



Lummi Stick Games © 2001-2005 TeacherWeb, Inc.

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Rhythm or Lummi sticks are a great way to add to excitement in children's games. They are fun, easy to use, and take up very little space. Students learn about direction, coordination, cooperation, and memorization while using the sticks. Those with and without natural rhythm can benefit from use of the sticks. This is also a great opportunity to have students freely express themselves with their own rhythm using the sticks. Some people believe that lummi sticks originated from the Indians in Washington. Others give credit to those living in the South Pacific.

Safety is the most important factor when using rhythm sticks. They are never used to hit others and kept at least arm's distance apart from other tappers. Sticks may be wooden, plastic and hollow inside of various sizes to make different kinds of noise or made with pool noodles. Sticks can be inexpensively purchased from Kimbo Educational.

Sticks are held in the thumb and fingers and at the bottom third of the stick. They are not held in the palm or fist of the hand. They are primarily an upper body movement utilizing the digits, the brachia, biceps, triceps, lats, deltoids, and the chest. Large movements utilize the movement of the upper body while small-specialized movements use more specific upper body areas.

The types of taps vary. The basic taps are the vertical, end-to-end, horizontal cross over, side-to-side, saw, scrape, twirl, and pass. When you tap vertical, you put both sticks together on the floor or in the air. Partner taps consist of partners tapping both right and left sticks together. The end tap is when the sticks are forward and they tap the ends of the floor in a slight tilt. To cross tap you tap the upper ends to the floor or in the air. The twirl consists of having the student twirl the sticks like a baton. You can advance the skill by twisting with the left and then the right hand. Stick games can be done standing or sitting on the ground. Scraping is done with the sticks being scraped together horizontally and sawing is done with the sticks vertically running together.

Children may also tap their sticks high in the air to use upper body movements and low to increase recruitment of the lower body muscles. Jumping, skipping, or fast walking can add to lower muscle recruitment. This also teaches coordination and agility because the student is using two opposite motions with his sticks and his feet.

Early childhood and music teachers love sticks as part of their instructional activities because they allow children to learn how to keep count and make a beat using their sticks. Student can demonstrate their musical skills by tapping to the beat of a quarter, half, and whole note.

Children are kinesthetically engaged and active. Music is a great tool to have the children listens to as they work with their sticks. Children can tap the sticks while practicing their spelling words or memorizing their math tables. The kinesthetic movement allows the brain to digest the information in a concrete way.

Students can advanced their skills by being challenged by having the stick on the finger of the hand and balancing it as they are standing, walking and moving. Children can drop the stick and see if they can catch it before it touches the floor. Students can throw the stick to each other and see how far they can move from one another and still catch the stick.

Students can use the stick to bat a ball, control it, and catch a ring in the air. Sticks can also throw rings to knock down hollow objects. The sticks can be set horizontally or vertically and used to teach agility and plyometrics training.

Students enjoy being the leader and the other children can mimic the rhythms that the student leader does with his stick. Grabbing the stick with the dominant and non-dominant hand is another fun game to try. Other skills include using the stick showing what it would look like using a cane, telescope, paddle, sword, baseball bat, flute, conductor's wand, and hammer. Allow children to come up with their own creative ideas.

Sticks also encourage originality. Using different music also allows children to experience music from different cultures and styles. What a wonderful way to children to have them experience life by having them play along.

**Recommended and Suggested Kimbo Resources:**

Johnson, Laura, Lummi Sticks for Kids, Kimbo Educational, 1984

Johnson, Laura, Simplified Lummi Sticks for Kids, Kimbo Educational, 1978

Stewart, Georgiana Multicultural Stick Fun, Kimbo International, 1992