We are called to take care of God’s world.

Bible Verse
“The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him” (Psalm 24:1).

Growing Closer to Jesus
Students will
- take care of one another,
- go on a nature adventure, and
- commit to caring for God’s creation.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis
- God blesses Noah and his family.

Genesis 9:1-3
Today’s passage follows directly after the story of Noah and the ark, which ended with the covenant God made with Noah never to destroy the earth through a flood again. Now, in today’s passage, God tells Noah how to proceed in repopulating the earth after everyone else has died.

Animals had apparently changed after Adam and Eve sinned. In Genesis 1:26, 28, God gave Adam and Eve the responsibility of ruling over the animals. Now, because of the way sin changed all relationships in the world—including that between humans and animals—God had to instill in the animals a fear of humans. The animals were “given into their hands” to subdue and use in ways pleasing to God. Now the humans would rule over the animals through force, and were given permission for the first time to eat the meat of animals. With that permission came responsibility—one that remains today—for humans to properly care for the earth as representatives of the Creator.

Another Scripture used in this lesson is Psalm 104:24.

Prayer
- Read Genesis 1:26, 28.
- How are God’s instructions to Noah in today’s passage different from those to Adam and Eve earlier?
- Pray: Dear God, help my students begin to understand the responsibility we have to care for the wonderful earth God has given us.
**Before the Lesson**

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Hands-On Fun at Home” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your students.
- Pray for your students and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

**This Lesson at a Glance**

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Welcome

As kids arrive, ask them how they applied last week’s lesson to their lives. Ask questions such as, “How did you handle your angry feelings in green-light ways?” and “How did you help others handle their anger?”

Remind kids that whenever you honk the Harpo horn twice, they are to stop talking, clap twice, and focus on you. Explain that it’s important to respond to this signal quickly so the class can do as many fun activities as possible.

Module Review

Use the casual interaction time at the beginning of the class to ask the kids the following module-review questions:

- What green-light ways to handle your angry feelings did you try this week?
- How has God helped you make good choices in the last few weeks?
- What have you done lately to be more like God?
- What’s your favorite thing we’ve learned in the past few weeks? Why?
- How is your life different as a result of what we’ve learned in class this month?

Attention Grabber

- Creation Caretakers

**SUPPLIES:** celery sticks, cream cheese, knives, raisins, napkins

Set out celery sticks cut in 1-inch pieces, cream cheese, knives, raisins, and napkins. As kids come into the room, designate each one as either a “Creation” or a “Caretaker.” Have all the Creations sit down with their hands behind their backs. Explain that they can’t use their hands during this entire activity.

Have Caretakers wash their hands. Then have all the Caretakers go to the snack table and prepare “ants on a log” snacks for the Creations. To prepare these snacks, Caretakers should spread cream cheese on the celery, and then push two or three raisin “ants” into the cream cheese on each celery “log.”

Have each Caretaker feed one Creation. After all the Creations have been fed, let the Caretakers prepare snacks for themselves.

Honk the Harpo horn twice to get kids’ attention. Wait for kids to respond, and then have the Caretakers pair up with the Creations they fed to discuss the following questions.

Ask: • Caretakers, what was it like to take care of someone else? (I felt like someone needed me; it was kind of strange.)

It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.
• Creations, how did you react to being taken care of? (I worried that no one would take care of me; it was hard eating without using my hands; it was fun being waited on.)

• How are the Creations in this experience like God’s world? (They need to be taken care of; they can’t do things for themselves.)

• How are the Caretakers in this experience like people in our world? (They’re in charge; they have to take care of those who are counting on them.)

Honk the Harpo horn twice to bring everyone together. After kids respond, invite them to share insights they gained from their partners.

Say: Today’s Bible verse gives us some insight into God’s creation. Listen while I read Psalm 24:1: “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him.” Have kids repeat the verse with you several times. The earth is the Lord’s, but he made us his caretakers.

► We are called to take care of God’s world. If we forget to do that, we hurt creation and we hurt ourselves. Let’s take a closer look at the wonderful world God has given us to care for:

Bible Exploration & Application

Nature Adventure

SUPPLIES: Bibles, paper, crayons, pens

Distribute Bibles.

Say: Look up Psalm 104. If you open your Bibles right in the middle, you’ll find yourself near the book of Psalms.

