



# Making Musical Instruments

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The Rhythm of Literacy

Storytime Songs goes to NAEYC!

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## Paper Plate Shakers

Materials:

- Two paper plates
- Dried Beans
- Stapler



Directions:

Set one paper plate down on the table. Place a handful of beans on the plate. Set the other plate face down on the first plate. Staple the two plates together around the edges. Make sure the staples are close enough together so that the beans cannot fall out! Decorate the outside of the plates with markers or stickers. Shake and have fun!

## Paper Plate Tambourine



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Materials:

Paper plate  
Bells  
String  
Hole punch  
Scissors

Directions:

Use scissors to cut a hole in the center of the paper plate. Use the hole punch to punch several holes around the outside of the plate. Thread a small piece of string through each hole and tie bells to the paper plate. Decorate with stickers or markers. Shake, jingle, and have fun!

### Jingle Bell Bracelets

Materials:

Two pipe cleaners  
Bells

Directions:

String three or four bells on a pipe cleaner. Take a second pipe cleaner and wind it around the first to hold the bells in place. Twist the ends together to form a bracelet. Hold bracelets in hand or wear on arms and legs while dancing.

### Jingle Bell Sticks

Materials:

A wooden chopstick or pencil  
Bells  
Pipe cleaner

Directions:

String two or three bells onto a pipe cleaner. Wrap the pipe cleaner around the wooden chopstick and twist each end together to secure. Shake and have fun!

### Rain Sticks

Materials:

Mailing tube  
Assorted filler material (ex: pennies, beans)



Hammer\*  
Nails



Directions:

Hammer nails about an inch apart along the spiral seam of the mailing tube. Take care that the nails do not poke through the other side of the tube. Wrap the tube with tape to hold the nails in place. Put a handful of assorted filler material into the tube. Seal both ends securely. Turn the mailing tube over end to end to hear the filler material clatter against the nails. Decorate the outside of the tube with markers or stickers.

\*This activity requires help from an adult.

## Cymbals and Drums

Materials:

Items from your kitchen:

Pots  
Metal bowls  
Wooden Spoons  
Metal lids



Directions:

Hit wooden spoons together as rhythm sticks. Use metal bowls as drums and wooden spoons as drum sticks. Clank metal lids together as cymbals. Explore your cabinets and create a band!

## Design Your Own!

Materials:

Recycled material:  
Egg cartons  
Empty containers  
Boxes  
Pipe cleaners  
Bells  
Fillers  
And more!



Directions:

Be creative, have fun, and create your own musical instruments out of recycled materials and art supplies.

## Streamer Baton



Materials:

Paper towel tube  
Colored tissue paper or ribbon  
Tape  
Scissors

Directions:

Cut tissue paper or ribbon into long strips. Tape the tissue paper onto each end of the paper towel tube to make a colorful baton - perfect for dancing!

## Kazoo

Materials:

Paper towel tube  
Wax paper  
Rubber band  
Markers

Directions:

Use markers to decorate the paper towel tube. Cut a 5-inch square piece of wax paper. Use the rubber band to secure the wax paper over one end of the paper towel tube. Hum into the open end of the kazoo.

## Jingle Bell Friends

Materials:

Pipe cleaners  
Jingle Bells

Directions:

Twist pipe cleaners into bugs, animals, or holiday shapes. Add bells to the ends of legs, arms, etc. to make musical friends. Shake them along to your favorite songs.

## Guitar

Materials:

Small cardboard box or holiday tin  
Paper Towel Tube  
Rubber Bands  
Tape (packaging, masking, or duct)

Directions:

Stretch the rubber bands across the box or tin. Secure them in place on either end with tape. Attach the paper towel tube to the box or tin with tape to form the neck of the guitar. Use markers or stickers to decorate. Strum away and have fun!

Tip:

Poke wooden chopsticks or dowel rods through the end of the paper towel tube to look like tuners!

## Shakers

Materials:

1 container with a lid  
(ex: plastic bottle, box)  
Filler material  
(ex: beans, pasta, rice, oatmeal)

Directions:

Fill the container with the filler material and decorate the outside. Seal securely and shake! Every filler will make a different sound!

## Xylophone

Materials:

Drinking Glasses  
Water  
Wooden Spoon

Directions:

You can use drinking glasses that are the same size or a variety of different sizes. Help your child fill each with a different amount of water. Allow your child to play the xylophone by gently tapping each glass with the wooden spoon. How does the amount of water in each glass change the sound? Do glasses with the most water sound highest or lowest?

## Rhythm Sticks

Materials:

2 Paper towel tubes  
Newspaper  
Duct tape  
Markers

Directions:

Tear strips of newspaper and stuff them into the paper towel

tubes. Fill the tubes completely with newspaper and seal the ends with tape. Use markers or stickers to decorate the outside of the rhythm sticks. Beat them together to make music!

## Egg Shaker Matching Game



### Materials:

Plastic Eggs  
Fillers (ie pennies, pasta, dried beans)

### Directions:

Fill pairs of plastic eggs with different types of fillers (ie two eggs with pasta, two eggs with beans, two eggs with pennies\*). Use the eggs as shakers and play them along with your favorite music, or mix up the eggs and try to match them by sound!

**\*Parent tip:** Choose items that are easily cleaned up in case the eggs are opened!

## Bullroarer



### Materials:

Paint stick  
String  
Drill (or a hammer and nail)\*  
Markers or paint

### Directions:

Decorate your paint stick with markers or paint. Drill a hole at one end of the paint stick or use the hammer and nail to punch a small hole. Thread a two-foot piece of string through the hole and tie securely. Hold the end of the string and swing the bullroarer around over your head. The bullroarer will spin and make a helicopter-like sound.

**\*This activity requires adult assistance.**

**Parent tip:** This activity needs a lot of space! Be sure to try it in a large room or even outside.

**Teacher tip:** This Australian instrument is a great way to introduce world cultures into the classroom!

## Paper Bag Maracas

### Materials:

Small Paper Bag  
Dried Beans  
Markers or Paint  
String



### Directions:

Decorate the outside of your paper bag with markers or paint. When dry, place a handful of dried beans inside the bag. Tie the bag securely shut with string. Have children hold the closed end of the bag and shake away!

## Roller Bells

### Materials:

Oatmeal/cylindrical container with lid  
Bells or dried beans  
Tape or glue

### Directions:

Help your child put a few bells or a handful of beans in the oatmeal container. Seal the lid with tape or glue. Let your child decorate the outside with markers, crayons, or stickers. You now have a rolling shaker! Children can roll it back and forth to one another while listening to music. Infants and toddlers can also enjoy crawling or toddling after this musical toy!

## Castanets

### Materials:

Cardboard  
Glue  
Two Large Plastic Buttons



### Directions:

Cut a strip of thick cardboard (1"x6"). Help children fold the cardboard strips in half. Glue the large buttons on the inside ends of the cardboard. Now squeeze the cardboard ends together to make a clicking sound!

## Wooden Blocks

### Materials:

Two wooden blocks  
Sandpaper  
Stapler



### Directions:

Staple sandpaper to one side of each wooden block. Clap and rub the blocks together for a great percussion sound. Help children play them along with their favorite songs!

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