

NATIVE AMERICAN EDUCATION FOR ALL RESOURCES

Partnership of IllumiNative and the National Indian Education Association



ILLUMINATIVE



Grade Level

3-5

Subject

**Social Studies
Music**

Lesson Title

**Native Music: Drums and
Shakers**

Activity Description: In this activity, students will identify the importance of music within a culture, and recognize the significance of the shaker and drum in the Native culture.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- WiFi access (recommended)
- [Ojibwe Music Tribal History video](#)
- Optional Activity:
 - [Dylan Jennings - Hand Drum video](#)
 - [Smokeytown at Oneida Nation Contest Pow Wow video](#)

STEPS

This activity is for children to do with a person from the family or community, or by the children themselves.

Discuss the Significance of Instruments to Native American Music

1. Watch the [Ojibwe Music tribal history video](#)
 - a. Share with your child the significance of two types of percussion instruments talked about in this video, called drums and shakers. These instruments hold significance when it comes to the traditional music in the Ojibwe tribe.
2. Discuss these questions with your child after watching the video.
 - a. What did they say the Midewin Lodge was? (A religion followed by the people of the Ojibwe tribe)
 - b. What is significant about the Shaker?
 - c. What types of drums were discussed?
 - d. What is the story of how the drum came to be?
 - e. What does the water drum represent?
3. Share with your child that different types of drums can be used for different types of gatherings and ceremonies.

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HELPFUL TIPS

Parents and caregivers: This is a wonderful opportunity for your child or student to learn more about the significance of various instruments to traditional music in Native American culture, specifically from the perspective of the Ojibwe people.

- After your child learns about the significance of drums and shakers to the traditional music of the Ojibwe people, ask them about dances that are important to them:
 - "What kind of instruments have you experienced?"
 - "Where have you seen these instruments?"
 - "How are these instruments similar or different to the instruments used by the Ojibwe people?"

Optional Activity: Different Uses of the Drum

- Watch the [video of the hand drum](#) with your child.
- Watch the [video of the the powwow drum](#) with your child.
- After watching these two videos, talk with your child about the two types of drums that were used in these videos, and how they might be similar or different to each other.
 - How are the similar or different to music you have experiences in your life?

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Families and Educators: This activity may open up other talking points about music from other Native American cultures, and how they might be similar or different to the music that your child knows.

- Visit the [Smithsonian Museum "Year of Music" page](#) to learn more about the unique musical traditions of Native American cultures.
- You may even want to consider exploring how Native American music shaped modern day music. To learn about how Native American music shaped Rock music, [read this article](#) with your child.

Activity Resource Links:

Ojibwe Music Tribal History video: <https://wisconsinfirstnations.org/tribal-histories-ojibwe-music/>
Dylan Jennings - Hand Drum video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvUX4j1svBk&feature=youtu.be>
Smokeytown at Oneida Nation Contest Pow Wow video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NA12_IZOKIQ&feature=youtu.be
Rumble: The Story of the Native Americans Who Shaped Rock Music: <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2019/jan/21/rumble-the-story-of-the-native-americans-who-shaped-rock-music>
Smithsonian Year of Music: American Indian Music: <https://music.si.edu/spotlight/native-american-music>