

# A Supplement

*For use with*

## ***Keepers of the Earth:***

***Native American Stories and Environmental Activities for Children***

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Created for use in Unitarian Universalist Religious Education Programs,  
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# Contents

About this Supplement .....	4
Session Plans .....	7
Session 1: Creation.....	8
Creation Chalice Lighting.....	11
Activity Sheet 1 – Exploration .....	12
Session 2: Earth.....	13
Earth Chalice Lighting.....	16
Activity Sheet 2 – Earth Turtles.....	17
Activity Sheet 3 – Exploring Outside.....	18
Activity Sheet 4 – Rock to Rock Fantasy Journey .....	19
Activity Sheet 5 – Modeled Turtles .....	20
Session 3: Air.....	21
Air Chalice Lighting.....	24
Activity Sheet 6 – Making Bubbles.....	25
Activity Sheet 7 – Aerodynamics Outside.....	26
Activity Sheet 8 – Origami Airshapes.....	27
Session 4: Fire.....	28
Fire Chalice Lighting.....	31
Activity Sheet 9 – Fireworks Pictures.....	32
Session 5: Water.....	33
Water Chalice Lighting.....	36
Activity Sheet 10 – Water Play.....	37
Activity Sheet 11 – Water Sounds .....	38
Activity Sheet 12 – Seashell Crafts.....	39
Session 6: Sky .....	40
Sky Chalice Lighting .....	43
Activity Sheet 13 – Night and Day Skyscapes .....	44
Activity Sheet 14 – Constellation Games.....	45
Made Up Constellations.....	46
Activity Sheet 15 – Sky Window .....	47

## Contents

Activity Sheet 16 – Sand-jar Skyscapes .....	48
Session 7: Seasons .....	49
Seasons Chalice Lighting .....	52
Activity Sheet 17 – Flower Role Play .....	53
Flower Parts Sheet .....	54
Seasons Suite.....	55
Activity Sheet 18 – Four Seasons Charades .....	56
Seasons Charade Cards .....	57
Activity Sheet 19 – Seasons Window .....	58
Activity Sheet 20 – A Book of Seasons.....	59
Session 8: Plants .....	60
Plant Chalice Lighting .....	64
Activity Sheet 21 – Popcorn.....	65
Activity Sheet 22 – Hunting and Gathering .....	66
Activity Sheet 23 – Plants Window .....	67
Activity Sheet 24 – Vegetable Printmaking .....	68
Session 9: Animals .....	69
Animal Chalice Lighting .....	72
Activity Sheet 25 – Tree Tag .....	73
Activity Sheet 26 – Animals Window.....	74
Activity Sheet 27 – Miniature Game Bags .....	75
Session 10: Life, Death, Spirit.....	76
Life, Death, Spirit Chalice Lighting.....	79
Activity Sheet 28 – Dance Feelings .....	80
Activity Sheet 29 – Spirit Walk.....	81
Activity Sheet 30 – Life and Death Window .....	82
Session 11: Storytelling.....	83
Storytelling Chalice Lighting .....	86
Activity Sheet 31 – Storytelling with Pictures .....	87
Comic Book Page .....	88
Activity Sheet 32 – Superheroes Game.....	89
Activity Sheet 33 – Group Storytelling .....	90
Activity Sheet 34 – Storytelling Questions .....	91
Session 12: Unity of Earth (Closing Pageant).....	92
Unity of Life Chalice Lighting .....	95
Activity Sheet 35 – Plants .....	96

## Contents

Activity Sheet 36 – Water .....	97
Activity Sheet 37 – Earth, Life and Death .....	98
Activity Sheet 38 – Fire, Air, Sky, Seasons and Animals .....	99
The Pageant .....	100
Elements Cards .....	106
Appendix A: Making a “Stained Glass” Window Covering.....	108

# About this Supplement

## **About this Supplement**

### **General Information**

This supplement includes twelve sessions based upon stories and activities found in *Keepers of the Earth: Native American Stories and Environmental Activities*, by Michael Caduto and Joseph Bruchac. Each session refers to specific pages and sections in that book for stories and some activities. Each session also refers to Chalice Lighting and Activity Sheets which are included in that session section. Background information (generally suggested links to websites) for teachers is included. Various other books, websites, audio-visual resources, and recordings may be useful to you as you use this Supplement; because resources available differ from place to place and are updated more quickly than this Supplement will be, I encourage you to use the Internet and your local library system to find the most current and useful materials.

### **Background**

This format and some of these activities were originally developed for a Summer RE program for about 30 - 40 children ages three to twelve at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, Virginia. I led the program each week with the help of three or four parent helpers. After that experience, I printed the Supplement up and sold it for a modest fee for about seven years to many Unitarian Universalist congregations around North America, many of whom let me know how useful and helpful they found it. In 2008 I decided to apply for a grant from the Unitarian Sunday School Society to revise the Supplement and post it on the internet for religious educators to download for free. Fortuitously, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Silver Spring, Maryland asked me to lead its summer Religious Education program that year and were delighted to have me use my Supplement. This provided me with a hands-on, interactive opportunity to revise, expand, and hone the Supplement! In that congregation, I again led the program each week (with a few exceptions), and had help from two or three volunteers. This Summer RE program was smaller, with about 10 – 15 children ages 5 – 12 attending each week.

I was reminded (although I already knew it) that different contexts require adaptation of any curriculum to suit the space, people, and cultural milieu one is dealing with. My hope in this revision is to make the Supplement more flexible, accessible, and user-friendly for congregations (and potentially other organizations) of a variety of sizes, with a variety of available spaces, and with a variety of ages and abilities among their children.

### **Multicultural, Anti-Oppressive, Anti-Racist Perspective**

I want to address the topic of cultural appropriation in a very abbreviated way in this introduction. I am a white person, and in both congregations I have used this Supplement in I knew I would be working with children and adults who, for the most part, would also be white. It was important to me to openly acknowledge that the stories I told were not my stories, but stories I had learned from the Native Americans who wrote them down in a book, and which I believed we as a community of mostly

## About this Supplement

non-Indians could learn from. Similarly, none of the craft activities is identified or presented as an “Indian” craft, and all of the resources I have suggested using are either clearly non-Native American (such as origami books or the UUA’s *Singing the Living Tradition*) or created by or with Indian people for use by people of a variety of cultures (such as *Keepers of the Earth*.) Although the program’s focus was not anti-racism, this supplement is as anti-racist as I can make it at this point in my life. I know, however, that I am not at the end of my learning how to create community with justice, equity, and compassion. I hope you will help me see ways in which the current supplement could better affirm all people.

### **Format:**

Each of the twelve sessions includes a core ritual opening and story and sometimes core activities, along with additional possible activities. There are a number of ways to arrange these activities to meet your time, space, and ability needs.

For example, with a small group with limited time (say 45 minutes per session) you may want to start with the core ritual opening and story, choose one or two activities, and finish up with a snack or closing circle. With a larger group with a longer time period (say 60 – 75 minutes) you may prefer to gather the whole group for the core ritual opening and story and then split up into age or activity preference groups to three or four activity stations, finishing with a snack and closing circle. With even more time (say 90 minutes) there may be time for the whole or smaller groups to rotate around each of two to four activities before closing the session.

These sessions could also be used as workshops during a camp or retreat experience, when you might have time to do everything with everyone!

Larger or smaller available spaces may also influence which activities are most useful for you. At the UU Congregation of Fairfax, I used a building with a central, open room surrounded by six classrooms. The opening circle met outside (indoors in the central room if it rained) and then three indoor activity groups met in different indoor rooms and an outdoor group stayed outside. The closing circle and snack were held indoors. At the UU Congregation of Silver Spring, we met in a long, rectangular classroom with easy access to a lawn. We gathered together in the center of the room for opening and closing, and set up two activity stations at either end of the same room. For outdoor activities, we simply went outdoors; if we needed a third activity station, we’d set one up in the central space after the opening circle was completed.

### **Finally:**

Please adapt this Supplement so that it works for you!

# **Session Plans**

## Session 1: Creation

### Session 1: Creation

#### Goals for participants:

To become aware that we can see each part of the natural world as wonderful and beautiful. To get to know each other and the class leaders. To explore the outdoors and observe some part of it closely.

#### What to Do:

##### *Opening Circle: (10 – 15 minutes)*

Gather the children in a circle around an altar space you have created on the floor or outdoors on grass or gravel. Light the chalice using the Creation Chalice Lighting Words or words of your own choosing. Depending on your circumstances you may wish to invite children to share a joy or concern from their week with the group (generally this will work well with a smaller group; in a larger group, you may wish to invite children to share with their immediate neighbor, break into smaller groups, or simply leave this ritual out as too time consuming).

Say something like this: today we are going to hear a story about how the whole world was made or created. This story comes from the Abenaki group of Native Americans, who lived and still live in the area we now call New England in the United States and the Maritimes in Canada. (Show where this is on the map, pp. XX – XXI in *Keepers of the Earth*.) I learned this story from a book called *Keepers of the Earth*. I share it with deep respect for the people to whom it belongs.

Read or tell the story “The Coming of Gluscabi” (p. 21, *Keepers of the Earth*).

Tell the children that people in many cultures believe that the world is made up out of several elements, such as earth, air, fire, and water. Explain that the objects on the altar cloth represent each of these elements. Invite them to come forward one at a time and say their names (as Gluscabi said his name in the story) and pick one of the objects.

Sing “The Earth, the Air, the Fire, the Water”, Hymn #387 in *Singing the Living Tradition*, UUA, or play a recording of it (sing along, if you do this!)

##### *Core Activity: (15 – 30 minutes)*

#### Exploration:

In four groups, go outside to observe an object in the natural world and reflect on it. See Activity Sheet 1 and pp. 22 – 23, *Keepers of the Earth* (Once Upon a Place).

#### *Other Activities:*

## Session 1: Creation

Discussion (5 – 15 minutes):

Use the discussion questions on p. 21 of *Keepers of the Earth*.

Storytelling (10 – 20 minutes):

Invite the children to tell you and each other creation stories they know from other cultural or religious traditions.

Story (10 minutes):

Read or tell the story “Four Worlds: The Dine Story of Creation,” pp. 31 – 34 in *Keepers of the Earth*.

*Closing Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather all the kids together in a circle. Ask each child to say his or her name and what he or she observed outside. If it is your practice, eat a snack together. If you did not share joys and sorrows in the opening circle, you may do so now if you feel it is appropriate.

### Materials:

#### *Basic:*

#### *Keepers of the Earth*

An enlarged copy of pps. XX and XXI  
(Native North America map) from  
*Keepers of the Earth*

“The Earth, the Air, the Fire, the Water”,  
Hymn #387 in *Singing the Living  
Tradition*, UUA

Chalice, candle and matches

Creation Chalice Lighting

Altar cloth, picnic tablecloth, or other  
cloth suitable for spreading on  
the ground or floor

Small stones, feathers, birthday  
candles, and sea shells to  
represent the four elements of  
earth, air, fire, and water -  
enough of them for each child to  
choose one

### Preparation:

Gather needed materials, books, and music. Contact your helpers ahead of time if possible. Learn the story and plan how you will share it with the group. Learn the song or plan how you will share it with the group. Set up your space for the opening circle outdoors or in a central location on Sunday morning before the kids arrive. Lay out your cloth and place the chalice, candle, and matches in the middle. Around it, arrange the small stones, feathers, birthday candles, and shells. Set up spaces for the activities you choose to offer. Copy Activity Sheets as needed for helpers.

## Session 1: Creation

Background for Teachers:

### **About the Abenaki:**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abenaki>

<http://www.abenakination.org/history.html>

### **About Gluscabi:**

<http://www.native-languages.org/penobscot-legends.htm>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glooscap>

## **Creation Chalice Lighting**

We light this chalice in honor of everything that is: the Earth, the Air, the Fire, the Water, and everything else that exists.

## Activity Sheet 1 – Exploration

- Take your group of children to an outdoor area.
- Tell each child to pick one object or part of his or her surroundings to observe and think about (i.e., a patch of grass, a bird, or the sky) quietly for 5 minutes or so (depending on the children's ages you may want to shorten or lengthen this quiet observation time).
- Then give out paper and pencils or other drawing materials and encourage the kids to write or draw something about what they saw in their quiet time.
- If they want to, encourage kids to talk amongst themselves about what they chose to observe and what they saw.
- If it is raining or otherwise unpleasant outside, ask the kids to quickly select a moveable object and bring it indoors to observe.

## Session 2: Earth

### Session 2: Earth

#### Goals for participants:

To become aware of the earth as the land we live on, rocks, etc. To get to know each other and the class leaders. To explore how the earth is present in their own lives.

