

LOWER KEY STAGE 2/UNIT 2A.1

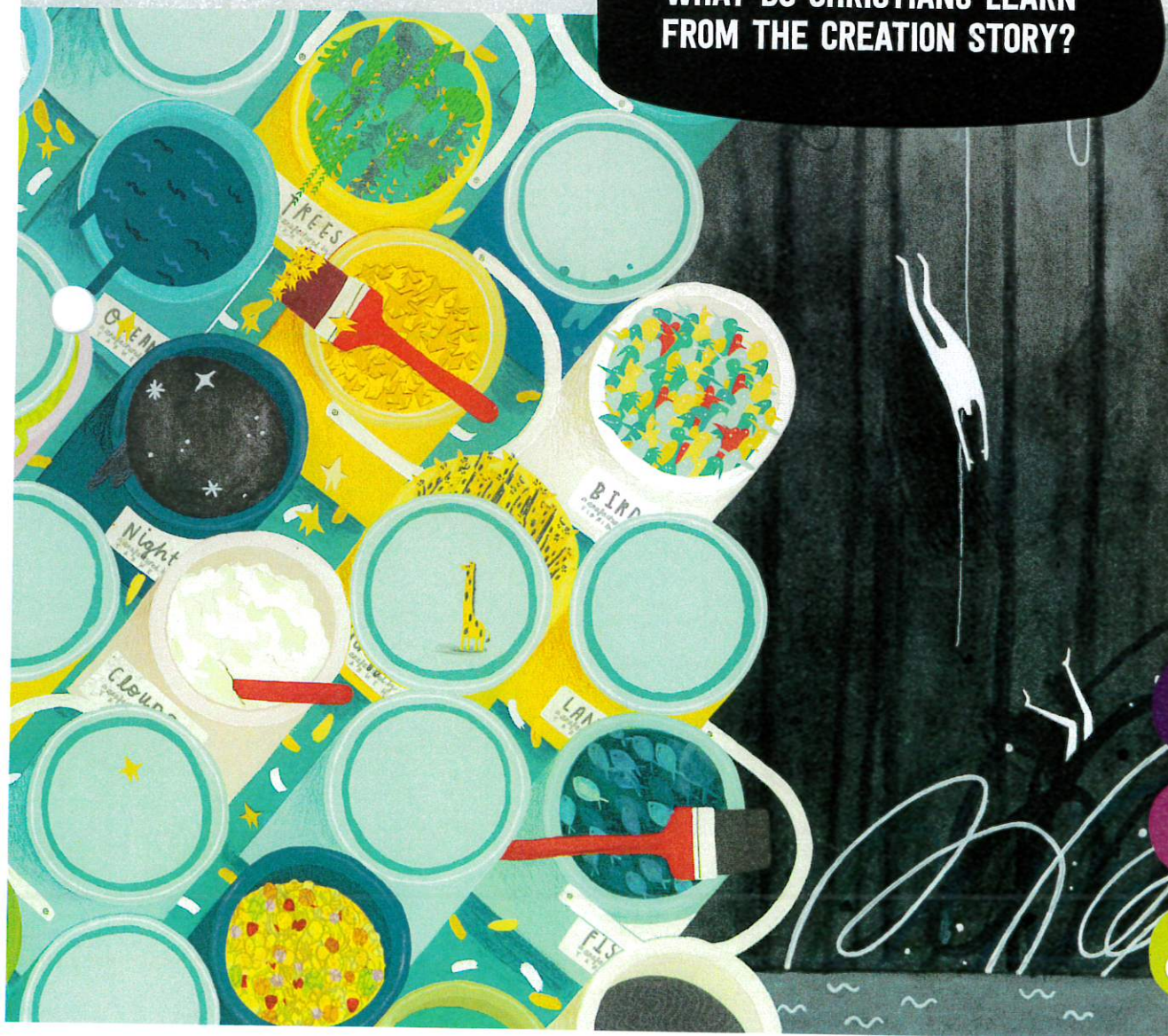
CREATION/FALL

WHAT DO CHRISTIANS LEARN FROM THE CREATION STORY?

