

XSTREAM

Red Compendium



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XSTREAM

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Introduction

Welcome to the *Xstream Red Compendium*! We're so pleased you've chosen this book to help you in your work with children aged 8 to 11.

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 *Xstream* 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 *Xstream 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 *Xstream* group of children aged 8 to 11. 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 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 *Xstream* 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 374, 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 *Xstream* 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 *Xstream* group sessions.

Each session in this *Xstream Red Compendium* is based on a Bible passage. You will find an **Index of Bible passages** on page 376, 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 *Xstream* 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, day and night

Explore the 'Wow!' factor as you look afresh at the story of creation, and think about the power and majesty of God. Help the children to appreciate and respond to the fact that God created the world from nothing.

To plan your session... Choose a selection of *Starting*, *Into the Bible* and *Living the life* activities to make your session fun and memorable.

Aim

To discover more about our Creator God and explore our response to him

Bible passage

Genesis 1:1–8

Options to start your session...

Records

Activity time: 5–15 minutes

Aim: to realise that God can do things we can't

You will need: a timer (optional)

- 1 Ask the children if they have tried pogo-stick jumping, standing on one foot or heading a football without dropping it. Tell them who holds the records for these things: In 2014, Jack Sexty from the UK set a distance record for pogo-stick jumping of 26.22 miles; Sri Lankan Suresh Joachim stood on one foot for 76 hours 40 minutes; and in 2010, Dan Magness from the UK kept his football in the air for 26 hours!
- 2 Have a competition to see who can stand on one foot for the longest time – if necessary, make it more difficult by challenging the children to also put their hands on their heads.
- 3 Explain that although humans can do amazing things, only God can do everything. That's a record!

Sensing God's world

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to appreciate what God has created

You will need: items to smell and touch, a blindfold (optional)

- 1 Pass the objects round, one at a time. Invite the children to describe how they look, feel and smell. If appropriate, blindfold them and challenge them to guess what one of the items is by touch and smell.
- 2 Discuss how each item was made. What raw materials were needed? Say that people can create things when they use raw materials that God has provided.
- 3 Praise God for the different materials he has created. Invite everyone to think of something to praise him for. Make a list, then pray about them.

READY TO USE activity

Discussion starter

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to realise that we can't create something out of nothing, but that God can

- 1 Invite the children to name their favourite thing that God made.
- 2 In pairs, challenge them to create a list of all the things you would need to make: a hit single; a TV show; a feature film.
- 3 After a few minutes, invite the pairs to share their answers.

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.

Into the Bible – options to explore the Bible passage...

READY TO USE
activity

Bible story with shout

Activity time: 15–20 minutes

Aim: to discover more about our Creator God and explore our response to him

You will need: creation shout from page 12 (optional)

1 Bible Timeline

Look together at the picture of creation on the SU *Bible Timeline* or in an illustrated children's Bible. Encourage the children to imagine they are going back in time. Invite them to close their eyes and imagine different parts of the creation picture removed in turn.

Say: The first thing to take out of the picture is the story of Noah: remove the rainbow, ark, animals and Noah, leaving just the sea. Now take away wars and arguments: remove the two fighting men. The snake that tempted Eve to disobey God is no longer there.

As we go back in time take out all the people and all the animals. Then take out the stars, the moon and the sun and leave the sky totally empty. Next remove all the trees and plants and leave the land completely bare.

If we go further back in time, then even the land must disappear. Just one bright light shines through that water and the power of God is moving over the roaring, raging ocean.

Take the light away and think about a universe that's empty, except for God. Try to imagine the scene – there is NOTHING BUT GOD!

Ask the children if they found it hard to imagine 'nothing but God'.

2 Check out the Bible

Ask the children if they know where to find Genesis in the Bible. Say that 'Genesis' means 'Beginnings'. That's a clue! Invite two confident readers to read Genesis 1:1–5. Encourage the rest of the group to follow the story in their Bibles. Ask the children to describe in their own words what happened on the first day, but edit out anything that didn't happen! If you have a large group, do this in twos or threes. Read verses 6–8 and encourage them to describe what the world might have been like at the end of the second day.