#### What to Do:

##### *Opening Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather the children in a circle around an altar space you have created on the floor or outdoors on grass or gravel. Light the chalice using the Earth Chalice Lighting or words of your own choosing. Depending on your circumstances you may wish to invite children to share a joy or concern from their week with the group (generally this will work well with a smaller group; in a larger group, you may wish to invite children to share with their immediate neighbor, break into smaller groups, or simply leave this ritual out as too time consuming).

Say something like this: today we are going to hear a story about how some people believe the earth came to be. This story comes from the Onandaga Nation of Native Americans, who lived and still live near the city of Syracuse, New York. (Show where this is on the map, pp. XX – XXI in *Keepers of the Earth*.) I learned this story from a book called *Keepers of the Earth*. I share it with deep respect for the people to whom it belongs.

Read or tell the story “The Earth on Turtle’s Back” (pp. 25 - 26, *Keepers of the Earth*).

Sing “The Earth is our Mother” Hymn # 1073 in *Singing the Journey: A Supplement to Singing the Living Tradition*, UUA or play a recording of it (sing along, if you do this!)

#### *Activities:*

##### Earth Turtles (10 – 20 minutes):

Make collages of “earth” images and materials on turtle-shaped bases. See Activity Sheet 2.

##### Exploring Outside (20 – 30 minutes):

Go outside and use your powers of observation to find and note on index cards as many different things as possible, followed by creating mini booklets out of the index cards. See Activity Sheet 3.

##### Guided Moving Meditation (10 – 20 minutes):

## Session 2: Earth

Act out a story about the process of rock formation. See Activity Sheet 4 and p. 61, *Keepers of the Earth* (Rock to Rock: A Fantasy Journey).

Modeled Turtles (10 – 20 minutes):

Make turtles out of play doh, sculpey, and/or modeling clay and decorate them as desired. See Activity Sheet 5.

Discussion (5 – 15 minutes):

Use the discussion questions on p. 26, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Stories (5 minutes):

Read or tell the story “Tunka-shila, Grandfather Rock” or “Old Man Coyote and the Rock” on pp. 57 – 59, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Charades (10 – 15 minutes):

Play Rock Charades! See p. 62, *Keepers of the Earth* (Rock Charades).

Making Dirt (10 – 15 minutes):

Learn what dirt is made of (and make some). See p. 62, *Keepers of the Earth* (Making Soil).

*Closing Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather all the kids together in a circle. Ask each child to say his or her name and something about the activity s/he participated in. If it is your practice, eat a snack together. If you did not share joys and sorrows in the opening circle, you may do so now if you feel it is appropriate.

### Materials:

#### *Basic:*

#### *Keepers of the Earth*

An enlarged copy of pps. XX and XXI  
(Native North America map) from  
*Keepers of the Earth*

“The Earth is our Mother” Hymn # 1073  
in *Singing the Journey: A  
Supplement to Singing the Living  
Tradition*, UUA

Chalice, candle and matches

#### Earth Chalice Lighting

Altar cloth, picnic tablecloth, or other  
cloth suitable for spreading on  
the ground or floor

#### *Depending on Activity:*

Earth Turtles: pre-cut pictures from  
magazines of various  
landscapes, rocks, plants, and  
land-dwelling animals, glue or

## Session 2: Earth

glue sticks, construction paper cut into large turtle shapes, sand, dirt, dried grasses or flowers

Exploring Outside: index cards, pencils or colored pencils, hole punch, yarn or ribbon

Modeled Turtles: play doh, Sculpey, and/or modeling clay, drop cloths

Charades: Samples of sedimentary, metamorphic, and igneous rock, nails, diagrams of how each type of rock is structured

Making Dirt: Spoon, large metal pan, soil ingredients (rocks, leaves & twigs, water, air, models of living things (worms, insects, etc.)

### Preparation:

Gather needed materials, books, and music. Contact your helpers ahead of time if possible. Learn the story and plan how you will share it with the group. Learn the song or plan how you will share it with the group. Set up your space for the opening circle outdoors or in a central location on Sunday morning before the kids arrive. Set up spaces for the activities you choose to offer. Copy Activity Sheets as needed for helpers.

### Background for Teachers:

#### **About the Onondaga:**

<http://www.onondaganation.org/>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Onondaga\\_tribe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Onondaga_tribe)

#### **About the Five Nations (Iroquois Confederacy):**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iroquois>

#### **About Rock Types and Formation:**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Formation\\_of\\_rocks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Formation_of_rocks)

## **Earth Chalice Lighting**

We light this chalice to celebrate the Earth;  
Native Americans say that  
the Earth is our Mother  
and so we must take care of her.

## Activity Sheet 2 – Earth Turtles

- Give each child a construction paper turtle backing and a glue stick or bottle of glue.
- Show the children the pre-cut pictures, sand, dirt, and dried flowers and grasses.
- Help the children select pictures and other materials and paste them onto the turtle shapes.

## Activity Sheet 3 – Exploring Outside

- Gather the kids and share the following words with them:

Step out onto the Planet  
Draw a circle a hundred feet round.  
Inside the circle are  
300 things nobody understands, and, maybe  
Nobody's ever really seen.  
How many can you find?

- Lew Welch

- Tell the kids that their task is to find a space on the ground, a circle as big around as their arm-span, and, using the index cards and pencils and/or colored pencils, to find and write down or draw as many different things as they can.
- When the kids run out of steam, take them inside and help them make their index cards into booklets using the hole punch and yarn or ribbon.
- They can spend any additional time illustrating the cards.

## Activity Sheet 4 – Rock to Rock Fantasy Journey

- Follow the procedure on p. 61, *Keepers of the Earth*, BUT invite the children to role play what they are imagining as they listen to you read the story. This may get pretty raucous, but the kids will LOVE it!

## Activity Sheet 5 – Modeled Turtles

- Protect your space with the drop cloths and provide each child with a lump of modeling material.
- Help the kids craft turtles or other shapes of their choosing out of the modeling material. They may decorate the turtles if they wish, or leave them to be cured as appropriate during the week. Encourage kids to make “flat” turtles or to hollow out the insides of the shells so that the modeling materials can dry adequately.

## Session 3: Air

### Session 3: Air

#### Goals for participants:

To become aware of the air as wind and weather. To get to know each other and the class leaders. To explore how air is present in their own lives.

#### What to Do:

##### *Opening Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather the children in a circle around an altar space you have created on the floor or outdoors on grass or gravel. Light the chalice using the Air Chalice Lighting or words of your own choosing. Depending on your circumstances you may wish to invite children to share a joy or concern from their week with the group (generally this will work well with a smaller group; in a larger group, you may wish to invite children to share with their immediate neighbor, break into smaller groups, or simply leave this ritual out as too time consuming).

Say something like this: today we are going to hear a story about the good things wind and weather bring to us through the air. This story comes from the Abenaki group of Native Americans, who lived and still live in the area we now call New England in the United States and the Maritimes in Canada. (Show where this is on the map, pp. XX – XXI in *Keepers of the Earth*.) I learned this story from a book called *Keepers of the Earth*. I share it with deep respect for the people to whom it belongs.

Read or tell the story “Gluscabi and the Wind Eagle” (pp. 67 - 71, *Keepers of the Earth*).

Sing “Meditation on Breathing” Hymn #1009 in *Singing the Journey: A Supplement to Singing the Living Tradition*, UUA or play a recording of it (sing along, if you do this!)

#### *Activities:*

##### Bubble Making (20 – 30 minutes):

Go outside and blow bubbles with a variety of bubble-making tools. See Activity Sheet 6.

##### Aerodynamics Outside (10 – 20 minutes):

Make paper airplanes and other flying objects and fly them outside! See Activity Sheet 7 and p. 73, *Keepers of the Earth* (Catch the Wind Procedure D).

##### Aerodynamics Inside (10 – 20 minutes):

### Session 3: Air

Make air pressure rocket ships and fly them indoors. See pp. 73 – 74, *Keepers of the Earth* (From Whence the Wind Procedure B).

Origami Airshapes (10 – 20 minutes):

Make origami pinwheels, birds, and butterflies. See Activity Sheet 9.

Discussion (5 – 15 minutes):

Use the discussion questions on pp. 71 – 72, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Making Smoke & Steam (20 – 45 minutes):

In a safe outdoor location, build a fire, add green wood to make smoke, and then douse with water to create steam. See pp. 72 – 73, *Keepers of the Earth* (Catch the Wind Procedure A.)

Cloud Shapes (5 – 15 minutes):

Go outside and spend some time watching clouds moving through the sky, identifying shapes if the spirit moves you!

Wind Socks (20 – 30 minutes):

Make wind socks. See p. 75, *Keepers of the Earth* (Extending the Experience).

*Closing Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather all the kids together in a circle. Ask each child to say his or her name and something about the activity s/he participated in. If it is your practice, eat a snack together. If you did not share joys and sorrows in the opening circle, you may do so now if you feel it is appropriate.

#### Materials:

##### *Basic:*

##### *Keepers of the Earth*

An enlarged copy of pps. XX and XXI  
(Native North America map) from  
*Keepers of the Earth*

“Meditation on Breathing” Hymn # 1009  
in *Singing the Journey: A  
Supplement to Singing the Living  
Tradition*, UUA

Chalice, candle and matches

##### Air Chalice Lighting

Altar cloth, picnic tablecloth, or other  
cloth suitable for spreading on  
the ground or floor

##### *Depending on Activity:*

Bubble Making: a bucket, 1 Cup Joy or  
Dawn dishsoap, glycerin  
(optional), clean cold water,  
straws, wands, and other bubble

### Session 3: Air

making tools, shallow trays, food coloring, heavy, glossy white paper

Aerodynamics Outside: paper, books or print-outs from the web about how to make paper airplanes or similar flying paper objects – check your bookshelves and your local library!

Aerodynamics Inside: construction paper, masking tape, pencils, glue, string, scissors, drinking straws, balloons

Origami Airshapes: Origami paper, scissors, pipe cleaners, straws,

books or print-outs from the web about how to make origami and/or paper pinwheels, birds, and butterflies – check your bookshelves and your local library!

Making Smoke and Steam: waste paper, dry tinder, small dry wood, small pieces of wet or green wood, bucket of water

Wind Socks: wooden poles (such as dowel rods) approximately 4' long, cloth cones approximately 8" x 2.5', strong thread or fishing line, needles, scissors

#### Preparation:

Gather needed materials, books, and music. Contact your helpers ahead of time if possible. Learn the story and plan how you will share it with the group. Learn the song or plan how you will share it with the group. Set up your space for the opening circle outdoors or in a central location on Sunday morning before the kids arrive. Set up spaces for the activities you choose to offer. Copy Activity Sheets as needed for helpers.

#### Background for Teachers:

##### **About the Abenaki**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abenaki>

<http://www.abenakination.org/history.html>

##### **About Gluscabi**

<http://www.native-languages.org/penobscot-legends.htm>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glooscap>

## **Air Chalice Lighting**

We light this chalice to celebrate the Air;  
Take a deep breath of air  
Hold it  
And let it out  
We all need to breathe to live.

## Activity Sheet 6 – Making Bubbles

- Mix up a batch of bubble mixture: Measure 10 cups of clean, cold water into a bucket or other large container. (If the weather is very dry, add up to 5 cups more.) Add 1 cup of dishsoap, then 3 - 4 tablespoons of glycerin (if using). Stir gently. If there is any froth, skim it off.
- Take the children and the bubble making tools, shallow trays, and food coloring outside and do some or all of the following:
- Give each child his or her own shallow tray of the bubble mixture and encourage experimentation with different wands, etc.
- Have a bubble race: figure out which way the wind is blowing and have children stand with their backs to it and blow bubbles. Make a finish line a few yards away and see how many bubbles you can get across the line without them bursting.
- Put a few drops of food coloring in different trays of bubble mixture. Blow different colored bubbles. Then try blowing the colorful bubbles onto the surface of the glossy paper. When they burst, they'll leave a spray of color on the paper, making beautiful designs (this is messy, but fun!)

## Activity Sheet 7 – Aerodynamics Outside

- Take the kids outside and look for aerodynamic objects, that is, things which easily fly, float, drift, or move through the air. Some possibilities: dandelion seeds, seed pods from trees, milkweed, insects, pollen, etc.
- Once each kid has found something, have a race (see also p. 73): set a finish line, figure out which way the wind is blowing, and have kids stand with their backs to the wind. On your mark, the kids release their flying object (don't let them throw or blow them) and see how many can make it to the finish line, and how quickly.
- When you are finished, come inside and make some paper airplanes from the books or print-outs, or out of your own imagination.

## **Activity Sheet 8 – Origami Airshapes**

- Use the origami paper, scissors, and books or print-outs.
- Allow the children to choose an air-related origami or paper project from the books and print-outs. Assist them in completing the project.

