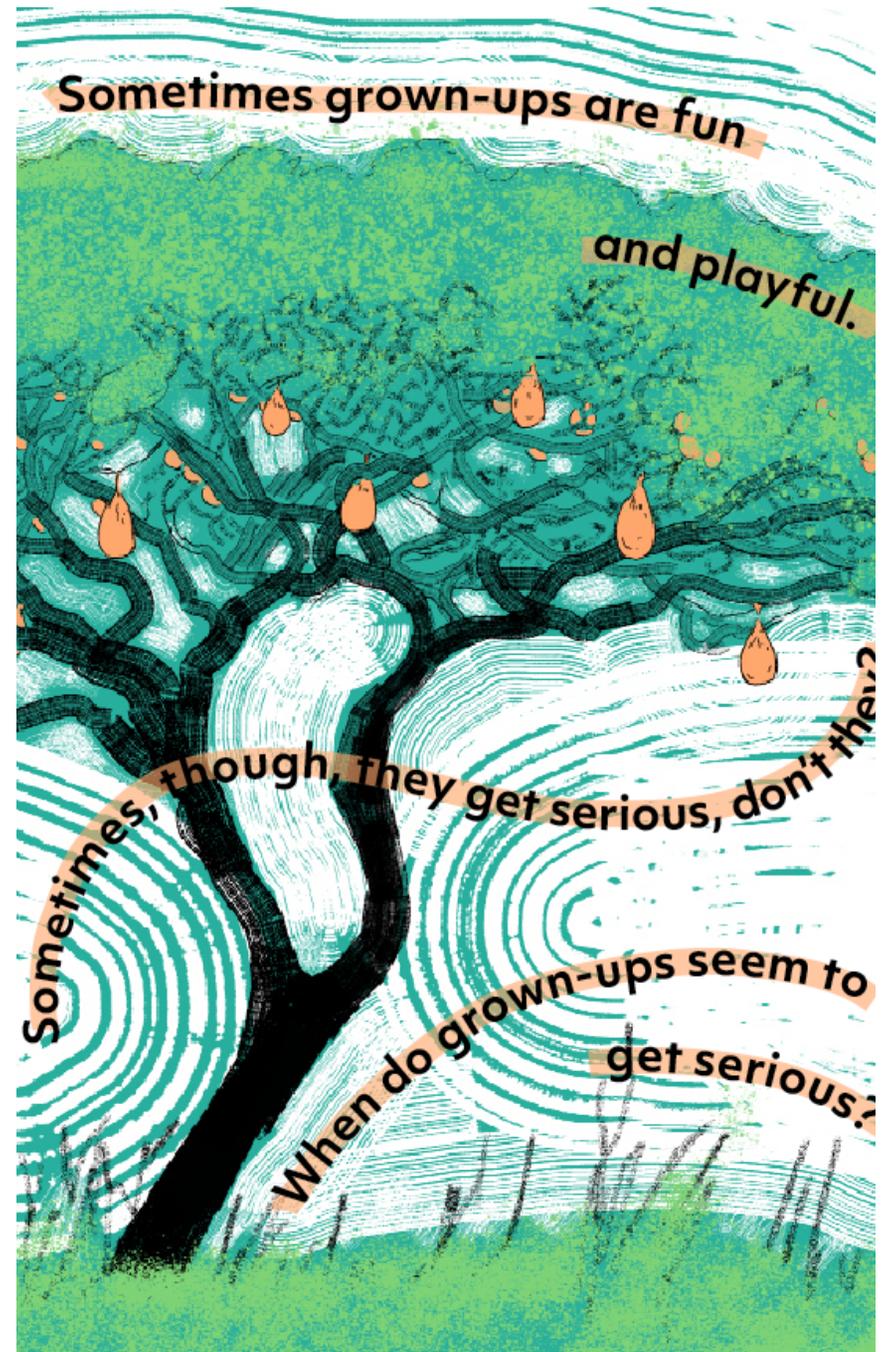
God took rest and will become our source of rest all of our days. All living creatures need rest, which comes to us in sleep and play.



