

Bead Craft

1. What is a bead?
2. Where did the word “bead” come from?
3. Name some of the materials that are used to make beads.
4. Share at least two interesting facts about the history of beads.
5. Name at least three things you can do with beads.
6. Make four or more different objects with beads.
7. Give one of your bead projects to someone, such as an elderly person. Tell them what you’ve learned about beads and explain what’s special about the gift you have made for them.



Helps:

1. A bead is a small object with a hole in it so that it can be fastened with thread or string. (Most beads are round.)
2. The word “bead” comes from an Old English word—“gebed,” or “bede”—which means “prayer.”
3. Beads can be made out of things like seeds, wood, stone, plastic, glass, metal, ceramic, pearls, shells, berries, beans, ivory, coral, amber, or precious stones.
4. Historical facts about beads include:
 - People made things out of beads in Egypt in Bible times.
 - The world’s first calculator was an abacus, which is made out of beads. It is still used in many countries.
 - Beads were used as money by American Indians and other native peoples. “Wampum,” or Indian money beads, were often made out of shells. Indians used beads to trade with the Pilgrims.
 - Some Indians used porcupine quills or pieces of bone for needles to string beads on thread made out of horse hair or cotton.
 - People who are Catholic or Buddhist often use beads to help them remember and count their prayers.
 - Beads have been used to decorate clothes for more than 400 years.
5. Some things that you can do with beads are:
 - Glue them onto something for decoration.
 - Perle (melt beads).
 - String them together.
 - Use them to trade, or for play money.
 - Decorate clothing.
 - Make pot holders or other things to decorate your home.
 - Count things.
6. Suggested bead projects:
 - String beads onto a pipe cleaner and shape it into a heart, cross, or shepherd’s rod.
 - Sew beads on piece of cloth in the shape of your name or initials.
 - Trace a picture or design onto heavy paper or cloth. Glue or sew beads onto it.
 - Make a refrigerator magnet using beads. (Glue them onto a clothespin or piece of felt, or string them on thread or wire.)
 - Decorate a bean bag with beads.
 - Sew beads on shoes or moccasins.
 - String beads onto thread or ribbon and wrap them around the outside of a picture frame.
 - Make a sculpture by stringing beads onto copper wire and shaping it.