## Session 4: Fire

### Session 4: Fire

#### Goals for participants:

To become aware of the many kinds of Fire in the world. To get to know each other and the class leaders. To explore how Fire or energy is present in their own lives.

#### What to Do:

##### *Opening Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather the children in a circle around an altar space you have created on the floor or outdoors on grass or gravel. Light the chalice using the Fire Chalice Lighting or words of your own choosing. Depending on your circumstances you may wish to invite children to share a joy or concern from their week with the group (generally this will work well with a smaller group; in a larger group, you may wish to invite children to share with their immediate neighbor, break into smaller groups, or simply leave this ritual out as too time consuming.)

Say something like this: today we are going to hear a story about how much we need the energy of fire and of the sun to live and how hard it can be to live together in peace. This story comes from the Nisqually Tribe of Native Americans, who lived and still live in the area we now call Washington State in the Western United States. (Show where this is on the map, pp. XX – XXI in *Keepers of the Earth*.) I learned this story from a book called *Keepers of the Earth*. I share it with deep respect for the people to whom it belongs.

Read or tell the story “Loo Wit, the Fire-Keeper” (p. 41, *Keepers of the Earth*).

Sing “Rise Up, O Flame” Hymn # 362 in *Singing the Living Tradition*, UUA or play a recording of it (sing along, if you do this!)

#### *Activities:*

Fireworks Pictures (10 – 15 minutes):

Draw, color, or make pictures of elements from the story or fireworks. See Activity Sheet 9.

Heat, Light & Motion Machine (15 – 20 minutes):

Make a candle-powered spinner. See pp. 44 – 45, *Keepers of the Earth* (The Energy Experience, Procedure A).

Sun Burning (5 – 10 minutes):

## Session 4: Fire

Try burning different materials by focusing the energy of the sun with a magnifying lens. See p. 45, *Keepers of the Earth* (The Energy Experience, Procedure B).

Discussion (5 – 15 minutes):

Use the discussion questions on p. 44, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Exploring the Building (10 – 30 minutes):

Show the children the congregation's heating and cooling system, and ask a knowledgeable person to explain how it works.

Story (5 – 10 minutes):

Read or share the story "How Grandmother Spider Stole the Sun", pp. 49 – 50, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Day and Night (10 – 20 minutes):

Demonstrate how the earth's rotation causes day and night. See pp. 52 – 53, *Keepers of the Earth* (Daylight-Night, Procedure A & B).

Rainbow Light (5 minutes):

Use a prism to explore how light is composed of different colors.

*Closing Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather all the kids together in a circle. Ask each child to say his or her name and something about the activity s/he participated in. Do the "Sun Circle" activity on p. 51, *Keepers of the Earth*. If you did not share joys and sorrows in the opening circle, you may do so now if you feel it is appropriate.

### Materials:

#### *Basic:*

#### *Keepers of the Earth*

An enlarged copy of pps. XX and XXI  
(Native North America map) from  
*Keepers of the Earth*

"Rise Up, O Flame" Hymn # 362 in  
*Singing the Living Tradition, UUA*

Chalice, candle and matches

Fire Chalice Lighting

Altar cloth, picnic tablecloth, or other  
cloth suitable for spreading on  
the ground or floor

Enough oranges for all the children to  
have a section and one whole  
orange left over

#### *Depending on Activity:*

Fireworks Pictures: Drawing paper  
and/or black construction paper;

## Session 4: Fire

drawing materials and/or glitter glue or white glue & glitter, copies of p. 42, *Keepers of the Earth*

Sun Burning: Magnifying glasses and various materials to try to burn

Heat, Light & Motion Machine:  
aluminum pie plate OR aluminum foil and heavy cardboard, awl or other “poker”, pen cap, long nail, metal file if necessary to smooth nail point, scissors, matches, clay or play-doh, small soda bottle, votive candles

Day and Night: Flashlight; tube that is open at both ends; globe or similar ball; large salad bowl; lazy susan or similar rotating stand; blankets, tape and/or nails and hammers and/or rope OR other room divider (floor to ceiling); lamp with a yellow bulb or shade

Rainbow Light: prism, sunlight

### Preparation:

Gather needed materials, books, and music. Contact your helpers ahead of time if possible. Learn the story and plan how you will share it with the group. Learn the song or plan how you will share it with the group. Set up your space for the opening circle outdoors or in a central location on Sunday morning before the kids arrive. Set up spaces for the activities you choose to offer. Copy Activity Sheet as needed for helpers. Recruit a person familiar with the building’s heating and cooling systems if you choose to use the Exploring the Building activity.

### Background for Teachers:

#### **About the Nisqually:**

<http://www.nisqually-nsn.gov/index.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nisqually\\_\(tribe\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nisqually_(tribe))

#### **About the Multnomahs:**

[http://www.nationalgeographic.com/lewisandclark/record\\_tribes\\_095\\_13\\_25.html](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/lewisandclark/record_tribes_095_13_25.html)

#### **About the Klickitats:**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Klickitat\\_tribe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Klickitat_tribe)

#### **About Loo-Wit:**

<http://www.olywa.net/radu/valerie/mshbefore.html>

<http://www.nps.gov/archive/whmi/educate/ortrg/legends.htm>

## Fire Chalice Lighting

We light this chalice today  
to celebrate the spirit of Fire,  
a spirit of hot, sunny summer days;  
to celebrate the energy of life in our bodies and  
the energy of enthusiasm in our minds.

## Activity Sheet 9 – Fireworks Pictures

- Use the paper of various types, markers, crayons, pastels, glitter glue and copies of one of the illustrations from the story.
- Help children do one or more of the following:
  - Draw a picture of the three mountains at the end of the story
  - Color in/over the copy of the picture of Loo-Wit
  - Use black construction paper and red glitter glue or glue and glitter to make pictures of fireworks or whatever interests the kids.
- If they become bored or disinterested, take off for a playground to release some energy or play duck-duck-goose or other game of your choice indoors.

## Session 5: Water

### Session 5: Water

#### Goals for participants:

To become aware of the water as necessary to all life. To get to know each other and the class leaders. To explore how water is present in their own lives.

#### What to Do:

##### *Opening Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather the children in a circle around an altar space you have created on the floor or outdoors on grass or gravel. Light the chalice using the Water Chalice Lighting or words of your own choosing. Depending on your circumstances you may wish to invite children to share a joy or concern from their week with the group (generally this will work well with a smaller group; in a larger group, you may wish to invite children to share with their immediate neighbor, break into smaller groups, or simply leave this ritual out as too time consuming).

Say something like this: today we are going to hear a story about water and how we all must share the earth's water in order to live. This story comes from the Abenaki group of Native Americans, who lived and still live in the area we now call New England in the United States and the Maritimes in Canada. (Show where this is on the map, pp. XX – XXI in *Keepers of the Earth*.) I learned this story from a book called *Keepers of the Earth*. I share it with deep respect for the people to whom it belongs.

Read or tell the story “Koluscap and the Water Monster” (p. 81, *Keepers of the Earth*).

Sing “I’ve Got Peace Like a River” Hymn #100 in *Singing the Living Tradition*, UUA or play a recording of it (sing along, if you do this!)

#### *Activities:*

##### Water Play (10 – 45 minutes):

Play with water using a hose, sprinkler, wading pool or whatever else is available! See Activity Sheet 10.

##### Water Sounds (10 – 15 minutes):

Listen to recorded (or live if available) water sounds and reflect on the experience using drawing and writing materials. See Activity Sheet 11.

##### Seashell Crafts (10 – 20 minutes):

## Session 5: Water

Make something beautiful or fun out of seashells and other materials. See Activity Sheet 12.

Discussion (5 – 15 minutes):

Use the discussion questions on p. 85, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Rainstorm (5 minutes):

Make a “rainstorm” with your bodies. See p. 86, *Keepers of the Earth* (Procedure A: Making Rain).

Story (5 – 10 minutes):

Read or share the story “The Hero Twins and the Swallower of Clouds”, pp. 79 - 81, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Rain Guided Meditation (5 – 10 minutes):

Lead a guided meditation on how rain forms. See pp. 86 – 87, *Keepers of the Earth* (Procedure B: From Dust to Raindrop).

Water Relay (10 – 15 minutes):

Explore the water cycle in a kinetic way by playing a relay-race game with cups and buckets of water. This is a good one for groups with kids needing more “active” engagement! See p. 90, *Keepers of the Earth*, (Water Cycle Relay).

*Closing Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather all the kids together in a circle. Ask each child to say his or her name and something about the activity s/he participated in. If it is your practice, eat a snack together. If you did not share joys and sorrows in the opening circle, you may do so now if you feel it is appropriate.

### Materials:

*Basic:*

*Keepers of the Earth*

An enlarged copy of pps. XX and XXI  
(Native North America map) from  
*Keepers of the Earth*

“I’ve Got Peace Like a River” Hymn  
#100 in *Singing the Living  
Tradition*, UUA

Chalice, candle and matches

Water Chalice Lighting

Altar cloth, picnic tablecloth, or other  
cloth suitable for spreading on  
the ground or floor

*Depending on Activity:*

## Session 5: Water

Water Play: Hose, wading pool, sprinkler, and/or other water play apparatus

idea), glue, heavy paper, small decorations, small bottles or jars (optional), glitter

Water Sounds: *Water Rhythms*, by Nature's Rhythms, or *101 Digital Sound Effects: Sounds of Nature*, by Sound Effects, or another recording of water sounds, a tape or CD player, paper, drawing & writing materials

Rain Guided Meditation: Copy of "Birth of a Raindrop" from pp. 86 – 87, *Keepers of the Earth*, paper, pencils

Water Relay: 4 – 6 buckets (half of them full of water, half of them empty), a cup or small container for each child, signs designating a "lake" and a "cloud" area

Seashell Crafts: a variety of seashells (a lot of different sizes are a good

### Preparation:

Gather needed materials, books, and music. Contact your helpers ahead of time if possible. Learn the story and plan how you will share it with the group. Learn the song or plan how you will share it with the group. Set up your space for the opening circle outdoors or in a central location on Sunday morning before the kids arrive. Set up spaces for the activities you choose to offer. Copy Activity Sheets as needed for helpers. Find out where a spigot to connect a hose to is if you choose to do the Water Play activity.

### Background for Teachers:

#### **About the Abenaki**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abenaki>

<http://www.abenakination.org/history.html>

#### **About Gluscabi**

<http://www.native-languages.org/penobscot-legends.htm>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glooscap>

## **Water Chalice Lighting**

We light this chalice today  
for the spirit of Water  
Clear, salty, flowing, still  
Outside ourselves and inside our cells.

## Activity Sheet 10 – Water Play

- Use whatever water-play apparatus you have available. If you have a sprinkler or a hose with a spray attachment, try this game:
  - A variation on “Red Light, Green Light” based on the story of Koluscap: Have one kid be the monster and the rest of the kids line up out of the range of the sprinkler. The monster faces away from the other kids and says “yes, you can come closer to the water” and “no, go away!” alternately without looking to see how far the kids have progressed. The kids can sneak forward even when the monster says “no”, but if he or she turns around and catches them, they must return to the beginning. First one to reach the sprinkler without being caught becomes the monster.
- If going outside is not an option, try playing in a sink - try not to splash too much!

## Activity Sheet 11 – Water Sounds

- Set up the tape or CD player and cue the recording of water sounds.
- Distribute writing and drawing supplies to each child.
- Explain that you will play the CD and allow the kids to listen and write or draw what they imagine or feel as they hear the water sounds.
- Play the CD and circulate helpfully if required.
- If you are unable to locate any recorded water sounds, this activity could be approximated creatively using running water from a sink or fountain, splashing noises in a bowl, etc.

## Activity Sheet 12 – Seashell Crafts

- Allow each child to pick some shells he or she likes.
- Suggest the following ways to use the shells to make something beautiful:
  - Glue the shells in a pattern onto brightly colored paper or a neutral colored paper to highlight the shells natural beauty
  - Decorate a larger shell with googly eyes, feathers, etc., to make a fanciful creature.
  - Use small shells to decorate a small jar or bottle. Fill the bottle with water and add a little glitter for a special souvenir.

## Session 6: Sky

### Session 6: Sky

#### Goals for participants:

To become aware of the sky, and various celestial objects. To get to know each other and the class leaders. To explore how the sky is present in their own lives.

#### What to Do:

##### *Opening Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather the children in a circle around an altar space you have created on the floor or outdoors on grass or gravel. Light the chalice using the Sky Chalice Lighting or words of your own choosing. Depending on your circumstances you may wish to invite children to share a joy or concern from their week with the group (generally this will work well with a smaller group; in a larger group, you may wish to invite children to share with their immediate neighbor, break into smaller groups, or simply leave this ritual out as too time consuming).

