



THINK  
**FAITH**



# UNIT 1 | STAGE 4A

Years 7–8

# INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

The world's most influential book





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Christian Education Publications  
PO Box A287, Sydney South NSW 1235 Australia

Email: [sales@cepstore.com.au](mailto:sales@cepstore.com.au)

Web: [cepstore.com.au](http://cepstore.com.au)



Web: [thinkfaith.com.au](http://thinkfaith.com.au)

## THE THINK FAITH TEAM:

**Project manager:** Dr Kaye Chalwell

**Writers:**

Lisa Andrawes  
Regina Atkins  
Kaye Chalwell  
Emma Collett  
Mike Dicker  
Rachel Dirks  
Nigel Dixon  
Ivan Harris  
Kat Harris

Anna Johnstone-Buckle

Wendy Kettlewell

Matthew Mulready

James Lane

Marty Richardson

Kirsty Robertson

Edward Sowden

Ed Springer

Jon Thorpe

**Editorial:** Loren Becroft, Natasha Percy

**Design and PowerPoints:** Bethany Abbottsmith

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# UNIT GUIDE

## INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

### The world's most influential book

The Bible is an incredible book: 66 books written by 40 people over 1500 years. The original text was written in two main languages and uses a multitude of literary forms and genres. It has been completely translated into 554 languages<sup>1</sup>, and 45 per cent of Australians own a physical Bible. Millions access it online and Australians accessed the Bible online 50 million times in 2013<sup>2</sup>. It has been sworn on in court, debated for centuries and quoted in famous speeches and when people stub their toe. The Bible is arguably the most influential book ever written.

The Bible is more than a popular book with some cool stories. It is Christianity's sacred text. It is the foundation of the Christian faith, shaping the beliefs, ethics and practice of Christians all around the world. Even though it was written by many human authors, from various places over a long period of time, the power of the Bible is that it is God's word. Christians believe that the Bible holds together as one story; its many human authors were all inspired by God to tell the one story of his work in creation. The Bible itself indicates that it is

written by God, by the power of his Spirit, through humans, so every word in the Bible comes from him. Even though the Bible covers a great deal of history and topics and stories, it tells one story from start to finish: God has acted to save the world through Jesus Christ his Son. Humans can know God and have a relationship with him now and forever. The Bible enables us to understand ourselves and what is happening in our world, and to live wherever we are with purpose and hope.

For Christians, the Bible is a life-changing book. It has always influenced people because it is written by God. The creator of the world has spoken.

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1. 'Scripture & Language Statistics 2015', Wycliffe Global Alliance, October 2015, viewed December 8 2015, [wycliffe.net/statistics](http://wycliffe.net/statistics)

2. McCrindle, 2014, 'Top 10 facts about Australians, Christianity and the Bible' April 17, viewed December 8 2015, <<http://mccrindle.com.au/the-mccrindle-blog/top-10-facts-about-australians-christianity-and-the-bible>>.

# LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE UNIT

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Students will consider the following questions:

- Why is the Bible the most translated book in the world?
- How does the Bible impact day-to-day life?
- Why is Jesus essential to our understanding of the Bible?
- Why do Christians keep on reading their Bible, even when they've read the whole thing?

## UNDERSTANDING

Students will:

- be able to explain why Christians continue to read the Bible
- be able to reflect on the difference between reading the Bible as a sacred text and reading it as literature.

## KEY TERMS

- Word of God
- God's word
- Scripture
- Testament
- Chapter
- Verse
- Passage

## ACQUISITION

Students will learn that Christians believe:

- the Bible is different to any other book
- the Bible is one book, but also many books that tell God's unfolding story
- the Bible is not a made-up story
- the Bible is God's word to his people

- the Bible has impacted our history and continues to impact our lives
- the Bible provides the most important way to get to know God
- Jesus is God's Word.

## SKILLS

Students will be able to:

- find a Bible passage
- identify Jesus' place in the biblical story
- engage personally with texts; recognise, reflect on, interpret and explain the connections between their own experiences and the biblical text.

## RELATING TO GOD

Students will understand that:

- Christians believe that God's word is living and active
- Christians believe that they are transformed by God's Spirit as they read God's word
- Christians are guided in their decision-making and ethics by God's word
- Christians pursue a relationship with God through reading his word, prayer, worship and service
- Christians believe that God reveals himself to us through his word.

## RELATING TO THE WORLD

Students will understand that:

- Christians relate to the world with the hope of all creation being redeemed.

