

Sound Map Activity

Preparation

Gather enough blank pieces of paper, pencils, and hard surfaces to write on. Find an outdoor place where you will be comfortable (and safe) sitting for about 10 minutes. This could be in your yard or in a public open space.

Each person should sit alone with about 8-10 feet of space so children feel safe but can also have the experience of being on their own during this activity.

Individually (10 minutes)

Once you find your spot, sit down and mark an **X** (or draw your smiling face) in the middle of the paper. This represents you on the map.

Now turn on your listening ears and if you feel comfortable, close your eyes. Set a timer for 10 minutes, the challenge is to sit and listen (no talking) during this time.

When you hear a sound you will record it on your paper. Remember the **X** represents you and so you will record the location and direction of the sounds based on where you are sitting. Use simple drawings to show what the sound is. For example, wavy lines can represent the sound of running water, a leaf for the sound of crunching leaves, or an airplane for the hum of an airplane flying above you.

Tip: Cup your hands around your ears to hear better. This is called deer ears! You can cup your hands facing forward to hear better in front of you and cup your hands facing backwards to hear better behind you.

After (5-10 minutes)

Once the timer is up come back together as a family to share your sound maps.

- What was your favorite sound?
- Did you hear any sounds you didn't recognize? Can you imitate the sound?
- Did you hear mostly nature sounds or human sounds (cars/airplanes)?
- How do you think all of the human noises might affect nature?
- Where and when would you like to try this activity again?