



## Curriculum Study Guide

[www.alexandthekaleidoscope.com](http://www.alexandthekaleidoscope.com)

Alex Mitnick, host of the Emmy® Award winning children's TV show *Alex & the Kaleidoscope*, is your trusted friend & guide on a journey that leads to the treasures of the world. Use this study guide along with the CDs and website to prepare your students for an adventure filled hour of singing, moving, dancing, fun facts and celebration with Alex & The Kaleidoscope!

### What is a Kaleidoscope?

A kaleidoscope is a tube of mirrors containing loose colored beads, pebbles, or other small colored objects. The viewer looks in one end and light enters the other end, reflecting off the mirrors. As the tube is rotated, the tumbling of the colored objects presents the viewer with varying colors and patterns. Any combination of objects shows up as a beautiful pattern because of the reflections in the mirrors.



### Why is it called Alex & The Kaleidoscope?

The Kaleidoscope is a unique way of seeing the world. It is the world through the eyes of a child where everything is new and interesting and discovery and wonder are waiting around every corner. Alex's songs unfold like storybooks, captivating young minds, drawing them into adventures, stirring their imagination.

## **Included in this study guide**

- **An introduction to the band**
- **Suggested activities for use with the songs**
- **Fun facts!**
- **Song lyrics to help you sing along**
- **Word searches**
- **Craft activity for making percussion instruments out of recycled materials**
- **Fun musical activities you can do in your own classroom**
- **Kaleidoscope coloring sheets**

## Who's in the Band?



Alex Mitnick sings and plays the guitar. He also composes all of the music that the band plays. The guitar is a musical instrument that typically has six strings. The size and shape of the neck and the base of the guitar also vary, producing a variety of sounds. The two primary families of guitar types are the electric guitars and the acoustic guitars.



Tony Flagiello plays the drum set.. A drum set (also drum kit or trap set) is a collection of drums, cymbals and sometimes other percussion instruments, such as cowbells, wood blocks, triangles, chimes, or tambourines, arranged for convenient playing by a single person.

1 - Cymbal; 2 - Floor Tom; 3 - Toms; 4 - Kick Drum;  
5 - Snare Drum; 6 - Hi-Hat



Samantha Rise and Najwa Parkins sing & dance  
Follow their moves during the show!





Keith Snyder plays the bass. The electric bass guitar (right) is a stringed instrument played primarily with the fingers or thumb (either by plucking, slapping, popping, tapping, or thumping). The bass guitar is similar in appearance and construction to an electric guitar, but with a larger body, a longer neck and scale length, with a four, five, or six strings. The double bass, also called the upright bass or contrabass, is the largest and lowest-pitched bowed string instrument in the modern symphony orchestra.



John Stenger plays the keyboard. A keyboard instrument is any musical instrument played using a musical keyboard. The most common of these is the piano. Other widely used keyboard instruments include various types of organs as well as other mechanical, electromechanical and electronic instruments such as synthesizers.



## **About the Songs (Songs for program selected from this list)**

**I'm So Glad** - VIDEO AVAILABLE ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL. Learn the Nigerian folk song "*Fum-wah Alafia Ashe Ashe*" and have the children sing it together. Translation: "*Give me peace, let it be so.*" The positive affirmation of experiencing music together will set the tone for communication and participation throughout the program.

**Mama's In The Kitchen** - Get out your air guitars and your best dance moves and follow along for each line of the chorus. During the verses pick a dance leader from amongst your students and have everyone copy their moves. Choose several different leaders throughout the song.

**Insect Tourists** - Can you identify all the insects named in this song? Tip toe to the beat during the choruses and be sure to say "*Cool!, Awesome! and Wow!*" along with the kids on the recording.

**Vegetable Garden Town** - Get out your hoes and rakes. During the chorus "shovel" on the beat digging in on the down beat and throwing the dirt over your shoulder on the upbeat. Learn the words to the chorus and sing along. Use hand movements and finger play to act out the verses pretending to plant seeds, dig in the dirt and sprout up rising to the sun.

**Peachtree** - VIDEO AVAILABLE ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL. Learn the lyrics to this adventure of the imagination or read along like a story book listening to the song or watching the video.

**Tell Me A Story** - Celebrate reading with this easy going song. Echo the words on the chorus and act out the lyrics using small hand movements and finger play.

