

S6: Faith and Reason

Student Workbook



Prayers to begin or end lessons

**This prayer was used by Pope John XXIII at the Second Vatican Council and then prayed by all the Bishops at the beginning of every session.**

1. In the name of the Father…

We stand before you, Holy spirit,
conscious of our sinfulness,
but aware that we gather in your name.

Come to us, remain with us, and enlighten our hearts.
Give us light and strength to know your will,
to make it our own,
and to live it in our lives.

Guide us by your wisdom, support us by your power,
for you are God, sharing the glory of Father and Son.

You desire justice for all:
enable us to uphold the rights of others;
do not allow us to be misled by ignorance
or corrupted by fear or favour.

Unite us to yourself in the bond of love
and keep us faithful to all that is true.

As we gather in your name
may we temper justice with love,
so that all our decisions may be pleasing to you,
and earn the reward promised to
good and faithful servants.

You live and reign with the Father and the Son,
one God, forever and ever.
Amen.

1. In the name of the Father…

Question the beauty of the earth, the beauty of the sea, the beauty of the wide air around you, the beauty of the sky; question the order of the stars, the sun whose brightness lights the days, the moon whose splendour softens the gloom of night; question the living creatures that move in the waters, that roam upon the earth, that fly through the air; the spirit that lies hidden, the matter that is manifest; the visible things that are ruled, the invisible things that rule them; question all these. They will answer you: "Behold and see, we are beautiful." Their beauty is their confession to God. Who made these beautiful changing things, if not one who is beautiful and changes not?

Amen

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1. In the name of the Father…

Almighty God,

you have made us for yourself,

and our hearts are restless

till they find their rest in you;

so lead us by your Spirit

that in this new life we may live to your glory

and in the life to come enjoy you for ever;

through Jesus Christ our Lord

who lives with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God now and for ever.

Amen.

Co-operative Learning Activity

Expert Jigsaw

Directions:

Students within each group are given different information/resources. Ensure that all number 1’s, 2’s and 3’s in each group are given the same resources/materials.

A time limit is given and each student is responsible for reading/summarising/synthesising/preparing material to share with the rest of the group.

Students then form expert groups. All the 1’s form a group, all the 2’s form a group and so on.

Expert groups then review the materials/resources that they were responsible for and come to a consensus on what needs to be taught back to the home group.

Students then return to their home group and take turns sharing information/findings/opinions/judgements/questions etc.

Students must then carry out a task that involves them thinking about the whole topic/idea/concept and not just the part they prepared for individually or as part of a group.

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Students could work in groups of three with each group member taking responsibility for one of the scientific attempts to explain the world. This could be Darwin’s theory of evolution, The Big Bang Theory or Fossils.

Darwin's theory of evolution

Charles Darwin was an English naturalist who studied variation in plants and animals during a five-year voyage around the world in the 19th century. He explained his ideas on evolution in a book called, 'On the Origin of Species', published in 1859.

Darwin's ideas caused a lot of controversy, and this continues today, because they can be seen as **conflicting with religious views** about the creation of the world and the creatures in it.

The basic idea behind the theory of evolution is that all the different species have evolved from simple life forms. These simple life forms first developed more than 3 billion years ago (the Earth is about 4.5 billion years old). The timeline below shows some of the key events in the evolution of life on Earth, from the first bacteria to the first modern humans.

The Big Bang theory

**Scientists believe the Universe began in a hot ‘big bang’ about 13,600 million years ago. The Universe continues to expand today. The evidence for the Big Bang theory includes the existence of a microwave background radiation, and red-shift. Stars do not remain the same, but change as they age.**

Scientists have gathered a lot of evidence and information about the Universe. They have used their observations to develop a theory called the Big Bang. The theory states that about 13.7 billion years ago all the matter in the Universe was concentrated into a single incredibly tiny point. This began to enlarge rapidly in a hot explosion, and it is still expanding today.

Evidence for the Big Bang includes:

* all the galaxies are moving away from us
* the further away a galaxy is, the faster it is moving away.

Fossils

**Fossils provide a record of organisms that lived a long time ago. They also provide evidence that animals and plants can change over long periods of time. The fossil record is often incomplete.**

**Fossil records**

Fossil remains have been found in rocks of all ages. Fossils of the simplest organisms are found in the oldest rocks, and fossils of more complex organisms in the newest rocks. This supports the theory of evolution, which states that simple life forms gradually evolved into more complex ones.

*Gaudium et Spes:* part 1

Below is a paragraph taken from Gaudium et Spes which in English means Joy and Hope. Complete the following steps to help you interrogate paragraph 36 of this document.

* Read one section of Gaudium et Spes at a time (in the middle of the page).
* Read the text box which explains in simpler language what the paragraph is saying (to the left of the page)
* Use the white space on your page to write your own notes on your understanding of the key messages from this paragraph.
* Answer the questions below by either writing an answer to each in your jotter OR highlighting where you have found the answer in the text, the explanation or in your notes.
1. How should “methodical investigation” be carried out?
2. How is the relationship between faith and science explained?
3. Does this reflect your own understanding of the relationship between science and religion?
4. Explore and, in your own words, try to explain the following quotation: “When God is forgotten, however, the creature itself grows unintelligible.”
5. What does the Church add to our understanding of creation?

PASTORAL CONSTITUTION
ON THE CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD
***GAUDIUM ET SPES***
PROMULGATED BY HIS HOLINESS, POPE PAUL VI ON DECEMBER 7, 1965

Some people think that a closer relationship between religion and things that humans do will mean that we have less freedom and independence.

