

Bubbles

Red Compendium



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Bubbles

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Introduction

Welcome to the *Bubbles Red Compendium*! We're so pleased you've chosen this book to help you in your work with children aged 5 and under.

It is our prayer that the materials contained within these pages will equip and inspire you while engaging and empowering the children you work with.

The material in this book has been compiled from the wealth of *Bubbles* content that Scripture Union has produced over the years – and with 52 sessions included, there should be plenty to choose from over the course of a year.

The *Bubbles Red Compendium* is part of the *Light* range, which is designed to enable children, young people and adults to develop a personal relationship with Jesus, to understand the Bible and the Christian faith, and to live for God as light in a dark world.

- ▶ *Light* is about... discovering who God is, what he is like, what he does and how we can get involved in that. The Bible is 'light to live by', so it is the centre of every session for every age group in the *Light* range of resources. Everyone will be able to follow the story of salvation that runs through the Bible, with its focus clearly on Jesus.
- ▶ *Light* recognises that children and young people can know and respond to God and does not expect too little or too much from them.
- ▶ *Light* celebrates every step taken towards and with God, letting the Bible shape our thinking about human nature and relationships with children and young people, and the way in which we minister with and to them.
- ▶ *Light* values exploration and discovery, fun, feelings and creativity and uses these approaches to inspire children, young people and adults to meet God through the Bible.

We hope you enjoy this resource, and we pray that God will bless you and those you work with as you use it,

The Scripture Union Mission Innovation Team



How to use this book...

This book provides 52 sessions of activities, and extra photocopiable resources, designed for your *Bubbles* group of children aged 5 and under. Choose sessions from this *Red Compendium* in any order to suit you and your group. You will also find that some sessions have further additional online resources which that you can download for free from the Scripture Union website, via the resource centre.

Leading up to Christmas time, you may wish to choose from the Christmas-themed sessions (numbers 41 to 45). Around Easter time, you will find there are Easter-themed sessions (numbers 46 to 52), to choose from. These 'seasonal' sessions are grouped together at the back of this book.

If you would like to work through a number of sessions on a similar theme with your *Bubbles* group, look out for the **More on this theme** boxes as you consider your session choice. Here you will find a list of other sessions on a related theme to the session you are looking at.

On page 372, you will find a helpful guide that explains **How to plan your session...** This section will help you to choose activities from within the sessions, including a selection of *Bubbles* activities to suit you and your group, enabling you to achieve the *Learning aim* for the session. Here you will also find a **Basic kit** list of essential items to keep handy for all your *Bubbles* group sessions.

Each session in this *Bubbles Red Compendium* is based on a Bible passage. You will find an **Index of Bible passages** on page 374 in the order they appear in the Bible.

The most important thing about this book is to enjoy using it to help you and your *Bubbles* group engage with the Bible and meet with Jesus, through a mixture of play, creativity, music, quiet reflection, noisy exuberance and friendship!

Christmas

Sessions 41 to 45

Easter

Sessions 46 to 52



Session 1

God makes light and sky

Young children are fascinated by the natural world, from the glistening snail trail on the doorstep to our attempts to find life on Mars, and all places in between! Over the next few sessions, we will be looking at God's creation through various Bible-based steps. The first session involves God creating light out of darkness. (For this session, be aware that darkness can be frightening for young children, so be careful if you choose to make your room dark, and be ready to make it light again very quickly!)

To plan your session... Choose a selection of *Play and learn*, *Bible time* and *God and me* activities to make your session fun and memorable.

Play and learn activity options...

Play and learn activity

Cloud mobile

Activity time: 10 minutes

Aim: to thank God for making the sky

You will need: sheets of white card, blue card or paper, cotton wool, glue, string, sticky tape, scissors, wire coat hanger(s)

- 1 Before the session, draw some cloud shapes on white card; a few for each child. You could cut out the clouds or let the children do this.
- 2 Remind the children that God made the sky and put some of the water there, in clouds.
- 3 Give the children the cloud outlines and let them stick cotton wool on both sides of each cloud.
- 4 Tie or tape string to one side of the cloud and attach it to a coat hanger. Cover the arms of the coat hanger with the blue card to represent the sky. Vary the length of string so the clouds hang at different levels.
- 5 Hang the finished mobile by an open window or over a radiator, or blow towards it so the clouds move. Pray with the children, 'Thank you, God, for making the beautiful clouds that bring shade and rain and snow.'

