

LESSON

1

Is there really a God?

Text: Genesis 1:1

Memory verse: Psalm 90:2

Materials:

- Illustrations 1-00–1-05
- Scrabble letters or magnetic letters arranged in a sentence “GOD IS LOVE” and another set of the same letters in no particular order, e.g., “ELIS OOD GV.” Arrange and display the two sets before the children come into class (or use Illustrations 1-04, 1-05).
- From CD: *God’s the Author of Creation* (song)

Introduction

We’ve probably all used the standard “design implies a Designer” argument as confirmation that God exists. However, evolutionists also agree that things appear “designed”—they attribute the apparent design to the effects of natural selection and mutations working on populations over millions of years. While it is beneficial to point out various “design features” in nature to confirm to children that there is a God, we also need to teach them the basics of another argument in this lesson (they can learn the details as they mature) so that in the future they’re able to answer the evolutionist argument “of course it appears designed—it wouldn’t be here if it didn’t function well!” This argument is based on “information theory” (IT) and the study of genetics. You can find more about IT in the Appendix.

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Welcome the students to class and begin with an introduction to the lesson series. **Many people don't trust the Bible to tell us the truth about the history of the world. They have lots of questions about God and the Bible. What kinds of questions do you have, or have you heard?** Wait for answers. If they can't think of any questions, suggest questions like **"Is there really a God?"** and **"How old is the earth?"** and **"Did God really create in six actual days—or over periods of millions of years?"**

Over the next few weeks, we'll be learning what the Bible teaches and how to answer these questions so that when our friends ask us questions, or when we read something in our textbook, or hear something from our teacher, we'll know the truth and we'll be able to give answers.

Ask, **Who can tell me what the first verse in the Bible is?** You may need to prompt them with **In the beginning ...** . Wait for them to answer, or have them turn to Genesis 1:1. **Right! In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The Bible tells us that God is the Creator of the universe.**

But some people don't believe that God exists. Do any of you know of anyone who doesn't believe God exists? Wait for them to answer. **If you haven't already, you may one day meet someone who thinks this way. Today, we're going to learn one way to show how science supports the Bible's statement that God exists. We'll answer the question "Is there really a God?"**

First, let me tell you a true story. In 1942, our country was involved in a war against Germany and Japan. It's important when fighting a war that the information we share with our fellow soldiers is kept a secret so that the enemy can't figure out what we're planning. To do this, the soldiers need a code system that the enemy can't decipher. Philip Johnston was the son of a missionary to the Navajo, a group of Native Americans who live in the Southwest. Philip could speak the Navajo language and knew that it was very complicated and that not many people could speak it. So he showed the Marines how to use the Navajo language to send and receive messages.

It worked like this: when a code talker got a message, he heard a string of Navajo words. He translated each of the words into English and then used just the first letter of the English words to form the message (Illustration 1-01). For example, what was being discussed if a code talker received the message, *tsah, wol-la-chee, ah-keh-di-glini, tsah-ah-dzoh*? Wait for students to find the words and translate the message. Right, he would know that the words were referring to the Navy, since *tsah* means needle, *wol-la-chee* means ant, *ah-keh-di-glini* means victor, and *tsah-ah-dzoh* means yucca. This code system was so complex that the enemy never figured it out, and many believe that without the Navajo code talkers we wouldn't have won the war!

[If you have time, ask **How would you spell your name using the Navajo code?** Allow students a few minutes to figure it out.]

Just like the Marines needed a code to send information, our bodies have a code that sends information—in fact, every living thing has this code. It's much more complex than the Navajo code, and it's written with chemicals, rather than with words.

Inside each of us are special molecules called DNA (which stands for deoxyribonucleic acid, if you want to mention that), and it looks something like this (Illustration 1-02). Our DNA stores the information needed to make you “you,” in the form of a special code.

Now, this coded information isn't very useful without something to translate it. That's what these special molecules are for (Illustration 1-03). All of this machinery is in our cells and helps to make us who we are.

