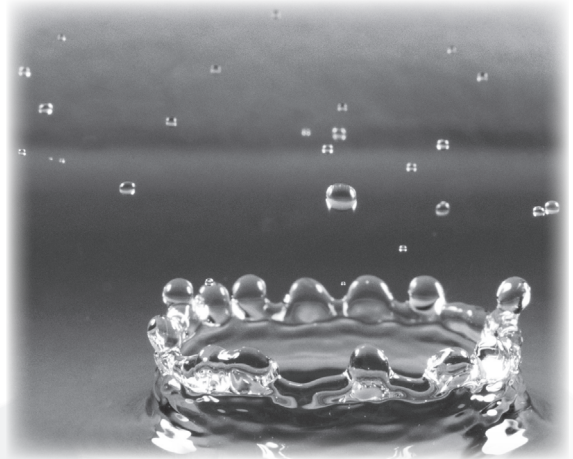


Making Rain

2

This is a fun body percussion activity which requires no attention to specific rhythms. Have the students watch and perform with you the following sequence of sounds:

1. Rub hands together (5 seconds)
2. Snaps (5 seconds)
3. Pat thighs softly (5 seconds)
4. Pat thighs louder (5 seconds)
5. Clap softly (5 seconds)
6. Clap louder (10 seconds)
7. During loud clapping, make thunder sounds vocally
8. Clap softly (5 seconds)
9. Pat thighs loudly (5 seconds)
10. Pat thighs softer (5 seconds)
11. Snaps (5 seconds)
12. Rub hands together (5 seconds)



Don't feel the need to adhere rigidly to the time suggestions. Your rain may vary. You may even choose to put another swell or two into the stormier sections.

Pat-a-Cake: Body Percussion Disguised as a Game

There are many street rhymes and finger plays from around the world that are basically chants with body percussion. Clapping games, from the European rhyme *Pease Porridge Hot* to the West African song *Sorida*, combine rhythm and rhyme with a teamwork aspect.

The following is a simple clapping pattern which can accompany literally thousands of rhymes. Divide the students into pairs and have the students of each pair face each other. Teach the following clapping patterns:

Pattern 1:

- Clap own hands.
- Clap partner's hands.
- Clap back of hands to back of partner's hands.
- Clap partner's hands.

Pattern 2:

- Clap own hands.
- Clap partner's right hand with your right hand.
- Clap own hands.
- Clap partner's left hand with your left hand.

Perform Pattern 1 twice, then Pattern 2, then repeat Pattern 1. If time allows, have the pairs create a new pattern.

The Human Voice: A World of Possibilities

Since percussion instruments are usually defined as those which may be struck, shaken or scraped, we often forget about the percussive possibilities of the human voice. Many world cultures use their voices as much for percussion as they do for singing. Often called “vocal percussion,” this term is a bit of a misnomer. There are many percussive sounds created by the mouth, tongue and lips that do not involve the vocal chords at all. There are also many sounds that can be made by combining the mouth and hands or fingers.

Sing, Whistle and Hum: Melody Matters

When dealing with body music, we often get stuck thinking in terms only of percussion. But the body is also an instrument with incredible melodic potential. For many world cultures, singing and body percussion go hand in hand (pun intended). In many instances it would be unthinkable to perform body percussion without a song. You can also add a whole new element to a body percussion piece through the addition of a melody, either whistled or hummed.

The addition of melody to a body percussion piece can be approached in numerous ways:

- A few students could hum, whistle or sing an existing melody. Then add other students on body percussion parts that complement the melody.
- Another way is to establish a body percussion rhythm. Then choose one student to hum or whistle an improvised melody inspired by the rhythms.

Lip Pops and Tongue Clicks: The Original Pop Music

There are many different kinds of lip pops and tongue clicks, all of which use the mouth as a resonator. The position of the mouth plays an important role in affecting the volume, pitch and tone color of each sound. As you perform the following sounds, experiment with different mouth positions such as “ah,” “oh,” and “oo.” Opening the mouth more will raise the pitch, and closing the mouth more will lower the pitch. Some sounds, such as “the horse,” will work best with a combination of high and low clicks. In fact, given practice, it is possible to play complete melodies using pops or clicks.

Lip Pops:

- 11** 1. **The Fish.** This lip pop gets its name because of the aquarium-bubble-like sound created. Oh yeah, and because you look like a fish when you do it. No hands or fingers are needed. Simply close the lips and suck in slightly while keeping the lips sealed. Then pull the lips apart to release the seal and create a pop.
- 12** 2. **The Popgun.** Done correctly, this pop will sound just like a popgun. Put your index finger just inside your mouth against the inside of the cheek. Create a seal around the finger with the lips and build up pressure behind the seal by inflating the cheeks. Then quickly flick the finger out of the mouth, breaking the seal and creating a nice, loud pop. It’s always a good idea to wash your hands before trying the popgun, or at least your index finger.
- 13** 3. **The Hand Pop.** Open your mouth to an “oh” position. Keep the lips relaxed as you gently pat the “oh” with the finger pads of one hand.