



PMC's FUN WITH DRUMS – LESSON PLAN

'Make Your Own Shakers and Cowbell'



By Dr. Craig Woodson

Overview

Using simple tools and easily available materials, students young and old, along with parents and/or teachers can make great sounding percussion instruments for use at home and in the classroom. In addition to learning how to play music, students will learn how these skills relate to science, technology, engineering, art, math (STEAM).

Audience focus ages/grades – This project can typically be made by children ages 9 to 13 without much assistance. Students ages 6 to 8 will need some older student or adult help.

Impact of this video – This video will stimulate interest in drumming alone and with others by providing simple music making activities based on the building of easy-to-make instruments in the home. It also provides connections to the STEAM approach.

STEAM Connections

Science – When you make the Shaker, you can experiment with different amounts and types of Mixture and will find out what that means for the sound. Try various types and sizes of cans for the Cowbell.

Technology – The Styrofoam is made of small 'expanded polystyrene beads' that are stuck together, These vibrate in a way similar to the traditional gourd material for shakers.

Engineering – The oval shape of the Cowbell is called a 'flanged' opening that makes the sound lower and more like a cowbell.

Art – The Styrofoam is easy to decorate with permanent markers. Also colorful tape can be used for decoration.

Math – When you play music for these instruments, experiment with patterns of numbers for each of the various sounds.

Required resources/instruments – You will need:

FIVE SHAKERS

Materials

1. Small Styrofoam cups - 5
2. Cup lids – 3
3. Soda aluminum cans – 3
4. 'Mixture' of rice and split peas or lentils
5. Masking tape

Tools

1. Scissors to cut tape
2. Tablespoon to measure mixture
3. Permanent markers for decoration

COWBELL

Materials

1. Soup can – small or large optional
2. Dowel 3/8" x 10" or pencil for a beater

Tools

1. Pliers to crimp sharp edges of the can
2. Hammer – small (optional) to flatten sharp edges
3. Can opener – manual or electric
4. Permanent markers for decoration
5. Soap and water to clean the cans



PMC's FUN WITH DRUMS – LESSON PLAN

'Make Your Own Shakers and Cowbell'

By Dr. Craig Woodson



Set up for lesson

Instruments/supplies - If possible, use a store-bought shaker and cowbell for comparison to your homemade instruments. Get tools and materials listed above ready to make your Shaker and Cowbell.

Resources – Go to www.PlayDrums.com for more information about playing drums, and go to www.RootsofRhythm.net for similar drum making projects.

Lesson Plan

Instructions that go with the 10-minute video found at www.PlayDrums.com.

Video Steps for Making the Can Drum

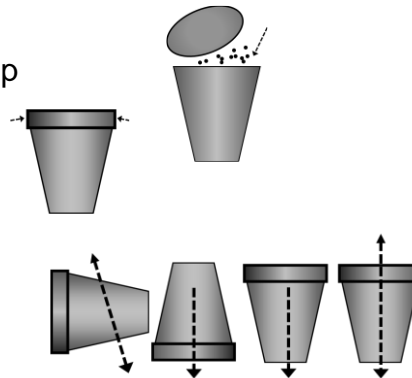
Shaker – Single Cup

1a - Single cup - add rice, split peas, lentils to cup

1b. Tape lid on cup around circumference

1c. Play single cup shaker

- Middle – side to side
- Top – low sound only
- Bottom – high sound only
- Top and bottom – low and high sound

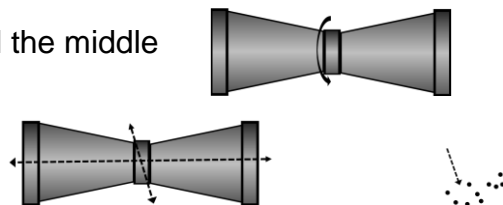


Shaker – Double Cup #1

2a. Make 2 single shakers and tape around the middle

2b. Play this shaker

- Middle – high sound
- Ends – both low sound only



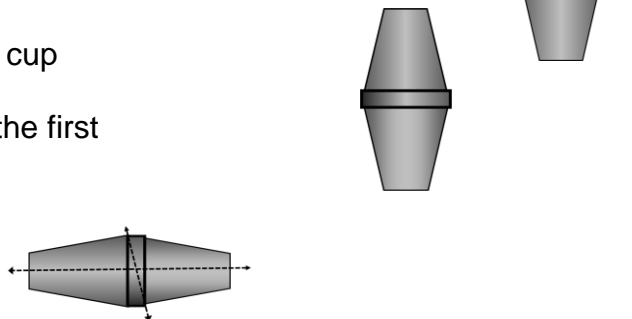
Shaker – Double Cup #2

3a – Double cups add mixture to one cup

3b. Carefully attach a second cup to the first one with tape around the middle

3c. Play this Shaker

- Middle – low sound
- Ends – both high sounds



Shaker – Single Can

4a – Soda can shaker wash and dry opened can. Take off opener tab.





PMC's FUN WITH DRUMS – LESSON PLAN

'Make Your Own Shakers and Cowbell'

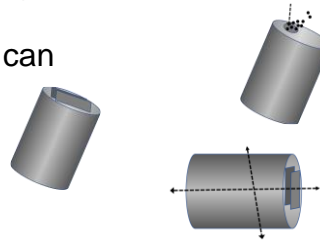
By Dr. Craig Woodson



4b. Add mixture of rice, beans/lentils to dried can

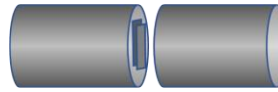
4c. Tape over opening

4d. Play the soda can shaker like shaker 1-3

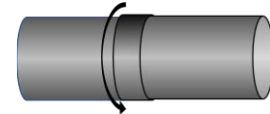


Shaker – Double Can

5a. Prepare two soda can shakers to join



5b. Join the two can shakers with tape around the middle



Cowbell

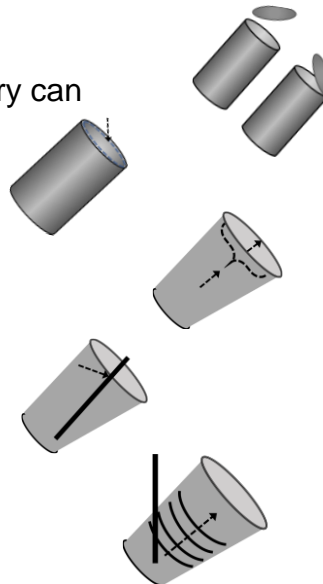
6a. Open soup can/enjoy contents, wash dry can

6b. If needed, use pliers/hammer to flatten can opening's sharp edge

6c. Carefully press our shoe onto the can's open end to make it oval shaped

6d. Play the Cowbell – hold the can by the closed end and hit the open end

6e. Scrape the Cowbell – hold the closed end and scrape the can's side ridges



3. Questions to stimulate and nurture your interest in:

- Music – Make a single shaker with other materials, what would it sound like? How about a different mixture? How about making a shaker with larger cups?
- Rhythm – Can you play two different shakers at the same time? One, then the other, then both at the same time.
- Percussion – This shaker has at least three different sounds, a low, medium and high sound. What happens when you hit the cowbell in many different places, for example on the can's bottom?
- Playing shakers and cowbells – If your friends made shakers and cowbells do you think they would sound the same as yours? Are there other ways to play your shaker or cowbell?

Written by,

Craig Woodson, Ph.D.