# OVERVIEW OF LESSONS

LAUNCH LESSON: THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD	STILLA 1: HOW DO I FIND SOMETHING IN THE BIBLE?
<p>Key Bible text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Thessalonians 2:13</li> </ul> <p>Big idea</p> <p><b>God shows himself to people through his word.</b></p> <p>Overview</p> <p>The Launch Lesson introduces the concept that people get to know God by hearing or reading his word. Time is provided for you to establish appropriate classroom expectations. Students are given the opportunity to read a Bible passage and explore its meaning.</p> <p>Sensitivity triggers: None identified.</p>	<p>Key Bible text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various</li> </ul> <p>Big idea</p> <p><b>The Bible is organised so that you can find a book, passage or verse.</b></p> <p>Overview</p> <p>Students are given the opportunity to look at a Bible and explore how it is organised. You can ascertain the extent of your students' prior knowledge in order to pace subsequent lessons appropriately to suit their needs. Students discover the way a Bible is structured into Old and New Testament, books, chapters and verses. They are given the opportunity to practise finding references and reading small parts for meaning.</p> <p>Sensitivity triggers: None identified.</p>
STILLA 2: WHAT IS IN THE BIBLE?	STILLA 3: WHAT IS THE BIG STORY OF THE BIBLE?
<p>Key Bible text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acts 8:26–40</li> </ul> <p>Big idea</p> <p><b>The Bible is one book made up of many books.</b></p> <p>Overview</p> <p>This Stilla identifies the 66 different books of the Bible. It explores purpose in texts and revises types of text (genre), leading students through a process of identifying the different books of the Bible and the six main genres represented. Students are led through the process of reading, investigating and understanding a Bible passage about the power of reading God's word (Acts 8).</p> <p>Sensitivity triggers: None identified.</p>	<p>Key Bible text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revelation 21:3</li> </ul> <p>Big idea</p> <p><b>The Bible is the story of how God rescues humanity and the world through Jesus.</b></p> <p>Overview</p> <p>The many types of texts in the Bible reflect one overarching theme which pervades the whole Bible. Students explore a collection of key passages selected from the Old and New Testaments to investigate the main thread of the story of the Bible. They identify that the Bible helps us to know God. His own Son Jesus is the centre of his great story of promise and fulfilment.</p> <p>Sensitivity triggers: None identified.</p>

<p><b>STILLA 4: HOW DO WE KNOW THE STORY OF JESUS IS TRUE?</b></p> <p>Key Bible text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Peter 1:16–18</li> <li>• Various</li> </ul> <p>Big idea</p> <p><b>The story of Jesus was written and verified by reliable eyewitnesses.</b></p> <p>Overview</p> <p>This Stilla explores the nature of providing evidence to prove truth. As Jesus is the centre of the main story of the Bible, this lesson focuses on the evidence to prove that the claims about Jesus are true. Students investigate the eyewitness accounts of Jesus in the Bible. Students look at various eyewitness accounts.</p> <p>Sensitivity triggers: None identified.</p>	<p><b>STILLA 5: HOW HAS THE BIBLE CHANGED PEOPLE?</b></p> <p>Key Bible text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Timothy 3:16</li> <li>• 2 Corinthians 5:17–18</li> <li>• 2 Kings 22–23</li> <li>• Romans 12:2</li> </ul> <p>Big idea</p> <p><b>God’s word has the power to change people completely.</b></p> <p>Overview</p> <p>This Stilla explores how different people respond to hearing God’s word. Students will explore how beliefs are formed and change over time, and what influences our beliefs. The lesson looks at the events of King Josiah’s life in the Old Testament and stories of individuals who have been impacted by reading God’s word.</p> <p>Sensitivity triggers: In this Stilla students will hear how the Bible makes clear that God judges the world.</p>
<p><b>STILLA 6: HOW DOES GOD’S WORD CHANGE OUR HEART AND ACTIONS?</b></p> <p>Key Bible text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Timothy 3:16–17</li> <li>• Luke 19:1–10</li> </ul> <p>Big idea</p> <p><b>Where the heart is, actions will follow.</b></p> <p>Overview</p> <p>This Stilla explores how when people read God’s word and understand who God is they realise the enormous distance between their sinfulness and God’s holiness. As they trust in the death and resurrection of Jesus, then in thankfulness to God and by his Spirit, they change the way they live. The story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19 and the story of John Newton are used as case studies showing how God changes hearts and helps our actions to change.</p> <p>Sensitivity triggers: In this Stilla students will hear how the Bible makes clear that God judges the world.</p>	<p><b>LANDING LESSON: BRINGING THE BIBLE HOME</b></p> <p>Key Bible text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not applicable</li> </ul> <p>Big idea</p> <p><b>The world’s most influential book.</b></p> <p>Overview</p> <p>This lesson closes the unit and seeks to reinforce the learning of the unit. Students engage in a number of activities to recall learning, key themes and conclusions.</p> <p>Sensitivity triggers: None identified.</p>

# TEACHER PLANNING SHEET

The template below enables you to plan the Stilla Learning Segments you will use in the lesson. For example, you might complete one Stilla in a single lesson or choose to teach a Stilla over multiple lessons. It also provides a formal record of what was taught in your classroom. You can either print this template or complete the interactive PDF available at [thinkfaith.com.au](http://thinkfaith.com.au).

