



# Make-a-Shaker

*Give children the opportunity to explore many different sounds and the materials that make them.*

## START

- The goal of this activity is to introduce children to a wide variety of sounds made from different materials and to explore the tactile properties of the materials themselves to support their curiosity and expand their understanding.
- Introduce this activity by asking Would anyone like to shake the shakers on the table and guess what's inside them?
- For younger children, you can introduce the activity by shaking the shakers yourself and inviting them to try it, too.
- For older children, you can invite them to shake the shakers and try to guess what's inside them.

## NEXT STEPS

- Once the children are shaking the shakers and making their guesses, you can ask them questions such as Can you describe the sound your shaker makes? Is it loud or quiet? Do you think the objects inside are big or small? Do you know anything else that makes this sound?
- You can point out the materials in the bowls for them to explore and see if that helps them with their guesses. The children will naturally pick up or run their hands through the materials, which is an important part of their sensory learning process.
- After they have handled some of the materials, see if their guesses change. As they continue to touch and explore the objects in the bowls, ask them Are the objects hard or soft? Small or large? What sort of sound do you think they would make?
- Encourage the children to experiment with making their own shakers from the objects in the bowls.
- For younger children, it's fine if they just want to play with the materials; they may roll them around, sort them, or line them up in different orders.
- For older children, see if they can create a shaker that sounds like the premade ones. If they can, ask them the following questions: Are the materials the same or different? How can different materials sound the same?

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## MATERIALS

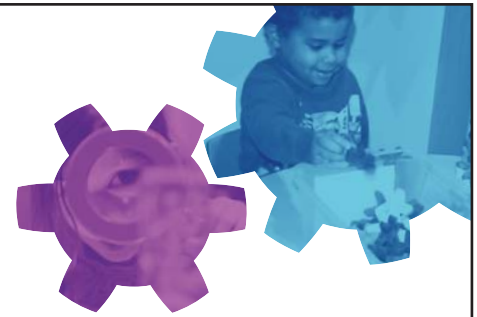
- \* 1 set of premade shakers for display or example
- \* 1 set of 4-oz white plastic bottles with lids (similar to large pill bottles)
- \* Collections of small objects that can fit into the containers to create shakers. For example, you can use cotton balls, toothpicks, dice, beans, paper clips, buttons, and acorns.

## Learning Guideline:

English Language Arts:  
Listen to, identify, and manipulate language sounds to develop auditory discrimination and phonemic awareness (e.g., sealed listening jars filled with various materials).

## Tip Sheets:

Explore, Experiment



(continued from side 1)

## FINISH UP

- Encourage each child to talk about their shakers and some of the thinking that went into making them. Did anything surprise you? Did you try more than one type of object? What was your favorite sound?
- Have the children help to clean up by sorting extra materials back into the bowls.

## EXPAND YOUR ACTIVITY

- Ask the children to talk about shakers or musical instruments that they have used or made. What were the materials? How did they sound?
- Introduce other types of sound vocabulary such as sharp, swish, ping, or shush. Ask if their shakers made any of those sounds and have them describe the sounds that their shakers made; if they can't find the right word, have them try to make the sound themselves and create a word to describe it.
- Keep track on the whiteboard or flip chart of the sound words that the children are saying and have some fun saying them aloud, or ask all of the children to say them as a funny sentence or poem.

## TAKE IT HOME

- Save old containers with covers (plastic, wood, cardboard, recycled material) and make shakers at home out of assorted materials from around the house, such as corks, marbles, buttons, or bottle caps.
- Play a game where your children assemble their own materials to make shakers and have you guess what's in them. They can also lay out the materials for you to touch and guess. The next step from making the shakers and listening is to use them as musical instruments. Try shaking out rhythms, making up songs, and dancing!

## BOOKS

- *I Make Music* by Eloise Greenfield
- *The Listening Walk* by Paul Showers
- *Sounds All Around* by Wendy Pfeffer

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