**Kangaroo!** - Winner of *Best Song For Children* from The Independent Music Awards, this song will have the children on their feet dancing to the upbeat rhythms of the band. Have children bounce to the beat every time they hear the word "boing". When played live this song includes call and response rhythm games that engage the audience in interactive play with the band.

**Recycle** - VIDEO AVAILABLE ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL. An anthem for our modern age when recycling must become a way of life. Includes many of the everyday things in our lives that can be reused or recycled. Percussion instruments made from recycled objects can be played while listening to or singing this song.

**Tyrannosaurus** - What does a dinosaur say? ROAR! March to the beat of this rocking song. Half time on the verus and double time on the chorus. After each chorus jump to the beat and say "ROAR!" every time you hear it in the song.

**Crocodile** - This cheerful song describes the gruesome behavior of a crocodile while it captures and eats it's food. A fun song to play air guitar too and to practice counting on the beat. 1... 2... 3... SNAP!!

**Oh, Won't You Sit Down** - Time to get up and dance to this African American spiritual. On the words, "Oh, won't you sit down" have children squat or bend their knees followed by a jump with hands up high in the sky singing "Lord, I can't sit down!". Walking to the beat in a circle for the versus is so much fun.

**Get On Board** - VIDEO AVAILABLE ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL. Make a train of children with each child placing their arms on the child in front of them. There can be several trains in one group of children. Set up an obstacle course in the space with chairs or other furniture and have each train walk around the course listening to this song.

**The Tongue Song** - Tongues taste *and* form words! One goes out and one goes in. Have children name their favorite foods and why they love them. Then, have the children discuss why it is so important that we use words. If we are upset, it is important to use your words and not your fists. Have children offer examples of words they have been told that both make them feel good and hurt their feelings. What did they say? Why did it hurt? Why did it make you happy? Take note of the similarities in responses.

**Music** - Move to the words of this song. Each verse describes a specific move for children to follow. Clap along to the beat of the chorus.

**Together** - Sing this song together! Have children sit in a circle and put their arms around each other's shoulders swaying to the beat. This is what it is all about - being together.

## FUN FACTS ABOUT KANGAROOS

- **Kangaroos are marsupial animals that are found in Australia as well as New Guinea.**
- There are four different kangaroo species, the red kangaroo, eastern grey kangaroo, western grey kangaroo and antilopine kangaroo.
- **Kangaroos can hop around quickly on two legs or walk around slowly on all four.**
- Kangaroos can't walk backwards.
- **Kangaroos have very powerful legs and can be dangerous at times.**
- Kangaroos can jump very high, sometimes three times their own height.
- **Kangaroos can swim.**
- Most kangaroos eat grass.
- **Baby kangaroos are known as 'joeys'.**
- A group of kangaroos is called a 'mob', 'troop' or 'court'.
- **The red kangaroo is the largest marsupial in the world.**
- Kangaroos usually live to around six years old in the wild.
- **Australian airline Qantas uses a kangaroo as their symbol.**

## FUN FACTS ABOUT CROCODILES

- **Crocodiles are reptiles.**
- The physical characteristics of crocodiles make them good predators.
- **Crocodiles are fast over short distances.**
- Crocodiles have sharp teeth.
- **Crocodiles have the strongest bite of any animal in the world.**
- The muscles that open crocodiles jaws however are not so powerful, reasonably strong people could hold a crocodiles jaw closed with their bare hands.
- **Like other reptiles, crocodiles are cold-blooded.**
- Crocodiles can survive for a long time without food.
- **Most crocodiles live in fresh water rivers and lakes but some live in salt water.**
- Crocodiles eat a variety of fish, birds and other animals.
- **Crocodiles release heat through their mouths rather than through sweat glands.**
- The saltwater crocodile is the largest species of crocodile.
- **Some crocodile species can weigh over 1200 kg (2600 lb).**
- Like alligators, crocodiles are part of the order 'Crocodylia'.
- **What's the difference between a Crocodile and an Alligator?**
  - Crocodiles have a longer, more V-shaped head than alligators.
  - The fourth tooth of a crocodile sticks out when its mouth is closed.
  - Crocodiles are better adapted to living in seawater.
  - Crocodiles are more aggressive than alligators.
  - Crocodiles tend to have a lighter appearance than alligators.
  - Crocodiles in the wild are found all over the world while alligators are only found in the US and China.
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  - Alligators have shorter, wider heads that are more U-shaped than crocodiles.
  - Alligators strongly favor freshwater while some species of crocodile live in seawater.
  - Alligators are less aggressive than crocodiles.
  - Alligators tend to have a darker appearance than crocodiles.
  - Alligators in the wild are only found in the US and China while crocodiles are found all over the world.