Say something like this: today we are going to hear a funny story about the moon, which is always above us in the sky whether we can see it or not. This story comes from the Kalispel Tribe of Native Americans who lived and still live in the area of Montana and Washington State and adjacent areas of Canada. (Show where this is on the map, pp. XX – XXI in *Keepers of the Earth*.) I learned this story from a book called *Keepers of the Earth*. I share it with deep respect for the people to whom it belongs.

Read or tell the story “How Coyote Was the Moon” (p. 111, *Keepers of the Earth*).

Sing “The Earth is our Mother” Hymn # 1073 in *Singing the Journey: A Supplement to Singing the Living Tradition*, UUA and alternate words: “The Sky is Our Father, we must take care of him” or play a recording of it (sing along, if you do this!)

#### *Activities:*

##### Night and Day Skyscapes (5 – 10 minutes):

Make simple depictions of the day and night sky using craft materials. See Activity Sheet 13.

##### Constellation Games (15 – 30 minutes):

Form teams to draw imaginary constellations using a dot pattern, and play constellation charades with maps of real constellations. See Activity Sheet 14 and Made Up Constellations.

##### Sky Window (15 – 30 minutes):

## Session 6: Sky

Create a visual display showing the sky on a bulletin board, using window clings, or by creating a “stained glass” type window covering. See Activity Sheet 15.

Sand-jar Skyscapes (10 – 15 minutes):

Make day, night, or sunset/sunrise skyscapes using sand in small glass containers. See Activity Sheet 16.

Discussion (5 – 15 minutes):

Use the discussion questions on p. 113, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Story (5 – 10 minutes):

Read or share the story “How Fisher Went to Skyland: the Origin of the Black Dipper”, pp. 117 – 120, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Creating Constellations (10 – 15 minutes):

Make constellations on construction paper with dried beans and grains. See pp. 122 – 123, *Keepers of the Earth* (Creating Constellations).

*Closing Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather all the kids together in a circle. Ask each child to say his or her name and something about the activity s/he participated in. If it is your practice, eat a snack together. If you did not share joys and sorrows in the opening circle, you may do so now if you feel it is appropriate.

Materials:

*Basic:*

*Keepers of the Earth*

An enlarged copy of pps. XX and XXI  
(Native North America map) from  
*Keepers of the Earth*

“The Earth is our Mother” Hymn # 1073  
in *Singing the Journey: A  
Supplement to Singing the Living  
Tradition*, UUA

Chalice, candle and matches  
Sky Chalice Lighting

Altar cloth, picnic tablecloth, or other  
cloth suitable for spreading on  
the ground or floor

*Depending on Activity:*

Night and Day Skyscapes: black and  
blue construction paper, cotton  
balls, yellow stickers, and glue,  
thumb tacks, white stickers

Constellation Games: Four copies of  
the Made Up Constellations, two  
copies each of pictures of 3 – 5

## Session 6: Sky

constellations (try <http://stardate.org/nightsky/constellations/>, a sky atlas, or another source) that match each other

jars), various colored sand, small sparkly stars, pearl beads, gold beads or pom-poms

Sky Window: papers and other objects to post on a bulletin board OR window cling material OR a prepared cardboard support, various colored transparent plastics and/or tissue papers, stiff black paper or cardstock, pencils/pens, scissors, ladder (if needed), nails, hammer

Creating Constellations: Marker and newsprint or chalkboard/whiteboard and something to write on it with; tacks, tape; rice; four different kinds of dried peas, beans, or cereal grains; glue; black construction paper; cardboard; pencils; copy of map of circumpolar constellations (Big Dipper, Little Dipper, Cassiopeia, Cepheus, Draco)

Sand-jar Skyscapes: clean baby food jars (or other small bottles or

### Preparation:

Gather needed materials, books, and music. Contact your helpers ahead of time if possible. Learn the story and plan how you will share it with the group. Learn the song or plan how you will share it with the group. Set up your space for the opening circle outdoors or in a central location on Sunday morning before the kids arrive. Set up spaces for the activities you choose to offer. Copy Activity Sheets as needed for helpers.

### Background for Teachers:

#### **About the Kalispel:**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pend\\_d%27Oreilles\\_%28tribe%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pend_d%27Oreilles_%28tribe%29)

<http://www.kalispeltribe.com/>

#### **About Coyote:**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coyote\\_%28mythology%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coyote_%28mythology%29)

<http://members.cox.net/academia/coyote.html>

#### **About the moon:**

<http://www.google.com/moon/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moon>

## **Sky Chalice Lighting**

Some Indians say that the Sky is our Father,  
just like the Earth is our Mother  
Think of a time when you have looked up at  
the sky and felt 'aaahhhh.'

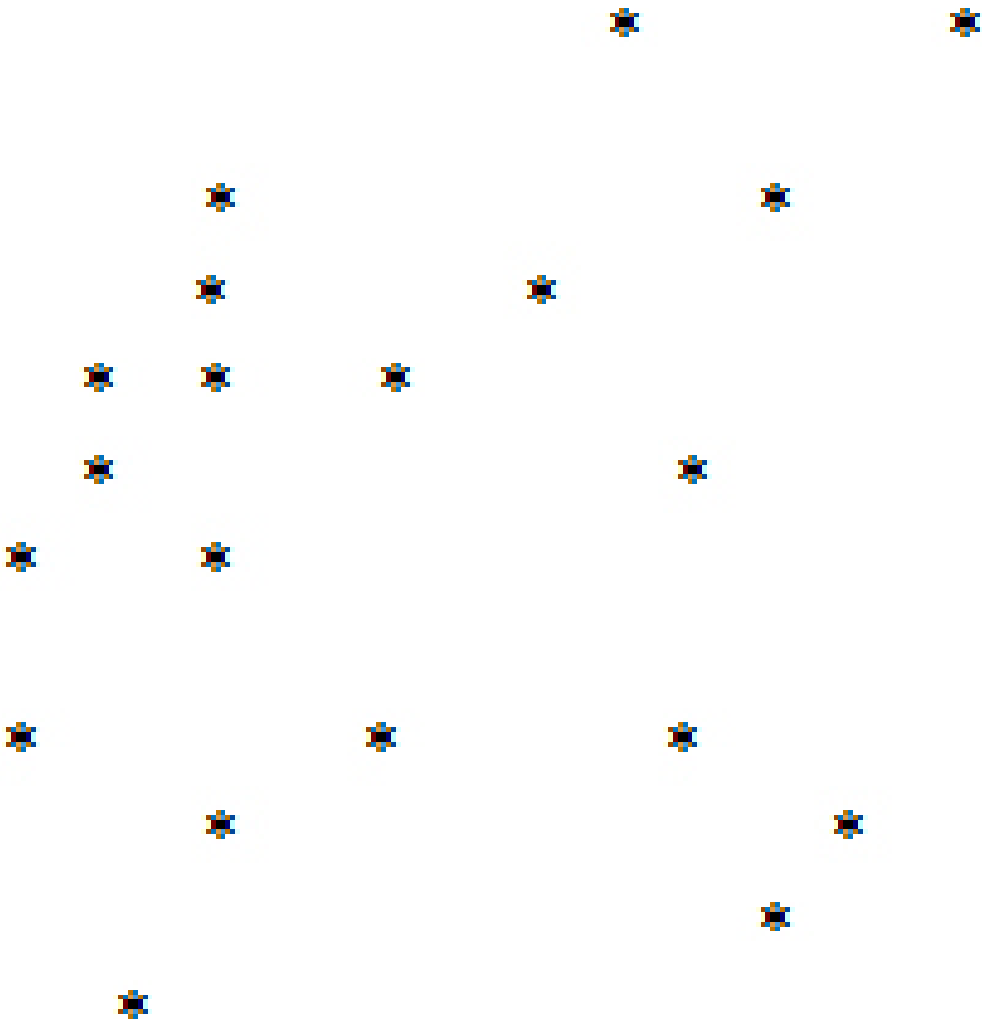
## Activity Sheet 13 – Night and Day Skyscapes

- Help each child make a nightscape by poking holes in a sheet of black construction paper and placing a white sticker on the paper to represent the moon. Tape up to a window so that light shines through the holes as 'starlight'.
- Help each child make a dayscape by gluing cotton balls onto a blue sheet of paper, using a yellow sticker to represent the sun.

## Activity Sheet 14 – Constellation Games

- Divide the group into two “teams”. Give each team two copies of Made Up Constellations. Ask each team to decide what this constellation looks like (a dove, a horse, whatever.) Give them five minutes to decide and connect the dots on ONE copy of the page to show what they decided.
- At the end of five minutes, each team tells the other what shape they saw in the constellation, but keeps the connected-dots drawing secret. Assuming they didn’t see the same thing (not likely) challenge each group to use the clean copy of the sheet they still have to try to draw the object the OTHER team identified. (This activity is based on materials from <http://skyserver.sdss.org/dr1/en/proj/kids/constellation/simple.asp>.)
- Compare the drawings (Team A’s original with Team B’s attempt to come up with what Team A saw, etc.)!
- Play constellation charades! Select one player to be “It”. S/he chooses a constellation and arranges the other players into the positions of the stars (as much as possible with the number of players available). The other players must guess which of the constellations s/he has arranged them in. Repeat as many times as desired. Ask players what they think the constellation should be named!

# Made Up Constellations



## Activity Sheet 15 – Sky Window

The purpose of this activity is to create a visual representation of the sky which can be displayed for all comers to enjoy for some period of time. There are many possible ways to do this. Three that you may wish to choose from are:

1. Create a bulletin board display using paper and other objects (cotton balls, etc.)
2. Use cling vinyl to cut out shapes and place them on a window
3. Create a “stained glass” display using a cardboard frame, tissue paper, and cellophane.

Detailed instructions for this last option can be found in Appendix A.

In any case:

- Help the children decide how they would like to represent each season in their display.
- Assist the children in cutting out or otherwise preparing materials to create the display, and affixing them in place.

## Activity Sheet 16 – Sand-jar Skyscapes

- Help the children fill the jars with mixture of sand, stars, moon and sun colored bead/pom-poms. Some of the kids will want to be realistic and use blue, dark or black sand for a night sky, and some will want to use fantastic colors resembling sunset or sunrise on Earth – or maybe Mars. That's fine!
- Seal the jars.

## Session 7: Seasons

### Session 7: Seasons

#### Goals for participants:

To become aware of the seasonal changes on our planet. To get to know each other and the class leaders. To explore the seasons as a presence in their own lives.

#### What to Do:

##### *Opening Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather the children in a circle around an altar space you have created on the floor or outdoors on grass or gravel. Light the chalice using the Seasons Chalice Lighting or words of your own choosing. Depending on your circumstances you may wish to invite children to share a joy or concern from their week with the group (generally this will work well with a smaller group; in a larger group, you may wish to invite children to share with their immediate neighbor, break into smaller groups, or simply leave this ritual out as too time consuming).

Say something like this: today we are going to hear a story about the inevitable, continual changes of seasons. This story comes from the Seneca Nation of Indians, one of six tribes of the Iroquois Confederacy who lived and still live in the area we now call New York State. (Show where this is on the map, pp. XX – XXI in *Keepers of the Earth*.) I learned this story from a book called *Keepers of the Earth*. I share it with deep respect for the people to whom it belongs.

Read or tell the story “Spring Defeats Winter” (pp. 129 – 131, *Keepers of the Earth*).

Invite the children to join you in imagining and making the sounds that the South Wind might make in the spring, sighing, blowing, and whooshing as desired.

#### *Activities:*

##### Flower Role Play (10 – 20 minutes):

Make simple construction paper flower hats, and act out the life cycle of a flower through the seasons. See Activity Sheet 17, Flower Parts Sheet and the Seasons Suite (adapted from pp. 132 – 133, *Keepers of the Earth*.)

##### Four Seasons Charades (10 – 20 minutes):

Play charades using animals, plants, and things in specific seasons as the concepts to act out. See Activity Sheet 18 and the Seasons Charade Cards.

##### Seasons Window (15 – 30 minutes):

## Session 7: Seasons

Create a visual display showing the seasons on a bulletin board, using window clings, or by creating a “stained glass” type window covering. See Activity Sheet 19.

A Book of Seasons (10 – 20 minutes):

Make “fan” books depicting each of the four seasons. See Activity Sheet 20.

Discussion (5 – 15 minutes):

Use the discussion questions on p. 132, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Mindfulness with Leaves and Flowers (5 minutes):

Carefully get to know a leaf or a flower and then try to find it again after mixing everyone’s together. See p. 134, *Keepers of the Earth*.

*Closing Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather all the kids together in a circle. Ask each child to say his or her name and something about the activity s/he participated in. If it is your practice, eat a snack together. If you did not share joys and sorrows in the opening circle, you may do so now if you feel it is appropriate.

