

Grade 1, Theme Five

Family Letter

Dear Family,

We are ready to begin the last theme of *Fully Alive*, our family life program. Because the partnership of home, church, and school is so important, this letter is written to let you know what we talk about in class, and to offer some ideas for your involvement.

About Theme Five

Theme Five of *Fully Alive* is called “Living in the World.” We are not simply individuals who have relationships with family members and friends. We are also members of human society. We want the children to become aware of how big the world is, and of the many ways in which people contribute to making it a good home for all. This awareness is the foundation for a Christian attitude of care and personal involvement in the world.

In Theme Five we will:

- explore the world as an amazing place to be and to learn about.
- learn about some of the ways people care for God’s creation.
- discover some of the kinds of work that adults do to contribute to making the world a good place to be.

Working together at school and at home

- In our classroom, we will be talking about how we learn about the world. Ask your child about his or her favourite way of learning — books, television, the Internet, talking to adults?
- If your child has a book on a topic that he or she finds especially interesting, we would be pleased if it could be loaned to our classroom.
- We will be talking about caring for our home in the world. Adults, and especially parents, are models for their children in the way they use and care for the resources of the world. You might discuss with your child some of the ways that your family reuses and recycles, and tries to reduce the use of energy.
- In class, we will be learning that all work is important and contributes to making the world a good place. Adult work is often mysterious to children, so be sure to tell your child about the kind of work you and other members of your family do.

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Theme Five Topics

In Grade One, this theme is developed through three topics. In the first topic, the children talk about some of the things that make the world an amazing place for them. Young children are full of curiosity and wonder. They ask many questions and are eager to learn about the world. The second topic is about caring for God's creation. In the first theme, the children talked about creation. Now they begin to learn about the responsibility we have to care for this creation. The final topic is about human work. The children discuss the many different kinds of work adults do, and how valuable all human work is.

Topic 1 — The World Is an Amazing Place to Be

*The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be happy as kings.*

Robert Louis Stevenson, *A Child's Garden of Verses*

Summary

This topic helps the children understand how amazing the world is and how they learn about it. The teacher and children explore an illustration of some of the amazing things in the world, and discuss the different ways there are to learn about the world.

Main ideas

- God's world is an amazing place to be.
- We learn about the world in many ways: from families, teachers, computers, the Internet, books, television, and through our own experiences.
- It's fun to learn about the world, to ask questions, and to discover something new.

Family participation

- Many young children have books about favourite topics — dinosaurs, inventions, sports, or life in other countries. If your child has a favourite book about some aspect of the world, he or she might like to bring it to school to share with the class.
- Children's curiosity and sense of wonder about the world is a great gift to adults. There is so much that they are experiencing for the first time. Their delight and interest reminds us to stop for a minute, and rediscover our capacity for wonder.
- The Internet, television, and books open the world for children. When you participate, and share an exciting Internet site or book about space travel or watch a television show

about whales with your child, the experience is even better. Children learn so much more when they have an adult who shares the experience with them, and answers questions.

Topic 2 — God’s World Is Our Home

Now, almost nothing will happen on Earth that humans will not be involved in. We cannot make a blade of grass, but there is liable not to be a blade of grass is we do not accept it, protect it, and foster it.

Thomas Berry

Summary

This topic helps the children understand that we all have a responsibility to care for God’s world. The teacher reads a description of a neighbourhood clean-up, “Caring for the World,” that is illustrated in the student book. The teacher and children talk about some of the ways we can be good caretakers at home and at school. You will find the description of the neighbourhood clean-up at the end of this theme.

Main ideas

- God gave us the world, and asks us to care for it.
- We want to be good caretakers.
- When we look after our homes and our classroom, we are caring for God’s world.