CREATION/FALL





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LOWER KEY STAGE 2/UNIT 2A.1



★ OUTCOMES

BY THE END OF THIS UNIT, PUPILS ARE EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO:

-  Place the concepts of God and Creation on a timeline of the Bible's 'Big Story'.
-  Make clear links between Genesis 1 and what Christians believe about God and Creation.
-  Describe what Christians do because they believe God is Creator. (For example, follow God, wonder at how amazing God's creation is; care for the earth in some specific ways.)
-  Ask questions and suggest answers about what might be important in the creation story for Christians living today, and for people who are not Christians.

KNOWLEDGE BUILDING BLOCKS

PUPILS WILL KNOW THAT CHRISTIANS BELIEVE:

- God the Creator cares for the creation, including human beings.
- As human beings are part of God's good creation, they do best when they listen to God.
- The Bible shows that God *wants* to help people to be close to him – he keeps his relationship with them, gives them guidelines on good ways to live (such as the Ten Commandments).
- [Building block from EYFS: Christians believe God made our wonderful world and so we should look after it.]

NOTE: Teachers should read the Essential Information pages before teaching this unit.

➔ YOU MIGHT LIKE TO START WITH...

A trip outside to the school playground, local park, forest, beach, and so on. Carry out an activity to help pupils identify 'wow factors' in nature. For example, give each pupil a piece of card shaped as a paint palette with double-sided sticky tape on and ask them to find examples from nature to stick on it. Can they fill it with all the colours of the rainbow or every shade of a particular colour, without destroying any living plants? Or ask pupils to shut their eyes and listen to 'nature's symphony' – can they hear bees, birds, leaves rustling, waves lapping? Recreate as many of these sounds as possible using resources from the surrounding natural environment. Ensure that pupils are helped to focus on what they find wonderful about the world in each activity. In pairs pupils take a digital image of something from nature that they feel has the 'wow factor'. Discuss choices and use images to start a display.

MAKING SENSE OF THE TEXT

- Close eyes and listen to Louis Armstrong's 'What A Wonderful World', then tell the Jewish and Christian creation story from Genesis 1:1-25 in child-friendly language. You might introduce it using guided visualisation (see Resource Sheet 1).
- Give time for pupils to write or draw what they think is wonderful about the world in light of the initial activity and the creation story – ideas can be added to the display of photos in a creative manner. Collect pupils' questions as you go through.
- Talk about what this God must be like – recall learning from KS1 Unit 1.1 God. If God is Creator, what kind of God must God be? List some ideas. (You might like to use James Weldon Johnson's poem to get pupils to think about what God's perspective might be; see Resources.)
- Go back outside. In pairs, pupils take a digital image of something that has the 'wow factor' from the human-made world, perhaps something that represents human ingenuity, kindness or capacity for appreciation of beauty. Add these to the display.
- Now, reading the text from a Bible, share Genesis 1:26-31, focusing on what it says about humans being made in God's image and being given control over the earth.
- Look together at a translation of the Bible from the original text (for example, the *International Children's Bible*; see Resources). Ask pupils to count the number of times that the words 'good' or 'very good' are used to describe how God sees creation. Discuss what parts of God's creation in the story were good/very good (ensure that humans are one feature in the discussion). How good and clever is creation/the natural world? Add any extra ideas to the list describing what Christians think God must be like from this story.
- Pupils share a time when they have created something they thought was good or really liked, for example, a story/picture/design/model/poem. How did they care for their own 'very good' creation and how did they want others to treat it? Talk about how people look after the 'wow' objects humans created. Explain how many Christians believe that God cares for his own creation, including humans. Ask pupils to write instructions God might give to humans to make sure the world stays 'very good'; for example, how to look after animals.
- Talk about the key question: what do they think Christians learn from this story?



UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT

- Give pupils a model kit, with no instructions, and ask them to make the model. What problems do they encounter? Discuss how much better it would be to have some instructions from the maker/designer or even better, have the designer with them! Make a link between this and the way Christians view the Bible – the Maker's Manual which is inspired by God to give his people a way of understanding life and how to live it.
- Set up a maze in the classroom. Blindfold a pupil – ask him/her to make their way through the maze. How does she/he feel? Then give the pupil a guide to help and lead. How does she/he feel now? Did the pupil feel happier with or without the guide? Draw comparison between this and how Christians let their Creator be their guide through life; they do best when they listen to God. Ask pupils to recall how the Bible helps Christians. (It guides them through life, helping them to understand life and how to live it.)
- Ask pupils: what instructions does God give to humans for treating the Earth as God's good creation? Read Genesis 1:28–30. Ask pupils what they think it means. Use Resource Sheet 2 which offers some possibilities. Ask them to decide which are the most likely and the least likely meanings.
- Show a picture of an overgrown garden. What would someone need to do to look after it? Christians believe that God ultimately owns everything that is just put into human hands to be looked after. Humans are 'stewards' or perhaps 'caretakers' of the world for God. Look at some case studies of how some Christians try to look after God's world (see Resource Sheet 3):
 - The monks and nuns at Mucknall Abbey in Worcestershire try to set an example of caring for Creation
 - A new movement of Forest Churches tries to reconnect with Creation
 - Ruth Valerio is an example of a Christian who tries to love God and his Creation
 - See KS1 Unit 1.2 Creation for an introduction to the Christian conservation movement A Rocha and their 'Living Lightly' campaign.
- Explain that there are many ways in which people can be God's stewards, and that this extends beyond looking after nature. People can give their time, money and talents to look after everyone and everything. Recall times when pupils in the class have done this – perhaps the whole class have given of their time, money and talents for a school-run charity event.



MAKING CONNECTIONS

Present pupils with three, six or nine (depending on ability) areas that people could learn about from the Christian creation story. For example:

- Humans
- God
- Animals
- Nature
- God designed the world
- The world is 'very good'
- God created the world from nothing
- Humans are responsible for the earth
- The world is amazing.
- In groups, discuss what pupils think can be learned about each area from the creation story. Ask them to decide which are the most important two for Christians, and why – allow a range of views.
- Remind pupils that not everyone is Christian or believes the world was created by God. Ask pupils to think of other reasons why nature and humans are important, and why we should look after the world and each other.
- Pupils to decide upon one thing that everyone in the class can try to do over the next week to make the world 'very good' (whether or not they believe in God).



MAKING SENSE OF THE TEXT

NOTE: If pupils are not moving on to activities from the story of temptation in the Digging Deeper section of this unit, the story of Adam and Eve from Genesis 2:15–17 and Genesis 3 should be shared with them here, perhaps using *The Lion Storyteller Bible*. The Fall should be placed on the 'Big Story' timeline.


DIGGING DEEPER

CREATION/FALL

WHAT DO CHRISTIANS LEARN FROM THE CREATION STORY?

★ OUTCOMES

BY THE END OF THIS UNIT, PUPILS ARE EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO:

-  Place the concepts of God, Creation and the Fall on a timeline of the Bible's 'Big Story'.
-  Offer suggestions about what the story of Adam and Eve might show about human nature and how to act.
-  Describe how and why Christians might pray to God, say sorry, forgive and ask for forgiveness.
-  Make links between what stories in the Bible say about human beings, and pupils' own ideas about how people should behave.

🏗️ KNOWLEDGE BUILDING BLOCKS

PUPILS WILL KNOW THAT:

- The Bible tells a story (in Genesis 3) about how humans spoiled their friendship with God (sometimes called 'the Fall').
- This means that humans cannot get close to God without God's help.
- The Bible shows that God *wants* to help people to be close to him – he keeps his relationship with them, gives them guidelines on good ways to live (such as the Ten Commandments), and offers forgiveness even when they keep on falling short.
- Christians show that they want to be close to God too, through obedience and worship, which includes saying sorry for falling short.

➔ YOU MIGHT LIKE TO START WITH...

Leaving a covered bowl in the classroom with a sign saying 'Do not touch'. This bowl could be full of chocolates to tempt pupils into taking one. It could also be full to the brim with feathers – when the cover is taken off, the feathers can go flying, the mess becoming worse with efforts to clear up, so perpetrators may find themselves caught red-handed! Discuss what temptation is and whether any of the class were tempted to look in the bowl. Look together at images where people might be tempted to do something (for example, take sweets from a shop or drop litter), ask pupils to identify who is being tempted and by what.



