**Materials you will need to create your Bead Timeline:**

**A small woven basket or box (palm sized)** to slowly draw out your timeline as you are talking

**Beads** – size 6/0 (500 +beads) in assorted colors –to represent 500 generations of people

**Strong flexible string**/**dental floss** – about 5-6 feet long

**4 Large beads**-

A large bead to represent 10000 years ago - Tie this bead on very securely…. It will be holding your entire bead line as you make it. This bead marks the end of the last ice age we had in North America

A large bead to mark about 4500 years ago when Egyptian pyramids were being built –a time which we think of today as ancient history

A large bead to mark 2000 years ago; the time when the calendar we use today started

A large bead to end your timeline; this is the bead you will hold as you pull the timeline out of your basket

You can choose other large bead time markers but don’t over load the timeline with too many large beads. The simplicity of the timeline makes it most effective and adaptable to many stories.

**One bead (the same size as your timeline beads) fastened to a small card-** this bead **represents one generation of people** - I explain to the children that one bead represents 20 years (or from the time a baby is born until that baby grows up and can have a child of their own)…… So, 5 beads are 5 generations or 100 years or a century on your timeline

**A small pin or string with assorted color beads** to represent how many generations your community has existed as a ‘modern’ settlement. Here in the Comox Valley, I use 7 beads to represent the past 140 years since European settlers came to this valley

**How to make your timeline**

Securely tie the large ‘10000 year bead’ onto one end of a string that is about 5-6 feet long.

String 5 beads of one color; choose another color and add 5 more beads; choose another color and continue. Make sure your bead colors have some color contrast so the children can see the centuries passing as the timeline is slowly drawn out of your basket. When you get to 5500 years from starting your timeline add one of the larger beads to represent when the Egyptian pyramids were being built. When you get to the 8000 year mark (or 2000 years from our present time); add other large bead on to represent the calendar we use today. Continue adding 5 beads of each color and work your way up to the present time.

**To Finish** Use another larger bead to securely tie off your timeline – this is the one you will hold as you start drawing your bead line out of a small basket or box.

*Bead timeline story telling created and shared by Suzanne Camp, Courtenay BC*

**Some suggestions for using this bead timeline:**

**Story telling; Resource Management and Conservation; Cultural Knowledge; Traditional local communities; Contemporary local communities**

1. ‘Set the scene’ for oral tradition storytelling –explaining how stories, culture and tradition were passed along from generation to generation through speaking, listening and remembering and speaking, listening and remembering……down through the generations to the present day
2. Talk about how the First People practiced conservation and caring for their resources in a respectful, thoughtful way – using only what was needed –‘Leaving a light footprint on the land’; in comparison to our present day practices creating a ‘heavy footprint on the land’ where we are carelessly using and discarding/polluting our limited earth resources. (This is usually where I hold up my 7 beads/ generations string to show how quickly we have changed our Comox Valley with our heavy footprint)
3. Talk about the People of the Cedar: About 6000 years ago the world had warmed up enough for cedar trees to begin to grow. *Show that place on the time line.* Cedar became so important that it is still known as the ‘Tree of Life’. For thousands of years Northwest Coast peoples have used cedar for ceremonial regalia, homes, canoes, clothing and household items such as rope and basketry.
4. The bead timeline can be adapted to talk about your traditional local communities, your history and your environment to help children understand how long people have lived on the land of your local territory. For instance, here in the Comox Valley, the remains of a vast network of fish weirs can be found along the Courtenay River estuary. Radio carbon dating has established that the age of a least one of the wooden stakes is over 1300 years old, so it shows that aboriginal people have lived and worked in this area for at least that length of time.
5. Show the 10000 year time line and in comparison, show the tiny contemporary time line of your local community: in the case of the Comox Valley it is only 7 beads/generations since settlers arrived to farm, fish, log, establish coal and copper mines and build homes. Talk about how your community looks today – paved roads, bridges, concrete buildings and landfills; all of which have resulted in a very heavy contemporary ‘footprint’ on the land – a footprint that will last for centuries into the future.