

Learning objectives

- To investigate the environment through sound.
- To encourage pupils to focus their attention on both natural and man made sounds.

10-15
mins

KS1
& 2

Teacher Preparation

Site visit, risk assessment and provision of paper and pens.

Equipment & Resources

- Postcard sized piece of blank paper with X in middle.
- Pencils or pens.

Main activity

1. Select a site where pupils will hear a variety of sounds. Meadows, streams and forests are great but school grounds work just as well.
2. Give each pupil a pencil and a sound card. Ask them to put an X in the centre of the page.
3. Tell the pupils that they are going to make a map of the sounds that they hear around them and the X on the page represents them.
4. Get the children to spread out so they have their own space. Ask them to close their eyes and listen to all the sounds around them for a little while (without recording). They can use their hands cupped around their ears to enhance the sensory experience.
5. Once they have listened for about a minute, you can get them to start recording on the paper where the sounds are in relation to their space (in front or behind, near or far). Get them to sketch symbols of the sounds they hear e.g. a music note might represent bird song; a car could represent traffic and feet might represent footsteps. They can use tally marks beside their symbol to represent how many times they hear that particular sound. The symbols should just be simple to remind the pupils what they heard for later discussion.
6. After the children have completed their maps get the group to sit in a circle and you can ask them how they felt about the activity. You can ask questions like:
 - How many sounds did you hear?
 - What sounds did you like best/worst?
 - What sounds were natural/manmade?
 - How far away were the sounds?
 - What animals would rely on their senses in this way?
 - What other senses would be important for wildlife?

Foundation/Key Stage 1 alternative

Tell the pupils to close their eyes and to listen to the sounds around them without speaking. Get them to raise one finger for every sound that they hear.

Once they have listened for about a couple of minutes you can encourage a group discussion about the sounds they heard.

Safety points

Site visit and risk assessments are essential for this activity. Ensure that the chosen area is free from hazards such as broken glass and dog faeces. Take great care when near water.

Example Sound Map

