



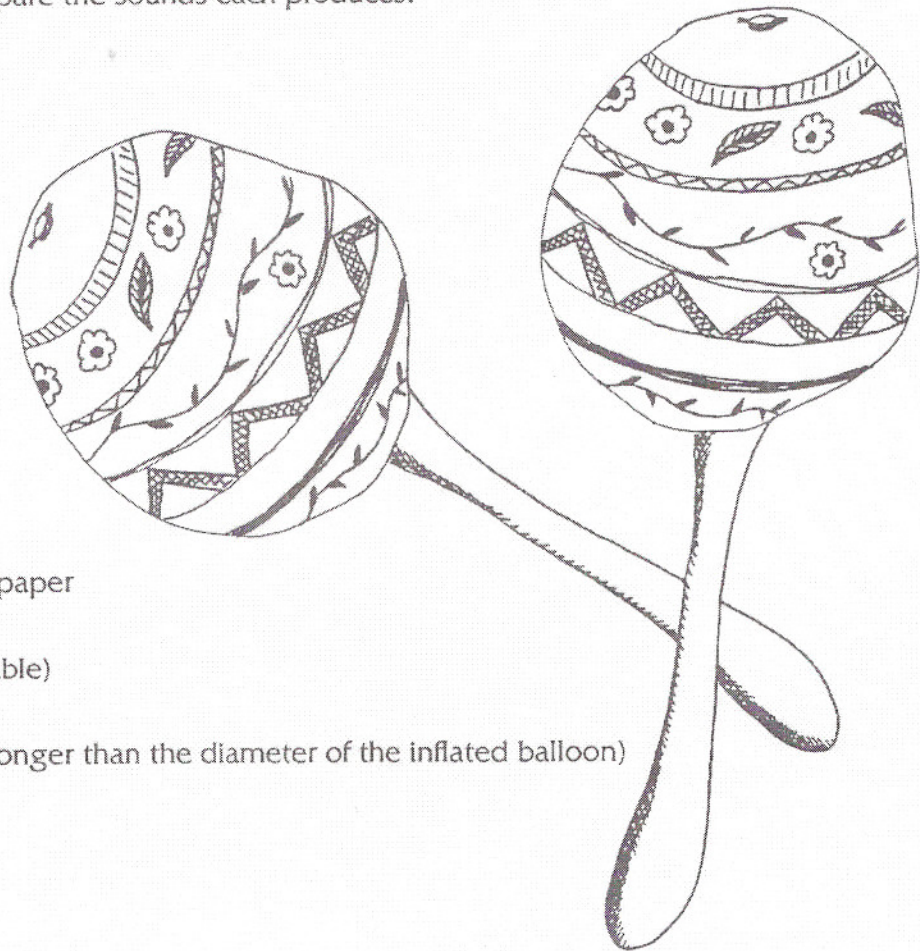
MARACAS

Maracas are dried gourds used as rattles. The dried seeds inside rattle when the gourds are shaken. Maracas are common rhythm instruments enjoyed and played during Mexican and Central American fiestas and parties or as integral parts of everyday music. You may make replicas of maracas using a variety of materials. Try making several and compare the sounds each produces.

Balloon Maracas

Materials:

- balloons (round)
- wheat paste
- 1/2" strips of newspaper
- blunt knife
- glue gun (if available)
- glue
- dowel sticks (6" longer than the diameter of the inflated balloon)
- beans or pebbles
- tempera paint
- paintbrush
- shellac



1. Inflate and tie the balloons. Then invite children to cover the surfaces entirely with three to four layers of papier-mâché strips. Allow to dry. (This may take several days.)
2. Cut a small hole in the papier-mâché forms and remove the balloons inside.
3. Place approximately one dozen beans or pebbles in the opening of the maracas and then papier-mâché over the holes.
4. Help children put a dab of glue on the end of a dowel stick and insert it in one end of the shell all the way through until it sticks to the inside wall of the opposite side of each maraca. (Use a glue gun, if possible.)
5. Place glue around the handles where they enter the shells.
6. Invite children to paint the maracas in bright colors. After the paint dries, add a coat of shellac. Be sure the room is well ventilated when using shellac.