

Junior Soldiers

Unit 8 : Lesson 5



Living Green!

PURPOSE : For the children to explore and understand that we are blessed to live in God's beautiful creation. He has given us care over it and we have a responsibility to look after all He has provided.

'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.'

Genesis 1:1 (NLT)

'Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground."'

Genesis 1:26 (NLT)

'Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!'

Genesis 1:31a (NLT)

Consider & Prepare

Read:

Genesis 1

Psalm 8

Leviticus 25:23–24

Proverbs 31:8

Watch the movie *WALL-E*. This will give you a nice basis for this lesson. You might like to do this for your own preparation or you might like to have it as a lead in to this lesson with the children.

As you lead this lesson, remember that some children may not have an understanding of particular terms, phrases or buzz words that adults may use when they discuss this topic (e.g. pollution, 'reuse, reduce and recycle', climate change, global warming, etc.). If you find yourself having to use these terms, take a moment to explain them, but don't get too sidetracked from the lesson.

While many Australians, especially in recent years, have been affected by natural disasters that may be accentuated by global warming, our nation also enjoys strong community support in terms of fundraising, emergency services, disaster relief programs and helpful neighbours and others. However,

many people in the developing world suffer extreme consequences of climate change (droughts, floods etc.) without the supports and helps that we have available.

God calls us to care for the planet and also for the marginalized and disadvantaged, so in caring for His creation we can not only be good stewards of our 'home' but also make it a safer place for everyone. Doing what we can to reduce global warming and protect the environment not only helps us but helps others—even those on the other side of the planet.

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- Paper and textas
- Something precious that you have previously created (e.g. a painting, a craft item, a sculpture, decorated cake, potted flower, etc.)

For 'The Main Thing'

- Internet access to the YouTube clip called 'The Gospel Project for Kids Bible Story Video, Creation' (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9MPef0FT7oY>)
- A screen to show the clip on
- Bibles
- A copy of the Disney movie *WALL-E* and something to play it on, or internet access and a screen to view the YouTube clip called 'WALL-E Intro' (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLx_7wEmwms)

For 'Tying In'

- Textas
- Green paper
- Scissors
- Large outline of a tree drawn on some butchers paper
- A map or globe of the world depending on what you can access
- Four different colours of sticky notes
- Pens
- Gluesticks

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off a Home & Beyond card for each child.

Connecting In

Something precious...

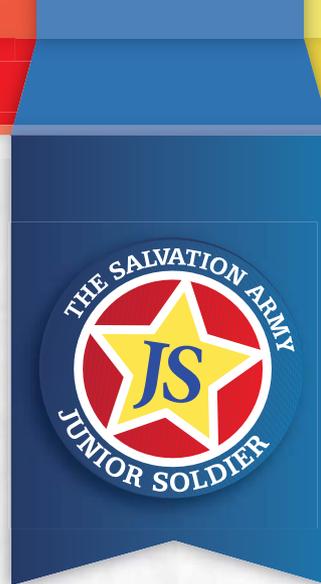
For this part of the lesson you will need something that has been created that might represent the word 'precious' (e.g. a painting, a craft item, a sculpture, decorated cake, potted flower etc.).

In front of the children, explain to another leader how important this item is to you and how it took you a long time to create it and how precious it is to you.

Give the object to the other leader and ask them if they could care for it while you lead an activity. During the next activity the leader entrusted with the precious item will slowly and discreetly ruins the precious item (draw on it, rip it, stick thing to it etc.).

Alphabet creation...

For this activity you will need paper and textas. Divide the children into groups of two or three. Give them time to write each letter of the alphabet in a list down the side of the page. Explain that they will have two minutes (or shorter or longer depending on your group) to write one thing God created for each letter. At the end of the game the children will get one point for each thing they thought of. Let the know not to worry too much about the spelling for each item, except that it starts with the right letter.



Variations:

1. You could score this game a little bit like the word game Boggle, where teams only get a point if no other team has the same word (e.g. if three out of four teams wrote elephant for 'e' and the fourth team wrote echidna – only the fourth team would score a point for 'e')
2. You divide your group into two lines. You stand at the front and say a letter to the two players standing at the beginning of each line. The first player to call out something God created starting with that letter earns a point for their team.

Link: 'God has created an amazing world for us to live in. Sometimes we forget that it is our responsibility to take care of Earth.'

