



# Drum Project

Owl - John Sweeney: Preschool 2

## Background

We began the drum project in November of 2015 based on the interests the children were presenting with the instruments and drums available within the classroom. The project was led by Janeth, RECE, Fiona, RECE and Simone, RECE with children aged 2.5 to 4 years of age.

## Phase 1: Beginning the Project

The project interest began when Zoey, Tiago, Arian, Ayden, Ryan and Nina were observed on many occasions banging on the drums available in the classroom. They were creative in utilizing different materials from their hands to sticks to create sound. Some of the discussions noted were the fact that the children were getting used to the loud and soft sounds when they were playing. Cavin, Lilian, Cadence also began to explore the sounds these made and were often observed comparing the sounds. Tiago utilized different surfaces to test out the drums such as the floor, couch or table.



**Fig. 1** Ryan trying to find a different way to drum without a drum stick.



**Fig. 2** Tiago bangs on 3 drums. He listens to the different sounds. He says "This one is loud, this one is not so loud."

Just before Christmas we added some provocations to the program which included 2 tambourines that some of the children thought were also drums.

Upon this interest the teachers created a web while also asking the children what they knew about drums and what they wanted to know.

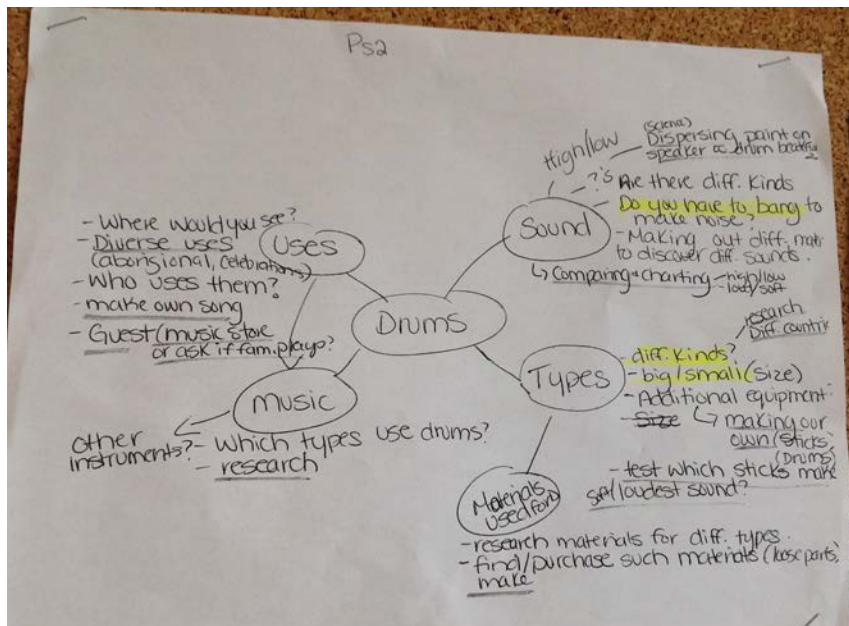


Figure 3. Children's web

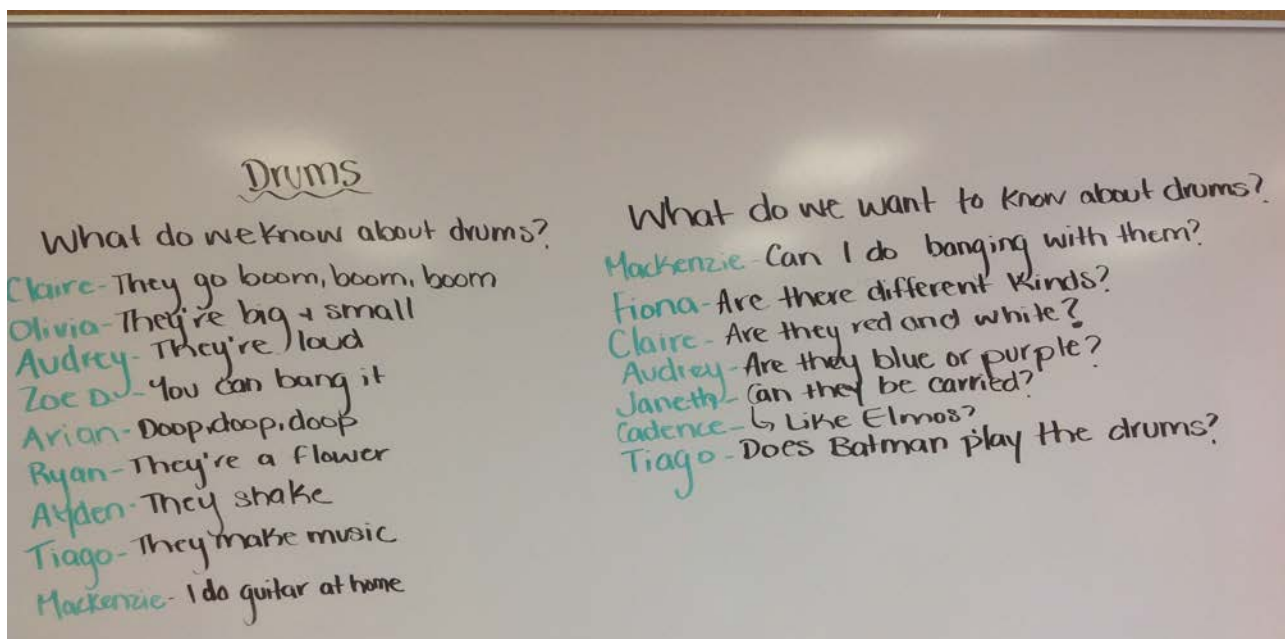
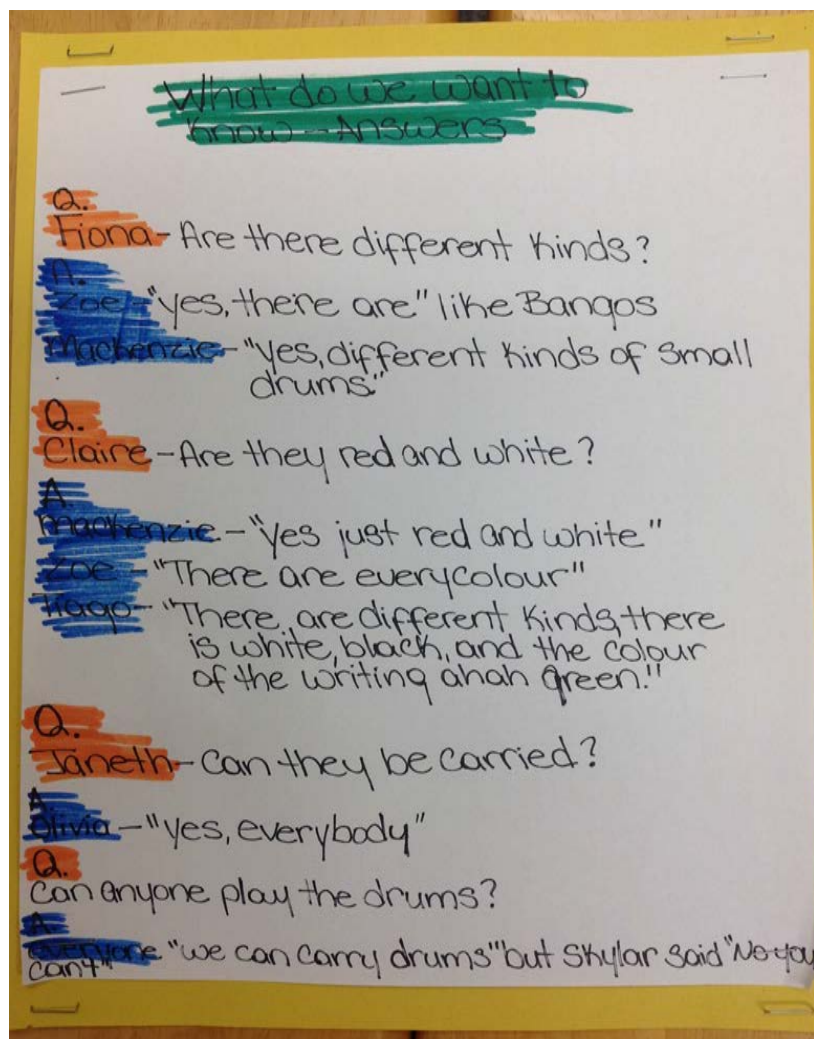


Figure 4. The known and unknown knowledge before the Christmas break.

The Christmas break occurred while we were in phase one of our project. The educators were a little worried that the children might have lost the interest in exploring drums over the break, but to their surprise the interest still continued. However, we did have to tweak things a bit and do some of the phase one steps again just to get us back on track. We revisited what we wanted to know and the children gave their answers and we saw that they had retained some of the information and showed interest in continuing.



