



Nature Sound Recording



This activity is based on the environmental education work by Steve Van Matre from the Institute of Earth Education - and several books including 'Earthwalks' and 'Sunship Earth'. The "Sound Proof Paper" activity was adapted by Ann Prescott and further developed here by NRM Education, Natural Resources SAMDB.



Preface for nature activities:

This is a very special area and we must be careful. No picking flowers if there are only a couple on the one plant e.g. orchids and only take a small piece, like one leaf from a live plant. Look on the ground too. If you can't take the object with you, take a photo in your memory. Make sure that the students know that they can go only as far as they can and still be able to see the teacher and to come back when the teacher blows a whistle (or other agreed signal).

Age/Year Level: Middle-Upper Primary, any group size

Time: 20min

Aim/Learning outcomes: Encourages students to tune into their surroundings, to be quiet and take in what's happening around them in nature. Students will become aware of the number of sounds (birds, animals etc) around them.

Equipment/Requirements:

- Manila folder labelled "Sound recording paper"
- A4 coloured "Sound recording paper" - enough for each group or each student
- "Magic sound activating" Coloured sticky dots
- Pencils



Activity:

- Hand out the 'sound recording paper' and ask students to be careful with it - we are going to use this to record the sounds in the environment.
- Hand out the 'sound activating' sticky dots. Tell students not to activate their dots just yet - they need to wait until it's time to start recording.
- Demonstrate the activity by putting the dot in the middle of the paper - marking where you are in the landscape - draw a few of the environmental elements to show this eg. creek/water or large trees.





- Now 'activate' the sticky dots and start recording the sounds around you, and what direction they are coming from by using symbols eg. dotted line for a bird call, squiggle for another noise etc. You can use multiple squiggles or dotted lines for the same bird call in the same spot.
- Tell the students to make their way to a quiet spot in the nearby area (they must stay within view of the teachers/adults). Mark their location on their paper and 'activate' their sticky dots by pressing them. Once they have pressed them - they need to be silent and listen to their surroundings - and start recording them on the paper.
- They have 10min to find their spot and record the sounds - then when the whistle goes they regroup. Once the group is back together each group or student can hold up their picture to share. Take note of the number of different sounds and marks they have made on their paper.
- Ask the students to share a couple of the sounds they heard.
- Ask them if they recognised any of the sounds? How many different birds did they hear in the area today?
- Ask the students if they were surprised at how many different sounds they heard and noticed and reiterate the importance of connecting with nature, finding a 'spot' and sometimes just listening to what's around you.
- Extension - students could try to identify the bird calls they heard that day.

