

## Purpose & Goals

**Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to develop listening skills and appropriate response, while using the activity to represent interactions in real life. Symbolism assigned to musical instruments is used to connect the concrete interactions of the activity to the abstract interactions of an ecosystem including human and non-human factors.

**Goal:** For two initial “groups” - human and natural features - to be integrated into a harmonious rhythm, symbolized in a circle. At the end of the activity students will be able to articulate how the various roles in the circle are represented in real life.

**Time:** 30-45 min **Grades:** 1-6

## Standards

MN Arts K-12: 0.1.2.3.2, 0.1.2.5.1, 0.2.1.2.1, 0.2.1.2.2, 0.2.1.3.1, 0.2.1.4.1, 0.3.1.1.1, 0.3.1.3.2, 0.3.1.4.1, 0.3.1.5.2, 4.1.3.3.2, 4.2.1.3.1, 4.2.1.3.2, 4.3.1.3.1., 4.3.1.3.2, 6.1.2.3.2, 6.1.3.3.2, 6.2.1.3.1-2, 6.3.1.3.2.

## Preparation & Materials

Activity starts with an understanding of what a watershed is and how it works. Each student is equipped with a percussion instrument while sitting in a circle. Activity can take place outdoors, accompanying a raingarden, or indoors. Instrument meanings are customized depending on what instruments are available.

- Lake (large drum)
- Stream (small drums)
- Rain (shakers, rain stick)
- Plants (scraper)
- Animals (claves)
- Pavement (cymbals/tambourines)
- Humans (whistles)
- Buildings/development (gong)
- Cars (jingle bells)
- Preparation rhythms (see rhythms on page 2)

## Procedure

1. Students are seated in a circle but are divided between natural and non-natural features, each with their own side of the circle. Each instrument’s meaning is explained and exemplified before being distributed. The facilitator explains that this is a safe place to play and make mistakes - just like a stream, mistakes flow away.
2. To start, all students take a moment to consider what their “role” in the watershed would sound like - they all play their “role” at once. *What did you hear? Why was it like that?*
3. Natural features lay a foundational, simple rhythm starting with the lake. The natural features always play in sync with each other, symbolizing the interconnectivity of nature.
4. The human features listen to the environment and can choose how to add to the rhythm. This can be an attempt at harmony, or a purposeful derailing to provide a challenge. Each member of the human features group must make their own choice as to how to contribute. *Now what happened? What do we want it to sound like?*
5. The facilitator introduces the provided rhythms (page 2) until students are comfortable creating their own.
6. Gradually re-locate students to different parts of the circle, swapping human and natural features. *What happens when we change spaces? Why?*
7. Students are challenged to change their rhythm through listening to some one else’s. Try this with everyone’s eyes closed, or encourage making eye contact with different people around the circle. *Whose rhythms were you able to catch onto? Why? How many times did you make a change in your rhythm?*
8. Students may switch instruments and roles as time allows. To provide time for switching, the leader of the activity can announce switches periodically, rather than focusing on achieving a harmonious rhythm in one round. With this strategy, the harmony would be encouraged in the a next round after a role switch.

## Reflection

Essential questions for thoughtful reflection.


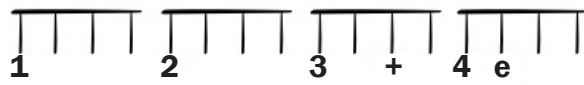

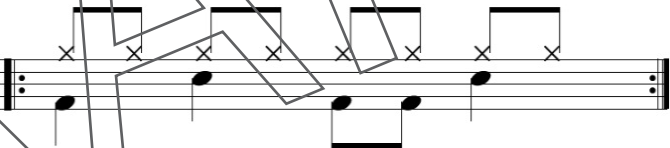
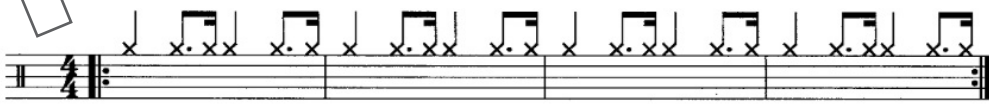
1. When did you feel good during the activity, and when were you confused? What made you feel that way?
2. Where in real life do you hear the harmonious rhythms or the lack of harmony?
3. Which instrument (role) do you think is most important for keeping the rhythm together and why?
4. What should we do in real life to create a more harmonious rhythm?

## Assessment

Students can express, written or verbal, a strategy for how to create harmony between human and natural factors.

## Rhythms

Rhythms are used as experience and ability allow. If students have experience or skill, they may add more intricacies or alterations. If skill level in music is low, the basic rhythm allows the meaning of the activity to be the focus. Instructors may spend time practicing rhythms before doing the activity. While most students focus on a certain rhythm, the shakers may serve as a tempo guide, playing constant quarter or eighth notes.

<p>Afro-cuban - Clave</p>	
<p>West African - Kuku</p>	
<p>Irish - Basic Jig</p>	
<p>American - Basic Rock/pop</p>	
<p>American - Basic Swing</p>	
<p>Brazilian - Samba Reggae</p>	