Elementary Drumming

Types of Drumming Experiences

**Drum Play** employs drums and percussion instruments within structured play experiences, often to provide an element of novelty that serves to increase participation and provides participants with musical accessibility and options. Instruments in these experiences are often used to reference ideas and events, as art objects, and as sound effects, rather than within a traditional musical framework. Drum play experiences are sometimes referred to as ‘music games.’

**Guided Interactive Drumming** the use of drums and percussion instruments within structured music-based experiences. Participants often follow a leader, who provides verbal and visual cues (conducting) for the entire group to follow. GID is characterized by simple unified rhythms and call & response interactions. GID is oriented towards creating feelings of success through unified action, rather than through producing a musical product of aesthetic value.

**Traditional Drumming** is the use of drums and associated instruments within a codified system of music making. It features specific instrumentation, techniques, rhythms, forms, songs, and extra-musical activities such as dance and rituals. Traditional Drumming exists within specific musical genres, such as ‘West African,’ or ‘Latin.’

**Drum Accompaniment** is the use of drums and percussion to support the playing of songs (pop, folk, original) and other music that is not based in a drumming tradition. Participants will play along with music that is often provided by the teacher or through group singing. Playing along with recorded music is also an option.

**Music Improvisation** is the use of drums and percussion to produce extemporaneous music that is created in-the-moment. This experience is directed towards a musical outcome where players are guided by their unique impulses and creativity. Individuals have almost complete autonomy with regards to instrument choice and type & degree of participation.

A **Drum Circle** (also called a Drum Jam or Community Drumming) is an interactive group process where individuals use a variety of drums and percussion instruments with the intent of producing a musical product of recreational and community value. Participants enjoy full autonomy with regards to instrument choice and type & degree of participation.

**DRUM PLAY**

Where’s Froggy?
1. Choose someone to hide Froggy somewhere in the room.
2. Choose someone to find Froggy. (They will wait outside until froggy is hidden.)
3. The group plays louder and softer as the seeker gets closer and farther from Froggy. (as in the game hot & cold).
4. Continue until Froggy is found. Choose new players.

For more information and resources, visit peripole.com, playsinglaugh.com and kalanimusic.com
Rumble Ball
1. Model bouncing, tossing, and rolling a small ball. (Invite players to respond musically.)
2. Pause and ask players to describe the action of ‘bouncing’ by providing adjectives.
3. Ask players to connect the adjectives to instruments, choosing one or two types to play ‘bounce.’ (Model bouncing with the ‘bounce’ instrument group.)
4. Repeat steps 3-4 with ‘toss’ and ‘roll.’ Play with the ball as the group responds.
5. Invite other leaders, or two leaders at the same time. Try this with an ‘invisible’ ball.

Musical Compass
1. Invite one player to come to the center of the circle and face their chair.
2. Invite them to close their eyes and listen to the sounds of the instruments as everyone plays. (Let them know that they will need to listen to the location of each instrument.)
3. Ask the person in the center to close their eyes and turn around several times.
4. Invite the group to play as the center player tries to find and point at their chair without opening their eyes. (They are using the sounds to guide them, like a musical compass.)
5. (This game is said to be created by drummer, Arthur Hull.)

Ships in the Night
1. Form partners and have each pair choose a unique instrument.
2. Explain that each pair will consist of a ‘ship’ and a ‘navigator.’ The navigator will play one note to guide the ship, who will set a course in the direction of the sound.
3. Model how to guide a ship through the water, playing only to change the ship’s direction. (Note that navigators can be far away from their ship.)
4. Invite ships to form a bow with their hands to help keep them safe. Ships close their eyes.
5. Invite all ships to set sail and move around the ocean. Continue for a couple minutes, then invite all ships back to their ‘docks.’ Switch roles and repeat.

Fun Fact: Ships are guided by buoys, which sometimes feature bells, horns and gongs!

Guided Interactive Drumming

Let’s All Play Our Drum
1. Invite everyone to play one note on the word “Drum” as you say out loud “Let’s all play our DRUM!” Make sure your words are rhythmic: Ta-te Ta-te Ta.
2. Change the tempo and volume of your prompt, eventually mirroring the rhythm on a bell or block. Continue to cue the group with a instrument using the rhythm: Ta-te Ta-te Ta.
3. Change to “All play our DRUM.” te Ta-te Ta. Explore variations in rhythm.
5. Invite other players to Lead.

Pieces of Eight
1. Invite players to choose a number from 1 to 8 (or 1 to 4 as a simplification)
2. Explain that you will count from 1 to 8 and that each player is to play one note on their number. Continue to count as players enter on their number.
3. Invite players to find others who have their number.
4. Fade your voice and invite the group to play on their own.
5. Gradually increase the tempo. See how fast they can play.
6. Slow down or speed up to end. Option: Choose two numbers.
Traditional Drumming (West African)

Kuku

Song: “O Ya Iteh kuku fonieh”

Medium-Fast (105-120)

Drum Circle

- Allow participants to choose instrumentation and EXPLORE.
- Find and play the PULSE on an appropriate instrument to GROUND the rhythm.
- MATCH, MIRROR, and ECHO the music played by others.
- Elicit play through MODELING, PROMPTING, and DIALOGUING techniques.
- MODULATE, and RE-DIRECT when you feel a change is NEEDED.
- CONDUCT as little as possible to keep players focused on the MUSIC.
- Offer correction only when needed to keep people and instruments SAFE.
- Sing some songs. Dance around. Be silly.
- Play for the FUN of it.
- Don’t worry. Be happy.

Kalani presents classes, residencies, concerts, and special events. To find out more and check availability, visit kalanimusic.com

For more on Developmental Community Music (DCM), including on-line resources and leadership training, visit playsinglaugh.com

To purchase Kalani products, including CDs, Books, DVDs, and recreational drumming products, visit Peripole.com and most music education retailers.

Kalani’s latest CD, RHYTHM SPIRIT, is available on iTunes and CDBaby.com

For more information and resources, visit peripole.com, playsinglaugh.com and kalanimusic.com