

Series: Born to Be Me

Lesson 1: Wonderfully Made

Lesson Objectives:

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to...

- Enact the role of a creator and discuss how a creator feels about his or her creation.
- Discover and hear that they are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Various art supplies (see Lead In)
- ☐ A cut out of a unisex body (such as a gingerbread man, approximately 2-3 feet high; use newsprint or Bristol board to build)
- ☐ Post-it notes
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Bibles

Series Lead In:

This lead in should take 25-30 minutes.

Bring in art supply items that will allow students to create something. For example, clay, paint, canvasses, and so on. Make sure they are good art items and not just leftovers from the Sunday school cupboard. Students should feel excited to work with these good materials and be able to create something that they care about and will feel proud of. For this reason give them at least 20 minutes to create something. You may choose just one medium (such as clay) or bring in several options, depending on your group. Give students time to work alone to create their masterpieces. When they have finished, compliment them on their work. Tell them that their works truly are “wonderfully made.”

Note: If you know that there are students in your group who are truly not artistic and who would not feel their works are “wonderful” consider finding an activity that is time and work intensive but that is less creative. It may be putting together a simple model airplane or doing a paint-by-number painting. Students should feel they have invested in their work.

Explain to students: *When you created these pieces, what made them especially wonderful was the love and work that you put into them. You made them something that you wanted them to be, and selected things you didn't want them to be. You had a design for them. Now imagine if your artwork could speak. Imagine if it was angry with you for being one way and not another.*

Ask each student to get up from the table and move to a different spot, beside the creation of another person. Ask each student to pretend that they are the new piece of art that they are sitting with. Now give each student an opportunity to ask their “creator” one question about why they were made that way. For example, “Sally, why did you paint me brown instead of yellow? I wish I was yellow!” Allow the creator of the piece to respond.

Bible Exploration:

Ask students to turn to Romans 9:20-21 in their Bibles. Have one student read this out loud.

Explain that this verse talks about how God is the creator of each one of us. We may think it is silly to think of a pot talking back to us and asking us why we are the way we are, yet we do that with God quite often. Invite students to think for a moment about the questions that they have asked God about why they are the way they are. In a moment, you will ask them to write this down.

Give each student a Post-it note and a pen. Ask each person to write down something that they don't like about themselves on the Post-it note. It could be something physical or about their personality. The notes can be anonymous. The leader can do this too to remind students that everyone has insecurities. When they have all finished, ask them to post the Post-it notes on the cut-out of a body that you brought with you (have this prepared on a wall). Point out that there are often things that we all don't like about ourselves. We often feel like we walk around as though our flaws were stuck to us like these Post-its.

Ask students to turn to Psalms 139:1-16 in their Bibles. Ask one student to read it slowly. Ask the other students to listen and identify the theme or key verses of this lesson. The correct answer is from verses 13-14, "For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you for *I am fearfully and wonderfully made.*"

Application:

Return again to the pieces of art work. Pick up one of the pieces that you know someone has been particular proud of and either:

- Destroy or alter it (throw a painting, smash a sculpture or reshape it, etc.)
- Ask how the creator would feel if the piece was destroyed or changed so that it looked different

Note: This object lesson can involve actually destroying the students' work. This can be a powerful moment; however, if you find it too dramatic or uncomfortable, simply act as if you are going to destroy or change it and then ask the artist how he or she would feel. Alternately, you could select a student in advance and ask his or her permission to destroy their creation.

Say something like, *Imagine how you would feel if this art work was destroyed. We would feel awful if something we had loved and made to be a particular way was changed to meet other people's standards. Yet we are often quick to change ourselves from the way God made us. How do you think God feels when we destroy his creation, us? Let's make a list of some ways that we destroy ourselves.* Examples might include eating disorders, drugs, cutting ourselves, being lazy or not meeting our potential, eating food that is harmful, etc.

Bring the students' attention back to the body cut-out and ask them to imagine that God was in the room with a Post-it note and a pen of God's own. Ask, *Would God be satisfied with these labels?* Have the students adapt the image. More than likely, they will remove the post-it notes and replace them with positive ones such as, "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made."

Closing:

If your group is comfortable doing this, close with this activity. Give each student another Post-it and ask them to write on it “Fearfully and Wonderfully Made.” When they have finished, ask them to turn to the person on their right and place the sticker prominently somewhere on the person’s body and say to them “_____, you are fearfully and wonderfully made by God.”

Close in prayer, thanking God for making each student just as they are. If you have not destroyed their artwork, allow them to take their pieces home as reminders of how God has made them to be just who they are. Make sure they still leave the room wearing their “label,” remembering that this is the most important label they can wear.