

# SHEKERE

Number of participants: Any

Duration: Unrestricted

Age Restrictions: Ages 4 and older

## Brief Description

A *shekere* is a musical instrument from Africa that is shaken, tossed or moved from hand to hand to create different rhythms and sounds.

Traditionally, *shekeres* are made from dried gourds that have the pulp and seeds removed and are wrapped in beadwork, netting or other decorations.

Space Requirements: Craft table

## Supplies:

- Plastic milk jug
- \* Stickers (such as paper reinforcements or the little round stickers used to price items at garage sales)
- Permanent Marker, (for those who wish to draw string patterns on the milk jugs)
- \* Colorful yarn or string for handle
- Filling for the shekere, i.e. bird seed, dried macaroni, beans, beads, rice, sugar, salt, paper clips or small pebbles.
- \* Electrical tape – for sealing the instrument and keeping the content inside

## Activity Instructions:

- Ask each child to bring a washed and cleaned milk jug from home with the lid or cap. Depending on the number of children at your site, you may wish to write each child's name on the bottom of the jug to help with identification.
- Invite children to decorate their shekeres, either free form by applying stickers anywhere on the milk jug or by drawing string patterns on them to show where a sticker would go.
- Once the milk jugs are decorated, add the filling. Some fillings create quieter shekeres such as sand, salt, sugar, Q-tips or tiny pasta. Slightly louder shekeres can be made with fillings like paper clips, bird seed, rice or smaller beans such as lentils. Louder shekeres

can be created by adding large dried macaroni, or beans, pebbles, larger beads or even jingle bells.

- Seal the shekeres with the help of electrical tape. For those who would like, add colourful yarn or pipe cleaners to the jug to create a handle.



**African Shekere**