

# KID-FRIENDLY FISH BEADS

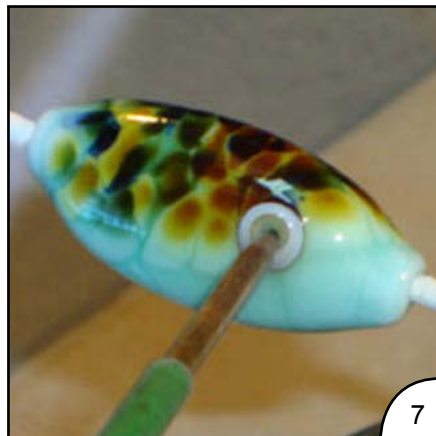
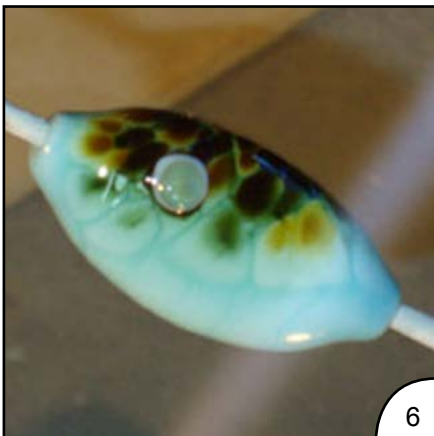
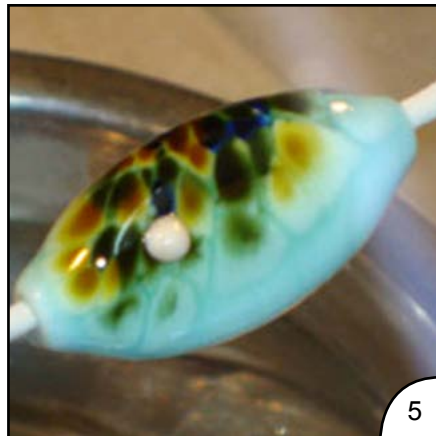
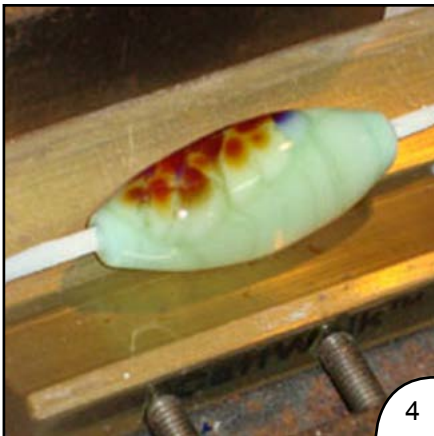
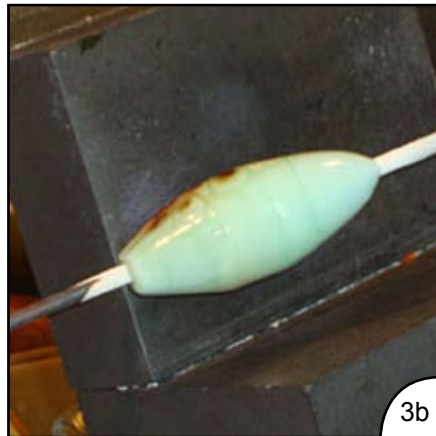
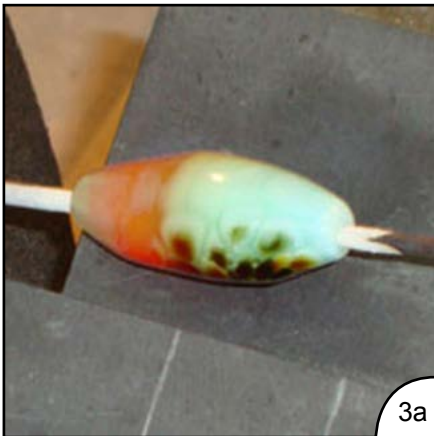
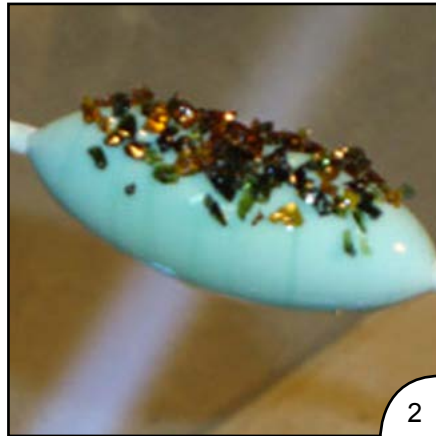
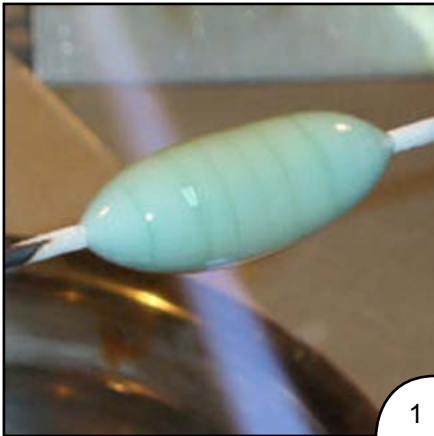
By Diane Woodall

Kids love fish beads, but many designs are just too delicate for the “love” children shower upon them. This bead was designed especially for the Beads of Courage program and is sturdy enough for children. I must warn you, however, that making fish beads is addictive.