For example, the way the information is arranged in your DNA tells whether you're going to be a boy or a girl, whether you'll have blue eyes or green, whether your skin will be medium brown or very dark brown, whether you'll have brown hair or red hair, and so on.

What has the information stored in your DNA told *your* body to do? Wait for your students to answer. Encourage them with examples:

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my eyes are brown, my nose is pointy rather than round, my top lip is smaller than my bottom lip, my eyes are spaced far apart, etc.

Let's see your ears. Who has earlobes that are attached to the sides of your head? And who has earlobes that aren't attached? Now, who can curl their tongue in a *u*, like this? Demonstrate—if you're able! **Now, put your hands together, like this.** Interlace your fingers, naturally. **Some of you have your right thumb on top, and some have your left thumb. Uncross your hands and try it so that your other thumb is on top.** Demonstrate. **Feels weird, doesn't it?**

All these things are determined by the information stored in your DNA. And each of us is one-of-a-kind and special. In fact, the Bible tells us that we're wonderfully made (have students look up Psalm 139:14) **and that we're made in God's very own image** (Genesis 1:26–27).

Now, where do you think all that information inside you came from? Wait for answers. **Well, it's a combination of the DNA we received; some from our mom and some from our dad. And where did their information come from? From their parents and so on. Now, as that information is passed down from person to person, it changes—sometimes the copying process makes mistakes, or information gets switched around and so on. But scientific observations indicate that no new information will come about naturally in your DNA. For instance, humans will never develop DNA information to grow feathers or a tail!**

For example, take a look at these letters. Show the two sets of letter arrangements, or Illustration 1-04.

Which set tells you something? The set that spells out “GOD IS LOVE.” **How long would we have to wait to get the letters that don't spell something meaningful to change into the set of letters that do? It will never happen, unless someone with intelligence rearranges the letters into a meaningful pattern that gives us information. Like this.** Rearrange the letters to spell “God is love,” or Illustration 1-05. **What information does this pattern give us?** God is love.

So, if information comes from a greater source of intelligence, and if information can't be naturally added to the information stored in our DNA, then where did all the information for all living things come from in the first place? (They may say, "God!" at this point, but there's a bit more explanation needed.)

Well, it had to come from a source that has all intelligence and all information—a source that is infinite. The only source that we know of that fits this description is the God of the Bible! So, the Bible is totally correct when it says, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." He filled the first creatures with enough information so that each could reproduce after their kind (dogs have puppies, cats have kittens, geese have goslings, etc.), and He put lots of information into Adam and Eve so that they could have many descendants without anyone being completely identical to the other.

Today, we've learned that real science confirms that God exists. Now let's read page 3 of our handout. Stress that, as Christians, we have a responsibility to share the good news with those around us. Are we doing that?

Now we're going to do an activity that will help us to learn our verse for today. Turn to the "Deciphering the code" page in the handout and allow students to work for a few minutes. If you have time, you can read the "Of course I exist!" section of the handout.

Discussion questions

1. What is the molecule called that helps to make us who we are?

Answer: DNA

2. Where did our DNA come from?

Answer: From our parents

3. Where did the information in Adam and Eve's DNA come from?

Answer: The infinitely intelligent Creator God made it.

Activity ideas

1. Telephone game. Have the students sit in a circle. Whisper into the ear of the one sitting by you something like *The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy red dog*. Say it only once. If they don't catch all of it, tell them to whisper into the ear of the person sitting beside them what they did hear, until the message makes it all the way to the last person. Have that student say out loud what he/she heard. It will likely have changed from what you originally said—sometimes drastically! The point of this game is that just as the information originated from an intelligent source but changed over time and lost information, so God is the originator of the information in all living things, but it changed as it was passed down from the original humans and animal kinds.
2. Family tree. On a large sheet of paper, begin with Adam and Eve at the top, then write the family line through Noah (from Genesis 5). Since you probably don't know which of Noah's sons were your student's ancestors, just draw a dotted line from Noah to the earliest ancestor they know about, and trace their family tree from there. If your students know what each person looked like, add a bit about some characteristics, and see if they can figure out where their blue eyes or other notable features came from!
3. Go over the other confirmations that God exists by reading through the "Is there really a God?" section of the handout.

