



ART BRIDGES: Lesson Plans for Enrichment, Growth and Healing

Chilean Rain Sticks

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Cheryl Trowbridge
www.teachkidsart.net



Objectives:

The participants will:

1. Learn about the culture and traditions behind the Chilean Rain Sticks

2. Manipulate materials in the creation of their art
3. Employ art elements in designing and embellishing their art
4. Create and use their own Chilean Rain Sticks

Audiences:

This lesson was designed for school children but could be easily adapted for adult audiences. It would also make a wonderful addition to a music enrichment class. This project requires a bit more prep than most, but it's not difficult and so worth the extra time it takes! Your students will LOVE creating these colorful, authentic sounding rain sticks! Be sure to show students where Chile is located on a map or globe, and talk about its unique geography and weather!

Learning Opportunity:

Chile is a country in South America, occupying a long narrow strip of land between the Andes Mountains and the Pacific Ocean. It is almost 3,000 miles long, yet averages only about 100 miles wide. Northern Chile is home to the world's driest desert, where the rain stick is believed to have originated. Rain sticks were made from long, hollow cactus tubes that were dried in the sun. Then the spikes were removed and driven back into the cactus like nails. Small pebbles were then placed inside the cactus tube and the ends were sealed. A sound like falling rain was made as the rain stick was turned and the pebbles fell. Rain Sticks were often useful in desert ceremonies where it was believed their use could bring rain.

Supplies/Materials (per rain stick):

- 18" x 2" cardboard mailing tube (You can find these at office supply stores or wherever commercial paper products are sold in your area.)
- 2 — 2" cardboard circles (I cut them from empty cereal boxes. If your school has a die cutter, this would be a good time to use it!)
- 18" x 8" brown grocery bag paper
- 6" x 6" brown grocery bag paper
- "YES! Paste" and stiff glue brush or a good quality glue stick
- Markers (assorted colors)
- 4 — medium size beads
- 2 — 12" pieces twine
- 4 — feathers
- 3' x 12" aluminum foil

- Masking tape
- 1/4 cup un-popped popping corn or rice
- 2 — rubber bands



Class Instructions:

1. Glue cardboard circles (centered) onto the squares of brown paper and set aside.
2. Lay out the long strip of aluminum foil and carefully “scrunch” it into a long skinny “snake”, but don’t squeeze it too tight!



3. Now, twist your foil snake into a loose coil about the length of your tube.



4. Next, slide the coil into your tube and secure with masking tape at each end.



5. Spread some glue around one end of your tube.
6. Place one of the papers (with the cardboard circle facing inward) over the end of your tube and press the edges down. Hold in place with a rubber band until dry.



7. Pour 1/4 cup popcorn or rice into the tube and seal the other end in the same way. (Your rain stick will sound different depending on what you fill it with, so it helps to have a sample of each and let students choose.)
8. Now, draw a colorful pattern onto the 8" x 18" brown paper.
9. Then scrunch up and carefully smooth out your paper about 8 times, until it has an evenly bumpy texture to it, resembling the texture of a cactus branch.
10. Spread glue over the back of your paper and roll it around your tube, overlapping itself and covering the loose edges of the paper you used to seal the ends.



11. Wrap a piece of twine twice around each end of your tube and tie in a knot.
12. Add a bead to each end and secure with a knot.
13. Spread a little glue onto the end of each of four feathers and stick them up onto each of the beads. Let dry completely.



To see this lesson in its entirety, visit <http://www.teachkidsart.net/chilean-rain-sticks/> .

*Special thanks to **Cheryl Trowbridge** for sharing a wealth of information and resources and ideas on her excellent website www.teachkidsart.net ! Cheryl has her art education credentials and has been teaching art to kids for over 20 years. She is inspired by watching children of all ages discover their ability to be creative. Her passion is to make successful art lessons accessible to help share the joy of art*

with all the kids in our lives. Visit Sheryl's on-line store <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Teach-Kids-Art> to purchase a variety of resources for helping kids create art.

If you have used this activity, we'd love to hear from you! Please send questions or comments through our website www.hildegardcenter.org .

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