Play and learn activity

Guessing game

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to enjoy God's creation of light

You will need: items in a box or bag, such as a comb, pen, key, coin or ball

- 1 Show the children the bag or box. Tell them that you have put lots of things in it. But it is dark inside and the things are difficult to see. The children have to put their hands inside and guess what each item is just by feeling it. You could also ask the children to close their eyes, so they are not tempted to peep!
- 2 Encourage the children to describe the objects: their shape and size and whether they are smooth or rough, soft or hard and so on. Then let the children bring the objects out into the light to see if they are right.
- 3 Say that it is much easier to see what things are in the light. What a wonderful creation light is! Ask the children to think of things they can only do in the light and thank God for them.

Aim

To discover that God is the maker of everything and to explore our response to him

Bible passage

Genesis 1:1–8

Play and learn activity

Audio story and water play

Activity time: 10 minutes

Aim: to think about how God brought order when he made everything, and to respond

You will need: *Listen with the Bible* CD or audio track from the website, sound system, a trough of water, containers, colander, towels and cover-up materials

- 1 Put aprons on the children and let them sit round a trough of water filled with containers. Cover the floor with something waterproof.
- 2 Let the children play with the containers in the water. After a few minutes, play the first part of 'God makes the world' from the CD. When the audio story talks about 'tidying up', encourage the children to tidy the containers away into a box quietly, while they continue to listen.
- 3 Pause the story at 'and trickled some into smooth lakes'. Challenge the children to try to separate the water into two parts. They could use their hands or the containers. Let them experiment and resist making suggestions to them. A colander could represent a cloud with rain.
- 4 Ask the children how they feel about what God made. What would they like to say to God?

Ready to use options...

Bible time activity

Story time

Activity time: 10 minutes

Aim: to discover that God made light and sky

You will need: paper, crayons and window (if available)

- 1 If possible, sit near a window for story time or point to a window close by. Talk about how we have windows to let in the light and to see the sky and the world outside.

- 2 Tell the story:

At the beginning of everything, there was nothing at all. *(Give out sheets of paper. Ask the children to look at the empty space.)* God didn't want it to stay that way. You couldn't see anything at all because everything was dark. *(Ask the children to shut their eyes to imagine what it was like.)* God didn't want it to be dark all the time. So he made light. *(Ask them to open their eyes.)* What can you see now?

Up above the world, God made the sky and clouds. *(Encourage the children to look out of the window, if you are near one you can see out of. If you are not near one, talk about how the children imagine the sky, or go outside to see it.)*

Can you see the sky? What colour is it? Are there any clouds? What do they look like? Is it light or dark outside? Is it raining?

- 3 Encourage the children to draw a picture of the sky in the blank space on the paper. How do they feel about the drawing they have made? Are they pleased with what they have made, like God was?
- 4 Look at the children's pictures. Can they retell the story, using their pictures?

God and me activity

Prayer with actions

Activity time: 5 minutes

Aim: to praise God for making light and sky

- 1 Practise making these body shapes:

World: curl up, tucking in your arms and legs.

Water: stand and sway, moving your hands up and down like waves.

Light: lift your arms high, drawing arcs in the air.

Sky: move your arms from side to side at shoulder height.

Thank you: punch upwards.

- 2 Say this prayer, encouraging the children to make the corresponding body shape:

God made the **world**.

God's **world** was covered in **water**.

God made **light** to shine on his **world**.

God made the **sky** above his **world**.

Thank you, God, for making the **world**.

Thank you, God, for making the **water**.

Thank you, God, for making the **light**.

Thank you, God, for making the **sky**.

- 3 Make the phrases more or less complex to follow, depending on the age of the children and how well they are following your instructions.

Play and learn activity

Make a book

Activity time: 5 minutes

Aim: to think about how God made the light and the sky

You will need: light and dark images from page 12, scissors, sticky tape or stapler; paper and glue (optional)

- 1 Make a copy of the four scenes from page 12 for each child.
- 2 Help the children to cut the paper into four pictures. Order the pictures from 1 to 4 and attach them together to make a book using the sticky tape or stapler. Alternatively, you could fold a long strip of paper into a zigzag. (Fold it in the middle and then fold back the edges to make an M shape.) Glue the pictures on in order to make a different style of book.
- 3 Let the children use their books to tell each other the story of how God made the light and the sky.

Tip for Leaders: If you are short of planning time, choose to include one of the *Ready to use* activity options for part of your session.