➔ MAKING SENSE OF THE TEXT

- Recap learning about creation. Use a timeline of the Bible (use the Frieze, for example) and get pupils to place Creation and God at the start of the 'Big Story' of the Bible. At this point in the story, everything was very good indeed. What do they think happens next? Look at how Creation moves into the Fall on the frieze, to help pupils articulate their ideas beyond initial ones.
- Share the story of Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:15-17 and Genesis 3) with pupils in a dramatic and engaging way. Ensure that the tree, God's command, Adam, Eve, the serpent, eating of the fruit, hiding from God and the punishment are all included. Talk about pupils' ideas and responses to the story. If there is a 'hidden meaning' or a message in the story, what would it be? Tell them they are going to explore what Christians think about the meaning of the story.
- Ask pupils to work out where in the story Adam and Eve are tempted, are disobedient, pass the blame, and even try to hide from God. Link this to pupils' own experiences of being tempted and disobedient (this would be a good point to remind them of the activity involving the bowl of feathers/chocolates). Make the point that Adam and Eve went further than just being tempted – they gave in to temptation!
- Select pupils to take the roles of the man, woman and snake. For God you might leave an empty chair, but have a pupil offering to be God's spokesperson to answer questions. Ask pupils (in pairs) to come up with questions for each character, then use these for hot-seating, where pupils in role try to answer the questions from their understanding of the story. Make a note of the best questions.
- Think, pair, share/wheels within wheels discussion: What do you think about Adam and Eve's behaviour? Was it wrong? See if pupils can offer some different ideas: get them to start sentences with 'on the one hand ... on the other hand...'. Pupils may be fairly judgemental that Adam and Eve did something they had been told not to do, and blamed each other. If they seem judgemental, inquire whether or not they know of anyone who has ever acted disobediently, or blamed another person – the likelihood is that most of the class will know of people who have acted in these ways.
- Explain that the part of the story where Adam and Eve eat the fruit is known as 'the Fall' and is important for much Christian belief. By being disobedient, Adam and Eve 'fell' from being close to God. This also damaged the relationship between people and God, people and each other, and people and the natural world. Do pupils now have any more comments to make about the Fall on the frieze of the 'Big Story' timeline?
- To see how well pupils understand the story, you might ask them to work in pairs or groups to produce the front page for the *Eden Times* newspaper. They should choose a suitable picture and headline, say what happened, and include a quotation from God, Adam, Eve and the snake. Good answers will explain the idea of 'the Fall' – that this spoiled the friendship between humans and God and that humans cannot get close to God again without God's help. Remind pupils of the unit's key question – what do Christians learn from the creation story?



UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT

- Point out that Adam and Eve do not say sorry in the story. They are also punished by God. However, God does provide them with what they need (for example, clothes) to survive outside of the Garden of Eden, reflecting the Christian belief that God still cares for people and wants to bring people back to being close to him. One way is through giving them guidelines for living:
- Show pupils the Ten Commandments (see Resource Sheet 4). Ask them what people must have been doing if God needed to give them these rules. Discuss the meaning of each. Explain that the Bible gives some guidelines on good ways to live. By following God's rules, Christians can be close to God (which he wants).
- Place each commandment at a different point in the room alongside an eleventh spot saying 'My Own Commandment'. Ask pupils to stand next to the one they consider the most important, a) to the people of God to whom the rules were given, and b) to Christians today, and call upon them to justify their decisions. Give pupils opportunities to change their minds if they wish during the discussion. Then add a twelfth spot saying 'All of them'. Does this change any pupils' positioning? Why? Talk about how hard it would be for Christians to keep all of the commandments. Ask pupils to suggest ideas for what they might do if they cannot love and obey God as much as they would like.
- Explain that many Christians believe it is important to say sorry when you have done something wrong. It is important to accept responsibility rather than pass the blame (as Adam and Eve tried to do). Some Christians may say prayers to God to show how sorry they are, or take part in a sacrament called confession/reconciliation/penance, which is a special time to say they are sorry to God, and pray for forgiveness. Give pupils some information about what Christians do to say sorry (see Resource Sheets 5A and 5B for information). Get pupils to describe three ways Christians might say sorry, and three reasons why they believe this will help them grow closer to God.
- Ask pupils to define forgiveness. Explore the idea of forgiveness by telling a story in which the main character behaves badly. For each act of bad behaviour, put a puff of air into a balloon – keep going until it's almost ready to pop (allow pupils to become involved in storytelling, devising appropriate bad actions for the main perpetrator). When the character admits his/her wrongdoings and says sorry at the end, let the air out, showing the belief that God can forgive and people can have a fresh start again. This can happen even when people keep on falling short.