God made us stewards of creation and wants us to take responsibility for looking after it. Everything in creation links to everything else. All things are in relationship and reflect something of God’s nature to us.

As long as we investigate properly and we don’t act immorally, science can never be an enemy of faith. This is because things of the world and things of faith come from the same God.

36. Now many of our contemporaries seem to fear that a closer bond between human activity and religion will work against the independence of men, of societies, or of the sciences.

If by the autonomy of earthly affairs we mean that created things and societies themselves enjoy their own laws and values which must be gradually deciphered, put to use, and regulated by men, then it is entirely right to demand that autonomy. Such is not merely required by modern man, but harmonizes also with the will of the Creator. For by the very circumstance of their having been created, all things are endowed with their own stability, truth, goodness, proper laws and order. Man must respect these as he isolates them by the appropriate methods of the individual sciences or arts. Therefore if methodical investigation within every branch of learning is carried out in a genuinely scientific manner and in accord with moral norms, it never truly conflicts with faith, for earthly matters and the concerns of faith derive from the same God.

If we try to find out more about creation, even though we may not know it, we are being guided by God. This is because God is responsible for all things in existence and gives them their meaning.

The Church is disappointed when people (including some Christians) try to take away the independence of science because this can lead to people thinking that science and religion are enemies – which is not the case.

We cannot separate the world from God. We do not have the right to just “use” things for our own purposes. If we don’t recognise God in everything then we lose our understanding of ourselves.

 Indeed whoever labours to penetrate the secrets of reality with a humble and steady mind, even though he is unaware of the fact, is nevertheless being led by the hand of God, who holds all things in existence, and gives them their identity. Consequently, we cannot but deplore certain habits of mind, which are sometimes found too among Christians, which do not sufficiently attend to the rightful independence of science and which, from the arguments and controversies they spark, lead many minds to conclude that faith and science are mutually opposed.

But if the expression, the independence of temporal affairs, is taken to mean that created things do not depend on God, and that man can use them without any reference to their Creator, anyone who acknowledges God will see how false such a meaning is. For without the Creator the creature would disappear. For their part, however, all believers of whatever religion always hear His revealing voice in the discourse of creatures. When God is forgotten, however, the creature itself grows unintelligible.

**How does the Bible explain creation?**

1. In two columns, outline the ‘order of creation’ in the two creation accounts (Genesis 1:1 – 2:3, and Genesis 2:4 – 2:25).

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| --- | --- |
| Genesis chapter 1 | Genesis chapter 2 |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

2. What are the implications of your findings in question 1 for the claim that Genesis 1-2 is a scientific account of the origins of the world?

3. What other features of the text itself might suggest that Genesis 1-2 is not meant to be a scientific account?

4. If each account were rather to be viewed as a ‘story with a religious or philosophical meaning’, what are the ideas being presented in each story about the following topics?

- God

- The created world

- Human beings

Answer this question in two columns, ‘Genesis 1’ and ‘Genesis 2’.

*Gaudium et Spes: part 2*

Select one of the four quotes from Gaudium et Spes below. As before, read the quote in the middle carefully then attempt the activity below it. The text box to the left explains the quote in simpler language.

Today, there is more questioning of the concept of God and whether or not humans have a relationship with him at all. Because of this questioning, the positive contributions that can be made by a faith perspective are being ignored and the capability of religion being able to contribute anything to the discussion about the meaning of creation is being undermined. All of this means we are focussing more on subjects like science and maths. Because we are separating these subjects from God, we are separating them from right and wrong too.

1. “Today's spiritual agitation and the changing conditions of life are part of a broader and deeper revolution. As a result of the latter, intellectual formation is ever increasingly based on the mathematical and natural sciences and on those dealing with man himself, while in the practical order the technology which stems from these sciences takes on mounting importance.”
* Discuss with the person sitting next to you why you think that mathematical and natural sciences are increasingly part of intellectual formation.
1. “This scientific spirit has a new kind of impact on the cultural sphere and on modes of thought. Technology is now transforming the face of the earth, and is already trying to master outer space. To a certain extent, the human intellect is also broadening its dominion over time: over the past by means of historical knowledge; over the future, by the art of projecting and by planning.”

Science shapes the way we think and the way we live. The way we communicate and our relationships.

Technology is advancing all the time. In a way, the human mind is also developing its control over time: over the past through what we know and have learned about it; over the future through our ability to know what will happen and plan for it.

* Think of examples of how “technology is now transforming the face of the earth”.
* Discuss the positive and negative impacts of this.

We now know so much about our reality- the world around us, how our bodies work, outer space, for example, that we have a much broader understanding of all things.

This knowledge means there are new problems we need to think about (consequences of our behaviour etc). We must make sure we understand how all things fit together.

1. “Thus, the human race has passed from a rather static concept of reality to a more dynamic, evolutionary one. In consequence there has arisen a new series of problems, a series as numerous as can be, calling for efforts of analysis and synthesis.”
* Explain what is meant by the term “new series of problems” and give examples of these.

Because of social media and other forms of instant communication we can know what is happening straight away.

These new ways of communicating shape our relationships and the way we interact with each other.

1. “New and more efficient media of social communication are contributing to the knowledge of events; by setting off chain reactions they are giving the swiftest and widest possible circulation to styles of thought and feeling.”
* What are the positive and negative effects of communicating through social media?
* Should there be any rules about how we use and communicate through social media?