Family participation

- You might talk to you child about the ways in which each member of the family helps to look after the world. This topic might provide the occasion for your family to plan a special clean-up project.
- Adults are models for children in the way we use and care for the things of the world. When we are careful not to litter or to waste, we are teaching children to respect creation and the things that God has given us. When a natural occasion comes up, be sure to let your child know that God trusts us to look after his creation. It’s an important responsibility. If you have a pet, you might tell your child that looking after the dog or cat is part of looking after God’s world.
- Children enjoy planting and watching things grow. It’s a good way for them to learn that when we care for our plants, we can enjoy beautiful flowers or good things to eat.

Topic 3 — All Kinds of Work

*We believe by faith that through the homage of work offered to God
humanity is associated with the redemptive work of Jesus Christ,
whose labour with his hands at Nazareth greatly added to the dignity of work.*

The Church in the Modern World, 67

Summary

This topic helps the children understand that adults do many different kinds of work. The teacher and children talk about these different kinds of work, and about how important each person's work is.

Main ideas

- The work we do makes the world a better place.
- Work is important and valuable.
- We depend on one another's work.

Family participation

- This topic gives you an opportunity to talk about your work. If you work in the home, you might ask your child to tell you about some of the things you do. If you have a job outside the home, tell your child about it.
- The world of adult work can be quite mysterious to children. It is so specialized that often children do not get a chance to see what their parents do. If it is possible, it's good to let your children visit your workplace and to talk to them about what you do.
- Your attitude toward work influences the way your children understand work. If they see that you are cheerful and proud of your work, and rarely complain, then they will learn a positive attitude. It's a good idea to let them know that sometimes you get tired or bored, but that you still try hard.
- Encourage your child to take pride in his or her work. If your child has done a good job, be sure to let him or her know. You might say, "That's good work. You must be proud of it." Children's work at school and at home is just as important and legitimate as adult work.
- You might want to remind your child that Jesus was a worker. You could explain that there were probably times when Jesus found it hard to work.

- Let your child know by the things you say that all work is important. Every person contributes, and no one's contribution is more important than another person's. When we work, we are continuing God's creation. God lets us help build the world through our work.
- You might like to read the poem, "It's a Wonderful World," with your child. This poem concludes *Fully Alive* for Grade 1. You will find it at the end of this theme. What does your child think is the most wonderful thing in the world?

Theme Five Stories and Poems

Topic 2: This description of caring for the world in a neighbourhood, which the teacher reads to the children, is illustrated in the student book.

Caring for the World

It's a beautiful spring day and everyone wants to be outside. It's a good day for a big clean up.

- It's time to clean the garage. What a mess! Everything needs to be put away neatly.

- It's time to fertilize the lawn. It's nice to have thick green grass to walk on. But first, the lawn has to be raked. There are twigs and dead leaves on it that have to be raked away.

- And what about flowers? It's good to plant flowers. They make the world beautiful. The bushes need trimming, too, so that they will be strong and healthy.

- The house needs cleaning. It's time to wash the windows, paint the trim, and shake out the dusty rugs.

- Even the road needs some work. There are bumps and cracks in it that have to be repaired. A bumpy road is hard to drive on.

- Is that litter on the lawn? It needs to be picked up. The world wouldn't look very beautiful if it was covered in litter, would it?

When everybody helps, the work is done more quickly. It is good to keep God's world clean and beautiful.

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Topic 3: This poem is at the very end of the Grade 1 *Fully Alive* student book. As a final activity, the children read the poem together and act out the parts from each verse.

It's a Wonderful World

I wish I were a rocket ship,
I'd blast off to the sky.
And then I'd figure out just how
God made the world so high.

It's a wonderful world!

I wish I were a fuzzy bug;
I'd crawl along the ground.
And wiggle underneath a rock
Without a single sound.

It's a wonderful world!

I wish I were a circus clown,
With funny ragged clothes.
I'd have a wig with purple hair,
And wear a bright red nose.

It's a wonderful world!

There are a million things or more
I want to see and do.
God made the world so wonderful,
I'm glad he made me too.

It's a wonderful world!

* * * * *