Chapter 8: The Tree

Genesis 2:4-25

God created the earth and all that was in it. His most precious creation was his people, Adam and Eve. God loved them so much he created a special place for them—the Garden of Eden. In that place they could have access to everything, except for one tree, “the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.”



Sometimes grown-ups are fun
and playful.

Sometimes, though, they get serious, don't they?
When do grown-ups seem to
get serious?

A Little Science

Did you know when humans make choices they use their rational brain (calm and practical self) and emotional side. When people make decisions, either the brain or the heart is in charge. Scientist find that humans usually make decisions based on their emotions.

Field Notes

Remind your StoryMakers what we know about God so far. We know that from the beginning, God thoughtfully designed a world for his creation. He created the heavens and the earth, plants, animals, and people all for the purpose of enjoying his creation. He also created a very special place for his children—the Garden of Eden.

However, within the garden, Adam and Eve are told there is something that they cannot enjoy. At this point the tone of the story begins to change.

Ask Your Storymakers

1. What were Adam and Eve told that they couldn't enjoy?
2. Why do you think God made a rule like that?
3. How do you think Adam and Eve felt about the rule?

Activity

Toolbox: magazines, scissors, glue, pencil, pens, colored pencils, markers

Instructions:

Draw or Collage the Tree of Knowledge: Using colored pencils or pastels draw the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Ask your StoryMakers to create one side as “good” and the other as “evil.” To create texture, collage the trees with strips of paper from old magazines. Ask the children to add any other details they like to the garden scene.

Deeper Meaning:

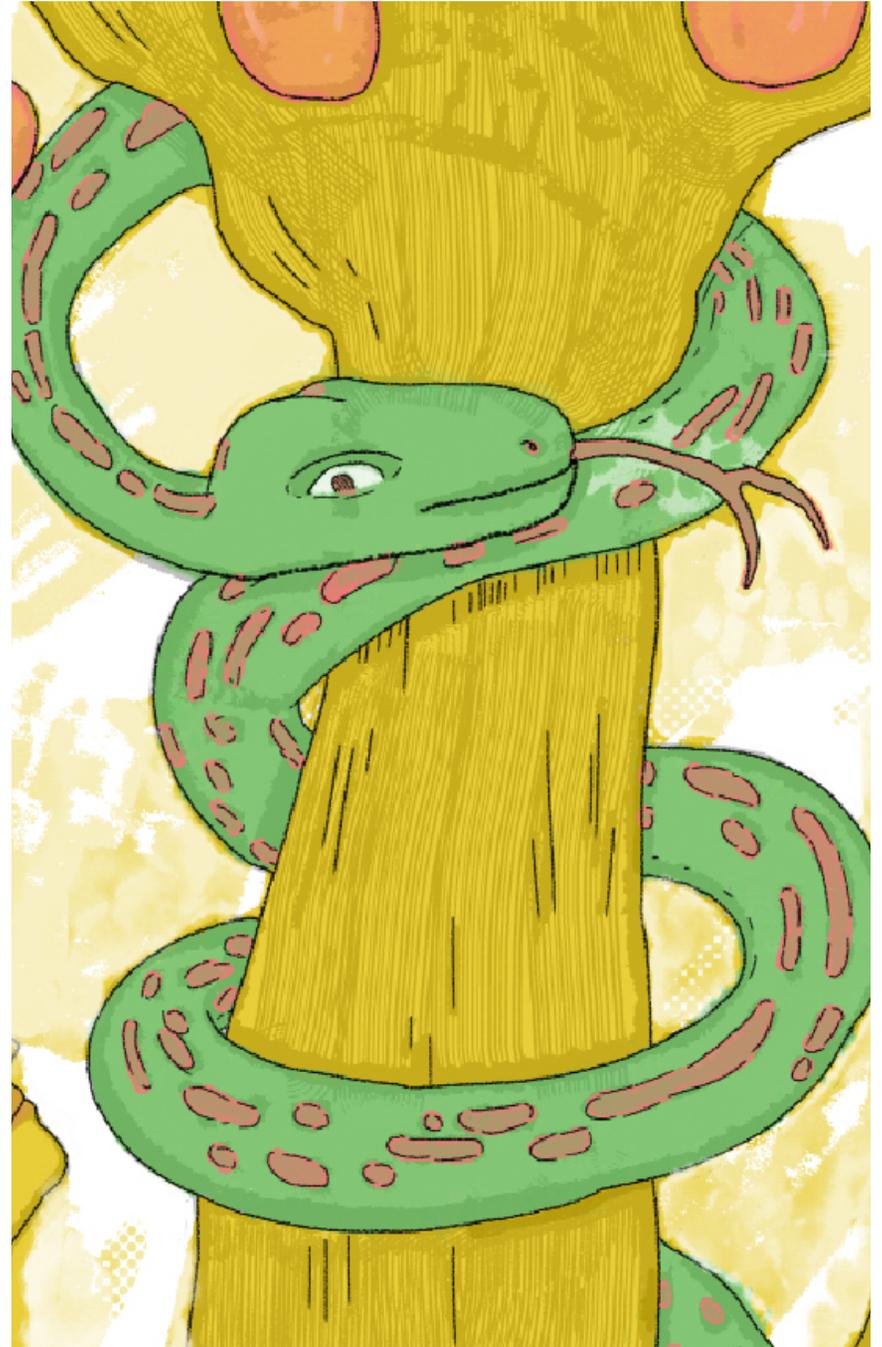
The Creation zine begins with a tone that is poetic and creative in nature. We have now taken a shift in our story. The tone is one of caution, in which Adam and Eve are given a rule for the first time. Emphasize the shift in the nature of the story with your StoryMakers.



