

EXCERPT from *Spirit Play* curriculum

“The Universe Story (CF) Violet Promise”



Cosmic Beads made by a volunteer at Live Oak Unitarian Universalist Church, Austin TX for use in this module of the *Spirit Play* curriculum

Materials: Violet Underlay, Cosmic Story Beads (see www.thegreatstory.org for information on creating the beads), Box or basket to hold materials. (contact Cindy at cynoak@aol.com if you are interested in buying the beads)

Watch where I go to get today’s story.

Set basket next to you and take out underlay. Drop it on the floor, then turn it over as you speak.

Violet, light purple - I wonder what this could be? A cloud....? I wonder what else is here?

Take out Cosmic Story beads and lay reverently on underlay.

What is this? It looks like a funny, mixed up necklace. It’s heavy. Maybe there is a story that goes with it.

Open the clasp and stretch out the beads around the circle of the underlay. The first bead is either a bell or a prayer box.

Long ago, before there was anything, there was the Great Mystery.

Finger the first bead as you name it - the Great Mystery is the first bead. Each underlined word is the next bead. Some beads, the moon, shell, fish, flower, insect,

goddess, Buddha, star, should help you stay on track. (If you get a little lost, don't worry - no one will know!)

From the Great Mystery flared the Great Radiance (*yellow bumpy or striped white/orange/yellow bead*)- from nothing came something.

Galaxies and stars (*star*) emerged from the Great Radiance, and within them formed Elements (*green*) – earth's building blocks from stardust.

Some stars burned so fiercely they exploded, and from one explosion, our Sun (*clear with yellow swirls, yellow swirly, or yellow round*) was born.

Particles of stars spun around our star and formed into planets... one of these our own Earth.(*green*)

When a large asteroid struck our Earth, she birthed our Moon.

As the Earth cooled and calmed, Rain (*small blue*) formed and filled our Oceans. (*larger blue*)

The very beginning of life developed within the oceans - Bacteria (*grey/black or grey*)

Earth learned to feed herself from sunshine and Photosynthesis (*green oval*) developed.

An Oxygen (*red w/silver stripes*) crisis threatened the new life on Earth, but cleverly Respiration, (*speckled blue or white*) the breathing of oxygen, developed.

Multicellular Life (*bumpy*) evolved. Early life began to eat each other – Predatory behavior (*red*) became a part of Earth's cycle. Creatures developed Shells (*small shells or shell-like bead*) to protect themselves.

Ferns (*green oval*) grew and Fish (*glass fish bead*) began to swim in the oceans.

Reptiles (*leopard or green rock bead*) lay eggs on Earth.

An Extinction (*black melon - all extinctions are black*) - a death of living things - threatened Earth, but Forests (*wooden bead*) grew, and soon Dinosaurs (*stone nugget*) roamed on her surface. Flowers (*stone flower*) and Insects (*silver dragon fly*)co-evolved bringing color and sound to Earth.

Another Extinction (*black melon*) happened when a large asteroid hit Earth once again. The Dinosaurs died.

Mammals (*rolling-pin shaped brown stone*), among them Predators (*bear stone surrounded by red beads for predation*) and Grazing Animals (*horn tube bead*) replaced them. Can you name some animals that might have roamed earth at that time?

Humans (*silver surrounded by red for predation*) began to walk the Earth. They brought small Extinctions as they hunted and fished, sometimes more than they needed to.

A small Ice Age (*white stone*) came when glaciers moved on Earth's surface. Fire (*reddish*) kept the Earth warm.

Spirituality - worship of the Mother Goddess (*stone or silver goddess*)- was developed by Humans to help explain their world.

Agriculture - (*tan bone w/ridges*) farming - was developed so Humans could grow food rather have to hunt for it.

As Humans developed, so did Philosophy (*round or oval bead*), Patriarchal Religions - Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhist to name a few (*Buddha*), and Sciences. (*round or oval bead*)

Science allowed humanity to understand we are all created from Stardust!(*star*)

Humans traveled from Earth into space, and through them, Earth could now See Herself. (*bead w/eyes*)

This is a very long string of beads. It helps us tell a long and important story.

Wondering Questions:

I wonder which bead you like the best?

I wonder which part of the story you like the best?

I wonder if stardust is really a part of my skin?

I wonder if I am connected to everything else on Earth?

I wonder what my own time line would look like?

Finger the beads once more, perhaps naming each one with no comment. Do the clasp so they are again a circle, a cycle, and replace them in the basket. Smooth and fold the underlay. Put Underlay back in basket. Return the basket to its correct place.

Suggested Activity for Art Shelf: Have plastic pony beads and/or wooden beads in different shapes and colors plus shoe strings available so children can string a time line of their own.

Any beads with large holes for the younger children - if doing this with older children, use greater variety in beads and stringing material. .

Talk with the whole group about what their time lines might contain before they begin. Encourage them to think of things that have happened to them that are important to them for their time line. Suggest things - moving, making friends, getting or losing a pet, how many people and animals are in their family, nursery school, kindergarten, school, losing a friend or family member, births of siblings/cousins/friends/pets - anything you think might be helpful. Children may also want to do the creation time line.