**Figure 5.** Sharing our answers after the Christmas break.

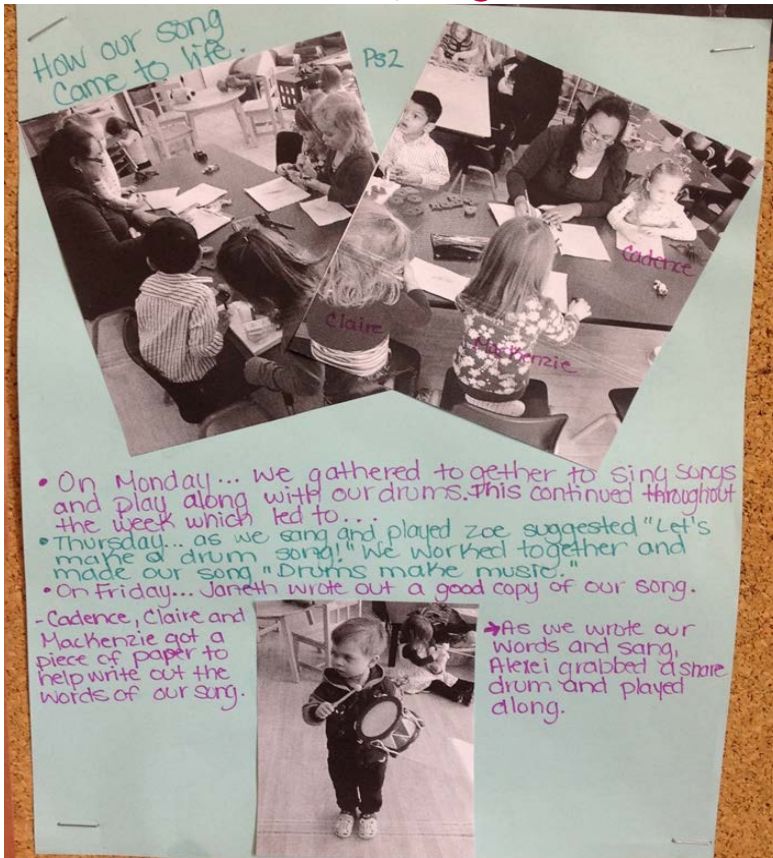
The children were asked where we could find more information on this interest and some of the responses were:

- Ryan - "In our house."
- Claire - "We can ask mom or daddy, grandma or grandpa."
- Tiago - "We can use the iPad."

Janeth also suggested we could find books on drums



## Phase 2: Developing the Project



Drums Make Music: Written and Played by Zoe, Skylar, Harper, Audrey, Mariusz, Fiona and Janeth

On Monday we gathered together to sing songs along with our drums. This continued throughout the week which led to Zoe suggesting on Thursday, "Let's make a drum song!" We worked together and made our song "Drums Make Music" (Sung to the tune of Frere Jacques).

Drums make music, drums make music,  
They go like this,  
They go like this.  
Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom,  
Bam, bam, bam, bam, bam, bam,  
Fast and slow, fast and slow.

Drums make music, drums make music  
They have different names, they have different names,  
Snare, body drum, Bongo, Darabukka,  
So many names, so many names.

**Figure 6.** Creating our drum song.



### Definition of a Drum:

Janeth read us stories that helped us discover what a drum is. We learned that “ a drum is a musical instrument” and there is ...

- A drum head
- Skin
- Round circles called snares
- A hollow body
- A drumstick(s)

**Figure 7.** Learning about drum parts

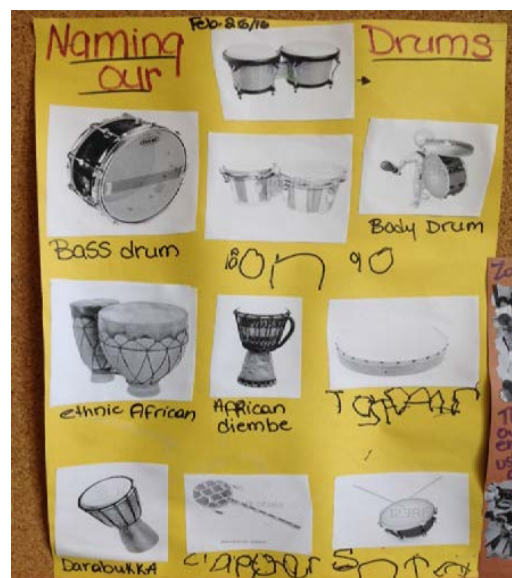


We came together to learn about different drums using our library books.