Chapter 9: The Snake

Genesis 2:4-25

In Genesis 3, the serpent, who is “more crafty than any other beast in the field,” enters the story. Biblical scholars understand the snake to represent the deceiver, aka the devil.



A Little History

The serpent is seen as a deceiver throughout the Bible and within Greek mythology. The serpent is a creature that God created and he was MORE clever than any other animal. According to our text, the punishment for the serpent for leading Adam and Eve astray would be that he must remain on his belly.

Field Notes

Living in Eden was fantastic. Adam and Eve spent their days close to God in the garden, playing and living. There will be a distinct contrast between the paradise in which they live and the world into which they will be cast after they leave the garden.

Ask Your Storymakers

1. When the snake enters the story, how does the tone of the story change?
2. When the snake climbed the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, what did you think?

Activity

Toolbox: colored pencils, markers, pens, crayons, pencil

Instructions:

Share your Emotions: Illustrate what it would be like if you were in the garden with your best friend. In one scene draw what it was like before the snake appeared. Be sure to tell the story through expressions on each page. On the second page draw what it would be like after you ate the forbidden fruit.

Deeper Meaning:

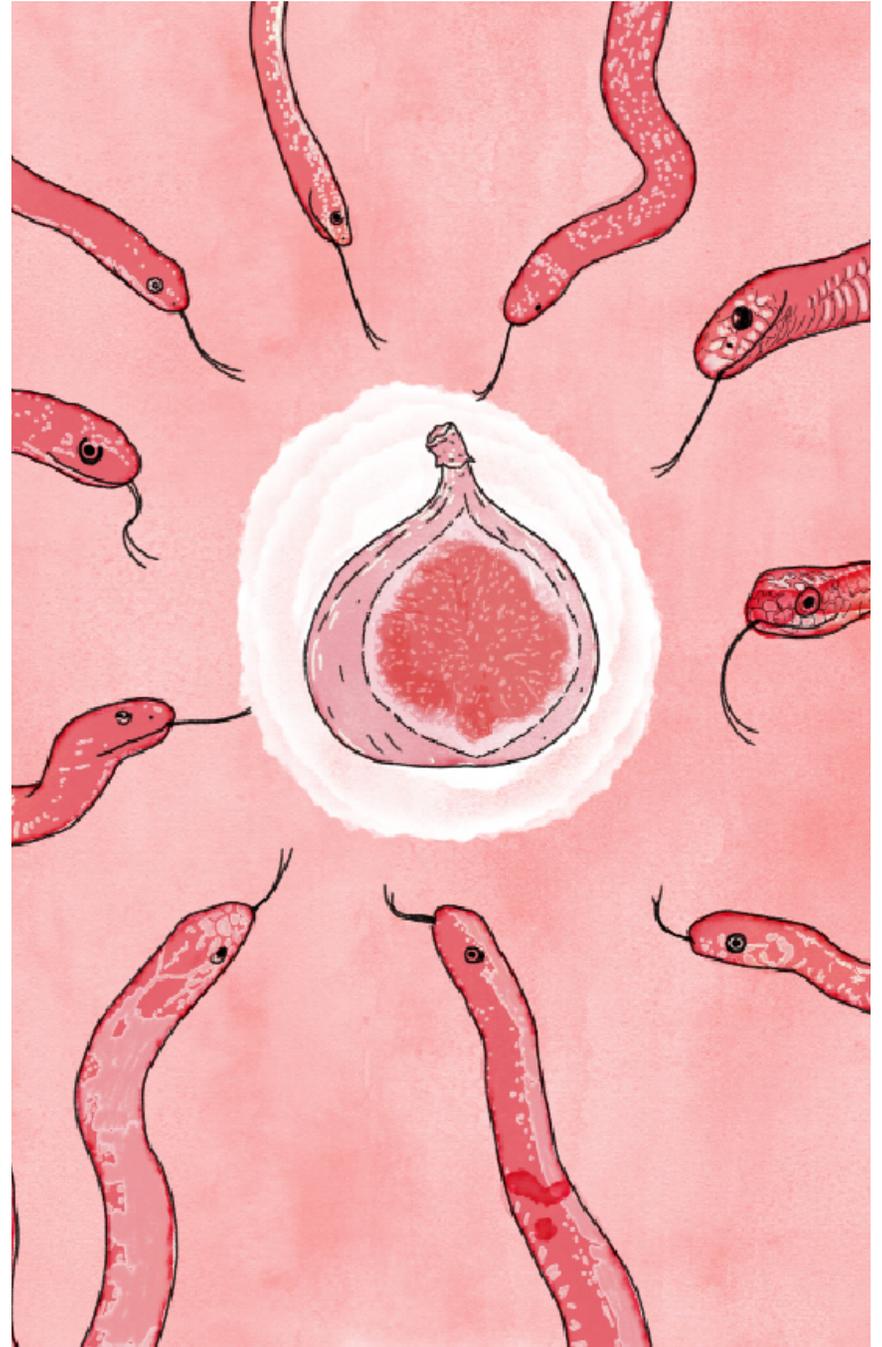
Encourage your StoryMakers to consider their emotions. God gave each of us intuition to navigate through life. Ask that deeper thought be considered as each child enters this activity.



Chapter 10: Temptation

Genesis 3:6-7

Adam and Eve are living their lives in the beautiful garden when they encounter the serpent. The serpent tempts Adam and Eve with a lie about how they will be more like God if they eat the fruit. Adam and Eve realize their desire to be as powerful as God.



A Little Science

Scientists find that when humans recognize what they are interested in, whether good or bad, we have clarity to deal with our problems. Or in this case temptation to be like God. This is why in many churches each Sunday people confess. Confession allows the human heart to be examined and given to God as we recognize how we maybe reaching up to be just like God.

Field Notes

In all good stories there is a problem. God's story is no different. Although Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden, they wanted to be like God. They had forgotten that God had given them everything and forgot how much God loved them.

After Eve took the fruit, Adam joined her. From that moment humanity would never be the same. Both God's children were made in the image of their Creator. But when given a choice, Adam and Eve rejected their Creator's command. We do the same thing. We forget that God is God and we are his creatures rather than gods ourselves.

Ask Your Storymakers

1. Do you ever forget how much someone like your parents or God loves you? What do you do when that happens?
2. Sometimes when we fail or want to be in control, our emotions become confusing. What emotion do you think Adam and Eve felt most?
3. What are the main things that make us different from God?

Let's Breathe Together...