### Materials:

#### *Basic:*

#### *Keepers of the Earth*

An enlarged copy of pps. XX and XXI  
(Native North America map) from  
*Keepers of the Earth*

Chalice, candle and matches

Seasons Chalice Lighting

Altar cloth, picnic tablecloth, or other  
cloth suitable for spreading on  
the ground or floor

Seasons Window: papers and other  
objects to post on a bulletin board  
OR window cling material OR a  
prepared cardboard support,  
various colored transparent  
plastics and/or tissue papers, stiff  
black paper or cardstock,  
pencils/pens, scissors, ladder (if  
needed), nails, hammer

#### *Depending on Activity:*

Flower Role Play: construction paper  
strips, construction paper flower  
parts, scotch tape/staples,  
Seasons Suite

A Book of Seasons: prepared fan books  
or folded construction paper, pre-  
cut papers, flower stickers, pre-  
cut plastics and sandpaper,  
round, yellow stickers, dried  
leaves or leaf-shaped rubber  
stamps, glue sticks, scissors

Four Seasons Charades: Seasons  
Charade Cards

Mindfulness with Leaves and Flowers:  
a selection of leaves and/or

## Session 7: Seasons

flowers (some similar to each

other, others may be unique)

### Preparation:

Gather needed materials and books. Contact your helpers ahead of time if possible. Learn the story and plan how you will share it with the group. Set up your space for the opening circle outdoors or in a central location on Sunday morning before the kids arrive. Set up spaces for the activities you choose to offer. Copy Activity Sheets as needed for helpers.

### Background for Teachers:

#### **About the Seneca:**

<http://www.sni.org/>

[http://senecaindians.com/seneca\\_tribal.htm](http://senecaindians.com/seneca_tribal.htm)

#### **About Seasons:**

<http://csep10.phys.utk.edu/astr161/lect/time/seasons.html>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seasons>

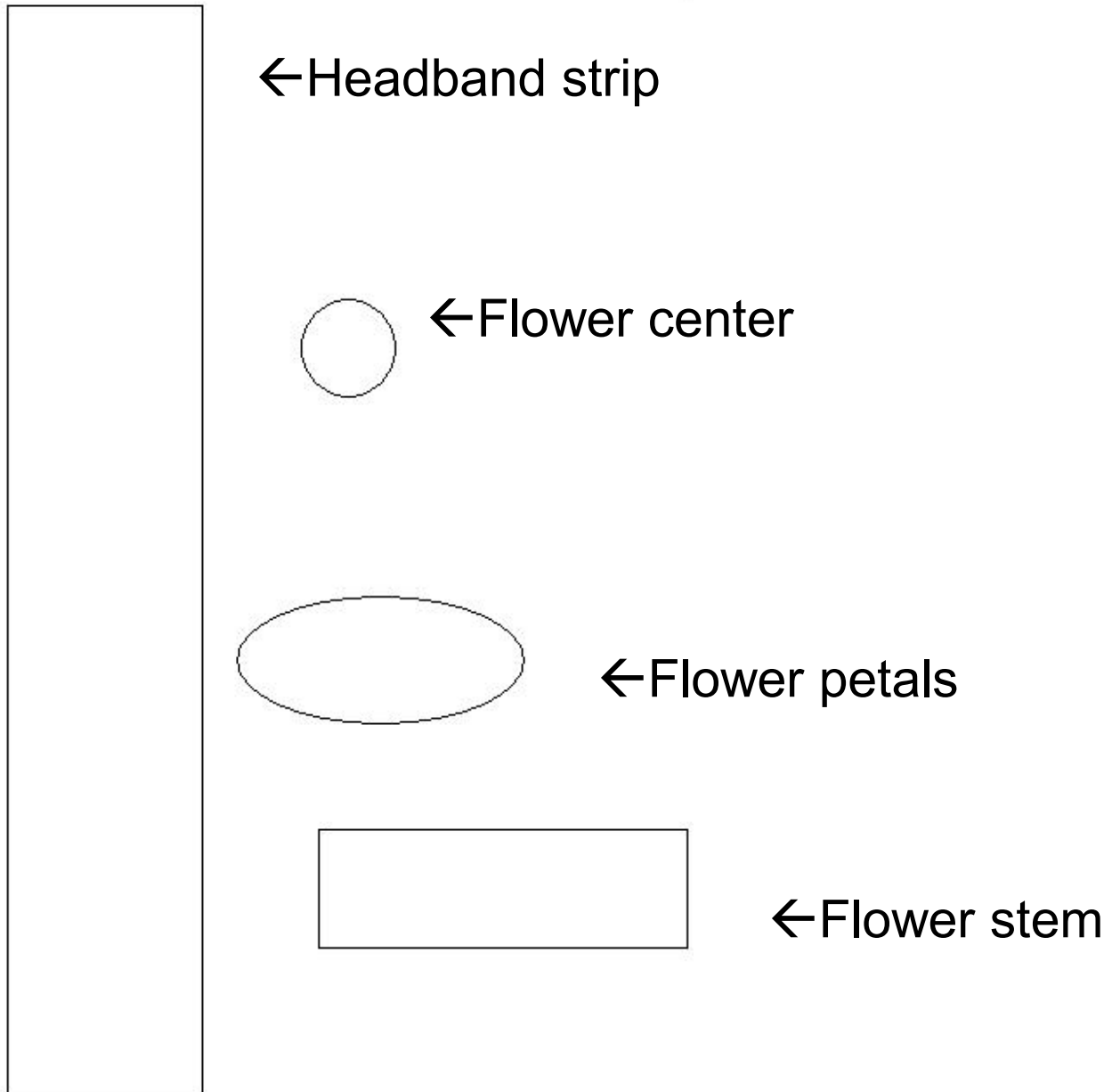
## **Seasons Chalice Lighting**

We light this chalice for the Seasons:  
For the Winter, the Spring,  
the Summer, and the Fall

## Activity Sheet 17 – Flower Role Play

- Make construction paper strips and flower parts using the Flower Parts Sheet
- Help each child make a flower hat for him or herself by attaching flower parts to the strip with tape or staples or glue and stapling together the ends of the strip at the right length to fit the child's head.
- Use the Seasons Suite script (simplified from p. 132 – 133, *Keepers of the Earth*). To begin the role-play, have the children curl up as tight as they can on a rug and tell them to follow your cues as you read the story. It usually works best if they can see someone doing the motions, so feel free to do them yourself or recruit a helper.

## Flower Parts Sheet



Enlarge this page so that the large rectangle is approximately 2" wide on the narrower side. Cut one each of the headband strip, flower center, and flower stem per participant, and about six – seven flower petals per participant.

## Seasons Suite

You are a seed resting in the soil. Winter is moving north and the soil around you feels warm and wet. Slowly you begin to unfold. Your root goes down into the soil and your sprout pushes upward **[children wiggle around a little]**. In a few days your leaves begin to unfold **[children's arms stretch out]** and they poke up out of the dark soil into the bright, warm sun. You grow taller and taller **[children slowly stand up]**. You can feel the sap flowing through your veins. Your green leaves stretch wider and higher toward the sun **[children reach their arms up high and wiggle their fingers]**.

When spring turns into summer, a bud forms on your head and finally opens up into a beautiful flower **[children put on their flower hats]**. Feel the long, hot days of summer and imagine the patter of rain upon your leaves and petals.

One day a bee buzzes over and she is covered with pollen from all the other flowers. She gets pollen from your flower and leaves pollen from another flower to help your seeds grow **[children can dance a little bit, as if they feel a bee tickling them]**.

The days grow short during the fall and one morning you find that frost has frozen your leaves and you are all shriveled up **[children take off flower hats and fold their arms]**. But now you have seeds! One day a cold, hard wind blows and your seeds shake loose and fall to the ground **[children bend as in a big wind and fling their arms out to sow their 'seeds']**.

When the first snow comes, you are very tired and fall down under it, till you are lying on the ground, **[children fall over gently]** but nearby the seeds you have sown wait for spring to come so that they can grow as you did.

## Activity Sheet 18 – Four Seasons Charades

- Use the Seasons Charades Cards (make a copy and cut the copy apart).
- Explain the game as follows to the kids, and then play!
  - Each kid takes a game card.
  - Kids separate into two equal (or semi-equal) groups.
  - Each kid has a turn to mime or charade something which will let the other team guess what his or her two words are. For example, if the card reads “You are a . . . SQUIRREL in the FALL,” the child might mime running around with a nut in my mouth and then scrabbling on the ground to bury it.
  - Alternate turns between the teams.
  - Encourage the kids to help the other kids on their team to think up ways to do the charade.
  - Make sure you help any child who isn’t reading well yet understand the words on his or her card.

## Seasons Charade Cards

You are a . . . SNOW FLAKE in the WINTER	You are a . . . SMALL POND in the WINTER
You are a . . . BROWN BEAR in the WINTER	You are a . . . WARM BREEZE in the SPRING
You are a . . . SEED in the SPRING	You are a . . . MOSQUITO in the SUMMER
You are a . . . ICE CREAM CONE in the SUMMER	You are a . . . WATER SPRINKLER in the SUMMER
You are a . . . SQUIRREL in the FALL	You are a . . . CANADA GOOSE in the FALL
You are a . . . MAPLE LEAF in the FALL	You are a . . . DANDELION SEED in the FALL

## Activity Sheet 19 – Seasons Window

The purpose of this activity is to create a visual representation of the seasons which can be displayed for all comers to enjoy for some period of time. There are many possible ways to do this. Three that you may wish to choose from are:

1. Create a bulletin board display using paper and other objects (leaves, flowers, etc.)
2. Use cling vinyl to cut out shapes and place them on a window
3. Create a “stained glass” display using a cardboard frame, tissue paper, and cellophane.

Detailed instructions for this last option can be found in Appendix A.

In any case:

- Help the children decide how they would like to represent each season in their display.
- Assist the children in cutting out or otherwise preparing materials to create the display, and affixing them in place.

## Activity Sheet 20 – A Book of Seasons

- **Before this class session:** prepare enough of the following items for each child to have one of each: fan books with seasonal covers or long strips of black construction paper folded into quarters long-ways; pieces of white paper, green tissue paper, and blue paper or plastic cut to fit on one page of the fan books or one quarter of the construction paper strips; and smaller pieces of sand-paper (about  $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{3}$  the size of one page of the books or strips).
  
- Help each child choose a fan book he or she likes, or give each child a prepared piece of construction paper. Show them how to:
  - Make a page for winter by folding a piece of white paper and cutting it to make a snowflake. Paste the snowflake onto the page.
  
  - Make a page for spring by pasting a green piece of tissue paper to the page and putting flower stickers on it.
  
  - Make a page for summer by first pasting a piece of blue paper to the page. Then paste the piece of sandpaper to the bottom  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the page to represent the beach. Finally, put a round yellow sticker on the upper part of the blue paper to represent the sun.
  
  - Either attach an autumnal leaf to the last page for Fall, or stamp leaf shapes onto the page using fall colored stamp pads.

## Session 8: Plants

### Session 8: Plants

#### Goals for participants:

To become aware of the role plants play in the cycle of life and death on our earth. To get to know each other and the class leaders. To explore plants as a presence in their own lives.

#### What to Do:

##### *Opening Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather the children in a circle around an altar space you have created on the floor or outdoors on grass or gravel. Light the chalice using the Plant Chalice Lighting or words of your own choosing. Depending on your circumstances you may wish to invite children to share a joy or concern from their week with the group (generally this will work well with a smaller group; in a larger group, you may wish to invite children to share with their immediate neighbor, break into smaller groups, or simply leave this ritual out as too time consuming).

Say something like this: today we are going to hear a story about how people need plants in order to live. This story comes from the Cherokee Nation, a Native American tribe which originally lived in the area we now call Georgia and the Carolinas, most of whom were forcibly removed from their homes and marched in the Trail of Tears to Oklahoma in 1838. (Show where this is on the map, pp. XX – XXI in *Keepers of the Earth*.) I learned this story from a book called *Keepers of the Earth*. I share it with deep respect for the people to whom it belongs.

Read or tell the story “The Coming of the Corn” (pp. 137 – 138, *Keepers of the Earth*).

Sing “Standing Like a Tree,” words and music by Betsy Rose © 1988 by Paper Crane Music (BMI) recorded on *In My Two Hands*. Or, “Garden Song” in *Rise Up Singing: The Group Singing Songbook*, Sing Out! Publications. Or play a recording of one of these songs (sing along, if you do this!)

#### *Activities:*

Popcorn (10 – 30 minutes):

Make popcorn, popcorn balls (optional), and read *The Popcorn Book* by Tomie De Paola. See Activity Sheet 21.

Hunting and Gathering (10 – 30 minutes):

Collect samples of three different kinds of plants and identify them. See Activity Sheet 22.

