



Assembly



## One in a billion

### Aim:

- To consider the worth of each individual
- To reflect on the Christian belief that God knows and loves everyone

### Introduction

#### Seven billion and counting

The United Nations estimates that the world's population has reached seven billion. The world reached a population of one billion in 1804, and it wasn't until 1927 that it reached two billion. Three billion was achieved in just over thirty years, and four billion just fourteen years after that in 1974!

*(It may be of interest to work out what number various members of staff and pupils were when they were born. Enter different people's dates of birth in the chart at [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-15391515](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-15391515). Interestingly, when I personally was born, I was the 2,960,466,318<sup>th</sup> person in the world. By the time my teenage daughters were born, when I was in my thirties, the world population had doubled – they are the 5,711,753,886<sup>th</sup> and 5,974,201,508<sup>th</sup> people in the world respectively)*

### Looking Deeper

#### Do I matter?

Thinking of ourselves as just one seven-billionth of the world, it is sometimes hard to see whether or not we are of any significance. Are we just statistics? Does it matter, in the great scheme of things, what I do, how I live, what I achieve?

Such questions can undermine our sense of

self-worth and leave us feeling inadequate.

However, Christians believe that each individual is uniquely designed and intimately known by God. There are 15,347 births and 6,418 deaths world-wide each hour, but Christians believe that God knows each individual concerned.

In the Old Testament section of the Bible, there are the lyrics of a poem or song written by King David 3,000 years ago. Addressing God directly, he says:

You have looked deep into my heart,  
LORD, and you know all about me.  
You notice everything I do and everywhere I go.  
Before I even speak a word, you know what I will say.

You are the one who put me together  
inside my mother's body,  
and I praise you because of the wonderful way you created me.

Even before I was born, you had written in your book everything I would do.

*(Taken from Psalm 139)*

In the New Testament, Jesus assures people of God's care for them when he says:

Five sparrows are sold for only two pennies, and God does not forget any of them. But God even knows how many hairs you have on your head. Don't be afraid. You are worth much more than many sparrows.

Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest, they don't have storerooms or barns, but God feeds them. And you are worth much more than birds. Consider how the lilies grow; they don't work or make clothes for themselves. God clothes the flowers in the field, which are alive



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today but tomorrow are thrown into the fire. So how much more will God clothe you? So I tell you, don't worry.  
*(Taken from Luke 12)*



## Reflection

### Uniquely you

Have a look at the unique pattern of lines and swirls on your thumb. No-one, out of the more than 83 billion people that have lived since history began, has ever had the same thumb print as you. No-one has had the same iris patterns as you. No-one has had the same combination of genes as you. You are unique and therefore enormously valuable.

## Prayer

Lord God,  
Thank you that I am not just a number.  
Please help me to remember that I am of infinite worth to you.  
Amen

## Keywords

Population  
Self-worth  
Value