## FUN FACTS ABOUT INSECTS

- **The number of insect species is believed to be between six and ten million.**
- Insect bodies have three parts, the thorax, abdomen and head. Insects have two antennae. Insects have three pairs of legs. Spiders (arachnids) have 4 pairs of legs
- **Of the huge numbers of insects, only a tiny amount, one percent, are harmful to humans. Most insects are harmless or actually beneficial. For example, without bees to pollinate flowers, plants would not have a way of reproducing and we wouldn't have anything to eat!**
- The desert locust is the world's most destructive insect. It can eat its own weight in food every day. Large swarms can gobble up to 20,000 tons of grain and plants in a day.
- **The honeybee has to travel an average of 43,000 miles to collect enough nectar to make a pound of honey! It takes them approximately 10 million trips to gather enough nectar to make a single pound of honey.**
- There is only one insect that can turn its head — the praying mantis.
- **Some male spiders pluck their cobwebs like a guitar, to attract female spiders.**
- A slug has four noses.
- **A mosquito flaps its wings 500 times a second.**
- Baby robins eat 14 feet of earthworms every day!
- **About 80% of the Earth's animals are insects!**
- The common garden worm has five pairs of hearts.
- **Dragonflies can fly up to 50 miles per hour.**
- The earliest fossil cockroach is about 280 million years old – 80 million years older than the first dinosaurs!
- **A snail can sleep for 3 years straight!**
- One kind of insect called a spittlebug, lays its eggs in a big nest of saliva bubbles. I guess no predator would look for a meal in there!
- **A cockroach can live for up to 3 weeks without its head!**
- The heaviest insect in the world weighs 2.5 ounces.
- **A butterfly has its taste receptors in its feet!**
- The mayfly only lives for 8 hours!
- **The female black widow's poison is 15 times deadlier than a rattlesnake's!**
- There are worms in Australia that are over 4 Feet Long!
- **The weight of all the termites in the world outweigh the weight of all humans 10 to 1!**

## FUN FACTS ABOUT RECYCLING

- **Recycling is the process of turning used waste and materials into new products. This prevents potentially useful materials from being wasted as well as reducing energy use and pollution.**
- Recycling is part of the waste disposal hierarchy - Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.
- **A wide variety of different materials can be recycled, including paper, plastic, glass, metal, textiles and electronic equipment.**
- The idea of recycling isn't something new, historical evidence shows that humans have been recycling various materials for thousands of years.
- **There are different methods of waste collection. These include drop off centers (where waste materials are dropped off at a specified location), buy back centers (where certain materials are exchanged for money), and curbside collection (where recycling vehicles are used to pick up waste material intended for recycling along residential streets).**
- Powerful magnets are used to sort through different types of metals.
- **Recycled paper can be made from three different types of paper; mill broke (paper scrap and trimmings), pre-consumer waste (paper that was discarded before consumer use), and post-consumer waste (paper discarded after consumer use, such as old newspapers).**
- Recycling plastic can be more difficult than other materials and plastics are not typically recycled into the same type of plastic.
- **Different types of plastics are labeled by numbers (plastic identification code), for example polyethylene (PET) is number 1 and polyvinyl chloride (PVC) is number 3.**
- Recycling old aluminum uses only 5% of the energy used to make new aluminum.
- **Aluminum can be recycled from cans, bicycles, computers, cookware, wires, cars, planes and other sources.**
- Glass recycling is often separated into colors because glass keeps its color after recycling.
- **For every ton of recycled glass turned into new products, 700lbs of extra carbon dioxide that would have been released during the creation of new glass are saved.**