## Session 8: Plants

Plants Window (15 – 30 minutes):

Create a visual display showing plants on a bulletin board, using window clings, or by creating a “stained glass” type window covering. See Activity Sheet 23.

Vegetable Printmaking (10 – 30 minutes):

Use cross-sections of a variety of vegetables to make prints. See Activity Sheet 24.

Discussion (5 – 15 minutes):

Use the discussion questions on p. 139, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Story (5 – 10 minutes):

Read or share the story “Manabozho and the Maple Trees,” p. 145, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Trees in a Forest (15 – 45 minutes):

Take a walk in a wooded area and observe how the fallen leaves/needles are decomposing. Learn about the structure of trees as well. See pp. 140 – 141 and p. 148, *Keepers of the Earth* (Procedure A: Recycling the Forest Floor and Procedure B: Tree Walk).

Cycle Circle Game (5 – 15 minutes):

Play a version of “Duck Duck Goose” using the parts of the nutrient cycle. See p. 141, *Keepers of the Earth* (Procedure B: Cycle Circle Game).

Composting (10 – 30 minutes):

Find a compost bin or pile to visit and have someone knowledgeable explain how it works to the kids.

Tree Poem (10 – 20 minutes):

Write a poem about a tree in the shape of a tree! See p. 149, *Keepers of the Earth* (Extending the Experience).

*Closing Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather all the kids together in a circle. Ask each child to say his or her name and something about the activity s/he participated in. If it is your practice, eat a snack

## Session 8: Plants

together. If you did not share joys and sorrows in the opening circle, you may do so now if you feel it is appropriate.

### Materials:

#### *Basic:*

#### *Keepers of the Earth*

An enlarged copy of pps. XX and XXI  
(Native North America map) from  
*Keepers of the Earth*

Chalice, candle and matches

Plants Chalice Lighting

Altar cloth, picnic tablecloth, or other  
cloth suitable for spreading on  
the ground or floor

“Standing Like a Tree,” words and music  
by Betsy Rose © 1988 by Paper  
Crane Music (BMI) recorded on  
*In My Two Hands*. Or, “Garden  
Song” in *Rise Up Singing: The  
Group Singing Songbook*, Sing  
Out! Publications

#### *Depending on Activity:*

Popcorn: *The Popcorn Book*, by Tomie  
De Paola; microwavable plain  
popcorn and a microwave or  
popcorn and a popcorn popper; a  
large bowl or baking dish;  
materials for making caramel  
syrup (optional!!!) – 1 Tablespoon  
butter + some for greasing hands,  
1 Cup brown sugar, 4  
Tablespoons water, medium  
saucepan or microwavable bowl,  
wooden spoon, plastic wrap or lid  
for pan, candy or instant read  
thermometer

Hunting and Gathering: newsprint,  
markers, tape, field guides to  
local plants. Check your local

library for books describing your  
local flora

Plants Window: papers and other  
objects to post on a bulletin board  
OR window cling material OR a  
prepared cardboard support,  
various colored transparent  
plastics and/or tissue papers, stiff  
black paper or cardstock,  
pencils/pens, scissors, ladder (if  
needed), nails, hammer

Vegetable Printmaking: a wide variety  
of vegetables and a few fruits,  
cutting board & knives, paper,  
tempura paints, trays, sponge  
pieces, a few books on  
printmaking (optional) such as  
*Simple Printmaking* by Peter  
Weiss, illustrated by Sally Gralla

Trees in a Forest: hand magnifying  
lenses, bags (to collect leaves  
in), information from pp. 146 -  
147, *Keepers of the Earth*  
(Discussion) including enlarged  
copy of Figure 17-1, a small  
branch sawn straight across for  
each child

Cycle Circle Game: a leaf, cardboard  
nametags on strings labeled as  
follows – LEAF, WORM, MITE,  
FUNGUS, BACTERIUM,  
NEMATODE, CENTIPEDE,  
PLANT ROOTS, BEETLE,  
SPRINGTAIL.

### Preparation:

## Session 8: Plants

Gather needed materials, books, and music. Contact your helpers ahead of time if possible. Learn the story and plan how you will share it with the group. Learn the song or plan how you will share it with the group. Set up your space for the opening circle outdoors or in a central location on Sunday morning before the kids arrive. Set up spaces for the activities you choose to offer. Copy Activity Sheets as needed for helpers. If you choose to use the Composting activity, find a compost pile and its owner ahead of time.

### Background for Teachers:

#### **About the Cherokee:**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cherokee>

<http://www.cherokee.org/>

#### **About Corn:**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maize>

## **Plant Chalice Lighting**

We light this chalice for the plants which sustain  
us and our whole world

Trees breathe for the world, we are fed by  
plants and by the animals which eat plants,  
and we see the beauty in flowers and in the  
green spaces around us

## Activity Sheet 21 – Popcorn

- Help the kids pop the popcorn in the microwave according to directions on the package, or in a popcorn popper.
- Read the simple words on each page of *The Popcorn Book*. (There are long, explanatory passages as well as the simple narrative, but these will likely not interest younger kids in a group.)
- If you are planning to make popcorn balls, proceed as follows; otherwise, eat the popcorn as is and enjoy!
  - Empty popped corn into the large bowl or baking dish.
  - Melt the butter in the saucepan or in the medium-sized bowl in microwave. Add the brown sugar and water and stir. Cook until the mixture comes to a boil, stirring frequently to help the sugar dissolve. Cover the pan or bowl and continue cooking for about three minutes. Uncover, and continue cooking until the syrup is about 234° F.
  - When syrup is ready, pour over the popcorn. Warn children that it is HOT! They may help stir the mixture using the wooden spoon.
  - Grease your hands and help the children grease theirs.
  - Make small balls when the mixture has cooled to a touchable temperature. The point is to have fun making a mess, not make beautiful candies. Enjoy!
  - Put finished balls onto a cookie sheet, or eat if desired.

## Activity Sheet 22 – Hunting and Gathering

- How this activity is organized will depend upon how many kids you have. If there are more than 3 divide the kids up into 3 small groups.
- Assign each child or group of children to find at least 3 different varieties of one of the following types of plants: Trees (very tall plants), flowers/undergrowth (medium height plants), and groundcover (grasses, creeping weeds, fungi).
- Take the kids outside. Try to stay within sight of them!
- When they have all found their samples (leaves, blades of grass, etc.), take the kids back inside and lay the samples out on the newsprint.
- Using books, try to identify the species you've found & label them!

## Activity Sheet 23 – Plants Window

The purpose of this activity is to create a visual representation of plants which can be displayed for all comers to enjoy for some period of time. There are many possible ways to do this. Three that you may wish to choose from are:

1. Create a bulletin board display using paper and other objects (plant parts, etc.)
2. Use cling vinyl to cut out shapes and place them on a window
3. Create a “stained glass” display using a cardboard frame, tissue paper, and cellophane.

Detailed instructions for this last option can be found in Appendix A.

In any case:

- Help the children decide how they would like to represent each season in their display.
- Assist the children in cutting out or otherwise preparing materials to create the display, and affixing them in place.

## Activity Sheet 24 – Vegetable Printmaking

- Show kids some illustrations of prints made with vegetables from a book or make some samples yourself before this class session.
- Pass out paper and paint. Help the kids cut up some vegetables (or you can do this before class begins,) and allow kids to choose the vegetables they would like to use.
- Demonstrate applying paint to vegetable surfaces using sponge pieces.
- Help kids make their masterpieces!

## Session 9: Animals

### Session 9: Animals

#### Goals for participants:

To become aware of the role animals play in the cycle of life and death on our earth. To get to know each other and the class leaders. To explore animals as a presence in their own lives.

#### What to Do:

##### *Opening Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather the children in a circle around an altar space you have created on the floor or outdoors on grass or gravel. Light the chalice using the Animal Chalice Lighting or words of your own choosing. Depending on your circumstances you may wish to invite children to share a joy or concern from their week with the group (generally this will work well with a smaller group; in a larger group, you may wish to invite children to share with their immediate neighbor, break into smaller groups, or simply leave this ritual out as too time consuming).

Say something like this: today we are going to hear a story about how important it is to take good care of animals, even as we rely on them for food and work. This story comes from the Abenaki group of Native Americans, who lived and still live in the area we now call New England in the United States and the Maritimes in Canada. (Show where this is on the map, pp. XX – XXI in *Keepers of the Earth*.) I learned this story from a book called *Keepers of the Earth*. I share it with deep respect for the people to whom it belongs.

Read or tell the story “Gluscabi and the Game Animals” (pp. 137 – 138, *Keepers of the Earth*).

Invite the children to show you what animal noises they know how to make (these will be loud and numerous and varied!)

#### *Activities:*

##### Forest Collages (5 – 15 minutes):

Create Forest Collages using construction paper and pictures of animals.

##### Hiders and Seekers (5 – 15 minutes):

Hide small “mice” for the children to find. See p. 171, *Keepers of the Earth* (Procedure B: Hiders and Seekers).

##### Tree Tag (10 – 20 minutes):

## Session 9: Animals

Play tag with trees as home bases. See Activity Sheet 25.

Predator and Prey (10 – 20 minutes):

A “predator” hunts for “prey” using only his or her sense of hearing. See pp. 170 – 171, *Keepers of the Earth* (Procedure A: Predator and Prey).

Animals Window (15 – 30 minutes):

Create a visual display showing animals on a bulletin board, using window clings, or by creating a “stained glass” type window covering. See Activity Sheet 26.

Miniature Game Bags (15 – 30 minutes):

Make pocket-sized “game bags” like Gluscabi’s to hold miniature toy animals. See Activity Sheet 27.

Discussion (5 – 15 minutes):

Use the discussion questions on pp. 168 – 169, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Stories (10 – 15 minutes):

Read or share the stories “Kokopilau, the Hump-Backed Flute Player,” p. 151, and/or “How Turtle Flew South for the Winter”, pp. 157 – 158, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Animal Spotting (10 – 15 minutes):

Go outside and make a list of all the animals you can find (even in an urban area, you will likely be able to find insects, spot birds, and see squirrels.)

Guided Meditations (5 – 15 minutes):

Lead the guided meditation “Winter is Coming”, p. 160 and/or “A Journey with the Abenakis”, 169 – 170, *Keepers of the Earth*.

*Closing Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather all the kids together in a circle. Ask each child to say his or her name and something about the activity s/he participated in. If it is your practice, eat a snack together. If you did not share joys and sorrows in the opening circle, you may do so now if you feel it is appropriate.

Materials:

*Basic:*

## Session 9: Animals

### *Keepers of the Earth*

An enlarged copy of pps. XX and XXI  
(Native North America map) from  
*Keepers of the Earth*

Chalice, candle and matches

Animals Chalice Lighting

Altar cloth, picnic tablecloth, or other  
cloth suitable for spreading on  
the ground or floor

### *Depending on Activity:*

Forest Collages: green construction  
paper, glue-sticks, brown paper  
'tree trunks', light-green and red  
and orange tissue paper 'leaves',  
cut-out forest animals

Hiders and Seekers: mouse-sized ovals  
of variously colored construction  
paper

Predator and Prey: a blindfold

Animals Window: papers and other  
objects to post on a bulletin board  
OR window cling material OR a  
prepared cardboard support,  
various colored transparent  
plastics and/or tissue papers, stiff  
black paper or cardstock,  
pencils/pens, scissors, ladder (if  
needed), nails, hammer

Miniature Game Bags: blunt needles  
with large holes, thread, leather  
thongs, pre-cut felt pieces (pre-  
punched on three sides for easier  
sewing), animal beads and/or  
miniature toy animals, hole  
punch, yarn (for any child who  
prefers not to use a leather  
thong)

### Preparation:

Gather needed materials and books. Contact your helpers ahead of time if possible. Learn the story and plan how you will share it with the group. Set up your space for the opening circle outdoors or in a central location on Sunday morning before the kids arrive. Set up spaces for the activities you choose to offer. Copy Activity Sheets as needed for helpers.

### Background for Teachers:

#### **About the Abenaki**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abenaki>

<http://www.abenakination.org/history.html>

#### **About Gluscabi**

<http://www.native-languages.org/penobscot-legends.htm>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glooscap>

## **Animal Chalice Lighting**

We light this chalice for the animals who are our brothers and sisters on the planet earth.

## Activity Sheet 25 – Tree Tag

- Take the children outside.
- Choose one kid to be IT. Tell the kids that IT is the hunter (like Gluscabi in the story) and they are the animals.
- Tell all the ‘animals’ to ‘hide’ by finding a tree to touch.
- Tell IT to count to 10 out loud and slowly. When s/he is finished, the ‘animals’ must move away from their trees.
- Any tree is a safe-zone. When tagged by IT, an ‘animal’ has to play dead by freezing or falling over on the ground. A playing dead ‘animal’ can be freed if a living ‘animal’ touches it and escorts it to a tree!
- Give several different kids a chance to be IT.

