

Sound Map

How many sounds can you hear right now? Sound waves are vibrations that travel through a medium such as air, water, or solid materials. Try this outdoor observation activity to listen to and map out all the sounds around you!

Materials needed:

- A piece of paper
- Something to write with

Step-by-step instructions:

1. Sit outside, away from others.
2. Draw a circle on a piece of paper with an “X” in the middle to represent your location.
3. Sit and listen to your surroundings for 5 minutes.
4. Record everything you hear on the circle, using symbols to represent what you think each sound looks like. Be creative!

Additional explorations:

- Try the same activity in a different location. Compare and contrast the different sounds you hear.
- Close your eyes. How does it change the sounds? Can you hear them louder and clearer?
- Recreate a bird call you heard for someone. Can either of you identify the type of bird? You might need to find a book about bird sounds or do some online research.

Discussion questions:

- How many sounds did you hear? How many were natural? How many were made by humans?
- Did you recognize any of the sounds you heard?
- Did you hear any bird calls you can identify?
- Did some of things you heard sound close, while others sounded farther away?
- How did it feel to sit and listen to your environment for five minutes?

Additional resources

- How to Start Identifying Birds by Their Songs and Calls:
<https://www.audubon.org/news/how-start-identifying-birds-their-songs-and-calls>