Options for children aged 3 to 5 years...

Bible time activity

Bible story with visual aid

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to discover how God made the light and the sky and to respond to him

You will need: very large sheets of black card and white card (make these as large as possible to use for the next three sessions too), blue tissue paper, sticky tack, glue or sticky tape

- 1 Sit with the children around you and hold up the black sheet of card. Tell the story:

In the very beginning, there was nothing at all. But God didn't want it to stay that way. So God made the universe. God made our world. But it wasn't like it is now. The world was covered in water. You couldn't see the world or the water or anything at all because everything was dark. God didn't want it to be dark all the time. So he made light. *(Hold up the sheet of white card.)* There was light and there was darkness. *(Stick the white card on the black card vertically so equal amounts of each are showing. Use the sticky tack, glue or sticky tape for this.)* God called the light 'day' and he called the dark 'night'. God looked at what he had made. 'This is good,' he said. 'I'm glad I made the light.'

Now you could see that the world was all covered in water. *(Hold the sheet of blue tissue paper in front of the black and white card.)* Up above the world, God made the sky – big and blue and wide. The sky went on and on for as far as you can see – and then on even more. God took some of the water and put it up in the sky to make clouds. *(Tear the tissue paper in half horizontally. Stick some to the top of the card to make the sky and some to the bottom to make the sea.)* God looked at what he had made and said, 'This is good. I'm glad I made the sky.' Day and night. The world and the sky. They belonged together, but they were different from each other. That's the way God made it and that's the way it is. God looked at it and said, 'This is good. It's a good beginning. It will be a good place for people to live, when I've finished making my world.' And it is.

- 2 Ask the children what they would have made first if they were making the world. Why do you think God made the light and the sky first? Could he have started with something else? Was this a good way to start? What do you think God made next?
- 3 Keep the visual aid for next time.

God and me activity

Prayer time

Activity time: 5 minutes

Aim: to praise God for making light and sky

- 1 Teach this prayer rhyme:
For the sky above my head,
Thank you, Father God.
For the light that's all around,
Thank you, Father God.
For the dark that comes at night,
Thank you, Father God.
For the light of each new day,
Thank you, Father God.
- 2 Younger children can just repeat the line, 'Thank you, Father God', as a leader says the other lines.
- 3 This simple prayer can be used over several sessions, or at home by changing the things we are thanking God for. For example, after Session 2, it could be, 'For the ground beneath my feet', 'For the sea with great big waves', 'For the sand beside the sea' and so on.

More on this theme

If you want to do a short series with your group, other sessions that work well with this one are:

- Session 2** God makes land, sea and plants, Genesis 1:9–13
- Session 3** God makes stars and planets, Genesis 1:14–19
- Session 4** God makes animals and people, Genesis 1:20 – 2:25

Options for children aged under 3 years...

Bible time activity

Bible story

Activity time: 5 minutes

Aim: to discover how God made the light and the sky

You will need: a torch or lamp

- 1 Settle the children in a group and explain that you are going to make the room a bit darker than usual. Ask for their ideas for how to do this: close the curtains or blinds and switch off any lights. How else could we make it seem dark? (*Ensure that none of the group is unhappy with the level of darkness.*) Suggest that the children close their eyes.
- 2 Say, 'In the beginning, when God started to make the world, there wasn't anything anywhere. But God wanted a beautiful world, so he made light.' Lighten the room again. You could switch on a torch or lamp. Ask the children to open their eyes and see how light it is now. Say, 'God looked at the light he had made. God saw that the light was good. Everything looked bright and clear. But God knew we would need it dark sometimes so we could sleep. So God arranged the light and dark into day and night.'
- 3 Shine the light towards the ceiling. Say, 'God made the sky. When it is light, the sky is clear and blue or covered with clouds. When it is dark, the sky looks dark too.' (*Switch off the light.*)
- 4 Shine the torch again and say, 'God made light. It's good.' (*Encourage the children to hold their arms wide.*) Switch the torch off and say, 'God made the dark. It's good.' (*Encourage the children to cross their arms over their chests.*)
- 5 Look up, hold hands up and say, 'God made the sky. It's good.'

