

Cosmic Beginnings: Perspectives on Creation

Learning objective: To understand and compare different cultural perspectives on creation stories and recognise their significance to communities.

Read the passage below carefully. Use your knowledge of religious and non-religious worldviews to answer the questions. Ensure your answers are supported by evidence from the text.

Across human history, civilisations have crafted profound narratives to explain the origins of the cosmos. Ellie the elephant, who loves history, often remarks that creation stories are more than mere tales; they are windows into how different cultures perceive their relationship with the natural world. Many traditions, such as those found in ancient Mesopotamia or the Vedic texts of India, describe creation as a deliberate act of divine order, bringing form to chaos. Conversely, some indigenous traditions view the Earth as a living entity, suggesting that humans are not masters, but rather relatives to the land and its creatures. While scientific explanations focus on processes like the Big Bang, many people find that these ancient stories offer a metaphorical framework for understanding purpose and morality. Whether a story speaks of a great architect or the spontaneous blossoming of life from a void, each narrative emphasises the precious, fragile nature of our existence. By exploring these diverse accounts, we learn how our ancestors grappled with the mystery of life, inspiring us to consider our own responsibility as stewards of the planet.

Word bank: cosmos · mythology · perspective · significance · stewardship · metaphorical · ancient · existence

1. Identify two different ways that creation stories describe the origin of the world according to the passage. (2 marks)

2. What does the text suggest is the main difference between how indigenous traditions and other religions might view the human relationship with the Earth? (2 marks)

3. Explain why the author uses the phrase 'windows into how different cultures perceive their relationship with the natural world'. (3 marks)

4. In what way might a scientific perspective and a traditional creation story coexist for an individual? (3 marks)

5. Justify your answer: Do you think creation stories remain relevant in the modern, scientific age? Give reasons for your opinion. (4 marks)

Draw: Draw a split-screen illustration. On one side, represent a 'scientific' view of the universe (stars, galaxies, expansion). On the other side, illustrate a 'traditional' creation story using symbols of nature, light, and life. Add a caption explaining how these two views might complement each other.



Extension challenge: Compare and contrast a creation story from a religious tradition you have studied with the scientific 'Big Bang' theory. Write a short paragraph explaining the similarities and differences in their messages. What might happen if we viewed our planet solely as a scientific object rather than a place with 'metaphorical' or spiritual value?