

# El Pueblo Historical Monument *Maracas* At-Home Workshop

El Pueblo<sup>™</sup>  
*de*  
Los Angeles



This workshop is fun for the whole family and can be created with things you may already have at home! Create homemade maracas by using water bottles, beans, and construction paper to personalize your design.

The directions below provide the directions for creating one maraca, but the instructions can be modified as needed to make more.

## **Historic Facts About Maracas**

- Originally used for religious and spiritual ceremonies, maracas are now widely known as a musical instrument used in many styles of music from Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Originally, maracas were made from dried fruits or gourds filled with tiny pebbles. Now maracas can be made from different materials including wood, leather, metal, and plastic.
- Maracas are played to keep the rhythm of music being played by other instruments.
- Maracas are typically played in a pair, one held in each hand. Sometimes the maracas are of different sizes, so one plays a higher pitch and the other plays a lower pitch.
- Maracas can be played many ways to make different sounds. To make a deep, lower sound, shake them up and down. For a livelier sound, hold them upright and shake them forward and backward. You can even tap one maraca with your finger softly to make a softer, lighter sound.

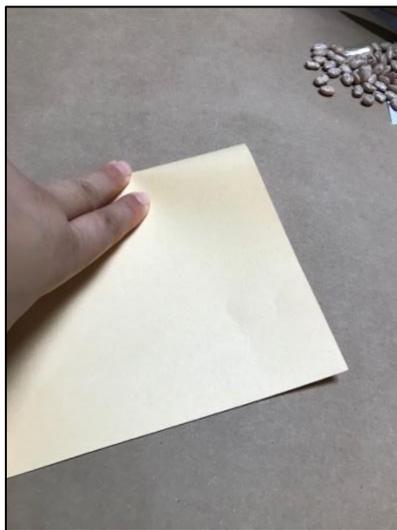
## **Materials:**

- One plastic water bottle that you recycled and saved
  - Remember to sanitize the recycled bottle and ensure it is dry
- About a quarter of a cup of beans (vegetable beans, coffee beans, or even beads)
- One sheet of construction paper (8.5 inches x 11 inches)
- Scissors
- Tape
- Crayons, Coloring Pencils, or Markers
- Optional: Stickers for additional decoration

## **Steps/Instructions:**

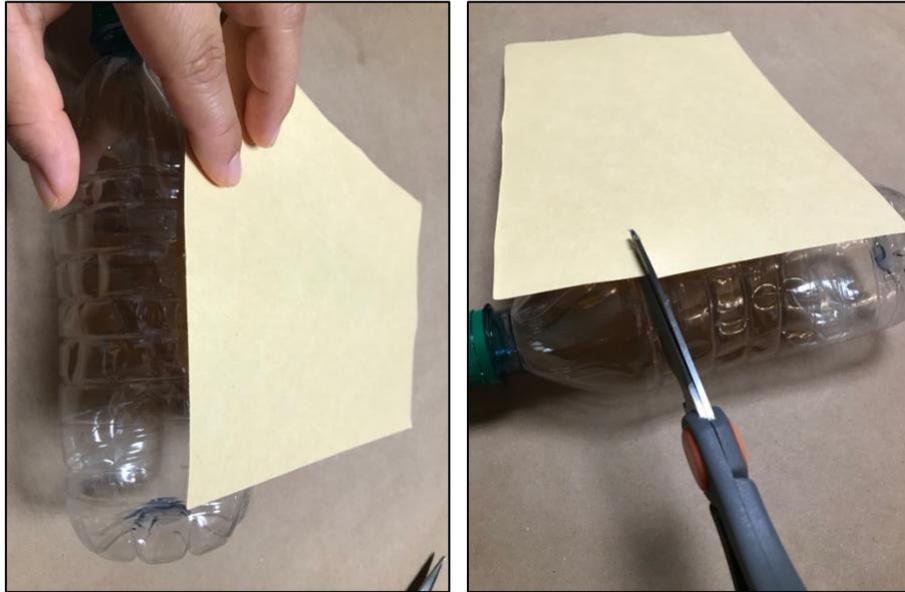
**Step One:** Collect all of your materials in one place on a flat surface.

**Step Two:** Fold the piece of construction paper in half and then cut along the seam all way through until you get two half sheets. You will only need one of the half sheets for one maraca, but feel free to use to the second half sheet for another maraca!