3 Describe God

What sort of God could do this? Invite the group to think of different words to describe this amazing God of ours. (If you have a large, lively group, invite them to jump up in turn to say their word loudly.)

4 Creation shout

Divide the children into two groups. Practise a 'backing track' with one group first, repeating 'In the beginning, God...' over and over again. Then practise the first two verses of the shout on page 12 with the other group, pausing when the words '... and that was the first/second day' are heard. Put the two parts together.

If you have time, do the same for the rest of the verses.

Why not perform the shout to another group or to the whole church?

**You will find another
Into the Bible option
on the next page...**

Into the Bible – options (continued)...

Bible story with actions

Activity time: 25–30 minutes

Aim: to discover more about our Creator God and explore our response to him

You will need: a container of sand, a sweet-smelling plant, pieces of chopped fruit, templates from pages 13 and 14, thin blue card (optional)

1 Act out the story

This could be done with everyone together, or in small groups with a leader. Before you start, teach the children the actions to do each time they hear the following words in italics:

Nothing – make a circle with your finger and thumb.

Ocean – move hands up and down.

Good – make the ‘thumbs up’ sign.

Separated – hands together, then move apart.

Day – say ‘Good morning!’

Night – say ‘Sleep well!’

Dome – point upwards.

Nothing. In the very beginning there was *nothing* at all in the universe. That is, there was *nothing* except God. Then God made the earth. The earth was lifeless and it was covered with a roaring *ocean*. The spirit of God moved over the *ocean*. God saw the dark, wet, desolate earth and he said, ‘OK, let’s have some light around here!’ And there was light. God looked at the light and he saw that it was *good*.

Then God separated the light from the dark. He called the light ‘*Day*’ and the dark ‘*Night*’.

Evening passed and morning came. That was the first *day*.

On the second *day* God separated the *ocean*. It was separated by a *dome* called the sky. There was water above the *dome* and water below the *dome*. Evening passed and morning came. That was the second *day*.

2 Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Read Genesis 1:1. God was there in the beginning. He has always existed! Not just God the Father, but God the Son (Jesus) and God the Holy Spirit as well. Use a Bible to check the following references:

God the Son – read Colossians 1:15–17 and John 1:1–4. (Read the verses twice, using ‘Jesus’ instead of ‘the Word’ the second time.)

God the Holy Spirit – read Genesis 1:2.

3 Sense prayers

If you have adequate adult supervision, take the children outside and ask them to look up at the sky. (Make sure they do not look at the sun.) What can they see? Invite them to thank God for the good things they can see. Now ask them to listen. What can they hear? Invite them to thank God for the good things they can hear.

Back in your meeting place, encourage the children to shut their eyes and keep them shut. Pass some sand around the group and help them to touch and feel it. Can they guess what it is? Invite them to thank God for the good things they can touch. Ask everyone to smell a sweet-smelling plant. Invite them to thank God for the good things they can smell. Give each child a piece of fruit to taste (be aware of hygiene and allergies). Invite them to thank God for all the good tastes he created.

4 Create a model

If you have time, encourage the children to make the first part of their creation model using pages 13 and 14 photocopied on to thin card (blue card for page 13, if you have it). This model shows how creation was built up on each successive day. Don’t send the models home yet – the children can add to them in Sessions 2, 3 and 4. The instructions are on page 13.

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, plants and sea, Genesis 1:9–13

Session 3 God makes sun, moon and stars, Genesis 1:14–19

Session 4 God makes animals and people, Genesis 1:20 – 2:25

Living the life – options to help live God’s way...

Xstream prayer

Activity time: 5 minutes

Aim: to use what we have learned to respond to God

You will need: copies of the *Xstream* sheets from pages 15 and 16

- 1 Invite the children to look at the *Xstream* sheet ‘Fly sky high!’ on page 15, and ask them to sit quietly and complete the page.
- 2 Encourage the children to pray the prayer individually, or as a group, if appropriate.
- 3 Invite the children to look at the *Xstream* sheet on page 16 and talk together about the seven-day prayer activity. Explain that this is the first of a series of posters that they can stick on their bedroom wall.