## TOOLS AND SUPPLIES:

- ▣ Marver
- ▣ Knife or shaping tool
- ▣ Tweezers for pulling stringer
- ▣ Parallel mashers
- ▣ Razor tool
- ▣ Effetre Light Sky Blue (224)
- ▣ Effetre Light Ivory (264)
- ▣ Effetre Light Aquamarine transparent (038)
- ▣ [Sea Breeze frit](#) from Glass Diversions



**Step 1:** Wind on a footprint as wide as your finished bead. If you are using an expensive color like Opal Yellow or a silver glass, you can make the core in clear and encase in the more expensive color.

**Step 2:** Dip one side of your bead in frit. This will become the top of the fish. You can also roll the whole bead in frit, but I prefer to decorate the top and bottom of the fish with two different frits, or a combination of frit and stripes or dots.

**Steps 3a and 3b:** Melt in the frit and then marver the bead so that the ends are puckered. Here I'm using my torch marver, but you can use a handheld marver if that is more comfortable for you.

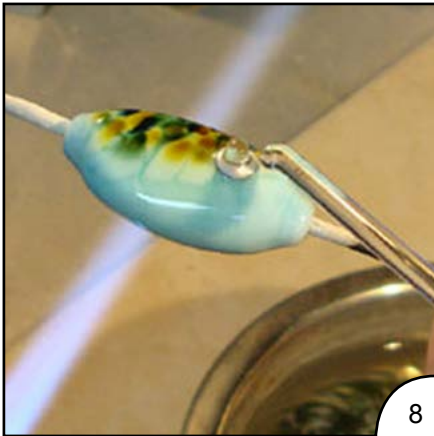
**Step 4:** To flatten the body of the fish I use a Cattwalk large crunch press, but you can also use parallel mashers.

**Step 5:** After the bead is pressed, it's time to make the eyes. I made the eyes with ivory and aquamarine. Aquamarine over ivory turns green, and this color combo is very effective for fish eyes. Start with a small dot of ivory and melt it flat.

**Step 6:** Place a small dot of aquamarine over the ivory and melt that flat. I like to press it with the flat side of my knife. Don't forget to keep the rest of the bead warm.

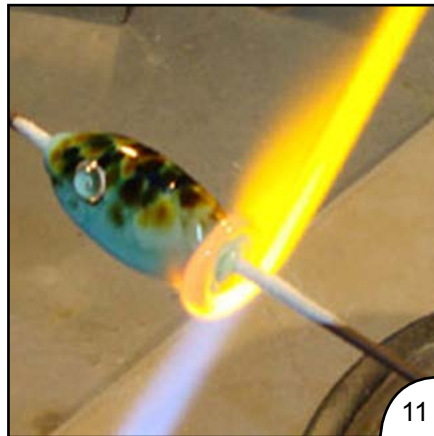
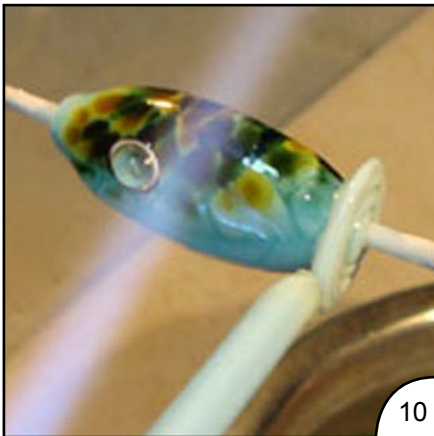
**Step 7:** Spot heat the eye, and using a poking tool, poke the eye as if you were making a plunged eye bead.