## FUN FACTS ABOUT DINOSAURS

- **The word dinosaur comes from the Greek language and means 'terrible lizard'. The word was coined by English paleontologist Richard Owen in 1842 and was meant to refer to Dinosaurs impressive size rather than their scary appearance.**
- Dinosaurs ruled the Earth for over 160 million years, from the Triassic period around 230 million years ago through the Jurassic period and until the end of the Cretaceous period around 65 million years ago.
- **It is believed that dinosaurs lived on Earth until around 65 million years ago when a mass extinction occurred.**
- Scientists believe that the event leading to the extinction may have been a massive asteroid impact or huge volcanic activity. Events such as these could have blocked out sunlight and significantly changed the Earth's ecology.
- **The first dinosaur to be formally named was the Megalosaurus, back in 1824.**
- A person who studies dinosaurs is known as a paleontologist.
- **Rather than being carnivores (meat eaters), the largest dinosaurs such as the Brachiosaurus and Apatosaurus were actually herbivores (plant eaters).**
- To help fight meat eaters such as the Allosaurus or Spinosaurus, many plant eaters had natural weapons at their disposal. Examples of this include the spikes on the tail of the Stegosaurus and the three horns attached to the front of the Triceratops's head shield.
- **The Argentinosaurus huinculensis was the world's largest-ever land animal. Rough estimates by others estimate that Argentinosaurus could have been 115 feet in length with a weight of anywhere from 88–110 tons. As big as a jet airliner**
- The smallest dinosaurs were just slightly larger than a chicken; Compsognathus ("pretty jaw") was 1 m (3 ft) long and probably weighed about 2.5 kg (about 6.5 lb).

## FUN FACTS ABOUT TONGUES

- The human tongue has on average 3,000 - 10,000 taste buds.
- **There are five elements of taste perception: salty, sour, bitter, sweet, and umami (or savoury).**
- Humans also use the tongue for speech where it helps with changes in sound.
- **The tongue also works as a natural way of cleaning teeth after eating.**
- On average, women have shorter tongues than men.
- **Humans also use the tongue for speech where it helps with changes in sound.**
- The tongue also works as a natural way of cleaning teeth after eating.
- **On average, women have shorter tongues than men.**
- The average length of the human tongue from the back to the tip is 10 cm (4 in).
- **The blue whale has the largest tongue of all animals. Its tongue weighs around 6,000 pounds!**
- Sticking your tongue out at people is seen as childish or rude in many countries, however, in Tibet it is considered a greeting.
- **Dogs and cats often use their tongues to clean their fur and body. The very rough texture of their tongue allows them to remove oils and parasites.**
- Have you ever wondered why a dog's tongue hangs out of its mouth after a lot of exercise? Well a dog's tongue increases in size as it exercises due to greater blood flow, moisture on the tongue works to cool this blood flow, cooling the dog.
- **Some animal tongues are specially designed to catch prey. Chameleons, frogs, and anteaters have tongues that can extend out of their mouth and grab insects.**

## FUN FACTS ABOUT THE BRAIN

- **Humans have the largest brain in terms of size ratio when compared to other creatures in the world. Elephants are considered as having the largest brain, which is partially true. If the ratio of the whole body and the size of the brain are compared it is only 0.15% in the elephant case; however, it is 2% in the case of humans.**
- The adult human brain weighs nearly 1.5 kilograms (3 pounds). While it makes up only 2% of a person's weight, it consumes around 20-30% of the total energy. That is why glucose is drained so fast to the brain.
- **A brain produces almost enough energy to light a bulb. On an average, a brain produces up to 30 – 35 watts at the time of awakening. The main energy source of the most energy hungry organ is glucose.**
- A brain uses approximately 20% of whole blood and oxygen flowing through the body to perform actions like yawning and intelligence. A person can lose consciousness if the brain is deprived of oxygen for around 7-9 seconds.
- **Yawning is the body's way of cooling down an overheated brain. In addition, when your brain does not receive the appropriate amount of oxygen, the yawn is said to provide the remaining amount of oxygen to the brain. Anoxic brain damage is brain injury caused by a lack of oxygen supply. Without oxygen, brain cells will start to die after four to six minutes.**
- The brain consists of around 150,000 miles of the blood vessels, working perfectly in high speed. Providing blood and oxygen to the brain, these vessels are said to be strong and can bear high tension.
- **Reading aloud or listening to a story being told is one of the most “cerebrally” engaging experiences a kid can have. Watching TV for 15,000 hours only generates about 30 minutes of brain activity. However, with reading aloud, it fires up children's brains because they have to use their imagination. This activity stimulates the electricity in the brain, promoting brain development by strengthening brain pathways.**
- During pregnancy, the fetal brain develops at an amazing rate. There are about 251,000 neurons added every single minute. In accordance with that, there could be nearly 1,000 – 10,000 synapses just for a single neuron. Cells will continue to develop for several years after birth. The region responsible for memory and learning, the hippocampus, will continue to add new cells throughout lifetime.