Make a publicity leaflet

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to appreciate how great God is

You will need: brochures, publicity leaflets and adverts

- 1 Show the children the examples of brochures, publicity leaflets and adverts (weekend newspapers are good sources of these). Read out the words saying how wonderful the person or product is.
- 2 Explain that Christians have the job of telling the good news about Jesus and our wonderful God. Ask the group to design a leaflet to tell people how great God is. Say that it’s impossible to draw God, so they could draw his creation, which shows how amazing he is.



READY TO USE
activity

The big debate

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to understand what the creation story teaches us about God

- 1 Ask the children to imagine the creation story being told in the ancient world. It would probably be told around the campfire, passed down from generation to generation.
- 2 Invite the children to sit in a circle on the floor and encourage them to imagine they are huddled around a campfire in ancient times, about to tell the creation story. What do the group think were the key points in the story? (*The world was no accident. God created it. God made everything out of nothing. Everything God made was good.*)
- 3 Ask the children what they could say to people who don’t believe the creation story in the Bible.

Extra ideas for the session and beyond...

Read out the ‘true or false?’ statements on the *Xstream* sheet on page 16. Ask if the children think they are true or false; say that, incredibly, they are all true.

Play a version of the game Pictionary, choosing items from God’s creation to draw.

Invite the children to tell each other about different parts of God’s world they have visited on holiday.

Shout for 'Bible story with shout'

God made the heavens, and God made the earth.
Dark and lifeless and covered by water
and over the water blew the wind of God.
God said, "Light" and light appeared.
That was the first day.
And God was pleased with what he saw.

God made a dome to cover the earth.
He called it sky.
That was the second day.
And God was pleased with what he saw.

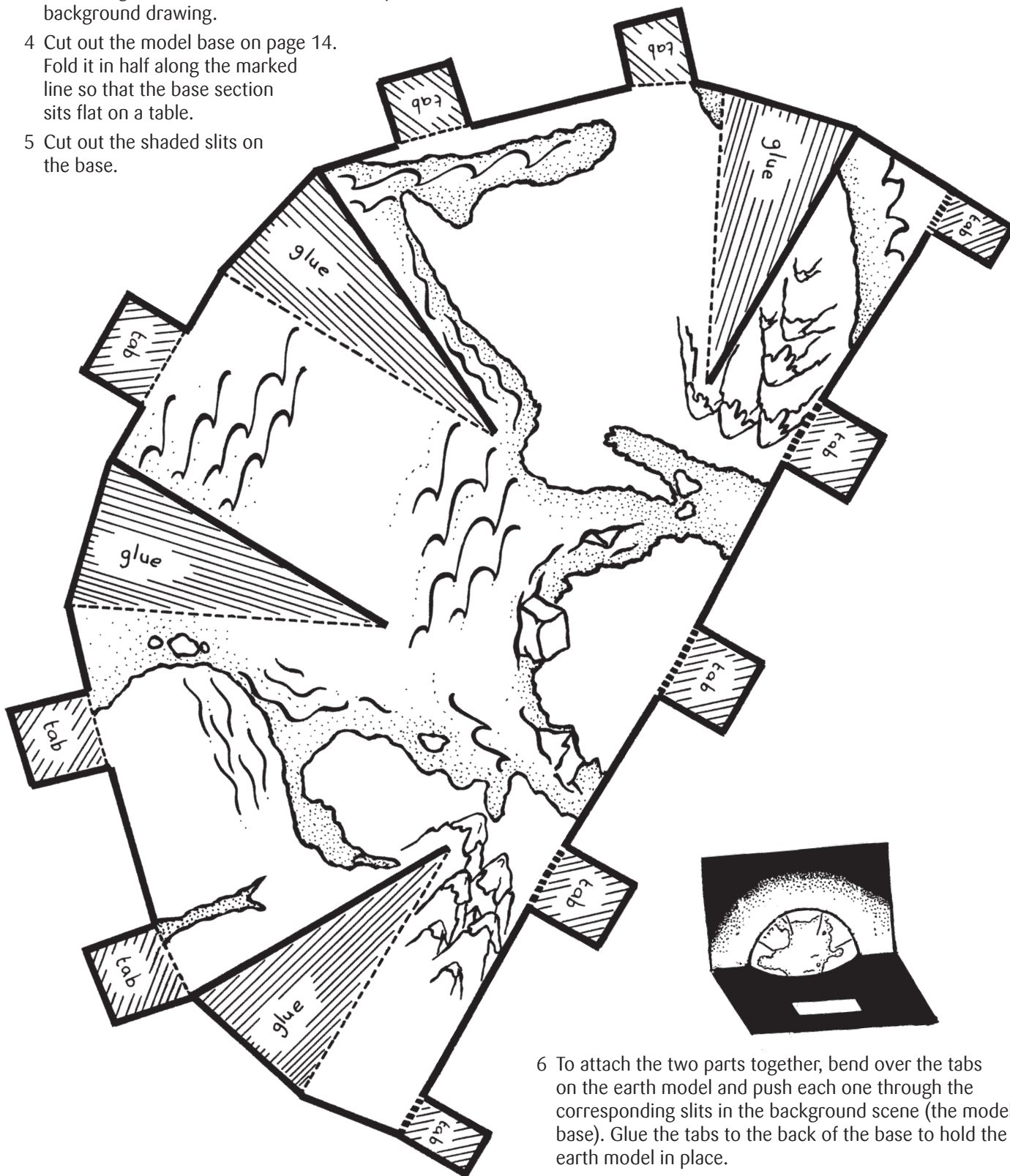
God made the land, he called it earth.
And on the earth the plants all grew.
That was the third day.
And God was pleased with what he saw.

