



SOUND MAPPING

Ages 8+

Learning Objectives

- Students will learn:
 - to use all their senses while outdoors
 - that hearing is an important observational tool.

Summary: Students will listen for and describe sounds that they hear in different ecosystems, and make a sound map.

Subject Area: Science

Time: 10-30 minutes

Background: Most of us have forgotten how to use our senses because of the daily bruising we get living in an urban environment. In particular, the everyday decibel level around us often drowns out simple sounds. This is a very quiet, focused activity, and the length of time will depend on the age, energy level, and other dynamics of each particular class. The longer the students spend on this activity, the more they will hear. Monitor the class, and call them in at the point where restlessness starts to interfere with concentration.

Before the Lesson

- Ensure all necessary resources (or alternatives) are available.
- Find and prepare an area for this activity to take place. If covering a specific ecosystem (for example, mangrove wetlands) make sure the area is accessible to all of your students.

Materials

- One 3 x 5-inch index card and one crayon per person
- Copy of a sonogram, or simplified example on page 3



Activity - Sound Mapping

Procedure

1. Show the group a 3 x 5-inch card with an X drawn in the center. Tell the students that the card is a map, and the X shows where they are sitting.
2. When they hear a sound, they should make a mark on the card that represents the sound—for example, wavy lines might mean the wind. The mark's location should indicate as exactly as possible the direction and distance of the sound. Tell them to keep their eyes closed while they listen. You may wish to show students a copy of the completed sound map at the bottom of the page.
3. Have everyone spread out and find their “listening place” quickly. Stress that once they find it, they are to remain seated and be as quiet as possible so as not to disturb the others. How long you play depends on your group.
4. Call the group back with a natural sound such as a bird call.

Discussion/Reflection

- Have the students share their maps with a partner.
- How many different sounds did they hear?
- Which sounds did they like best?
- Which sounds did they like least?
- Were there sounds they had never heard before?

References

- Mangrove Action Project, Marvellous Mangroves - A Wetlands Education Resource Book for the West Indies

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Sound Map Example