God and me activity

Rhyme with actions

Activity time: 5 minutes

Aim: to thank God for making day and night

- 1 Teach the children the following rhyme:
It's day, it's day, the world is bright.
All the sky is full of light.
Thank you, God, for making light!
It's dark, it's dark, there is no light.
Time for us to sleep.
Good night!
Thank you, God, for making night!
- 2 When the children are familiar with it, encourage them to add actions: jumping and dancing for the first verse; lying down and pretending to sleep for the second.
- 3 Say the rhyme together now as a prayer. Suggest the children say it to God when they wake up in the morning or go to bed at night. This will help them remember that God made light.

Play and learn activity

Exploring with torches

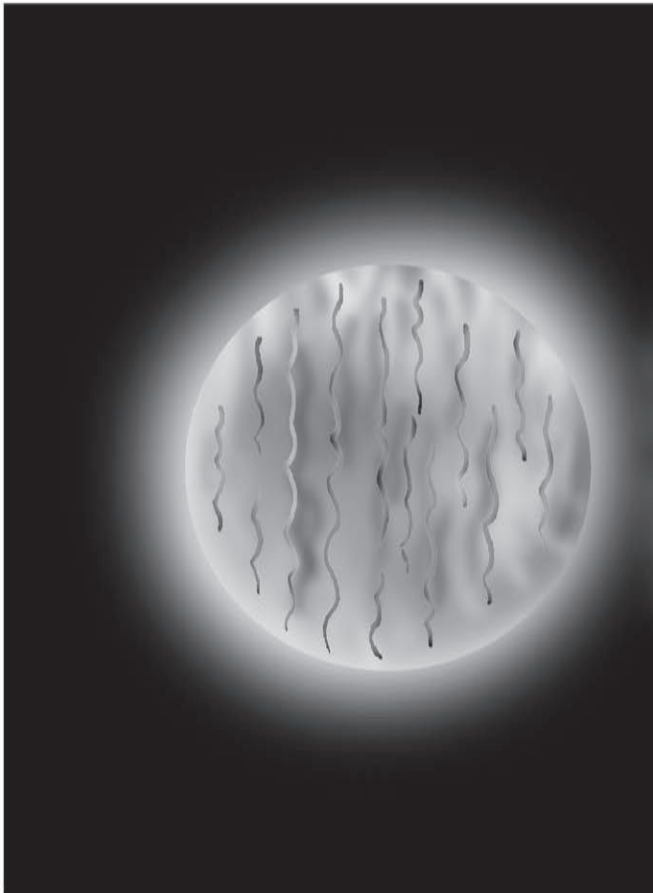
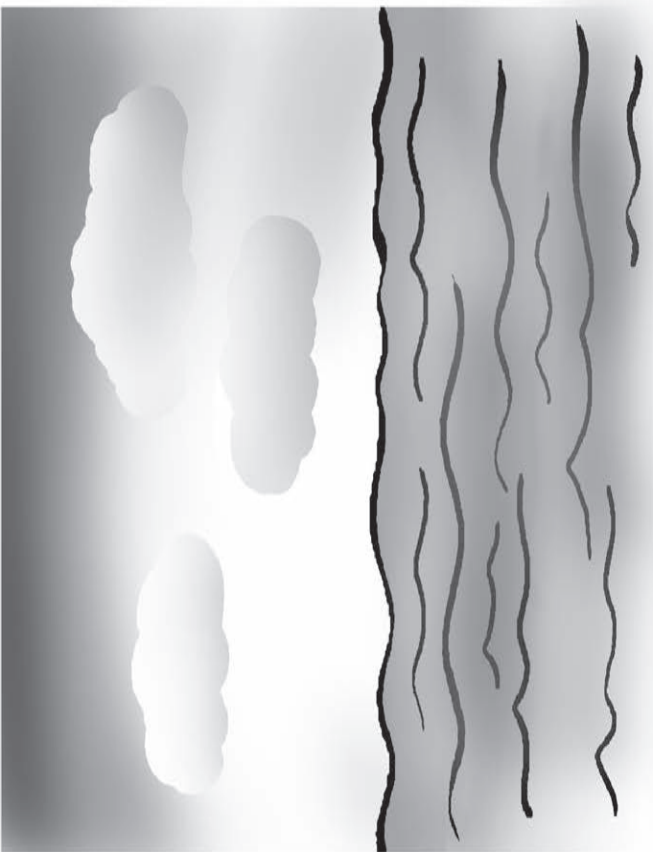
Activity time: 10 minutes

Aim: to think about the effects of light and thank God for it

You will need: a torch

- 1 If possible, darken the room by closing the curtains or switching off the light. (But do not allow the children to get distressed by this.) Shine the torch and let the children try to touch the beam. What happens when they do? Where does the light shine now?
- 2 Shine a small beam on a wall and move it quickly: can the children catch or hold it?
- 3 Use the light to make a watch or small mirror throw a 'dot' of light on to a surface. Can the children touch it?
- 4 Ask the children to stand about two metres from a wall, facing towards it. Stand behind them and shine the light: what happens?
- 5 We know the light is coming from the torch, but who do the children think made light in the first place? Pray with the children, 'Thank you, God, for making light. Thank you for all the things we can see and do with light.'





