



Rainsticks



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1900 Dalrymple Drive
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Knock Knock Children's Museum is a community spark for engaging, playful learning experiences that inspire and support lifelong learning.

Rainsticks

Age Level: 5 and up | Learning Zone: STEAM Activity #7

Subject: Rainsticks | Lesson Duration: 45-60 minutes

[WATCH THE VIDEO LESSON HERE!](#)

Materials Needed:

- Cardboard tube
- Hammer
- Nails
- Pieces of fabric
- Rubber bands
- Pieces of vinyl
- Bag of dried rice and beans
- Scissors
- Markers

Louisiana Standards:

VA-CE-E1, VA-CE-E2, VA-CE-E3, VA-CE-E4, VA-HP-E1VA-HP-E3

Learning Objectives:

We are going to use cardboard tubes as the body of our **rainsticks**. You will hammer in nails and then place pieces of vinyl over them as decorations and to keep the nails in place. You will then place a piece of cloth at the end of the rainstick to cover the opening using a rubber band. Then place the beans and rice in the tube and cover the other end with cloth and a rubber band.



History and Vocabulary:

The term **indigenous people** refers to groups of people who are the original or earliest **inhabitants** (people that occupy a place) of an area.

Indigenous people tend to develop their own culture over time.

A **culture** is a set of shared beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, practices, artifacts and behaviors. For example, having parades and throwing beads to celebrate Mardi Gras is part of the culture of Louisiana residents.

You can listen to rain indoors with these copies of **rainsticks**. The **rainstick** is believed to have been invented by the Mapuches, indigenous people of the Americas, more specifically in Chile. In their **culture** it was believed that **rainsticks** could bring about rainstorms. They have also been found on the Chilean coasts, though it is not certain if they were made by the Incas.

Rainsticks are usually made from any of several species of cactus. Small pieces of pebbles are placed inside and as they hit the cactus thorns it mimics the sound of rain.

A **rainstick** is a **percussion instrument**. A **percussion instrument** makes a sound when it is hit, shaken or scraped. Examples of other percussion instruments include drums, xylophones, cymbals, maracas, chimes and the piano.

Steps:

- Take the rubber band off the bag and pull out all your materials.
- Notice that your tube is marked with dots along the seam. Hammer one nail in on each dot until you get to the bottom of the tube.
- Cut the vinyl sticker into strips and use them to cover all the nail heads on the tube.
- Take out your scissors and use your leftover vinyl to create geometric shapes to decorate your rainstick.
- Pull out your markers and add more decorations to your rainstick. You can also add words!

- Place one piece of cloth over one of your rainstick's openings on the end of the tube. Don't do both yet!
- Hold up the end of the rainstick that is uncovered and pour the bag of dried beans and rice inside.
- Place a piece of cloth over the remaining open end and secure with a rubber band.
- When the beans and rice hit the nails, it will make a beautiful sound.
- Flip your rainstick over and hear the rain!