



Long Activity
Ages 9–12
30 minutes

Drums from Recycled Material

Description

Make drums using recycled material and beat out a rhythm as a group.

Competencies

- Teamwork
- Social responsibility
- Creative expression

Materials

- Balloons
- Empty, clean tin cans
- Rubber bands or duct tape
- Scissors
- Craft sticks, wooden chopsticks, or dowels (for drumsticks)
- Optional: uncooked rice, pasta, pebbles, or any small objects to shake
- Optional: access to computers with speakers
- Optional: cell phone or recording device

Implementation

1. Optional: As a group, read the advanced picture book, *Ada's Violin: The Story of the Recycled Orchestra of Paraguay*
2. Blow up the balloon and then allow it to deflate, which stretches it out
3. Cut off the blowing tube end of the balloon
4. Optional: if you want to make a drum that rattles, add some rice, pasta, or pebbles to the tin can at this point
5. Stretch the balloon over the rim of a tin can and secure it tightly with rubber bands or duct tape
6. Optional: for extra durability, add a second balloon over top of the first
7. Participants can use the wooden chopsticks, craft sticks, or their hands to play on the balloon side of the drum, or flip it over to play on the tin

8. Divide the participants into two groups
 - a) Have the instructor or one participant count 1, 2, 3, 4 at a comfortable, consistent pace and repeat
 - b) Teach a simple beat to one group (for example, play on the instrument when the instructor counts the number 2 and 4 beats)
 - c) Then teach a different simple beat to another group (for example, only play the instrument on the number 3 beat)
 - d) Allow the groups to play simultaneously
 - e) After participants get used to their musical pattern, see if they continue without the instructor counting and stay on beat
 - f) Can the groups come up with their own beat and song?
9. Optional:
 - a) Encourage the group to write a song and use your cell phone or another device to record it and then play it back for them
 - b) If you have a computer or laptop with speakers, access the free [drumbit](#) app for inspiration or allow participants to each write a song
 - c) Talking points can include the following:
 - i. A music *sequencer* is used to create a pattern for an individual instrument that can be combined with patterns of other instruments to create a song
 - ii. There are hardware and software sequencers to create complicated musical performances

Book Suggestions

Ada's Violin: The Story of the Recycled Orchestra of Paraguay by Susan Hood

Respect Our World: Sustainability by Ramona Heikel

Images and Templates

