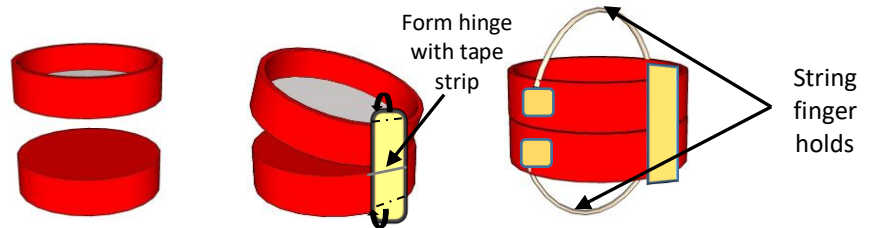


I've Got Rhythm

A Simple Way to Make Castanets for Young Learners



This activity gives preschool age children an opportunity to explore rhythms using castanets or clackers played with the hands. This activity appeals to both auditory and tactile learners.

Activity Challenge

Make simple castanets and use them to create rhythmic patterns.

Preparation

1. Review the materials list and gather the needed items.
2. Tear off two strips of tape about 3 inches long.
3. Cut two pieces of string about 3 1/2 inches long.

To Do

1. Stack 2 caps so their flattest sides touch.
2. Fasten the 2 caps together with 1 strip of tape to form a hinge. Fold the top and bottom of the tape over and under the caps (as shown above).
3. Place the ends of a piece of string on opposite sides of one cap and secure with tape (shown above). Repeat for the other cap. These serve as finger holds for the castanet.
4. Repeat steps 1-3 to make another castanet.
5. Insert the forefinger and middle finger into one finger hold and the thumb into the other finger hold of each castanet.
6. Play the castanets by opening and closing the caps so the flat sides can be "clacked" together.

Observations

Perform and compare these rhythms (clack patterns):

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

Extensions

- Try to perform other familiar or new rhythms.
- Play imitation games using the castanets.

The Content behind the Activity

Sound is caused by vibrations that travel in compression waves through the air (the medium) and into the ear. Once hitting the eardrum, the sound is sent to the brain's auditory cortex where it is analyzed and interpreted. Rhythm is the heartbeat of music. Regular, steady beats are most common in popular music today, but many common world dance forms have more complex rhythms.

Material Needed

- Milk jug plastic caps, or other small bottle caps
- Tape (sticky)
- String
- Scissor

Grade Range

Pre-K

Topics/Skills

Science: Observation, Sounds

Math: Patterns, Numbers

Arts: Music Exploration

Learning Standards

NGSS: [Wave Properties](#);

Desired Results Developmental

Profile (DRDP): [Physical](#)

[Development, Visual/Performing Arts, Cognition](#)

Duration

15-20 minutes

Prep Time

5 minutes