**Step 8:** Place a dot of clear over the eye, trapping a little bubble beneath the glass.

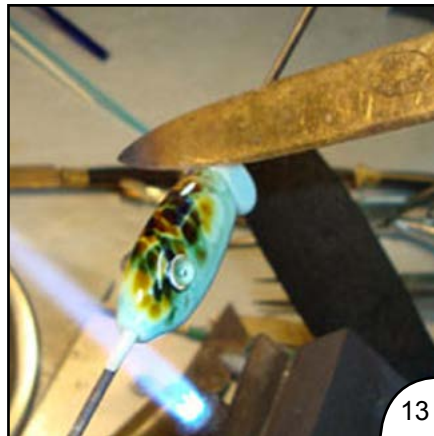
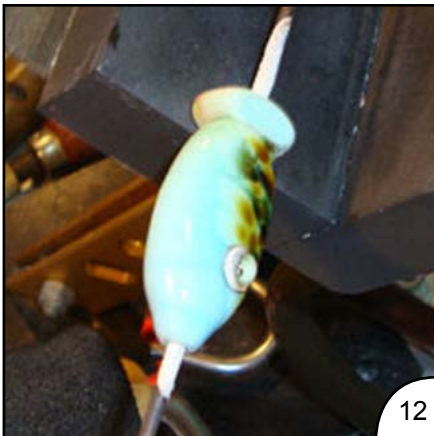
**Step 9:** Here is what the finished eye looks like. I have also made fish using murrinis for the eyes, and they work well too.



**Step 10:** The next step is to form the tail. Start by winding on a disk at the end of the bead, parallel to the base bead.

**Step 11:** Melt the disk until it rounds up a bit.

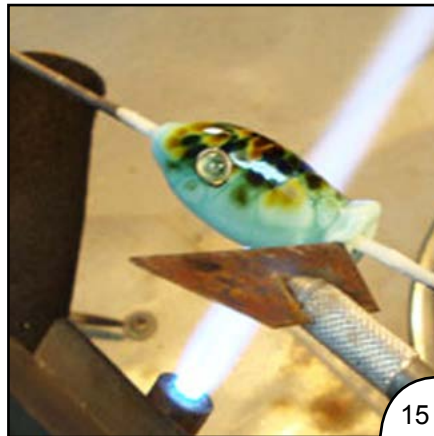
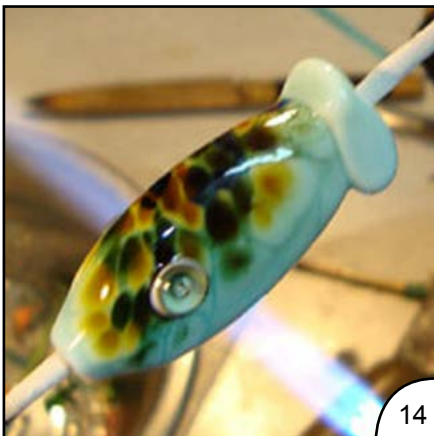
**Step 12:** Gently press the disk onto your marver, flattening both sides. You can also use parallel mashers for this step.

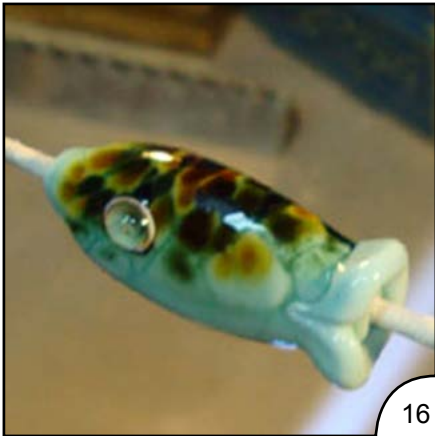


**Step 13:** Using the flat side of your knife or shaping tool, gently press the tail toward the mandrel.

**Step 14:** This is the shape you want. Remember to keep your bead warm.

**Step 15:** Once you have both sides shaped, you are ready to define the tail. Heat the tail near the mandrel, and using a razor tool or rake, gently pull the tail in towards the body.





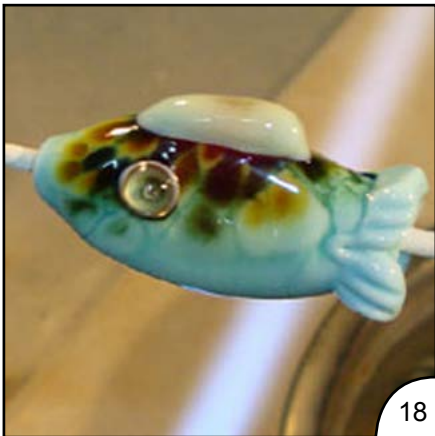
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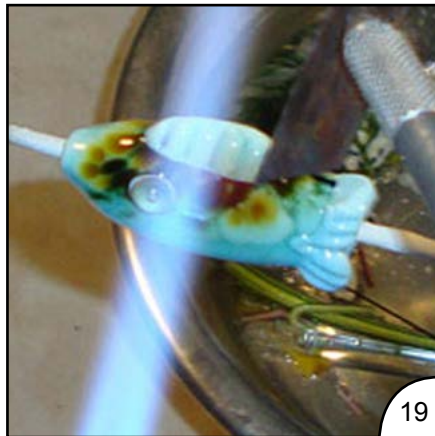
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**Step 16:** This is the shape you want – and remember to keep flashing your bead in the flame to keep it warm.