Additional study ideas

1. American history

Learn more about the Navajo, their history and the role the tribe played in World War II. Do they have any "creation" or "flood" legends?

2. Theology

We can learn a lot about God through His Word, but only He knows everything about Himself. We're going to have a "sword drill" so that we can learn more about God. (In a sword drill, you have the children hold up their Bibles, closed, with one hand on each side of the Bible.

You announce the verse, have them repeat it, and then say, “Go!” The first child to find the verse stands, and you call on them to read the verse.) Feel free to add or subtract any verses as you have time or as you prefer:

Genesis 17:1 (*El shaddai* translated as “Almighty God” means the Sustaining God); Exodus 15:26 (the God who heals); Exodus 22:27 (gracious); Exodus 31:13 (the God who makes us holy); Isaiah 9:6 (Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace); Isaiah 44:24 (the Creator); Isaiah 51:12 (the Comforter); Isaiah 60:16 (the Savior and Redeemer); Malachi 3:6 (Unchanging); Romans 15:33 (God of peace); 1 John 1:5 (God is light); 1 John 4:7–8 (God is love)

3. Codes

Learn Morse code and write Psalm 90:2 (or student’s name, etc.) in Morse code. Or, get a long piece of yarn and, using long hollow tube macaroni (to represent the “dashes”) and small hollow circular macaroni (to represent the “dots”), string the macaroni together, separating each “letter” by tying a knot in the string. Separate each “word” by tying several knots in the string. (Warning: do not let children eat uncooked macaroni. Small macaroni can be a choking hazard for young children.)

Or, have children make up their own code and write Psalm 90:2 or their names with it.

Terms to know

Decipher: to read or interpret; to convert from a code to plain text

Infinite: having no boundaries or limits

Recommended resources

A Faith to Grow On (devotional book for children)

Daddy, Is There Really a God? (book for children)

Digging Up the Past (devotional book for children)

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Where Did God Come From? (DVD for high school—adult)

Available from www.AnswersBookstore.com, or call 1-800-778-3390.

On the web

www.AnswersInGenesis.org/God

www.AnswersInGenesis.org/Info_theory

Is there really a God?