Have students follow along in their Bibles as a volunteer reads Psalm 104:24 aloud. If students have different versions of the Bible, let several students read their versions of the verse.

Say: Let’s take a special kind of walk through God’s creation to experience what this verse means.

Give each person a sheet of paper and a crayon. Have kids form four groups. Give each group five Wikki Stix to shape into a circle. Make a Wikki Stix circle for yourself, too. Then invite kids to gather their supplies and follow you outside for a nature walk.

Have kids each find a surface (such as tree bark, grass, the ground, or leaves), place the paper on it, and use the crayon to rub over it. Encourage them to see what details emerge from the crayon rubbings.

Then have the kids in each group toss their Wikki Stix circles onto a grassy area. Ask the kids to gather around their circles and name all the different parts of creation they find inside the circle, such as grass, bugs, twigs, pebbles, sand, and soil. Encourage students to use their senses of sight, hearing, touch, and smell as they explore. Provide pens so that students can list their findings on the backs of their crayon rubbings.

After five minutes, honk the Harpo horn twice, wait for the kids to respond, and lead everyone back to the classroom. Collect the Wikki Stix for use in future lessons. Ask the kids to find partners from other groups and share their crayon rubbings and creation sightings.
After two or three minutes, honk the *Harpo horn* and wait for kids to respond. Have them stand up as you ask the following questions. Say: **Raise your hands when you think of an answer to each question. I’d like to hear lots of different, interesting answers. When someone gives an answer you thought of and you don’t have anything more to add, you may sit down. When everyone is seated, I’ll ask you to stand again for the next question.**

Ask: • **What did you discover from your crayon rubbings?** (Leaves have lots of tiny ridges and details; things that look smooth aren’t really very smooth at all.)

• **What did you learn from observing things inside your *Wikki Stix* circles?** (There are many kinds of life in one small circle; there’s a lot happening in one little space.)

• **What would look different inside your *Wikki Stix* circles if it were spring? summer?** (The grass would be greener; there would be flowers; there might be more bugs or different kinds of bugs.)

• **What new things did you learn about God’s creation from this activity?** (God made lots of different things; each plant or twig is different.)

• **What does this experience make you think about God and the world he’s made?** (God is awesome; there’s a lot more to God’s creation than I realized.)

Say: **Did you know that we’re in charge of all the things you saw, heard, touched, and smelled just now? We are called to take care of God’s world. God trusts us with the big and small things that make up his creation. Today’s Bible story is about a creation caretaker who took his job quite seriously.** Collect the crayon rubbings for the kids to take home.

**Noah Knows**

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, CD player

Say: **Listen for the things this caretaker did to take care of God’s world.** Play “Noah Knows” (track 4) on the CD. When the track ends, stop the CD player.

**The JESUS Connection**

Say: **You know, in the Old Testament, God used the ark to save Noah and the animals from the flood. In the New Testament, God sent Jesus to save all who believe in him.**

**Now let’s see how God rewarded Noah for his obedience.**

Have kids look up **Genesis 9:1-3**. Ask three volunteers to read the verses aloud as the rest of the students follow along in their Bibles.

Ask: • **What did Noah do that made him a good creation caretaker?** (He built the ark; he fed and cared for the animals until it was safe to go outside; he set the animals free so they could fill the earth again.)

Say: **Noah was an A-plus creation caretaker. We can be, too!**
Lesson 4

Have the Creations and the Caretakers from the “Creation Caretakers” activity form lines facing each other with their arms raised to form an arch. Explain that the arch represents the exit from Noah’s ark. Have pairs take turns walking through the arch and rejoining the arch at the other end.

As pairs come out of the ark, ask them to name one way they can be good creation caretakers like Noah. Pairs might say they’ll recycle cans and newspapers, take care of pets, or not waste water. Repeat the activity until kids start to run out of ideas. Then have them sit down.

Once all the pairs are seated, say: ►**We are called to take care of God’s world, and you’ve just named a bunch of great creation-caretaker ideas! Now you’ll decide which of those ideas you want to do on your own.**

**HANDS-ON BIBLE**

Give each student a paper plate, a pen, and a pair of scissors. Make a supply of colorful crayons, yarn, construction paper, and tape available. Make sure kids have their Hands-On Bibles.

Have students turn to Genesis 9 in their Bibles and complete the “I Promise!” activity found there. When kids have finished, have them show off their creations.

