

# Interfaith Education for Kids

Age-Appropriate Narratives,  
Crafts, and Activities from  
World Creation Stories



NAIN Connect: Aug. 6-10, 2017

Vicki Michela Garlock, Ph.D.

Nurture Program Coordinator and Curriculum Specialist

Jubilee! Community Church, Asheville, NC

Founder, Faith Seeker Kids

**Coexistence and Tolerance**



**True Religious Pluralism**

# From our Preschool- Kindergarten Classroom

Then the Lord said to Moses, “I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, in order that people may hear when I speak with you and so trust you ever after.” (Exodus 19:9a)

Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, because the Lord had descended upon it in fire; the smoke went up like the smoke of a kiln, while the whole mountain shook violently.” (Exodus 19:18)

# **Millennials (born in 80s & 90s)**

- **Empowered**
- **Co-Creators**
- **Authentic**

# **Age Groups**

- **Preschool-Kindergarten**
- **Lower Elementary**
- **Upper Elementary**
- **Middle School**

# Themes

- **Peace**
- **Compassion**
- **Embracing the Darkness**
- **Awe and Wonder**
- **World Creation Stories**

# Narratives

- **Familiar Pedagogical Technique – Jewish/Christian**
- **Familiar Pedagogical Technique...uh...Everywhere**
  - **Tales of the Panchatantra (Ancient India)**
  - **Jataka Tales (Buddhist)**
  - **Hadith and other tales of the Prophet Muhammad (Islam)**
  - **Folktales of the Indigenous Traditions (Native American, Aboriginal and Maori, Sub-Saharan Africa)**
  - **Stories about the 10 human gurus from the Sikh tradition**
  - **Stories from the Hasidic Rebbes of the Ukraine and Poland**
  - **Tales of the Sufi dervishes and mystics**

# Narratives (cont'd.)

- **Storytelling a Quintessentially Human Endeavor**

*On the Origin of Stories* (Belknap, 2010) by Brian Boyd

**Storytelling may confer an evolutionary advantage for the species by offering a method for focusing attention, highlighting our commonalities, and promoting social cohesion**



# **Narratives (cont'd.)**

- **Story Context/Vocabulary Provides Additional Learning Opportunities**
  - **Hasidic Tales**
  - **Sikh Tales**
  - **Hindu Tales**
- **Kids (and Adults) Love Them!**

# Adamah V'shamayim



Adamah...V'shamayim  
Chom ha'aish...Tsilil ha'mayim  
Ani margish...zot b'gu-fi  
B'ruchi...b'nishmati

Heya, heyah, heyah, heyah, heyah, heyah, heyah, ho

Dry earth...Warm fire  
Cold wind...deep water  
I can feel it in my body,  
I can feel it in my soul

# World Creation Stories

- Background Information
- Story Itself

## *How the World Came from an Egg*

This story starts out with one, very simple thing. An egg! But this was no normal egg. This was the biggest egg you have ever seen. It was bigger than the tallest building in the world and wider than the biggest canyon in the world. No one knows where this egg came from. It was just there.

One day, after just sitting there for thousands of years, the egg began to crack. The first little crack turned into a bigger crack. And that bigger crack grew wider and wider. Eventually, the two halves of the egg split clean apart!

Have you ever cracked open an egg before?  
What normally comes out of an egg?

- **Craft**
- **Activity**



# **Table of Contents**

- **How the World Came to Be**
- **Earth's Innumerable Attributes**
- **Creation Care**

# How the World came to Be

Going from “nothing” to nearly “everything”

- **Phan Ku**
- **Genesis 1**
- **Earth on Turtle’s Back**
- **Big Bang Theory**



# How the World Came to Be

## Classification Scheme

- **Primordial Egg**
- **World Parent**
- ***Ex Nihilo***
- **Dismemberment**



**Quiz Time!!**

# Earth's Innumerable Attributes

## **Native American**

- How Rabbit got Wisdom
- Why the Owl Lives away from the People

## **Aboriginal/Maori**

- How the Kangaroo got her Pouch
- Why Frogs can only Croak
- How the Crocodile got its Scales

## **Native African**

- Why the Hawk Catches Chickens
- Why the Hippopotamus Lives in the Water
- Why Monkeys Live in Trees
- Why the Turtle has a Hard Cover
- Why the Elephant is Large in Front and Small Behind

- Why the Praying Mantis has a Thin Belly
- How Crab got his Shell
- Why Tortoise is Bald
- Why the Lizard Bobs its Head
- How the Hyena's Fur became Striped
- How Anansi got his Bald Head
- Why Anansi is Very Thin in the Middle
- Why Anansi Hides in Dark Corners
- Why Anansi Eats Flies, Moths, and Mosquitoes

# A Few Examples

- **How We Got the Sun/Daylight**  
**Grandmother Spider (Nat. Amer./Creek)**  
**How the Crow Brought Daylight (Inuit)**



# A Few More Examples

- **Animal Tales**

**Butterflies (Nat. Amer./Papago)**

**How Kangaroo Got Pouch (Aust. Abor.)**

**Why Snake Has No Legs (Afr./Ghana)**



# Creation Care Stories

- **Vedic/Hindu**
  - Panchatantra
  - Deities
    - Varaha the Boar



- **Buddhist**
  - Jataka Tales
    - Brave Little Parrot