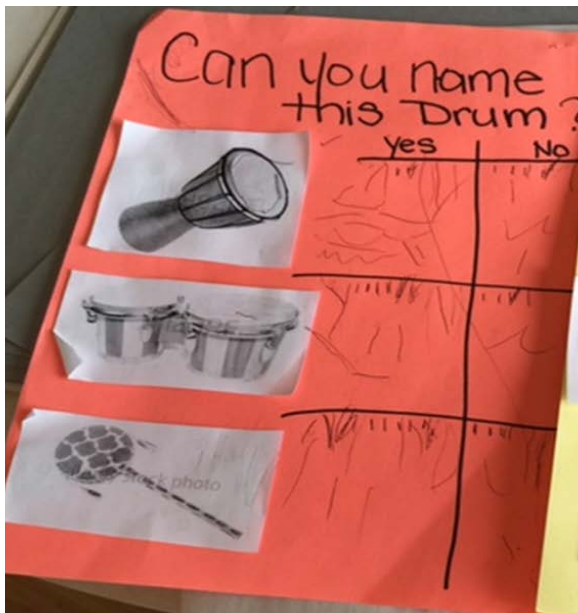
**Figure 8.** Research



**Figure 9.** Ayden is using his writing skills to print the word ‘Bong’ as we make our vocabulary list.





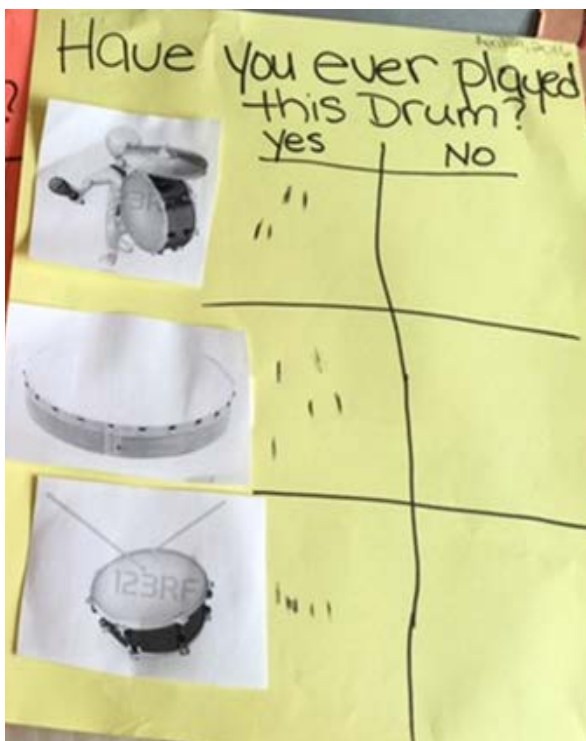


**Figure. 10**

After learning about the different drawings the children initiated surveys. "Can you name this drum?" was completed by Olivia as she walked throughout the room asking her peers the question, and then making a stick beside yes or no.

Lillian saw her doing this and asked "What are you doing?"

Olivia replied. "Asking you about drums, do you know the name?"



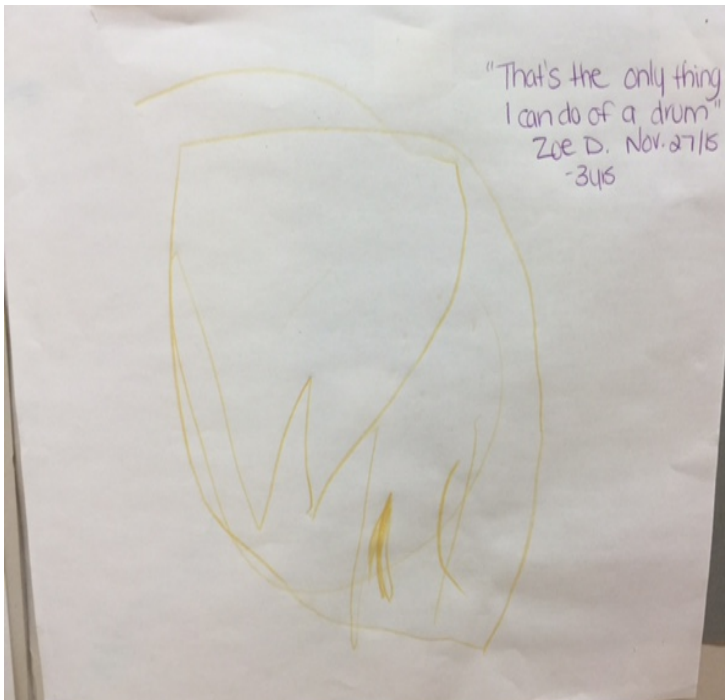
**Figure. 11**

Zoe also wanted to do a survey so she completed the "Have you ever played this drum?" survey. We couldn't get over how many said yes.