## **MAMA'S IN THE KITCHEN**

Lyrics & Music by Alex Mitnick

Mama's in the kitchen makin' something finger lickin'  
I'm sittin' here listenin' to a little guitar pickin'  
Like a Sundae with a cherry on top or suckin on a lollipop  
No I never ever want it to stop  
Oh let the music play everyday, and we go

*One, wiggle your thumbs*  
*Two, shuffle your shoes*  
*three, tap your knees*  
*four, jump on the floor*  
*five, shake it up high*  
*six, do the twist*  
*seven, I'm in heaven*  
*eight, when I move like this*  
*nine, spin around and*  
*ten, clap your hands!*  
*1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9.... 10!*

My heart's thumpin' like a drum boom boom  
now I'm bouncing all around the room  
Moving fast like a race car zoom  
I'm blasting off like a rocket to the moon  
I do it everytime I get the chance  
pick up my knees and do a happy dance  
Fall into a magic musical trance  
Woah move until we drop we'll never stop, and we go

### *CHORUS*

Shake shuffle and slip and slide  
Flutter by like a butterfly  
Oooo Ooooo stretch it up and touch the sky  
Woah hearts open wide and it's alright, and we go

### *CHORUS*

## **TELL ME A STORY**

Lyrics & Music by Alex Mitnick

*Tell me a story  
wrap your words all around me  
show me the glory  
of my imagination abounding*

Let's take a look and see  
Here comes a cool colored caterpillar climbing up my sleeve  
Could you conceive?  
A bear blowing bubbles with a baby bumble bee

### *CHORUS*

Listen and you will hear  
A wild wolf wailing while we watch the moon appear  
No there's nothing to fear  
When a lion roaring loudly leaves a melody in my ear. crystal clear

### *CHORUS*

Let's make wishes washing dishes  
maybe we'll see swimming fishes  
fountain's full of golden riches  
rainbows in the mountain mist  
it's right here in this very minute  
splish splash now we're in it  
get on board the sky's the limit  
tell me more yeah that's the ticket

Would you believe?  
the stories we tell become  
the dreams we weave  
And dreams are the key  
the golden thread to  
life free and happy so

### *CHORUS*

## **VEGETABLE GARDEN TOWN**

Lyrics by Alan Bell Music by Alex Mitnick

*Lettuce carrots onions and peas  
Cabbages cauliflower radish and beans  
Spinach cucumber tomato and sprouts  
Vegetables galore from the deep dark ground  
Herbs and fruits and flowers abound  
In our vegetable garden town*

Reach in the soil give it a spin  
loosen the ground to let the air in  
Dig the furrows side by side  
rows and rows we hoe with pride  
Inch by inch we plant the seeds  
giving each one just what they need  
We will watch them sprout and rise  
up to the sun right before our eyes

### *CHORUS*

Pull up the weeds and carefully pour  
magic water so the seeds grow more  
Every day we watch the place  
where tiny leaves open to the sun's bright face  
Up and up and up they grow  
standing strong in the wind that blows  
We need our plants for what they give  
we care for them so we can live

### *CHORUS*

## **INSECT TOURISTS**

Lyrics by Alan Bell Music by Alex Mitnick

Quietly walk softly talk what will we see on the insect trail?  
Quietly walk softly talk I hope my courage won't fail!

We're going out into the forest  
Insect tourists studying nature's way  
Eyes and ears are peaked to notice  
Ants and the Mantis Prey

Listen, quick, there's a bee flying faster than the breeze  
And those cicadas over there chirping in the trees  
One great choir singing out their reprise

Quietly walk softly talk what will we see on the insect trail?  
Quietly walk softly talk I hope my courage won't fail!

There goes a prickly, crackling locust landing on a crocus  
Watch out! The wasp can bring a tear  
I'm gonna catch a caterpillar climbing up the willow  
Before those beetles come near

Oh it's hot I'm sweating now the gnats are in my hair  
my eyes, my mouth, my nose and ears  
Hovering in swarms every moment of the day  
Haunting like a ghost but we can run away!