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God makes the world

Use these stories with Big Sheets 1-4.

Early years expert Judith Wigley writes:

"As Christians our work with children is concerned with bringing children into both a knowledge about and relationship with God... We want [them] to learn about God's love and, most importantly, to experience it for [themselves]. We long for the thousands of under-5s to enjoy their Maker now. Yes, we want to lay important foundations for an ongoing relationship but, first and foremost, we want under-5s to discover a valuable and meaningful relationship with God now, in their early years, when I believe they are most open, most aware and most responsive to him."

1 God makes light and sky

At first there was nothing at all. Then God made a world. God wanted it to be a wonderful place. But everything was dark and empty.

God did not want it to stay that way. God made light. Now there was light and there was darkness.

God looked at what he had made and said, "This is good. I'm glad I made the light."

Then God made the sky. Up above the world, as far as we can see, and more.

God looked at what he had made and said, "This is good. I'm glad I made the sky."

Day and night.

The world and the sky.

That's the way God made it and that's the way it is now. It's the world we live on today.

God looked at what he had made. "This is very good," he said. "It will be a good place for people to live, when I've finished making my world."

And it is.

Genesis 1:1-8

2 God makes land, sea and plants

God's new world was covered with water. God said, "I want to make the sea and the land." All at once, the water rushed together.

It made seas and rivers, lakes and ponds, oceans and puddles.

And that left the dry earth. God made it into rocky mountains, gentle hills, dry deserts and sandy beaches.

God looked at the land with its rich, dark soil. He looked at the seas, shining and blue. God was happy.

God spoke again. "I want to make plants," he said. And plants appeared: tall plants, green plants, plants with seeds to make new

3 God makes stars and planets

God made us a wonderful sky. In the daytime, it is bright and light blue and has a big shiny sun in it.

God made the sun to keep us warm and to light up the daytime.



God made us a wonderful sky. In the night-time, it is a dark deep blue and has a bright moon shining in it. Sometimes the moon looks big and round. Sometimes it is a shiny curve. And God made lots of stars to twinkle in the dark and to light up the night-time.

God loves us so much that he made beautiful stars and planets, the moon and the sun.

Genesis 1:4-19

4 God makes animals

God made a world. Above the world was the sky with the sun and moon, stars and planets. On the world there was sea and land and plants of all shapes and sizes. God was happy with all the things he had made.

Now God wanted to make more things.

God made birds to fly in the sky. They sang, "Tweet, tweet!" and croaked, "Caw, caw!" and hooted, "Twoo twoo!"

God made fish to live in the sea. They swam, swish-swash. They jumped, splash-splash. God made animals to live on the land. He made cows, moo moo. And dogs, woof woof. And lions, roaaa roaaa. And crocodiles, snip snap. And snakes, siss siss. And bees, buzz buzz. Animals of all shapes and sizes and colours.

And then God made people, like you and me. God was very pleased with everything he made. "It's all very good," said God.

Genesis 1:20-2:4

God the maker

This is God's wonderful world.

Here is the sun, shining so bright, that God put in his wonderful world.

Here are the silvery moon and stars, that God put in his wonderful world.

Here is the sea with splashing waves, that God put in his wonderful world.

Here are creatures which live in the sea, that God put in his wonderful world.

Here is the sky, way up high, that God put in his wonderful world.

Here are birds which fly in the sky, that God put in his wonderful world.



Here is the land with plants and trees, that God put in his wonderful world.

Here are rain clouds that water the land, that God put in his wonderful world.

Here are animals, big and small, that God put in his wonderful world.

And here are some people God made to enjoy and look after his wonderful world.

Psalms 104



Enjoy these Bible stories again in *The Big Bible Storybook*, available from SPCK as a hardback or audio book. It is full of great Bible stories, told especially for young children, and features all your favourite *Bible Friends*.

Photocopiable resource