Close your eyes, and take three deep breaths, then on the count of three, shout out your strongest emotion when you make a mistake, feel disappointed, or are afraid.

Activity

Toolbox: markers, pencil, pens

Instructions:

SHARE YOUR EMOTIONS: Illustrate your feelings on the broken pages. Share a time when have you felt tricked into believing something that was not true. Write a few words or sentences in the broken glass that tells your story too.

For Example:

"Sometimes I am afraid of the dark because I think no one is there for me."

"Once I was tricked into eating a jelly bean that actually tasted like dirt."

Deeper Meaning:

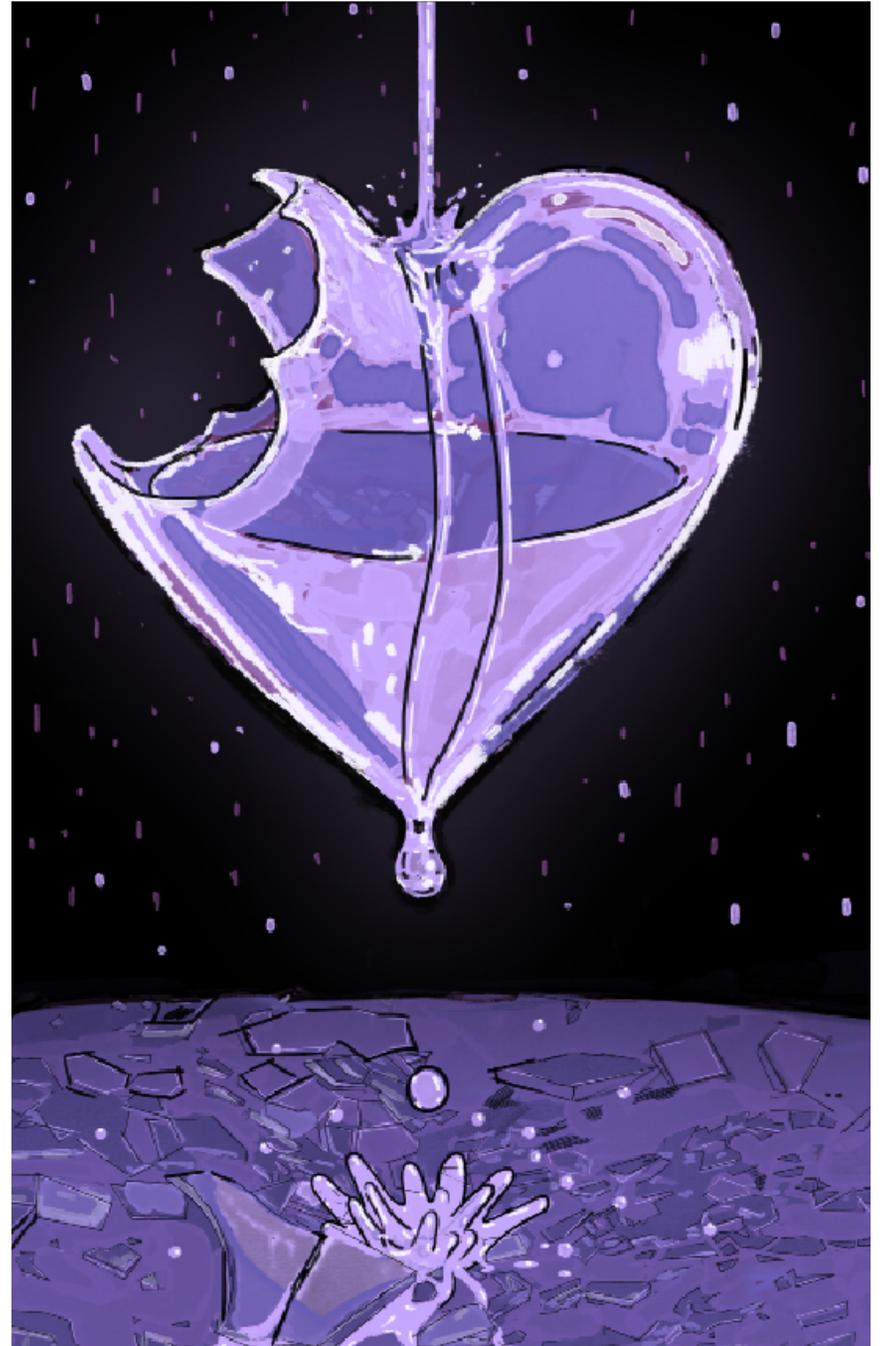
Draw your StoryMakers' attention to how much the world hurts when life is experienced apart from God. We lack peace when we forget God's depth of love and grace for each of us.