**ANSWERS
FOR KIDS**

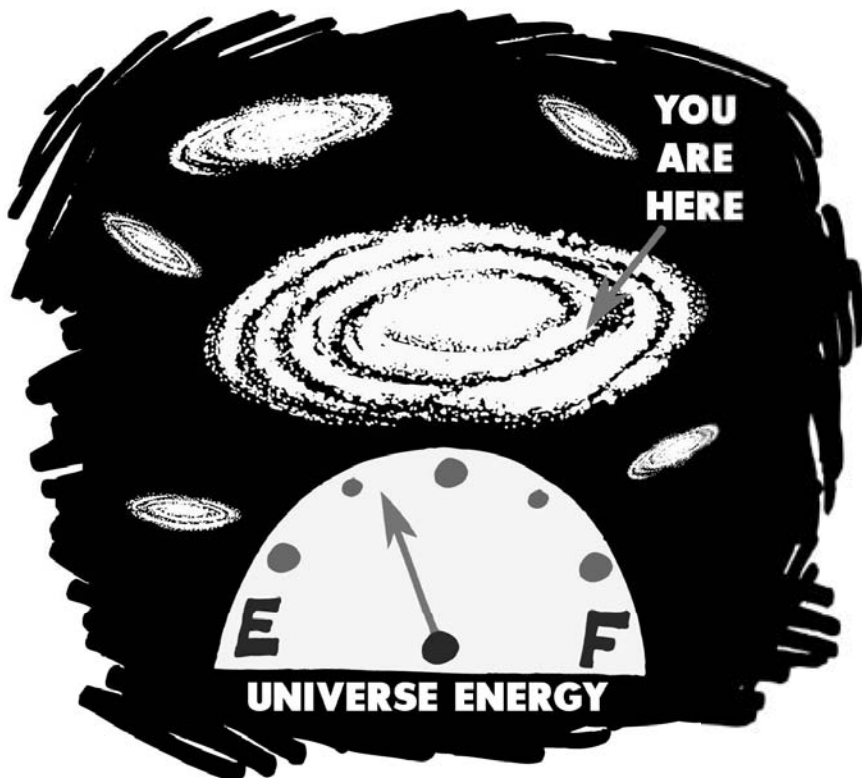


HELPING CHILDREN DEFEND THEIR FAITH

“Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”

God is *infinite*—He has no beginning (He was never born), and He has no end (He can never die). He is the eternal Creator of all things—space, matter and even time itself.

Some people don't believe what the Bible says about God—they even deny He exists! The Bible tells us that these people deliberately reject the Creator (2 Peter 3:8). As a result, they are blinded to the evidence around us that is consistent with God's existence. For example...



The energy in the universe is being used up.

1. Unlike the “Energizer Bunny,” which just keeps going and going on its own power (or so the ad would have you believe), the universe is running out of available energy and is becoming more chaotic, or disorderly, as time goes on. Eventually, there will be no more energy available throughout the universe to accomplish any work. So where did all the original available energy come from? How was it “wound up” initially? Someone outside of the universe had to have created it orderly in the beginning—that Someone was God.



2. Our bodies are made up of trillions of cells. Just one of those cells contains enough information about who we are to fill 500,000 close-typed pages! Scientists who study DNA (or *deoxyribonucleic acid*—a special large molecule that stores all that information in our cells) have not observed huge amounts of new information originating by chance as it is passed from parent to child. The information stored in our DNA is only rearranged or decreased. So where did the information in all living things come from in the first place? Current scientific observations show that information can only come from a source of intelligence, ultimately. Since God is *infinitely* intelligent, it makes sense that He is the Author of all the information.



You think some people are smart? God is the only real "know-it-all"!

Only God has all information!



3. Those who believe that molecules have evolved into man (contrary to modern scientific observation which shows it just isn't possible) must also believe that the universe is billions of years old. Yet there is **much** evidence that is consistent with the Bible's teaching that the universe has not been around for billions of years, but was created by God around 6,000 years ago.

4. Many tribes and nations share stories or legends similar to the original, unchanged accounts of creation, Noah's Flood and the break-up of the people at Babel found in the Bible. Why is this so? The Bible explains it! As Noah's descendants spread around the earth after the Flood, they took the knowledge of creation and the Flood with them, but the stories have gradually changed over the years. Also, scientists are finding that there is no significant difference between the various so-called "races" of people. This is consistent with the Bible's teaching that there is only one "race"—all humans are descendants of Adam.

ONE "RACE"

Acts 17:26



Adam & Eve

1 Corinthians 15:45
Genesis 3:20



Sons & Daughters

Genesis 5:4



Noah & Sons

Genesis 9:17-19



People at Tower of Babel

Genesis 11:8-9



Different People Groups/Cultures

The Bible says those who deny God are without excuse, since the creation makes it plain that there is an all-powerful God, as shown by the above examples (Romans 1: 20).

The Bible tells us everyone should be able to know that God is real by what He has made. If they choose not to believe there is a God, they are WITHOUT EXCUSE!

Romans 1:20



The Bible also tells us that Christians should be telling the world about the Creator and the good news of salvation for a world and humanity ruined by sin.



I KNOW I SHOULD SAY SOMETHING TO THEM.

Mark 16:15
Mat. 28:19-20

God has given us all we need to do this task.



I HAVE HIS WORD AND HIS SPIRIT.

2 Timothy 3:15-17
Philippians 2:13

God's creation is a great place to start!

The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.

Psalms 19:1



There are many people yet to reach. Are you telling others about our Creator God?



EVERYTHING MADE ITSELF.

THERE IS NO GOD.