Date	Year group	Lesson
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TIMING	CONNECTING	RESOURCES

TIMING	EXPLORING	RESOURCES

TIMING	FORMING	RESOURCES



# LAUNCH LESSON

## THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD

**1 Thessalonians 2:13** God shows himself to us through his word.

### AT A GLANCE

Connecting	Exploring	Forming
Establishing classroom routines and expectations Teacher introduction Getting to know students Getting to know God	God mind map The Bible teaches us about God 1 Thessalonians 2:13 God's word and me	Prayer Ticket to leave

## CONNECTING



### SETTING UP YOUR CLASS ⌚ 5 mins 📋

**Teacher's note:** It is important at the beginning of the year that you spend time setting up your class for the year ahead. Learn and remember names as quickly as possible and pray for students by name each week.

You will also need to decide what Bible translation you will use. There are triplicate worksheets when dealing with Bible texts in NIV, NIV and CEV. Please double-check your version before printing any worksheets.

#### 1. Establishing classroom routines and expectations

- Explain that *Think Faith* is taught from a Christian perspective, therefore students will read the Bible and talk about what the Bible has to say. There will also be an opportunity to pray, but students are not obliged to pray if they don't want to. When the class is discussing something from the Bible, students are free to ask questions, and disagree, and share their point of view.
- In these classes, respect needs to be shown for God, the Bible, the teacher, other students and property. This will mean:
  - » only one person speaks at a time unless directed otherwise
  - » everyone pays attention when someone speaks
  - » students will show respect for you as their teacher

- » everyone will share thoughts with others respectfully
- » there will be no 'put-downs'
- » everyone will feel comfortable asking questions
- » everyone will have fun learning together.

## 2. Routines

- Use the activities at the beginning of each Stilla to ensure there is something for students to do while they wait for others to arrive.
- Make sure students understand that they will read from the Bible, and that they are welcome to bring their own Bibles to class.
- Make sure you always finish with time to reflect on what students have learned and allow time for questions.



**ENGAGING** 5 mins

**Teacher's note:** This activity gives you the opportunity to get to know the students in your class, and it will be used later to introduce the idea that the Bible is the place we go to know God.

### Teacher introduction

Introduce yourself by answering the following ten questions.

1. What is your whole name?
2. What country or city were you born in?
3. What month is your birthday in?
4. If you have any pets, what are they?
5. Do you have any brothers or sisters?
6. What's one thing you like to do in your spare time?
7. Name a favourite TV show or movie.
8. What school subject do you like best?
9. What is one of your favourite foods?
10. What primary school did you go to?



**ENGAGING** 5–10 mins

Worksheet L:1

**Teacher's note:** This activity will help you to get to know the students. It also illustrates that those whom we trust will know more about who we are. You should expect students who know the volunteer student to answer many of the questions correctly, while others may not know many answers. The question topics vary from general to more private to things even those close to the student might not know. A single ? indicates a question aiming to get a brief answer from students.

## Getting to know students

1. Ask for a volunteer student to come to the front of the room.
2. Ask the volunteer the questions in the Teacher introduction activity. As you ask each question, have class members guess the answer they think the volunteer will give for each question, and write down their guesses in the left column on Worksheet L:1. Then ask the volunteer to reveal their answer and invite students to put up their hands if they matched the volunteer's answer.
3. Continue this until all questions have been answered.
4. Ask students to check how many questions they answered correctly, and invite them to show hands to indicate how many were correct out of ten. For example, ask for students who got one, between one and five, more than five, or all correct.
5. Ask students:
  - ? Why do some students know more about the volunteer student than others?
  - ? What would you need to do to increase your score on a questionnaire like this?
  - ? Why would some people be more motivated than others to get to know someone better?
6. Give students a two or three-minute time limit to complete the same questions about themselves on Worksheet L:1.
7. Ask students to show their answers to a partner.
8. Select a few students to share one of their answers with the class.



## INSTRUCTING 1 min

**Teacher's note:** *This brief activity aims to draw the previous activities together to make the point that if we want to know God, we should listen to his words in the Bible.*

## Getting to know God

1. Ask students:
  - ? If I really want to know about the volunteer student, whom should I ask? (The student.)
  - ? If I really want to know you, whom should I ask? (You.)
  - ? If you really want to know me, whom should you ask? (Me.)
  - ? If we really want to know about God, whom should we ask? (God.)