Ask: ▶**In what ways did you promise to care for God’s world?** (To not waste water or paper; to turn off lights when I leave a room; to recycle everything I can.)

▶**How can you help others care for God’s world?** (I can show them my rainbow craft; I can inspire them to help me; I can tell them the story of Noah.)

**Nature Spring**

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, “Nature Spring” handout (p. 50), CD player, pencils, scissors, paper clips

Help kids find ►**Psalm 24:1** in their Bibles. Ask for a volunteer to read the verse aloud.

Ask: ▶**Because the earth is the Lord’s, how should we treat it?** (With respect; we should take care of it.)

Say: **Let’s listen to a song about God’s creation.** Play “The Earth Is the Lord’s” (Psalm 24:1) (track 5) on the CD. Play the track again, and invite kids to sing along. Lyrics are at the back of this Teacher Guide.

Then distribute photocopies of the “Nature Spring” handout, pencils, scissors, and paper clips.

Say: **You’ll have four minutes to create your own “nature spring.” First, write on your spring two ways you’ll “spring” into action and take care of God’s creation this week. Use ideas we named earlier or new ideas of your own.**

Once you’ve written your ideas, cut the spiral on the dotted lines. Cut the outside circle first, and then cut the inner lines to make a spring. Attach your paper clip to the top of the spiral as a hook, and then lift it up and watch it spring to life!
Allow a few minutes for kids to complete their nature springs. Play “The Earth Is the Lord’s” (track 5) on the CD again quietly while kids work. Then honk the Harpo horn twice to bring everyone together. Have kids form a circle and hold up their nature springs. Invite them to share one thing they’ll do to care for creation during the upcoming week.

Say: **We are called to take care of God’s world.** It’s exciting to see you ready to spring into action! Let’s remind each other of our creation-caretaker role by reading together the verse printed on our nature springs.

### Closing

#### Up, Down, Near, and Far Prayer

**SUPPLIES:** none

Distribute streamers, one per student. Have kids follow you outside for a “walking prayer.” Say: **I’ll tell you a direction to look, and then we'll each name something we see in that direction that we're thankful for. But we won't just name something, we'll shout it out, waving our streamers in praise and thanksgiving to God for creating it. Ready? Look up.** (Birds! Clouds! Sky!)

**Look down.** (Grass! Earth! Insects!) **Look to the left.** (Each other! Bushes!) **Look to the right.** (Trees! Fields!)

Pray: **God, no matter where we look—up, down, left, or right—your creation surrounds us. Help us treat your creation with care. Remind us always that we are called to take care of God’s world.**

Have kids shout three “amens” to God (“Amen! Amen! Amen!”) while waving their streamers. Then collect the streamers for use in later lessons.

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**Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.**

Photocopy the “Hands-On Fun at Home” handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your kids. Encourage kids and parents to use the handout to spark meaningful discussion on this week’s topic.
Nature Spring

On the spring, write two things you will do to take care of God’s creation this week.

The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him. (Psalm 24:1)

On the spring, write two things you will do to take care of God’s creation this week.
We are called to take care of God’s world.

Bible Verse: “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him” (Psalm 24:1).

Terrific Terrarium

Separate a plastic two-liter bottle from its bottom cup. Collect soil, small pebbles, and moss to fill the cup. Plant a few small plants, such as tiny ferns, in the soil. Cut the neck off the plastic bottle, turn the bottle upside down, and put it over your plants to form a terrarium. Don’t forget to take care of your creation!

Collect fallen leaves or other natural objects. Place each object under a blank sheet of paper or a note card. Rub over it gently with a crayon or soft colored pencil. Make several cards to give as gifts or to use as stationery.

Read Psalm 8.

Bundle up one night (if it’s cold), and go outside to look at the stars. Bring a flashlight, and read Psalm 8. What does it mean to be in charge of all God’s wonderful creation?

Read Isaiah 42:10.

Make a song to praise God for his creation. Use a familiar tune, such as “Jesus Loves Me.” What part of God’s creation are you most glad he made? Why?

Lead your family in an “Up and Down, Right and Left” prayer. Have everyone follow you outside and look in all directions around your home to discover new things about God’s wonderful world. Each time you look in a direction, have the members of your family name something they see that they’re thankful for.