- What is one of your favourite things that God has created? Why?
- What parts of God's creation do you care for at the moment? (*pets, gardens, yourself*)

Today we are going to look at how important it is to take care of Earth and explore further what might happen if we don't take our responsibility for this seriously.'

When you have finished your activity, return your attention to the leader and your precious item to see how things are going. When you realise that the leader has ruined your item, express how hurt and disappointed you are. Explain that because it is ruined others won't be able to enjoy it in the future. It was really special to you. You trusted your leader to care for it and respect it.

Link: 'I was only acting today about how important this item was to me and (leader's name) and I agreed at the beginning of the lesson that they were going to destroy it but let's just imagine for a moment that this was a real life situation.'

- Imagine if you had created something very special and unique for others to enjoy and you trusted someone to care for it and they didn't take that responsibility seriously. How would you feel?
- Do you think (leader's name) knew how important this item was to me?

I think that a situation like this might help us to understand something of what God might be feeling about His precious creation and how we are treating it.'

The Main Thing

In the beginning...

For this activity you will need access to the internet and a screen to share the following YouTube clip with the children: 'The Gospel Project for Kids Bible Story Video, Creation' (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9MPef0FT7oY>). Show the clip to your group.

Link: 'This is a great clip to remind us about how God created Earth and the universe. How he made creation is truly amazing and beyond our understanding. God made a beautiful world for his children to live in and take care of.'

- What did God say about his creation as he was making it and when he was finished?
- Do you think he still thinks that today? Why or why not?
- Do you think humans do a good job of taking care of the Earth God has blessed them with?

Look up and read together Psalm 8 (CEV uses good language for children)

- What stands out to you in these verses?
- What do these verses say about our responsibility to God's wonderful creation?

WALL-E...

For this activity you will need a copy of the Disney movie *WALL-E* and something to play it on or internet access and a screen to view the YouTube clip called 'WALL-E Intro' (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLx_7wEmwms). Watch the intro of *Wall-E*. You might wish to watch it a couple of times as, the first time, the children may not pick up what you will be discussing.

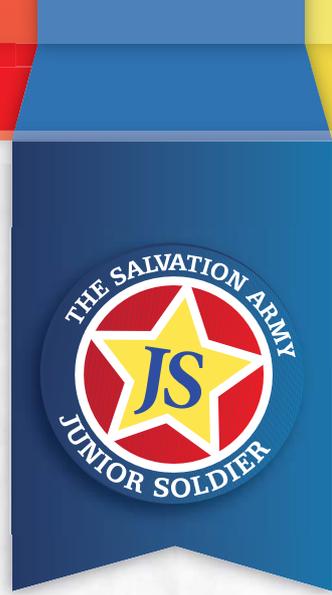
- How does Wall-E's world look different to our world now? (*dark, no sun, no blue sky, no green, no people, no animals, nothing living, cluttered, lots of rubbish, no water etc.*)
- Where do you think all the rubbish came from?



- Why do you think there are no trees or sun or water?
- Why do you think there are no people or animals?

Have the children think back to the creation DVD they watched earlier, or you may even like to replay all or part of it to help the children compare and contrast the two clips.

- Do you think Earth could become as polluted as shown in *WALL-E*? Why or why not?
- How might God feel if His beautiful world ended up this way?
- What are some ways we contribute to pollution?
- What can we do to make sure our world doesn't end up like Wall-E's world?
- I wonder what you might do differently this week.



Tying In

Action Point...

For this activity you will need some green paper, textas, scissors, gluesticks and a large outline of a tree drawn on some butchers paper.

Spend some time discussing (either as a whole group or split into smaller groups depending on numbers) some of the things that each of us could be doing to show respect, love and care for God's creation.

Draw a leaf outline on a sheet of green paper and write or draw an action point in the middle of the outline. Cut out the leaf shape and then stick this onto the large tree outline.

Prayer activity...

For this activity you will need a map of the world or a globe depending on which you can access, four different colours of sticky notes and some pens.

Encourage the children to write some prayers on sticky notes and place them on the map/globe. Use a different coloured sticky note for each of the topics.

- Thank you prayers.
- Please help others (include people and places affected by climate damage).
- Please help me to recycle, save water etc.
- Pray a promise to look after God's creation.

Home & Beyond

Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

Respect God's creation at home...

- Make some time to talk with your family about the topic we have been exploring today.
- I wonder if there is anything that you can do differently to care for God's creation.
- Share the action point you chose to put on the tree during the session today.
- Your family or Big Bud might like to encourage and support you as you seek to live out this goal.

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