# NOTES

## EXPLORING



### CONVERSING ⌚ 10–15 mins

**Teacher's note:** *These activities will give you some initial insight into the biblical literacy of the students in your class. The aim is to help students to see that the best way to understand who God is is to read the Bible. Some students will need guidance when completing a mind map. For more information, see the Activities Compendium.*

God mind map

1. Have students record all that they know about God on a mind map. This may be completed individually or as a class.
2. Ask:
  - ? Where did you learn the things you know about God?
  - ? How do you know if they are true?



### INSTRUCTING ⌚ 10–15 mins 📄 Worksheet L:1 🖨️

**Teacher's note:** *In this activity students see how the Bible describes God. It is important that students see that God is the main character of the Bible.*

The Bible teaches us about God

1. Show the class your Bible and explain:
  - This is the reliable source I use to find out who God is and what he is like.
  - The Bible is reliable because it is the word of God. As a Christian, I believe God worked through people to say what he wanted to say to humankind. So, the Bible is written by people but inspired and directed by God.
  - When we read the Bible, we can learn what God is like.
2. Read one or more of the following verses from the Bible to the students. Ask students what the verse says about what God is like:
  - Exodus 34:6–7
  - Deuteronomy 10:17–18
  - Psalm 54:4.
3. Ask students to indicate how often they read the Bible on the scale on Worksheet L:1.

## NOTES



## INVESTIGATING ⌚ 10–20 mins 📖 Worksheet L:2 🗨️

**Teacher's note:** *This activity gives students their first opportunity to read a passage from the Bible and work out what the Bible says about itself. Do not spend time looking up the Bible (this will start next week); rather, ask students to read the passage on the worksheet.*

*You may choose to do this activity by:*

- *going through the passage as a whole class*
- *giving students time to do the activity alone or in small groups.*

*The PowerPoint presentations feature different Bible translations. Please delete the slides that feature the version you do not use.*

### 1 Thessalonians 2:13

1. Ask students to read 1 Thessalonians 2:13 on Worksheet L:2 and complete the questions.
2. Invite students to report back on what they discovered.

## LINK STATEMENT

The Scriptures are God's word, so an important way to get to know God is to read God's word: the Bible.



## INSTRUCTING ⌚ 5 mins

**Teacher's note:** *In this activity you describe how God's word has impacted you. This is not your conversion story but an example where reading/hearing God's word encouraged, rebuked or corrected you. It is important that you prepare your own story with the following tips in mind:*

- *emphasise that it is about God and what he has done*
- *bring out the difference between knowing about God and knowing God*
- *read a verse from the Bible while telling your story*
- *make your story short and succinct.*

### God's word and me

1. Share your own story with your students of how reading/listening to God's word impacted you personally and helped you know God better.

# NOTES

# FORMING



**REFLECTING** ⌚ 5 mins 📄 Worksheet L:2 🗨️

**Teacher's note:** *Leading students in prayer is important because this models what prayer is like and gives students the opportunity to pray. Additionally, the Bible says that God loves to hear and respond to our prayers. It is important that you give students the option not to pray.*

*The Ticket to Leave activity gives students the opportunity to respond to the lesson. This activity is repeated throughout the unit. Collect the Tickets to Leave as students leave, mark them and return them next week.*

Prayer

1. Suggested prayer:

- Thank you God that we can get to know you through your word, the Bible. Thank you that we can get to know each other in this class. Help us to get to know you better this year. Amen.

Ticket to Leave

1. Have students complete the three statement sentences on Worksheet L:2:

- A question I have about Christianity: \_\_\_\_\_
- Something I would like to do in this class this year: \_\_\_\_\_
- From today's lesson I think I would like to: \_\_\_\_\_

# NOTES

MY BEST  
**GUESS**  
ABOUT

GET TO  
KNOW  
**ME**

# - two-minute - get-to-know-you **CHALLENGE**




1. What is your whole name?
2. What country or city were you born in?
3. What month is your birthday in?
4. If you have any pets, what are they?
5. Do you have any brothers or sisters?
6. What's one thing you like to do in your spare time?
7. What is your favourite TV show or movie?
8. What school subject do you like best?
9. What is one of your favourite foods?
10. What primary school did you go to?

I READ  
THE **BIBLE**



# LOOK CLOSER

A letter to the Thessalonians found in the Bible

1 Thessalonians 2:13

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.

WORD =  
MESSAGE

What is this 'word'?

What does the 'word' do?

Whose 'word' is it?

Look for the **action words**. What have the Thessalonians done?

TICKET

TO  
LEAVE

A question I have about Christianity:

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Something I would like to do in this class this year:

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From today's lesson I think I would like to:

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