God made lights appear in the sky.
The sun and moon marked day and night.
That was the fourth day.
And God was pleased with what he saw.

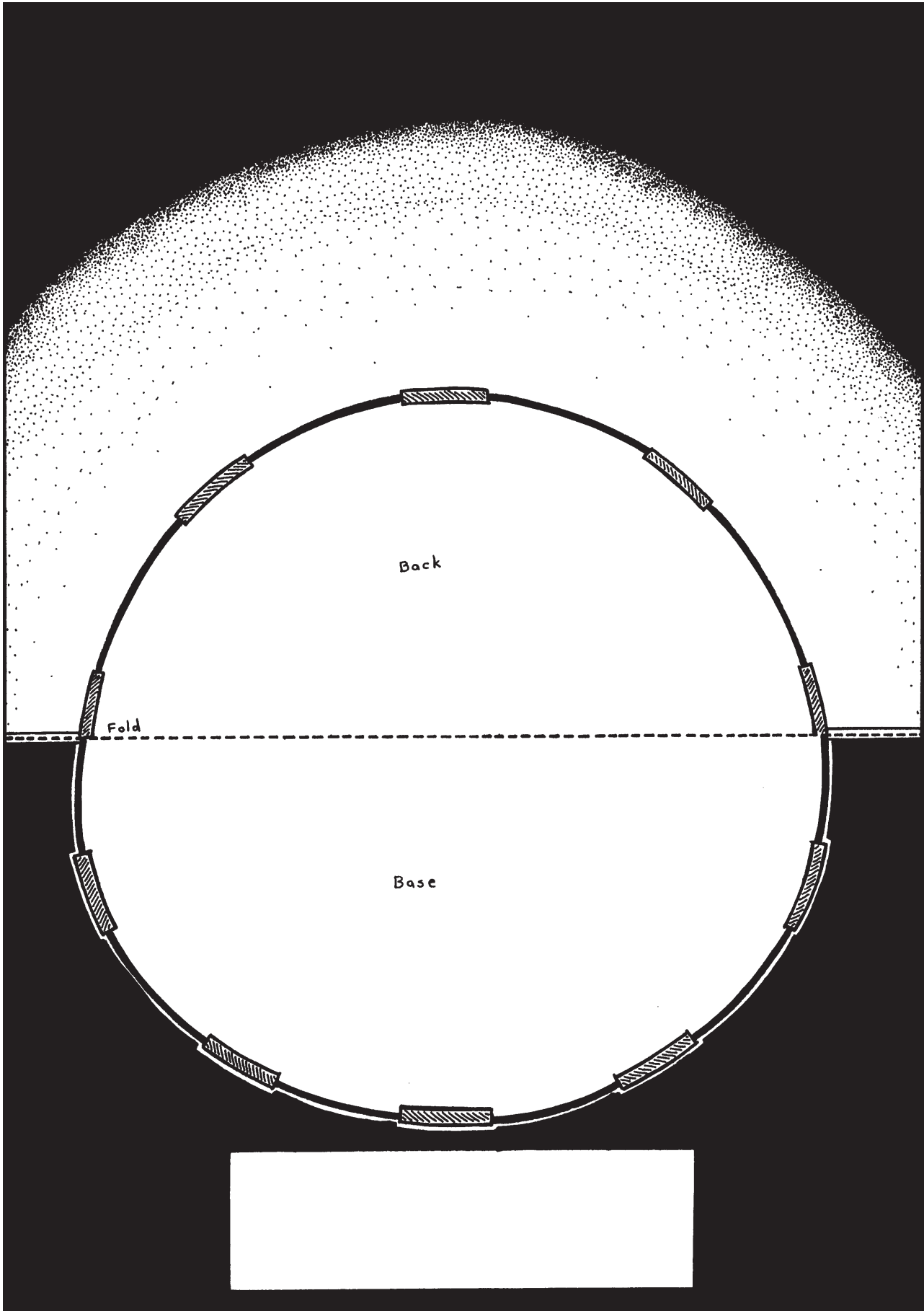
God put fish into the sea.
And God put birds into the sky.
That was the fifth day.
And God was pleased with what he saw.

God made the animals to live on the land.
And then he made people to rule the earth.
That was the sixth day.
And God was pleased with what he saw.

- 1 Cut out the earth model along the thick black lines.
- 2 Colour in the earth, mountains and sea.
- 3 To make the dome-shaped model, push the flaps marked "glue" to the underside and line up the background drawing.
- 4 Cut out the model base on page 14. Fold it in half along the marked line so that the base section sits flat on a table.
- 5 Cut out the shaded slits on the base.



- 6 To attach the two parts together, bend over the tabs on the earth model and push each one through the corresponding slits in the background scene (the model base). Glue the tabs to the back of the base to hold the earth model in place.



Fly **XSTREAM** sky high



Fill in the blanks and then pray this prayer:

Lord God,

When I hear about you creating
the universe, it makes me realise that
you are _____ and
_____.

What I like best about the world you
have made is _____.

Thank you _____.

Amen

True or false?

Which of these facts do you think are true?
Tick "True" or "false" for each one.

True False
The temperature of the centre of the earth (5,500°C) is nearly as hot as the surface of the sun.

True False
Lake Baikal in Siberia (Russia) holds 20 per cent of the world's fresh water and at 1,637 m deep is the deepest lake in the world.

True False
All 14 of the world's highest mountain peaks (over 8,000 m high) are located in the Himalaya or Karakoram ranges in Asia.

True False
The Great Barrier Reef is 2,600 km long. It is the world's largest coral reef and is the only structure built by animals that can be seen from outer space.

Praise God every day this week.

Sunday
Praise God because he was there in the beginning.

Monday
Praise God because he is amazing.

Tuesday
Praise God for his love.

Wednesday
Praise God for his power.

Thursday
Praise God for his greatness.

Friday
Praise God because he is awesome.

Saturday
Praise God because he is in charge of the world.