MAKING CONNECTIONS

- Remind pupils of the Parable of the Lost Son from their KS1 work. Retell the first part of the story, in Luke 15:11-17. Ask pupils to put themselves in the role of the son and write on speech bubbles what they are going to say to the father on their return. Read the end of the parable and focus on the son's words – he apologises and asks to be a servant. The father is so delighted to welcome the son home! Ask pupils to suggest what this might show about Christian beliefs regarding forgiveness and the importance of apologising. Explore how the father must have been waiting for his son's return, and how this might show how keen God is to welcome people back to him.
- See if pupils can link Genesis 3 and the Parable of the Lost Son (see Resource Sheet 6). What if the Lost Son met up with Adam and Eve? What would they say to each other?
- Remind pupils that the story of Adam and Eve showed that humans are not always good. Take the following statements and do a human bar chart, or have a 'snowball discussion' about whether or not they agree with the statement, bearing in mind what they found out in the story:
 - **The world is good**
 - **It is easier to be bad than to be good**
 - **Humans are good**
 - **It is easy to resist temptation**
 - **It is never tempting to be good**
 - **It is good to be forgiven**
- If pupils find this difficult, as a class beforehand they can list some reasons why the statements might be correct or incorrect. Talk about why. Remember the creation story says the world is good/very good; but humans choose bad things too sometimes. Whose fault is it?
- Reflect on the question 'What do Christians learn from the Creation story?' In light of their learning, discuss what pupils think people today can learn from the stories of Creation and Adam and Eve. Ask pupils if people other than Christians or Jewish people can learn something from the stories – and if so, what that could be.

SELECT AND WEAVE TOGETHER ACTIVITIES TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOMES

MAKE SENSE OF THE TEXT

UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT

MAKE CONNECTIONS

OUTCOMES

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Genesis (the first book of the Bible) begins with the Hebrew word תְּשׁוּבָה [bereshit], which is often translated as 'In the beginning'. This is the very start of the Creation story, which is placed at the very start of the Bible. (See also Unit 1.2 Creation in KS1 for more background information on Genesis 1.)

For many Christians, this story may be about the beginning of the world, but it is also about the start of the relationship between God and God's creation. Much of this extended story focuses on God's relationship with people.

It does not take very long before a rift in the relationship emerges (see Genesis 3). Adam and Eve eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – the one thing that God has commanded them not to do. Many Christians talk about this as being the moment when sin enters the world – or 'the Fall'. Of course, there is much to be discussed here – why does God allow humans to bring sin

into the world? Why was the tree put in the same place as Adam and Eve themselves? Why does Eve seem to think she must not even touch the tree? These are just some of the questions this story throws up.

However, a theme running through the story is that of individual choice. Adam and Eve chose to disobey God. Then they neither apologised nor took responsibility for their actions, Adam blaming Eve and Eve blaming the serpent.

Whilst the story seems to tell of a time when two human beings did something wrong and were punished, most Christians would say that it is really doing more than this. It also indicates what all human beings are like – being tempted to do things their own way rather than following the good guidance of a good Creator God, and often ending up doing the wrong thing. It also offers an explanation for why the world is not always 'very good' – humans have spoiled things.

COMMENTARY ON THE TEXT AND ITS MEANING(S)

GENESIS 1:1-2:3

Many cultures and religions have creation stories. There are some similarities between Genesis 1 and other creation stories from that time and that part of the world. An important feature of the creation story in the Bible, however, is that unlike others, it has only one God, who is all-powerful. God is able purposefully to form a well-designed world in an orderly manner, and over which he is Lord. Christianity teaches that God created the world from nothing.