Those Christians who choose not to tell the world about the good news, are WITHOUT EXCUSE too.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10



Decipher the Code

WOL-LA-CHEE ANT
 NA-HASH-CHID BADGER
 MOASI CAT
 BE DEER
 AH-JAH EAR
 CHUO FIR
 AH-TAD GIRL
 TSE-GAH HAIR
 TKIN ICE
 AH-YA-TSINNE JAW
 JAD-HO-LONI KETTLE
 AH-JAD LEG
 BE-TAS-TNI MIRROR
 TSAH NEEDLE
 A-KHA OIL
 NE-ZHONI PRETTY
 CA-YEILTH QUIVER
 GAH RABBIT
 DIBEH SHEEP
 D-AH TEA
 SHI-DA UNCLE
 A-KEH-DI-GLINI VICTOR
 GLOE-IH WEASEL
 AL-NA-AS-DZOH CROSS (X)
 TSAH-AH-DZOH YUCCA
 BESH-DO-TLIZ ZINC

Imagine you're a Navajo code talker who needs to know what your fellow soldiers are telling you. Use the code key to the left to decode the message on the right. Place the first letter of the English word in the blank beside the Navajo word.

A real Navajo code talker could do this in 20 seconds—how long will it take you?

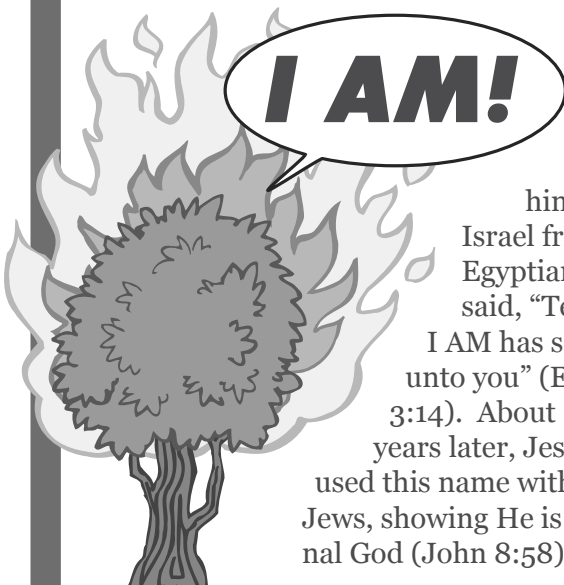
CHUO.....	_____	AH-JAH	_____
GAH	_____	A-KEH-DI-GLINI ...	_____
A-KHA	_____	AH-JAH	_____
BE-TAS-TNI	_____	GAH	_____
		AH-JAD.....	_____
AH-JAH	_____	WOL-LA-CHEE.....	_____
A-KEH-DI-GLINI ..	_____	DIBEH	_____
AH-JAH	_____	D-AH	_____
GAH	_____	TKIN	_____
AH-JAD.....	_____	TSAH	_____
WOL-LA-CHEE....	_____	AH-TAD.....	_____
DIBEH	_____		
D-AH	_____	TSAH-AH-DZOH ...	_____
TKIN	_____	A-KHA	_____
TSAH	_____	SHI-DA	_____
AH-TAD.....	_____		
		WOL-LA-CHEE.....	_____
D-AH	_____	GAH	_____
A-KHA	_____	AH-JAH	_____
		AH-TAD.....	_____
		A-KHA	_____
		BE	_____

FROM EVERLASTING TO EVER-
 LASTING, YOU ARE GOD
 PSALM 90:2B

ANSWER:

Of course I exist!

God's Word assumes He exists. In fact, the very names God uses in dealing with His creation tell us more about His eternal existence.



When Moses asked who it was that was sending him to deliver

Israel from the Egyptians, God said, "Tell them, I AM has sent me unto you" (Exodus 3:14). About 1,500 years later, Jesus again used this name with the Jews, showing He is the eternal God (John 8:58).



These names also show God exists forever:

Elohim

(translated "God")
 Eternal Creator

YHWH

(translated "LORD")
 reflects His eternal, living, personal nature

El Olam

(translated "The Everlasting God")