**Step 17:** To define the tail, use your razor tool to press grooves into the tail, heating one section at a time.



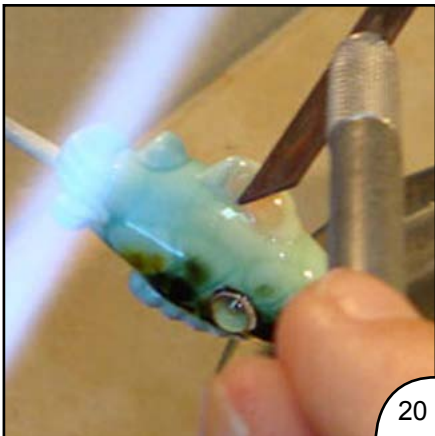
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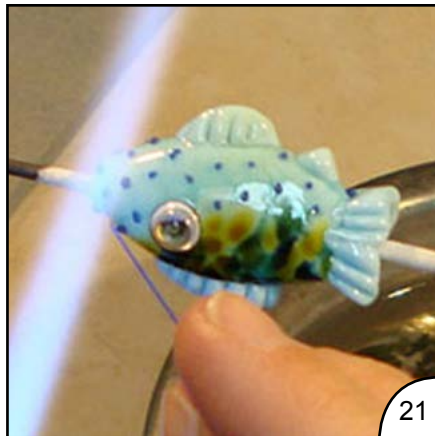
19

**Step 18:** Now it's time to add the fins. Start by applying a swipe or two of glass on top of the fish to create the dorsal fin and melt gently until it is well-adhered.

**Step 19:** Using your razor tool, gently press grooves into the fin, being careful not to overheat the fin. Flip the fish and press the grooves on the other side. You may have to go back and adjust the first side.



20



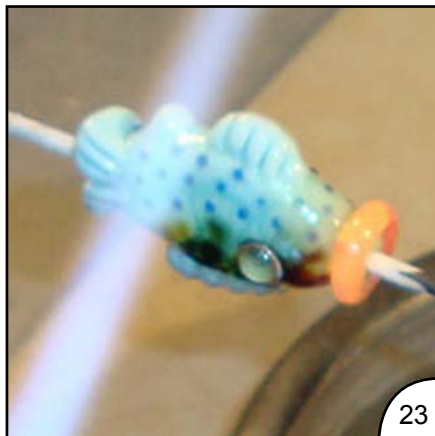
21

**Step 20:** Add a pelvic fin and anal fin and define the pelvic fin the way you did the dorsal fin. Try to keep all of the fins small and not too thin. Remember, these beads are for children and have to be durable.

**Step 21:** Add small cobalt blue dots using a hair-thin stringer and carefully melt them in. Because these dots are so small, they will melt quickly, and this is why I do this step after adding the fins.



22

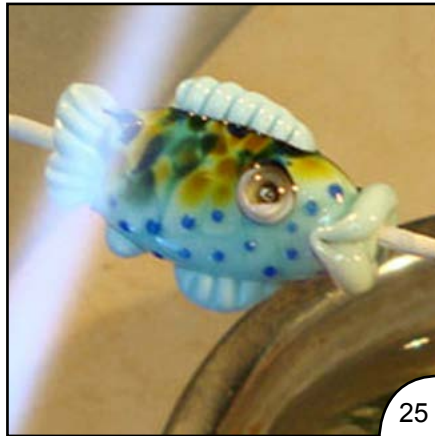
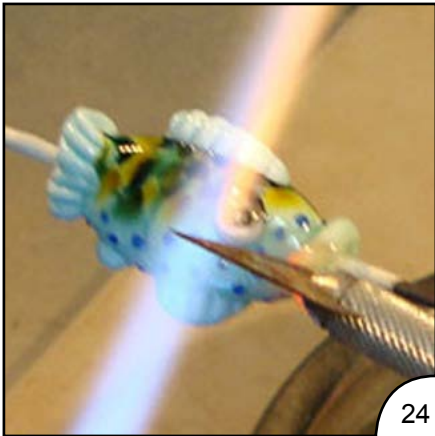


23

**Step 22:** Now our fish needs some lips. Wind on a disk as you did when you made the tail.

**Step 23:** Melt carefully until the lips round out a bit. You can make the lips as large as you want by making the disk larger.





**Step 24:** Using a razor tool, nudge the glass toward the bead.

**Step 25:** The lips should look like this. Pucker up dahling!

**Step 26:** The last step is to add the pectoral fin. To make it simply swipe on a small amount of glass on the side of the fish and, using your razor tool, press grooves into the fin angling up and toward the tail. And your fish is done.



Below are some photos of other fish I've made. The possibilities are endless.