Quietly walk softly talk what will we see on the insect trail?  
Quietly walk softly talk I hope my courage won't fail!

## **RECYCLE**

Lyrics by Alan Bell Music by Alex Mitnick

*If we use what we've got  
We don't need such a lot  
Of new materials  
To fill the shops  
We won't throw away  
What increases the pollution  
We'll recycle recycle and become the solution  
We'll recycle recycle and become the solution*

To recycle means there's less to throw away  
To recycle means we reuse the garbage waste  
Make new containers out of one's we've used today  
Remake new boxes from the one's we throw away  
There are so many ways to lesson pollutions resume

### *CHORUS*

Glass and plastic  
Cardboard and cans  
Paper bags and tin foil pans  
Coffee cups with plastic tops  
Newspapers and shoes  
Light bulbs and broken toys  
Wrapping paper too  
So many things can be made anew

### *CHORUS*

## **PEACHTREE**

Lyrics by Alan Bell Music by Alex Mitnick

I love to go where the peach tree grows  
Set down a blanket in the cool shadow  
Lie on my back for a daydream show  
Close my eyes and breathe to my toes

I dream up stories or journeys to the stars  
Underground caves or find gold bars  
Under the branches where the peach tree grows  
My imagination wakes up and flows

Riding seahorses on ocean waves  
I go back in time to lands of ancient fame  
The great wall of China or the city of Rome  
The pyramids of Egypt then fly back home

I'll even visit legends in lands without a name  
Talk with real dragons right here in my brain  
Under the Branches where the peach tree grows  
My imagination wakes up and flows

(Hum)

Daydreams daydreams carry me away  
This is my favorite peachtree time of day  
Take me on adventures and show me what I've learned  
I'll share my dreams with others when I return

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Insect Tourists Word Search

R E B A A R A T S S E S S  
E E S E R I M E C I S A M  
T R A A E E O N S T S N H  
P A D E R T O R A N L N H  
E L A C T B L N E A C D G  
E L C A R I G E P M C L B  
T I I W A S P R S G N L F  
P P C L I I T N G N I T Y  
O R E O A I S W A I U D W  
E E A C W N T N L Y E P K  
I T C U A O T S Z A N E V  
A A S S N O R S I R R P B  
I C A T R P T E L P U M X

**Word List:**

ANT

LOCUST

GNATS

PRAYINGMANTIS

WASP

BEE

CATERPILLAR

CICADAS

BETTER

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Recycle Word Search

S R E I P U A W S S S P P  
B B F E L R O R N S R L S  
L R E E A R R A A N E A P  
U O P H S D R P P A P S U  
B K A E T R C P L C A T C  
T E P N I A I I I O P I E  
H N E A C O I N O N S C E  
G T R A G B I G F S W T F  
I O B L P D P P N T E O F  
L Y A E S R I A I T N P O  
E S G A O A O P T T D S C  
S L S A L C O E P W T O L  
S H O E S E O R N N C N N

### Word List:

GLASS  
PAPERBAGS  
NEWSPAPERS  
WRAPPINGPAPER

PLASTIC  
TINFOILPANS  
SHOES

CARDBOARD  
COFFEECUPS  
LIGHTBULBS

CANS  
PLASTICTOPS  
BROKENTOYS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Vegetable Garden Word Search

F O A A C S P I N A C H  
L E S I S I A R S H R B  
O E E O B P R R S E S B  
W B G N R A R I W T O S  
E E A I E A D O O I E R  
R A B O H A L R U O O E  
S N B N R F R F T T T B  
E S A S I A R A I I S M  
B E C L C U M R E I O U  
E E U I I O C C R B O C  
P A C T T P E A S I T U  
C U S L E T T U C E S C

### Word List:

LETTUCE  
CAULIFLOWER  
TOMATOES

CARROTS  
RADISH  
SPROUTS

ONIONS  
BEANS  
HERBS

PEAS  
SPINACH  
FRUITS

CABBAGES  
CUCUMBER  
FLOWERS

# Kids Activity: Making Musical Instruments From Recycled Trash

## Fun with Recycling

By C. Jeanne Heida

Kids love making noise and at our place, making musical instruments is a pretty fun pastime. We'd reach into the recycling bins for raw materials, and with a little paint and inspiration, came up with some pretty cool sounding musical instruments.