The story (which is read by some Christians as being a kind of poem) recounts how God creates each part of the world on each day. This culminates with the creation of human beings on the sixth day.

Humans are made in God's image and are the pinnacle of created life. God imposes order on his creation, blessing humans and giving them

dominion, authority, over every living thing. This is usually taken to mean they are to look after the world on God's behalf – presumably in a way that God would approve.

Some Christians take this story literally, whereas others do not. Although the question of whether the story is literally true may crop up in a Year 3/4 classroom and should not be brushed under the carpet, it is not the focus of pupils' work until Year 5/6. In this unit, pupils will be progressing from their work on Creation in Year 1/2, and will concentrate on how Christians say 'thank you' to God the Creator, and look after the world.

NB: It is now against the law to teach the six-day Creation in Science as a scientific account of the origin of the universe. You can talk about it in RE as a belief held by some people. Most Christians in the UK do not believe in a literal six-day creation, although there may well be pupils, e.g. those from a Pentecostal background, who do.

COMMENTARY ON THE TEXT AND ITS MEANING(S)

THE STORY OF ADAM AND EVE, GENESIS 3.

At the end of the Creation story in Genesis 1, the world is 'very good'. The story of Adam and Eve focuses on what happens next in this 'good' world.

Adam has been told by God not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and Eve knows a version of this commandment too. Eating from this tree is the one and only thing that God forbids Adam and Eve to do. However, both of them give in to the temptation to eat the fruit of the tree, an action that comes with a huge price.

This is the first time that something has gone wrong in God's very good world, and it is not caused by God (who is completely good), but by humans. The story can be read as an insight into human nature – people are not always good. As part of God's creation, humans should obey God, but this can be very difficult to do. In the case of Adam and Eve, disobeying God is presented as humans corrupting the good world and bringing evil into it.

This 'Fall' changes the relationship between humanity and God. Humans are punished and forced to leave

the Garden of Eden. The Bible goes on to show ways in which people can be close to God after this Fall. This recognition of failure, and also the desire to be close to God, are reflected in Christian practice today.

Christians disagree about the nature and purpose of this text (and all of Genesis 1-11). Some see Genesis 3 as an historical event concerning two real individuals; some see it as 'proto-history' – not concerned with literal events but introducing the themes and concerns of 'salvation history' which begins in Genesis 12-50; some read it as 'mythic', in that it is not literally true but contains some truths about human nature and human relationships with God, other humans and the natural world.

Whatever the perspective, most Christians would agree that the text supports the idea that God is Creator and worth worshipping, that Creation is good and worth preserving, that humans have the capacity to be both good and bad, but that they tend to turn away from God and need God's help.

RESOURCES

Teachers should share both the stories of Creation and Adam and Eve with pupils. Even if pupils are not going on to complete the deeper cycle of learning, it is crucial for their overall understanding of the 'Big Story' of the Bible that they know the story of Adam and Eve, and that this shows how humans changed both God's world and their relationship with God.

Teachers can find the texts at www.biblegateway.com. *The International Children's Bible* is clear and accessible.

Child-friendly versions should be used with pupils when telling the stories. Bob Hartman's excellent *Lion Storyteller Bible* (Lion Publishing) is worth buying for the classroom.

James Weldon Johnson's poem is available on 'Poem Hunter': www.poemhunter.com/poem/the-creation

A Rocha: <http://arocha.org.uk>

Mucknell Abbey: www.mucknellabbey.org.uk

Ruth Valerio: <http://ruthvalerio.net/about-me>

Forest Churches: www.oxford.anglican.org/mission-ministry/environment/resources/forest-church



GOING FURTHER

- Pupils could look at how God cares for his Creation in the Bible. There are many examples of this, such as God providing manna for the children of Israel when they had no food in the desert.
- Pupils might enjoy finding out about Adam giving all the creatures their names in Genesis 2.
- An additional text about temptation might be Matthew 4, the Temptation of Jesus.