

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY GUIDE

Effects of the program are enhanced by bringing some of the activities into the classroom.

Session 1 Theme: Introduction to the Drum Circle

- Review Drum Circle Rules in classroom.
 1. Keep mallets up and on your laps when it is someone's turn to talk. Your mallets are your hands.
 2. Listen quietly while others are talking.
 3. Sit appropriately on your chair without lying on top of the drums.
 4. Everyone must participate.
 5. If anyone disrupts the drum circle, they will be asked to sit out until they are ready to participate appropriately. You are all old enough not to need a warning.
- Use Call and Response rhythms to get the students' attention in the classroom.

Session 2 Theme: Focus and Listening Skills, Positive Behavior

- Do the Welcome at the Door, using the American Indian buffalo drum. Play a *slow* heartbeat rhythm, single repeated beat or other simple rhythm, while verbally or nonverbally greeting each student at the door.
- Before recess and/or before lunch, review with students the meaning of the affirmation: *I am respon-si-ble, I do the right thing* and have them practice saying it (with or without simultaneously playing a rhythm).

Session 3 Theme: Focus and Listening, Team Building, Positive Risk Taking

- Before recess and/or before lunch, review with students the meaning of the affirmation: *I will do, some-thing new* and have them practice saying it (with or without simultaneously playing a rhythm).

Session 4 Theme: Focus and Listening, Self-Esteem, Awareness of Others

- Ask students to stay aware of what they could do that would be kind and thoughtful for someone else, or to share what kind and thoughtful things that they have done for others, based on the affirmation: *I think of o-thers, not on-ly my-self.*
- Before recess and/or before lunch, review with students the meaning of the affirmation: *I ac-cept you, you ac-cept me, that's, the way, that it will be* and have them practice saying it (with or without simultaneously playing a rhythm).

Session 5 Theme: Focus and Listening, Leadership, Sense of Self, Awareness of Others

- Utilize any previous classroom activities as needed to improve student behavior.

Session 6 Theme: Focus and Listening, Expressing Feelings, Managing Anger

- Review the "Calm Down Mantra": *Walk away, get some space, and breathe.* Give students an opportunity to: 1) practice the mantra out loud and 2) practice taking a deep breath.

Session 7 Theme: Focus and Listening, Leadership, Managing Stress

- Remind students to go to their comfort place when they feel stressed or need it.

Session 8 Theme: Focus and Listening, Leadership, Empathy, Gratitude

- Remind students to find things for which they are grateful and to express gratitude throughout the day. Have them regularly write down something for which they are grateful and then share them with the class.

Note:

Gratitude facilitates positive behavior and relationships.

BEAT THE ODDS®: Session 1

Theme: Introduction to the Drum Circle

Before the Session

- Let the classroom teacher know in advance what role(s) s/he is to play during and outside of the drum circle. See the important section on "Working with Teachers" under "Basic Delivery Guidelines" in the *Instruction Manual* section of this booklet.
- Give the teacher a copy of *Beat the Odds®: Classroom Activity Guide*. Explain that it contains recommended follow up activities that correspond with each session, and that s/he is welcome to use any of these activities at any time.
- Set up drums in front of each chair in the circle before students arrive. Students should line up in an alternating boy-girl pattern and sit down accordingly. The teacher should sit directly across from you. All of these measures can be helpful for behavior management.

Welcome (2")

- Welcome everyone. [If the students are having a hard time settling down, you can say: "The sooner we listen, the sooner we can have fun."]
- Introduce yourself.
- Ask: Has anyone ever played a drum before? Has anyone ever heard of a drum circle?
- Explain the concept of a drum circle:
 1. A drum circle is about having fun; we don't have to worry about how well we play.
 2. A drum circle is about creating a community where we all learn to support each other, work together, and learn new things together. We set up in a circle so that we can clearly see and communicate with each other.
 3. If you look at the drums, they are different colors and sizes. What else represents different colors and sizes? People. Just like these drums, each one of you is unique and special.
- Explain: Before we start, make sure you remove rings, bracelets, and watches to protect your hands and the drum.

Drum Circle Rules (2")

1. Keep mallets up and on your laps when it is someone's turn to talk. Your mallets are your hands. [Practice this with the students before moving on to the next rule.]
2. Listen quietly while others are talking.
3. Sit appropriately on your chair without lying on top of the drums.
4. Everyone must participate.
5. If anyone disrupts the drum circle, they will be asked to sit out until they are ready to participate appropriately. You are all old enough not to need a warning.

Drum Wave (5") – From a seated position, beat the drum once, and have each student repeat the pattern sequentially around the circle. Then initiate the Drum Wave by beating the drum twice.

Tips on Playing Drums (2") ending with Rumble / 4-3-2-1 Stop Cut (1")

- Tips:
 1. Take care of the drum and your hands by not hitting hard.
 2. Freestanding cylindrical tubano drums require no holding. Small djembe drums, with a goblet shape, are held between the knees. Larger djembe drums should be nested in a basket stand, tilted away from the drummer. [Demonstrate.]
 3. Hit the drum like bouncing a basketball. [Demonstrate.]
 4. Low tones are made by playing in the center of the drum.
 5. High tones are made by playing near the edge of the drum with fingers only (thumbs off the edge of the drum). [Demonstrate.] Have students briefly practice playing four high sounds and then four low sounds repeatedly. [See Photos of How to Play High and Low Tones" within the "Basic Delivery Guidelines" section of the *Instruction Manual*.] There is a natural tendency for students to speed up on this activity; therefore, it officially ends with a Rumble / 4-3-2-1 Stop Cut.