

The Bible

*The best book to read is the Bible.
The best book to read is the Bible.
If you read it every day,
It will help you on your way.
The best book to read is the Bible.
(Traditional)*

What is it?

It is a book, a best seller that most people on the planet have at one time read or at least casually glanced at. It has touched countless people with its insights and information. The English-language version is now distributed in over seventy countries. It opens doorways and tells us a lot about ourselves and our world. It is to be found in pretty well every library on the planet. It is available in thirty-seven foreign-language translations. Sales of this book are phenomenal, totalling somewhere up near the 100-million mark worldwide.¹

What is the name of this book? _____

1. What is the Bible?

The Bible is the bestselling book of all time. It is estimated that in the last 200 years 5 billion (yes billion!) copies of the Bible have been printed and it is available to read in nearly 3000 languages.

The New Testament writers refer to the Old Testament as the 'Scriptures' which is from the Greek word 'graphe' meaning writing. The word Bible comes from the Latin translation of the Greek word 'biblia' which simply means 'books'.

'The Holy Bible is God's one and only special book' (Ben Shaw and Pete Downey, Everything you want to know about the Bible).

2. What do you know about the Bible?

How many books are there in the Bible? _____

How many books are there in the Old Testament and what do they tell us about? _____

How many books are there in the New Testament and what do they tell us about? _____

The Old Testament Scriptures were written on 'papyrus' which was a form of paper made out of reeds. The New Testament Scriptures were written on 'parchment' which was prepared animals skins.

What languages was the Bible originally written in? _____

Over how many years was the Bible written and by how many writers and on how many continents?

What are the longest and shortest books in the Old and New Testaments? _____

Why do we have chapters and verses in our Bibles? _____

¹ Taken from Ben Shaw & Pete Downey, Everything you want to know about the Bible

The original manuscripts of the Bible did not have chapter and verse numbering. The chapter numbering we find in our Bibles was devised by Archbishop Stephen Langton between 1227 and 1248. Verse numbering came some years later. Robert Estienne is responsible for the verse numbering we find in our Bible which he devised in 1551. There are 1,189 chapters and 31,173 verses in the Bible.

The names that have been given to the books of the Bible either describe their content, the writer or who the book was written to. **Give examples of books whose name describes their...**

Content? _____

Writer? _____

Who the book was written to? _____

'The Bible is a collection of books that is fixed in number, divine in origin and universal in its authority. The Bible is 66 books, 40 writers, written over 1600 years, has one big story and one author'. (Brian Edwards)

3. What is the Bible's message?

'The Bible shows us how to be in relationship with God'. (Ben Shaw and Pete Downey, Everything you want to know about the Bible).

'The Bible is all about God's gracious actions to reverse the effects of human sin and establish a new creation'. (Introduction to the Bible, Moore Theological College Correspondence Course)

4. What does the Bible say about itself?

Complete the table to find out what the Bible says about itself:

	What does the Bible say about itself?
2 Timothy 3:16 2 Peter 1:19-21	
1 Thessalonians 2:13	
Luke 16:29-31	
Proverbs 6:23 Psalm 119:105	
Psalm 119:160 John 17:17	
Proverbs 30:5-6 Psalm 19:7	
Isaiah 55:11	
Hebrews 4:12	
Romans 16:26	
James 1:22	
Psalm 119:11	
Acts 17:11	