For a recycling activity that's a little different than the usual fare, why not make musical instruments?

### **Milk chub maracas**

Milk chubs are those cool, chubby milk containers that have a screw top lid. The outer plastic wrap can be peeled off leaving a white container that can be decorated in a fun motif.

For materials, you will need dimensional paint (Scribbles brand is my favorite) or markers, some glitter glue, sequins, or even stickers. You will also need a clean chub container with lid, and a small handful of dried beans.

Step 1: Decorate the outside of the milk chub in a fun design.

Step 2: Let dry over night.

Step 3: Place a spoonful of beans inside the chub, replace the lid, and shake. Ole'!

### **Disposal plastic plate tambourine**

For this activity, you will need a couple of used (but clean) plastic picnic plates such as the type made by Solo, glue, a handful of beans, crepe paper, and materials from the craft box such as glitter pens, sequins, or stickers.

Step 1: Decorate the "backside" of each plastic plate. Let dry.

Step 2: Cut the crepe paper into 12 inch streamers. Glue three or four strands to the bottom edge of one of the plates.

Step 3: Place a spoonful of beans in the plate with the streamers. Drape the streamers so that they are outside of the plate.

Step 4: Invert the second plate over the first and glue in place. Let the glue dry before shaking your tambourine.

### **An Amazon rain stick**

An Amazon rain stick is a long, hollow cactus stem that has had the thorns pushed back inside, and then has been allowed to dry. As the stick is turned from side to side, it makes the sound of falling rain.

Several years ago, my daughter and I made an Amazon rain stick from ten discarded plastic cups, some strong adhesive (silicone calking works best), a handful of beans, string, a few beads, and some brown spray paint. It's easy to make following this instructions and using the photograph for reference:

Step 1: Cut a 1/2 inch diameter hole in the base of eight of the cups.  
Step 2: Glue 4 sets of punched cups together, matching base to bases.  
Step 3: Now, glue the four paired sets to each other, matching rims to rims  
Step 4: Glue the uncut ninth cup to one end.  
Step 5: Drop a large handful of beans into the open cup at the opposite end. Sealed closed by gluing the last cup "rim to rim."  
Step 6: Spray the "rain stick" brown. Wrap with string and beads to give it some visual interest. To play, tip the rain stick back and forth.

### **A pop bottle xylophone**

Kids love making music by blowing across the tops of pop bottles or running a wet finger on the rim of a glass. You can make a very easy water xylophone using eight clean but used 20 oz bottles filled to various levels with water.

Here's a handy chart to tell you how much water to put in each bottle to create a complete musical scale:

Do 7 ounces  
Re 9.5 oz.  
Mi 14.5 oz.  
Fa 14 oz.  
So 16.5 oz.  
La 17.5 oz.  
Ti 18.5 oz.  
Do 19 oz.

### **An Coffee mate canister drum**

We buy our Coffeemate creamer in the economy size which leaves us with a nice sized cardboard container that makes a fabulous drum.

Materials needed include some leftover spray paint, glue, baubles from the craft box, and those chopsticks you brought home the last time you ate Chinese food.

Step 1: Remove the canisters snap on lid and set aside.

Step 2: Spray the canister with paint. Let dry 30 minutes.

Step 3: Decorate the canister in a geometric pattern OR design your own.

Step 4: Replace the snap on lid and use the chopsticks to lightly tap on the lid to create the sound of a drum.

Step 5: Got two canisters? Tie them together with string to make a set of bongo drums that can be played by hand.

# A Kaleidoscope of MUSIC – simple games and activities for the musician in each of us.

## Pulse Vs. Rhythm

1. Have one group clap the pulse (never slowing down or speeding up) while another group simultaneously claps the rhythm of the syllables of a simple song such as Old McDonald or Mary Had A Little Lamb.
2. Have students sit in a circle. The leader plays a steady beat on a drum or another instrument. Students “pass the clap” around each clapping once for each beat. Once the group is comfortable with this call out a number (let’s say 3) and have the students clap every third beat skipping those students who fall on beats 2 and 3. Say, “Clap, 2, 3, Clap 2, 3, etc...” Try out different numbers as the game progresses.
3. Use names. Spell Billy: B-I-L-L-Y clapping on every “B”. Say it! Try different names. Try different names at the same time. One half of the group spells “Jon” and the other half spells “Sarah” so we have a 3 pattern over a 5 pattern. Clap on the first letters but concentrate and keep the pulse steady!
4. Once everyone is comfortable saying it *and* playing it stop saying it and just clap. Clap the first letter and pat your knees for the rest so Sarah becomes “Clap, pat, pat, pat, pat, Clap, pat, pat, pat, pat, etc”
5. Add more moves. Sarah could become “Clap, pat, pat, snap, snap!” Make them up but keep the pulse steady! Use two or three different names with moves simultaneously. Have students assemble into small groups to make up their own patterns and perform for each other.
6. Add feet, thighs, knees, head, words, sounds etc.