Chapter 11: Brokenness

Genesis 3:8-20

As a result of Adam and Eve disobeying God, creation has taken a sharp turn. A dark cloud has entered the story. Now that Adam and Eve have taken the fruit, they are experiencing two major feelings: guilt and shame. As a result, they hide.



Field Notes

Adam and Eve lived in a place where they had everything they could ever need, and yet they were tricked into thinking they needed more. They were unable to see that they needed nothing else. Like all of us, they forgot their place as creatures and tried to be more than they were designed to be.

Thoughts to Ponder

Why would Adam + Eve eat of the fruit? Some would say humans are easily spooked and want to be over prepared, partly because we are often afraid. When brokenness and hurt are often experienced, its usually because someone is afraid or wants to be in control(which is just another way of being afraid)

Ask Your Storymakers

1. When was a time you thought you needed more than you have? What did you do? How did you really feel inside?
2. What do you think God might be feeling about Adam and Eve at this point in the story?
3. When you feel guilt or shame, what do you do? Does it help?

Activity

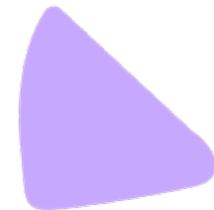
Toolbox: pencil, pens, markers, colored pencils, pastels

Instructions:

Encourage your StoryMakers to create two strips of emotions, one emphasizing the progression of Adam and Eve, then ask the StoryMakers to create their own emotional strip.

Deeper Meaning:

When we relate to the characters of a story, deeper meaning and understanding is learned. Asking our StoryMakers to relate to and consider the emotions of Adam and Eve will enable them to have a deeper sense of their own humanity.



Chapter 12: Love + Mercy

Genesis 3:21-24

Adam and Eve are sent out of the Garden, but not naked and alone. God clothes them in animal skins (the first death in the world), and promises to be with them no matter what.



Thoughts to Ponder

Have you ever wondered about the depth of God's love for his creation, especially his children, aka US? God's love is just about to show up in a big way as we begin to explore Genesis. Even though creation created a disconnect between themselves and God, he is ready to pursue us. The start of the Bible sets the tone for how God will come for his creation over and over again, making a way even though creation continues to go their own way.

Field Notes

Have you ever felt homesick? This is what Adam and Eve would feel like outside of the garden. In fact, all of creation would be homesick forever because brokenness had entered the world.

BUT, even though God sends Adam and Eve out of his garden, he promises to protect them and guide them outside of their home. This is a BIG clue about who God is and what he is like. He is always at work to bring us back to himself, no matter how many obstacles come our way.

Ask Your Storymakers

1. What did you think when God made clothes for Adam and Eve? Would you have done that?
2. What do you do when you get that feeling of homesickness—a feeling that things aren't right?
3. Now that you know more about God's promises to Adam and Eve and you, how do you think you might respond when you have feelings of guilt or shame?

Activity

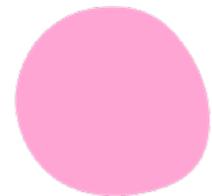
Toolbox: scissors, craft sticks, flashlight, tape, pencil

Instructions:

Encourage your StoryMakers to share what they have learned. Attached to the zine are pages of shadow puppets. Assist your StoryMaker in cutting each puppet out and attaching them to craft sticks with tape. Turn off the lights, grab a flashlight, and let the fun begin.

Deeper Meaning:

When a reader is able to retell a story they have read, a depth of the story is received. Puppets enable receivers to integrate each story for themselves and know that God is their Creator and Redeemer, now and always.



Teacher's Notes



