Creation Stories: The Wisdom of Ellie

Learning objective: To identify and compare features of different creation stories from world religions and understand why creation narratives are significant to believers.

Ellie the elephant has been collecting creation stories from all around the world. Look at the statements below. Decide whether each statement describes a common theme found in many religious creation stories or a specific scientific explanation. Mark each as 'Religious Theme' or 'Scientific Explanation' and provide a brief reason for your choice.

Word bank: Divine Creator · Big Bang · Purpose · Evolution · Stewardship · Natural Selection · Sacred Text · Cosmology

1. The universe began with a rapid expansion of hot, dense matter approximately 13.8 billion years ago. (2 marks)

2. Human beings have a specific role to look after the Earth and all living things within it. (2 marks)

3. Life on Earth has changed over millions of years through the process of natural selection. (2 marks)

4. The world was brought into existence through the power and intention of a divine creator. (2 marks)

5. Why might a religious person find both a scientific explanation and a religious creation story meaningful at the same time? Explain your thoughts. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a split-screen image. On the left, draw a scene representing a religious creation story using symbols of nature and light. On the right, draw a scene representing the scientific view of the universe's beginning. In the middle, draw Ellie the elephant holding a book to connect the two ideas.

Extension challenge: Research a creation story from a religion of your choice (e.g., Christianity, Hinduism, or Judaism). Write a short paragraph explaining the most important message that the believers take from that story regarding how they should treat the planet.