## Activity Sheet 26 – Animals Window

The purpose of this activity is to create a visual representation of animals which can be displayed for all comers to enjoy for some period of time. There are many possible ways to do this. Three that you may wish to choose from are:

1. Create a bulletin board display using paper and other objects (animal teeth or claws, etc.)
2. Use cling vinyl to cut out shapes and place them on a window
3. Create a “stained glass” display using a cardboard frame, tissue paper, and cellophane.

Detailed instructions for this last option can be found in Appendix A.

In any case:

- Help the children decide how they would like to represent each season in their display.
- Assist the children in cutting out or otherwise preparing materials to create the display, and affixing them in place.

## Activity Sheet 27 – Miniature Game Bags

- Give each child a needle and thread, and a rectangle of felt about 3" x 5", pre-punched with holes along both 3" sides and one 5" side.
- Help the kids fold the felt into a rectangle about 3" by 2½" and sew the edges together to form a pouch. Turn the pouches inside out.
- Punch holes in the open edge of the pouch and thread through a leather thong or yarn. Thread animal beads onto the thong or yarn as the kids do so. Or, simply tie off the thongs or yarn and give each child a miniature toy animal to put in the pouch.

## Session 10: Life, Death, Spirit

### Session 10: Life, Death, Spirit

#### Goals for participants:

To become aware of the cycle of life and death on our earth. To get to know each other and the class leaders. To explore how death and loss have affected their own lives.

#### What to Do:

##### *Opening Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather the children in a circle around an altar space you have created on the floor or outdoors on grass or gravel. Light the chalice using the Life, Death, Spirit Chalice Lighting or words of your own choosing. Depending on your circumstances you may wish to invite children to share a joy or concern from their week with the group (generally this will work well with a smaller group; in a larger group, you may wish to invite children to share with their immediate neighbor, break into smaller groups, or simply leave this ritual out as too time consuming).

Say something like this: today we are going to hear a story about the circle of living and dying which each person, plant, and animal takes part in. This story comes from the people of the Siksika Nation, who lived and still live in the area we now call southern Alberta, Canada. (Show where this is on the map, pp. XX – XXI in *Keepers of the Earth*.) I learned this story from a book called *Keepers of the Earth*. I share it with deep respect for the people to whom it belongs.

Read or tell the story “The Origin of Death” (pp. 181 – 182, *Keepers of the Earth*).

Sing “Now I Walk in Beauty” p. 41 in *Signature Songbook 3*, UUA, or play a recording of the song (sing along, if you do this!)

#### *Activities:*

##### Dance Feelings (10 – 20 minutes):

Play music evoking different moods or feelings and dance to the music with scarves to add expression. See Activity Sheet 28.

##### Spirit Walk (5 – 20 minutes):

Take a “trust” walk and observe what is alive, what is dead, and what is neither alive nor dead. See Activity Sheet 29.

##### Life and Death Window (15 – 30 minutes):

## Session 10: Life, Death, Spirit

Create a visual display showing life and death on a bulletin board, using window clings, or by creating a “stained glass” type window covering. See Activity Sheet 30.

Lost and Found (5 – 20 minutes):

Draw pictures and/or write stories about something important that you have lost, and something that has come into your life since that loss. See pp. 183 – 184, *Keepers of the Earth* (Death and Life: Lost and Found).

Discussion (5 – 15 minutes):

Use the discussion questions on p. 182, *Keepers of the Earth*.

Cemetery/Memorial Field Trip (10 – 60 minutes or longer):

Visit a cemetery, memorial garden, or memorial plaque/statue/monument. See p. 184, *Keepers of the Earth* (Extending the Experience).

*Closing Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather all the kids together in a circle. Ask each child to say his or her name and something about the activity s/he participated in. If it is your practice, eat a snack together. If you did not share joys and sorrows in the opening circle, you may do so now if you feel it is appropriate.

### Materials:

*Basic:*

*Keepers of the Earth*

An enlarged copy of pps. XX and XXI  
(Native North America map) from  
*Keepers of the Earth*

Chalice, candle and matches

Life, Death, Spirit Chalice Lighting

Altar cloth, picnic tablecloth, or other  
cloth suitable for spreading on  
the ground or floor

“Now I Walk in Beauty” p. 41 in  
*Signature Songbook 3*, UUA

music which you have chosen  
and which evoke a variety of  
feelings or spirits for you

Life and Death Window: papers and  
other objects to post on a bulletin  
board OR window cling material  
OR a prepared cardboard  
support, various colored  
transparent plastics and/or tissue  
papers, stiff black paper or  
cardstock, pencils/pens, scissors,  
ladder (if needed), nails, hammer

*Depending on Activity:*

Dance Feelings: multicolored scarves,  
tape or CD player, recordings of

Lost and Found: black and white  
construction paper, drawing  
materials

## Session 10: Life, Death, Spirit

### Preparation:

Gather needed materials, books, and music. Contact your helpers ahead of time if possible. Learn the story and plan how you will share it with the group. Learn the song or plan how you will share it with the group. Set up your space for the opening circle outdoors or in a central location on Sunday morning before the kids arrive. Set up spaces for the activities you choose to offer. Copy Activity Sheets as needed for helpers.

### Background for Teachers:

#### **About the Siksika**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siksika\\_Nation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siksika_Nation)

<http://www.blackfoot.org/>

#### **About the definition of life:**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life>

## **Life, Death, Spirit Chalice Lighting**

We light this chalice for the circle of life and death, which are two sides of the same thing  
– our existence in this world.

## Activity Sheet 28 – Dance Feelings

- Explain to the children that you are going to play some music and that you would like them to move their bodies to show what kinds of feelings the music bring to them. You could leave it at that, or ask the children to ‘freeze’ when the music stops. Play samples of music between 30 seconds and 2 minutes long.
- Invite the children to choose one or several of the scarves to use as props.
- Play the first piece of music. When it is over, ask the children to share whether they thought the music was lively or somber, happy or sad, etc. Repeat with the other pieces of music.
- If time allows, let the children choose one or two favorites and play the whole song for them to dance to.

## Activity Sheet 29 – Spirit Walk

- Take the kids outside.
- Tell the kids to line up behind you, with their hands touching the waist or shoulders of the person in front of them, and to close their eyes.
- Walk a short distance. Pick a place to stop where you can see some living things and some dead things.
- Tell the kids to open their eyes and make a circle. Ask them to find several living things inside the circle, and several dead things. Ask them to find several non-living, non-dead things (like rocks or metal.) This is an interesting area for discussion, since some people feel that such things ARE alive in a spiritual sense.
- If desired, continue with eyes closed again to a different location.

## Activity Sheet 30 – Life and Death Window

The purpose of this activity is to create a visual representation of life and death which can be displayed for all comers to enjoy for some period of time. There are many possible ways to do this. Three that you may wish to choose from are:

1. Create a bulletin board display using paper and other objects (memorial bulletin, etc.)
2. Use cling vinyl to cut out shapes and place them on a window
3. Create a “stained glass” display using a cardboard frame, tissue paper, and cellophane.

Detailed instructions for this last option can be found in Appendix A.

In any case:

- Help the children decide how they would like to represent each season in their display.
- Assist the children in cutting out or otherwise preparing materials to create the display, and affixing them in place.

## Session 11: Storytelling

### Session 11: Storytelling

#### Goals for participants:

To understand the importance of storytelling in Native cultures and in modern American culture. To get to know each other and the class leaders. To explore their own abilities as storytellers.

#### What to Do:

##### *Opening Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather the children in a circle around an altar space you have created on the floor or outdoors on grass or gravel. Light the chalice using the Storytelling Chalice Lighting or words of your own choosing. Depending on your circumstances you may wish to invite children to share a joy or concern from their week with the group (generally this will work well with a smaller group; in a larger group, you may wish to invite children to share with their immediate neighbor, break into smaller groups, or simply leave this ritual out as too time consuming).

Say something like this: today we are going to hear a story about how telling a story can inspire someone to do something different than they've ever done before. Stories are very, very important in the cultures of Native Americans – and in our modern American culture, too, in different ways. This story comes from the people of the Dakota Sioux, who lived first in the south and east of this continent and gradually migrated to the areas we now call eastern North and South Dakota, Minnesota, and northern Iowa. (Show where this is on the map, pp. XX – XXI in *Keepers of the Earth*.) I learned this story from a book called *Keepers of the Earth*. I share it with deep respect for the people to whom it belongs.

Read or tell the story “How Turtle Flew South for the Winter” (pp. 157 – 158, *Keepers of the Earth*).

Sing “Now I Walk in Beauty” p. 41 in *Signature Songbook 3*, UUA, or play a recording of the song (sing along, if you do this!)

#### *Activities:*

##### Native American Stories (5 – 30 minutes):

Read a variety of Native American stories from the many picture books available through your library or bookseller.

##### Storytelling with Pictures (10 – 30 minutes):

## Session 11: Storytelling

Read a graphic novel and/or comic book and/or funny pages from a newspaper, then create story in the form of a comic. See Activity Sheet 31 and the Comic Strip Page.

Superheroes Game (10 – 20 minutes):

Play an improvisational theatre game in which one person begins to act out a role as a superhero responding to a crisis, adding superhero characters (and players) as desired. See Activity Sheet 32.

Group Storytelling (5 – 15 minutes):

Tell a circle story in which everyone gets to contribute to the story. See Activity Sheet 33.

Discussion (5 – 15 minutes):

Talk about the story using questions on Activity Sheet 34.

Personal Stories (5 – 15 minutes):

Invite each person to tell a story on a given theme (such as a birthday story, a summer story, anything you think would work well for your group).

*Closing Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather all the kids together in a circle. Ask each child to say his or her name and something about the activity s/he participated in. If it is your practice, eat a snack together. If you did not share joys and sorrows in the opening circle, you may do so now if you feel it is appropriate.

Materials:

*Basic:*

*Keepers of the Earth*

An enlarged copy of pps. XX and XXI  
(Native North America map) from

*Keepers of the Earth*

Chalice, candle and matches

Storytelling Chalice Lighting

Altar cloth, picnic tablecloth, or other  
cloth suitable for spreading on  
the ground or floor

“Now I Walk in Beauty” p. 41 in  
*Signature Songbook 3, UUA*

*Depending on Activity:*

Native American Stories: a wide variety  
of Native American story/picture  
books. Try to choose books  
written and/or illustrated by a  
member of a Native American  
tribe or nation – there are many  
wonderful examples. Two very  
prolific authors are Joseph  
Bruchac and Paul Goble.

Storytelling with Pictures: several  
graphic novels, comic books,

## Session 11: Storytelling

and/or the comics pages from the newspaper; blank paper; pencils, pens, colored pencils, and other

drawing materials, and copies of Comic Strip Page for each child

### Preparation:

Gather needed materials, books, and music. Contact your helpers ahead of time if possible. Learn the story and plan how you will share it with the group. Learn the song or plan how you will share it with the group. Set up your space for the opening circle outdoors or in a central location on Sunday morning before the kids arrive. Set up spaces for the activities you choose to offer. Copy Activity Sheets as needed for helpers.

### Background for Teachers:

#### **About the Dakota:**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sioux>

#### **About Storytelling:**

<http://www.storynet.org/>

## **Storytelling Chalice Lighting**

We light this chalice for the stories we tell and listen to every day, learning as we do.

## Activity Sheet 31 – Storytelling with Pictures

- Share the graphic novels and/or comic books and/or comic pages from the newspaper with the children.
- Give each child a blank piece of paper and/or a copy of the Comic Book Page and access to pens, pencils, colored pencils, and other drawing materials.
- Encourage each child to tell a story in the form of a comic, with sequential panels moving the viewer from point A to B to C in the story. The children may need some help thinking of a story – or you can have them use the story of Turtle flying south for the winter if that seems preferable.

# Comic Book Page


## Activity Sheet 32 – Superheroes Game

- Play an improvisational theater game: Superheroes. Tell the children that there is a huge disaster that our superheroes must solve. One child starts, but all will get to enter the game as it evolves.
- Tell everyone what the disaster is (for example, all the water in the river has been turned into chocolate milk, or a giant turtle has landed in the middle of I-95 – whatever seems like it would be fun.) Tell the first player to announce what his or her superhero name is and what his/her super powers are. Then s/he can begin acting out how s/he would act and use his/her superpowers to address the disaster. Then s/he says something like, “If only Super X were here with his ability to Y and Z” filling in X, Y, and Z with the name of the second superhero and his/her abilities (which the first player gets to make up.)
- That’s the cue for the second player to come into the game, in role as Super X doing Y and Z, and continues trying to deal with the disaster with the first player. The second player does the same as the first did to introduce the next player, and so forth.