## Balls

1. Begin by simply throwing the ball in the air and catching it to a steady pulse. Say, “One and One and One and.....” or “Throw Catch, Throw Catch”. (quarter notes) It is very important to *say* the actions as well as do them.
2. Once a steady pulse is established and control of the ball can be maintained, throw the ball for two beats. (half-notes) Say, “One and Two and One and Two and...”
3. Continue with whole notes (4 beats). This time throw the ball up for beats one and two, let the ball bounce for beat three and catch the ball on beat four. Say, “One Two bounce and catch, One two bounce and catch, etc...”
4. The leader may keep a steady pulse on a drum or by clapping while the students throw the ball to the specified note (quarter, half, whole) Change the note several times and be sure that the students are listening! Have a student lead.

5. Have students partner up and start the process over again except this time we throw the ball to our partner. Say, "Throw and Catch, Throw and Catch" or "Bounce and catch, Bounce and catch" One can make up endless patterns. This is a lot of fun. "Bounce (to yourself) and Catch, Throw and Catch..." "Bounce and catch around the back, throw and catch around the back..." "Bounce and catch around the back, under the leg, throw and catch..."
6. "Peace Ball Meditation" – Have students sit in a circle and pass a ball around the circle to a steady pulse. Add another ball. Students must pay attention to balls coming and going. Eventually have a ball for each student and pass them around to a steady beat focusing on the pulse. Everyone must participate in order for this to work. Great for community building. Sing too! Use a large ball for younger students.
7. Form a circle and bounce the ball from the center to each student. Do this while singing and keeping the beat alive. Bounce the ball to a steady beat and do call and response rhythm patterns.

### **Walking/jumping rhythmic patterns**

1. Leader keeps a steady beat on a drum or piano. Start by stepping to a steady pulse. Say, "One and One and One...." Then step to half notes, "One two, One two..." Then whole notes, "One two three four....". Change the number as students are walking being sure that everyone is listening! Use different instruments for different notes. A bell for quarter notes, a shaker for half notes and sticks for whole notes. They must use their ears to determine which note to step to.

### **Call and response**

1. "What's for dinner...?" Keep a steady beat on a drum or with body percussion and ask a two beat question such as "What's for dinner?". Students must respond with a two beat answer such as "Piz-za", or "Spaghetti and meatballs", or "Broccoli".
2. Try different questions. Allow a few moments for students to think and be sure that they use adjectives. "What's your favorite animal?" Instead of "Dog", be sure they include other words such as "Brown furry Dog". "What's your favorite book?, movie?, place?, color?....etc"

### **Games**

1. "Zuma" – Sit in a circle. The leader is "Zuma" and the rest of the group counts off numbers so everyone has their own number. Practice by going around the circle saying your own number twice and your neighbors number twice. "Zuma zuma one one, one one two two, two two three three, three three four four, etc...." Once students are comfortable with this begin to play the game by calling out any number in the circle. "Zuma zuma five five, five five three three, three three ten ten, ten ten one one, etc...." If a student misses their or pauses or calls a number that is out, they are out. The last one remaining can use their numbers or try lemon and lime (lemon lemon lime lime, lime lime lemon lemon) or soap and soup or zuma and zipper). Accompany the game with the rhythmic pattern: knees knees clap clap, knees knees clap clap etc....
2. "Shoe Game" – Sit in a circle. Each student place one shoe in front of them. Practice passing the shoes around (in the same direction!) to a steady pulse. Say, "Grab then pass, grab then pass, etc...." Add more movements, "Tap, clap, grab then pass, tap, clap, grab then pass, etc...." "Tap, clap, tap, clap, grab and pass, tap, clap, tap clap, grab and pass, etc...." Sing a song to the steady beat of the pattern.



