### Step Three:

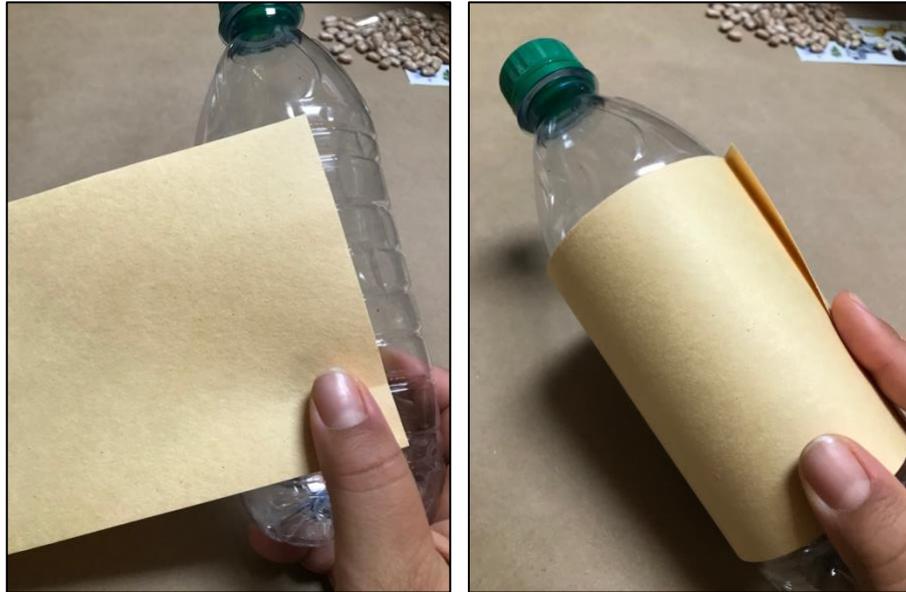
- Note how the entire half sheet does not wrap tightly around the part of the upper part of the bottle (funneled part where the bottle opening is.)
- To fix this, take one (1) of the half sheets of construction paper and wrap it around the water bottle to measure out the next trim/cut of this piece of construction paper.



- Once you estimate how much you would like to trim, fold over the construction paper to match the desired trim area and cut along this seam.



**Step Four:** You should now have a rectangular portion of construction paper with an appropriate height to wrap around the bottle. This construction paper will be used to decorate the maraca with a design and decorations of your choice!



**Step Five:** Prepare your color pencils, crayons, markers, stickers, and any other desired decorations so you can personalize your maraca! Artwork and designs will be done on the newly trimmed construction paper. It is recommended to design, draw, or color on your construction paper on a flat and even surface (before wrapping the construction paper around the bottle.)



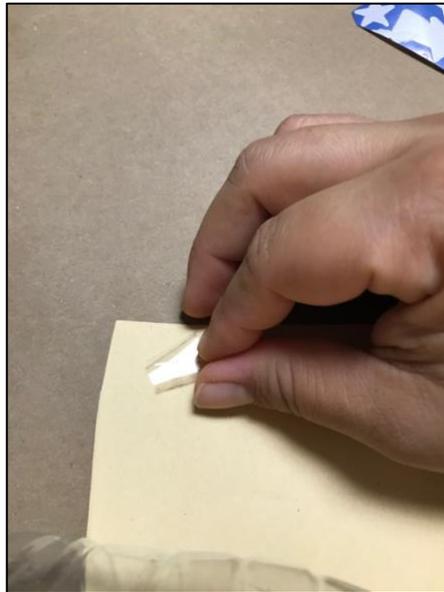
**Step Five (continued):**

- **Tip:** Decorate in any way you would like! Stickers are also fun ways to personalize your maraca. Be creative and have fun!



**Step Six:**

- Once your artwork/design is complete, turn your piece of construction paper over (the blank side) so you can prepare add the tape as adhesive.
- Use the tape to create small “loops” of tape and line up the tape loops on each short edge of the construction paper. This is done to ensure your decorated construction paper will stick to the plastic bottle.



**Step Six (continued):** Once tape loops have been lined up on each short edge of your paper, place the bottle on top of the tape. Wrap the construction paper around the bottle. Continue this until the end of your construction paper and seal the other edge lined with tape.



**Step Seven:** Once you wrapped your plastic bottle with the decorated construction paper and it has been sealed, add your beans inside of the bottle to complete your maraca! Once your maraca is filled, be sure to tighten the cap of the bottle so the beans do not spill out.



*Congratulations! You have completed your own maraca instrument that is unique and wonderful! Enjoy the different sounds and rhythms you can make with your new maraca. Stay safe and we hope to see you on your next visit to El Pueblo Historical Monument soon!*