

RAFT IDEAS

Topics: Sound,
Instruments, Rhythm

Materials List

(per pair)

- ✓ 4 Caps
- ✓ 6-10 small pony beads, 8 paper clips, sand, salt, or other small hard objects
- ✓ Tape, masking, transparent, or electrical

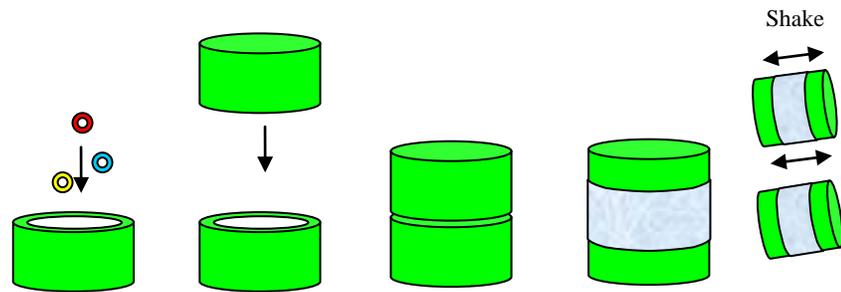
This activity can be used to teach:

- Senses (Next Generation Science Standards: Grade 4, Life Science, 1-2)
- Sound (Next Generation Science Standards: Grade 1, Physical Science, 4-1 & 4-4)
- Science & Engineering Practices (Next Generation Science Standards: Grades K-4)
- Explore and experience musical ideas and concepts (National Music Standards: Creating, Grades Pre K-4)
- Fine Motor Skills (Early Education: Desired Results Dev. Profile (DRDP-R), Physical Development, 40)



CAP MARACAS

Exploring Sound and Rhythm While Shaking Things Up!



Explore rhythms using these simple maracas in an activity that appeals to both auditory and kinesthetic learners.

Assembly

1. Place 3-5 pony beads, 4 paper clips, or a small amount of sand or salt into a cap.
2. Place an empty cap on top, so that the open edges meet.
3. Wrap tape around the caps where the edges touch to secure the caps together.
4. Repeat steps 1 to 3 to assemble the second maraca.

To Do and Notice

Caution – if a maraca comes apart during use the small pieces could then present a choking hazard.

(Teacher note: This activity can be used in a group or at stations, with students exploring rhythms on their own.)

1. Hold a cap maraca in each hand and shake with quick up and down motions to explore sounds and specific rhythms.
2. Optional: have a leader (teacher or student) play a rhythm with the cap maracas for the others to copy.

The Content Behind the Activity

Sound is caused by vibrations that travel in compression waves through the air (the medium) and into the ear. After hitting the eardrum, the vibration is transmitted through bone, fluid, and hair movements until nerve impulses are sent to the brain's auditory cortex to be analyzed and interpreted.

Generally, young learners explore music with their voices and with simple instruments that focus on rhythm and usually make just 1 or 2 notes: maracas, castanets, triangles, drums. Rhythm is the heartbeat of music. Regular, steady beats are most common in popular music today, while more complex rhythms are found in dance forms from around the world:

- Waltz, Foxtrot, and Greek Syrtó: Slow Quick Quick, Slow Quick Quick
- Rumba and Polka: Quick Quick Slow, Quick Quick Slow
- Swing: Slow Slow Quick Quick, Slow Slow Quick Quick

Variation: Older students can try more complex rhythms and patterns by following “right” or “left” instructions as well as rhythm instructions: L L R R L L

Taking it Further

Investigate sound and instruments with some other RAFT Idea sheets, including *Sound Shakers*, *Straw Oboes*, *Glove-a-Phone*, and *Pan Pipes*.

Web Resources (Visit www.raft.net/raft-idea?isid=552 for more resources!)