## Activity Sheet 33 – Group Storytelling

- Sit in a circle. Explain how this activity will work: you will begin telling a story by saying, “Once upon a time, . . .” continuing with anything you’d like to have happen in the story until you ring a bell to indicate that it is the next person’s turn to take up the story. At that time, the person sitting next to you has to continue to tell the story, in any way s/he wishes, silly or serious, until you ring the bell again, at which point the next person in the circle takes a turn. Continue until the story has been around the circle at least once or possibly more. It’s important that you indicate when it’s time to move to the next teller by ringing the bell, preferably at a crucial moment when the story can change easily for the next person!
- Another variation is to pass around a piece of paper on which you have written two lines of a story. Fold the paper down so that the next person can see the second line of the story but not the first. S/he writes two more lines, folding the paper so that the next person in turn can see his/her last line, but neither of yours or his/her first line. Continue until all have had a chance to contribute, write “The end” at the end, and then unfold the paper to read the whole (usually very silly) story out loud.

## Activity Sheet 34 – Storytelling Questions

- Did the birds tell Turtle a true story about what he would find if he went south with them?
- Does a story have to be true in order for people to believe it?
- How do you know if a story is true or not?
- What's the difference between a true story and a real story?
- How do we tell stories in our world today (film, TV, internet, books, magazines, face to face)?
- What's your favorite way to tell a story? To hear a story?

## Session 12: Unity of Earth (Closing Pageant)

### Session 12: Unity of Earth (Closing Pageant)

#### Goals for participants:

To become aware of the way all parts of life relate and form a unity here on Earth. To get to know each other and the class leaders. To share what they have learned and done during this class with their parents and other people.

#### What to Do:

##### *Opening Circle: (10 minutes)*

Gather the children in a circle around an altar space you have created on the floor or outdoors on grass or gravel. Light the chalice using the Unity of Earth Chalice Lighting or words of your own choosing. Depending on your circumstances you may wish to invite children to share a joy or concern from their week with the group (generally this will work well with a smaller group; in a larger group, you may wish to invite children to share with their immediate neighbor, break into smaller groups, or simply leave this ritual out as too time consuming).

Say something like this: today we are going to hear a story about how each part of the world we live in is part of a greater whole. This story comes from the people of the Lakota Sioux, who now live in the areas we call North and South Dakota. (Show where this is on the map, pp. XX – XXI in *Keepers of the Earth*.) I learned this story from a book called *Keepers of the Earth*. I share it with deep respect for the people to whom it belongs.

Read or tell the story “White Buffalo Calf Woman and the Sacred Pipe” (pp. 187 – 188, *Keepers of the Earth*).

Sing “Now I Walk in Beauty” p. 41 in *Signature Songbook 3*, UUA, or play a recording of the song (sing along, if you do this!)

##### *Core Activities:*

##### Plants (5 – 15 minutes):

Prepare to act out how flowers grow for the Pageant. See Activity Sheet 35.

##### Water (5 – 15 minutes):

Prepare to lead a Rainstorm for the Pageant. See Activity Sheet 36 and pp. 85 – 86, *Keepers of the Earth*, (Procedure A: Making Rain).

##### Earth, Life and Death (5 – 15 minutes):

## Session 12: Unity of Earth (Closing Pageant)

Collect earth and life and death related objects to place on the altar during the Pageant. See Activity Sheet 37.

Fire, Air, Sky, Seasons & Animals (15 – 20 minutes):

Make decorative objects to represent Fire, Air, Sky, the Seasons, and Animals to place on the altar during the Pageant. See Activity Sheet 38.

*The Pageant (15 – 20 minutes):*

Guide the presentation of a brief pageant to parents and interested others using The Pageant and Elements Cards.

*Closing Circle: (10 minutes)*

Invite the children to take a bow to their audience, and eat snack (otherwise known as refreshments!)

### Materials:

*Basic:*

Plants: a real or fake flower

*Keepers of the Earth*

Water: glass of water

An enlarged copy of pps. XX and XXI  
(Native North America map) from  
*Keepers of the Earth*

Earth, Life and Death: plastic bag or  
cardboard box

Chalice, candle and matches

Storytelling Chalice Lighting

Fire, Air, Sky, Seasons and Animals:  
two posterboard circles, gold,  
orange, red, green, silver and  
yellow paper, wire, ribbons, tree  
shapes cut out of posterboard,  
masks cut out of posterboard

Altar cloth, picnic tablecloth, or other  
cloth suitable for spreading on  
the ground or floor

“Now I Walk in Beauty” p. 41 in  
*Signature Songbook 3, UUA*

*For Activities/Pageant:*

For all: Elements Cards copied and cut  
out

### Preparation:

Gather needed materials, books, and music. Contact your helpers ahead of time if possible. Learn the story and plan how you will share it with the group. Learn the song or plan how you will share it with the group. Set up your space for the opening circle outdoors or in a central location on Sunday morning before the kids arrive. Set up spaces for the activities you choose to offer. Copy Activity Sheets as needed for helpers.

## Session 12: Unity of Earth (Closing Pageant)

**VERY IMPORTANT:** plan ahead how you will present the Pageant. The simplest thing to do is invite parents to join the class at the end of the session; the most complex would probably be presenting the Pageant as part of a church worship service on the same day or at another time. Publicize the event in whatever way seems appropriate AT LEAST one week ahead of time.

Background for Teachers:

### **About the Lakota**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lakota\\_people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lakota_people)

### **About the world as an organism:**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaia\\_hypothesis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaia_hypothesis)

## Unity of Life Chalice Lighting

We light this chalice for  
all the elements of this world:  
Creation, Fire, Earth, Air, Water,  
Sky, Seasons, Plants, Animals,  
Life, Death,  
People and Stories.

## Activity Sheet 35 – Plants

- Help the children practice moving as if they are seeds growing into flowers while you read the following script:

You are a seed resting in the soil [**children crouch down into as small a ball as they can**]. Slowly you begin to unfold. Your root goes down into the soil and your sprout pushes upward [**children wiggle around a little**]. In a few days your leaves begin to unfold [**children's arms stretch out**] and they poke up out of the soil into the bright, warm sun. You grow taller and taller [**children slowly stand up**]. Your green leaves stretch wider and higher toward the sun and you open your flower face to the sun! [**children reach their arms up high and wiggle their fingers**].

- Be prepared to read the card for Plants (or invite a child to read it) and help the children do this movement during the pageant! Perfection isn't necessary - just fun! Give the flower to the children to place on the altar after they have done their movements.

## Activity Sheet 36 – Water

- Practice the Rain Making activity on pp. 85 – 86, *Keepers of the Earth*, (Procedure A: Making Rain).
- Decide who will read the card for Water, and who will lead the Rainstorm game (if none of the kids feel comfortable doing it by themselves, maybe the adult leader can do it with one or more children).
- Decide who will place the glass of water on the altar.

## Activity Sheet 37 – Earth, Life and Death

- Take the kids outside.
- Help the kids who want to be part of the Earth group find some dirt (collect in plastic bag) and some cool rocks if possible.
- Help the kids who want to be part of the Life & Death group find living and dead things (such as green and brown leaves, grass, cicada shells, etc.)
- Decide who will read the Earth card and who will read the Life & Death card.

## Activity Sheet 38 – Fire, Air, Sky, Seasons and Animals

- Help the kids who want to be in the Fire group make a decorative sun by covering a circle of posterboard with gold, orange, red, and yellow paper.
- Help the kids who want to be in the Air group make a hoop out of wire and attach various ribbons as streamers.
- Help the kids who want to be in the Sky group make a decorative moon by covering a circle of posterboard with silver paper.
- Help the kids who want to be in the Seasons group decorate four tree cut-outs to denote the seasons with no leaves; small, light green leaves; large, full green leaves; and autumn colored leaves.
- Help the kids who want to be in the Animals group decorate masks to represent animals such as dogs, cats, horses, wolves, deer.

## The Pageant

### Leader:

“When the world was young . . .”

“The Lakota people say that in the beginning . . .”

“A long time ago there was no moon . . .”

“When the world was new, long ago . . .”

“Long ago when the world was new . . .”

These are the words which began some of the stories we have shared this summer. All the stories we told were stories about how each piece of the circle of life came to be and what each piece of the circle gives to people today. We do not know for certain how the things that are now came to be - how creation happened and which stories have some truth and which do not. But we do know what happens at the beginning of every day here on our earth: the sun rises!

## **Fire Group:**

The Sun gives us light and heat and energy and makes plants grow! *[Place SUN on altar.]*

## **Leader:**

We know that right now we are standing on the earth, our home!

## **Earth Group:**

Soil and rocks feed plants and support all beings! *[Place DIRT AND ROCKS on altar.]*

## **Leader:**

We know that we are all breathing air!

## **Air Group:**

Air gives the breath of life to living beings! *[Place STREAMERS on altar.]*

**Leader:**

We know that our bodies are made mostly of water!

**Water Group:**

Water quenches thirst and brings life to all plants & animals! *[Lead RAINSTORM and place GLASS OF WATER on the altar.]*

**Leader:**

We know that all of us live together under one sky!

**Sky Group:**

The Stars and the Moon light the night sky, guide the way and bring the tides! *[Place STAR GLITTER & MOON on the altar.]*

**Leader:**

We know that we pass through wonderful seasons!

**Seasons Group:**

Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter bring changes each year: heat, cold, wet, dry, sleep & wakefulness, new life & old! *[Place TREE SHAPES on the altar.]*

**Leader:**

We know that we walk on, eat, wear, and love to look at plants!

**Plants Group:**

Plants use the sunlight and make food and oxygen for other living beings! *[Perform PLANT MOVEMENT and place flower on the altar.]*

**Leader:**

We know that we are not alone when we see our animal brothers and sisters!

**Animal Group:**

Animals feed each other and people, help to pollinate flowers and sow seeds, and bring movement and sounds to the Earth! *[Place ANIMAL MASKS on the altar.]*

**Leader:**

We know that all living beings also die, and that all beginnings are also endings, all endings are also beginnings!

**Life & Death Group:**

Life brings living things where none were before. Death makes room for new life. Life and Death keep the circle of being turning! *[Place LIVE AND DEAD OBJECTS on the altar.]*

**Leader:**

These are the elements of the circle of life on our earth, and each one plays a part in keeping the whole in balance. [*Teach “Now I Walk In Beauty” song.*]

To close, we will go around the circle and each one of us say something which PEOPLE give to the circle of life on earth. I’ll start by saying that “People give stories to life on earth.”

## Elements Cards

<p>The Sun gives us light and heat and energy and makes plants grow!</p>	<p>Soil and Rocks feed plants and support all beings!</p>
<p>Air gives the breath of life to living beings!</p>	<p>Water quenches thirst and brings life to all plants and animals!</p>
<p>The Stars and Moon light the night Sky, guide the way and bring the tides!</p>	<p>Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter bring changes each year: heat, cold, wet, dry, sleep and wakefulness, new life and old!</p>

Session 12: Unity of Earth (Closing Pageant)

Plants use the sunlight and make food and oxygen for other living beings!

Animals feed each other and people, help to pollinate flowers and sow seeds, and bring movement and sounds to the Earth!

Life brings living things where none were before. Death makes room for new life. Life and Death keep the circle of being turning!

**Appendix A:**  
**Making a “Stained**  
**Glass” Window**  
**Covering**

Choose a window to transform into a ‘stained-glass’ type display space. Cut a piece of cardboard from a large box into a frame that you will be able to attach to the window. If your window is very large, you may want to brace the frame across the middle to strengthen the whole arrangement. If it’s not possible to mount the finished craft onto a window, just make a cardboard frame with an opening about 2 x 2 feet square. Paint the front of the frame with black tempura paint to provide a uniform appearance.

With the children, cut out tissue paper or transparent plastic paper to form the background of your image. You may also want to have some additional pieces of black-painted cardboard to subdivide the image if desired.

Use your creativity to cut shapes out of the background paper or plastic to depict the element you are showing on this window. Some examples: star and moon shapes for a sky image, a tree for a plant image, a skeleton for a death image.

Trace around the opening(s) you have cut in the background paper or plastic onto an appropriately colored piece of paper or plastic (i.e., iridescent or white for stars and moons, brown and green for a tree, etc.) Cut out these shapes a little *outside* of the traced lines.

Now, trace around the colored shapes onto stiff black paper or cardstock. Cut a little *outside* AND *inside* the shapes you’ve drawn on the black paper or cardstock, creating an outline of the colored shapes.

Tape the colored shapes onto the *back* of your background paper or plastic in the appropriate spaces, and tape the black paper or cardstock frames onto the *front* of your background paper or plastic, ditto.

When your image is complete, attach the frame to the window you designed it for, or simply hang it in front of a larger window.

*(There is no page 111. Sorry.)*