

Hand Drum



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Echo chant By M'Lou Speranza – BBCD#4, Track #52 - Tune – Army Sound Off!

Before using instruments, it is very helpful to have preschoolers become familiar with the “Stop and Go” chant and visual to help with self-regulation, (See www.rcsdk12.org/prek/blocks and look under “Song Cards” for the “Stop and Go Chant.”) A second adult should be present to support the children when introducing the drums so everyone feels successful. Try to gather enough drums to have 2 children on a drum, or if you have a group of about 18 children, you can have 6 play at a time while the others keep the beat on their legs. Have your “Stop” and “Go” music symbol card handy. Below is the process I usually use to introduce the drums:

- I show children the picture on this song card and then why they think we call these “hand drums” to get them thinking. I show them a hand drum and I talk about how the “head” of the hand drum is thin, and that is why we don’t use sticks like they do on some of the drums we see on TV, at church, etc. We also talk about its shape and anything else the children notice.*
- I tell the children that we’ll be learning a song about the drums. I establish steady beat tapping our legs and I ask children to “copy my words,” and I begin the chant. The second adult needs to do the echo to support children. We do this twice through.*
- If sharing drums, I model with a child or another adult how to share a drum by placing the drum **on the floor** between us. I ask children if they think it would be fair if I held the drum and show how my partner would have to lean way over to reach it. This sense of “fairness” usually works pretty well, but remember that it’s normal for preschoolers to need LOTS of reminders!*
- I model how to make the sound of the “wind” (by rubbing the drum) and the “rain” (by wiggling our fingers on the drum) and ask children to make these sounds while I pass out the drums. I ask them to stop when I hold up the red music symbol sign. (Note: I never put a new instrument in front of preschool children and tell them not to touch it!)*
- I alternate between having them make the sound of the “rain” and “wind” to increase their listening skills and get them focused. Then I hold up the red music symbol card or sometimes I go right into the next step below.*
- We establish steady beat tapping the drum and I ask them to “copy my words” again for the chant, repeating it until they know it fairly well. Note: On the CD, you’ll hear the original words for line 4, “Or tap, tap, tap to make a sound.” Using the newer lyrics below gives children three ways to play the drum (COR: Y, level 4) and they may very well think of other ways to play it as well.*
- To offer choice to the children and allow for creativity, I often follow up with “Wheels on the Bus.” For each verse, I ask children how they might play their drums, i.e. often for the wipers going swish swish swish, children will do a back and forth motion on the drum.*

COR Advantage Items: I – Gross Motor Skills, N – Phonological Awareness, T – Geometry, Y - Music, Z - Movement

Use your hand to keep the beat, (*children echo*)

Oh, the hand drum sounds so sweet. (*children echo*)

You can rub it round and round, (*children echo*)

Or wiggle your fingers to make a sound. (*children echo*)