Aiden said, "I have played the snare."

Tiago said, "I have played the tambourine and the snare."

After the survey, the children began playing the instruments and singing "Let it Go", "ABC" and their drum song.



**Figure. 12**

After asking Zoe what she thought a drum looked like, she quickly got to work to create this picture. When she was done, she said "That's the only thing I can do of a drum."

**Figure. 13**

After asking Olivia about her picture we found out we have a very colourful snare drum and drumsticks





**Figure. 14**  
Arian is very rhythmic as he plays on the snare drum.



**Figure. 15**  
Here's the Clapper.  
Alexie persevered for five minutes to get it to clap.



**Figure. 16**  
The Darabukka is the drum that Zoe is playing. She is keeping the beat while she and her friends help Janeth write our drum song.



**Figure. 17**  
Our jam session after learning the names of our different drums



With the wooden spoons and plastic containers we practiced our Drum Song. We also sang 'Twinkle, Twinkle' and 'ABC's'. The children also explored drumming fast and slow.



**Figure 18, 19 & 20.** Candice brought in plastic containers and wooden spoons.



## Phase 3: Concluding the Project

Figure. 21, 22, 23, 24 Jacobo's dad, Andres came to play bongos for us April 11



- Jacobo's dad taught us that a bongo has one high sound and one low sound.
- We also learned that there are different types of music that use drums. He plays Salsa (a Latin American rhythm) with his bongos.
- We played along to Latin music with Andres using our drums in the room and plastic containers with sticks.
- We listened as he sang a song in Spanish about a rat and a cat.
- We observed the differences between our bongos and Andres' bongos:  
"The tops are different," Olivia.  
"They are different colours," Zoe.  
"The sides look different," Ayden.





### QUESTIONS FOR ANDRES:

1. Do you always use your hands to play? (Olivia)  
"Yes, you use your hands"

2. Is your bongo heavy?  
(Harper)  
"Bongos can be heavy."  
We tried to lift them. It was tricky but we did it!

3. Do boys only play the Bongos?  
"No, girls do too."  
He showed us a video of a little girl playing the Bongos.



**Figure. 25**

Here we have Ayden, Jacobo, and Royce helping put the drum set together.

"What is that little thing in your hand Janeth?" says Royce.  
"It's a key to tighten parts together, can I help you?" asked Ayden.  
"Sure," said Janeth.  
They used their muscles to help carry parts and put them together.  
"Like a puzzle." said Ayden.



**Figure. 26 – 40**

In the next two pages we see all the children try out the new drums. We had to change chairs due to height, so they would be able to reach the base drum. Throughout the whole morning everyone took turns on the drums.



- We learned to play drums.
- We did high and low sounds.





Rat- a- tat- tat! Listen to the beat of our drum!

- We all took turns to practice our drumming











**Figure. 41**

We got to play our drums all day. Then, guess what, Batman came and played drums for us! Some of us could not believe it. We got to play our drum song, ABC, and Twinkle, Twinkle little star.



**Figure. 42**

So, to end our project we as the teaching team answered Tiago's question "Does Batman play drums?" from our "What do you want to know?" phase of our project. It was fabulous. We found out that batman does play the drums!

**Figure. 43**

Preschool one joined us for our special celebration. After Batman showed us he can play drums, we had a chance to take pictures with him. He showed us some superhero moves.



## Teacher Reflections

Through this child directed project we discovered that the children were more interested in using the materials in the classroom as drums rather than making their own. We allowed the children to take the lead with their learning by practicing their writing abilities when researching the names of the drums we have in the classroom (e.g., Ayden was proud of himself for writing the word “Bongo.” Zoe was able to recall the name of the snare drum and was able to write it as well). When chopsticks were introduced in the room we found that the children were more interested in using them rather than the drum sticks to make music.

While exploring drums we also found that children who typically do not play together used their social skills, cooperative play and language skills to help create our drum song and participate in what we called “jam sessions.” An example of the friends that enhanced their social and language skills through the project were Mariusz who would mimic Janeth as we practiced fast and slow and who worked hard at learning the words of our song. Arian showed his ability to focus and follow the beat of the person playing drums. Jayden J. grew socially by participating in group activities throughout the project.

As teachers we reflected on how wonderful it was to have parent participation throughout the project and how they helped foster their sense of wonder in helping to answer some of their children’s questions. Seeing the growth of some of our children was an emotional encounter that made greater connections with the children and even though it got loud sometimes it was a fun experience.

