

Activity: wild sounds

Summary of activity

Pupils explore sounds in their school grounds, identifying human and wild sounds. Pupils go on to create instruments from natural and recycled materials, which are used to accompany a song.

Learning objectives

1. To identify human and wild sounds.
2. To use objects to make sounds.

Preparation

- Request that pupils bring old containers and bits of packaging from home.
- Request that pupils come in to school well prepared to spend time in the outdoors.

Resources

- A variety of materials brought in from home for re-use.
- Sounds Song (see below).

Introduction

Take the class outside and find somewhere comfortable to sit for a while. Ask pupils to listen to all the sounds they can hear. Ask pupils to decide whether a sound is human or wild.

Create a simple chart on a flipchart to record these sounds. Sounds can be recorded using appropriate symbols. Sing the Sounds Song (see below) to the class.

Main activity

1. Tell pupils that you would like them to be your orchestra next time you sing the song.
2. Ask pupils to explore their school grounds to find objects that can be used to create sounds. Ideas might include pebbles rattled together, leaves crunched up or twigs banged against each other.
3. Back in the classroom, present pupils with a variety of human materials that have been collected. These might include yoghurt pots, plastic bottles, cereal packets and Tetra packs. Ask pupils to explore the materials and see if they can create any instruments. Ideas might include blowing over bottle tops, twanging rubber bands stretched over a margarine tub or using containers as drums.
4. Sing the song again to the pupils.

5. Decide which sounds from the new instruments are most appropriate for each part of the song. You may wish to use natural objects for the wild sounds and recycled objects for the human sounds.

Plenary

Perform the song in an assembly. Record the performance on tape or video. Can it be improved?

Health and safety consideration

- Refer to your risk assessment for your school grounds.
- Complete a risk assessment if you leave the school grounds.
- Consider pupil specific risks.
- Consider activity specific risks such as pupils handling sharp natural or recycled objects





Sounds Song

To be sung to the tune of Frère Jacques.

HUMAN SOUNDS VERSE

Cars and buses
Babies and trains
What can you hear?
What can you hear?
People coughing
Aeroplanes zooming
It's not quiet
It's not quiet

WILD SOUNDS VERSE

Birds and rustling
Wind and rain
What can you hear?
What can you hear?
Raindrops pattering
Leaves and twigs crunching
It's not quiet
It's not quiet

Follow-up ideas

Pupils could conduct a noise survey around school. Can the pupils investigate a method of measuring sound levels? Record results from different parts of the school.

Explore musical instruments from different countries which are often made from materials found in the local environment.

Consider purchasing a bird sounds' tape or CD. Pupils could use the sounds to try and identify birds in their own school grounds or to make music.

Consider how noises alter throughout the seasons. Identify sounds that relate to each season. Try to use instruments to create each sound.

Read pupils a story which includes references to a variety of animals. Pupils can be given an 'animal identity' and asked to join in with an appropriate sound at the appropriate part of the story.

Explore traditional music from overseas. Explore why music is an important part of the culture in other countries.

Pupils can take their secret instruments behind a screen and play them. The remaining pupils have to guess what materials were used to create that particular noise.

Encourage pupils to be creative. Ask pupils to mimic a variety of animal noises, and other wild noises – like weather.

Using the original words as a starter, can the pupils rewrite the song using sounds they heard in their school grounds?

Create a sound map of the school grounds. What can be heard in different places? Record sounds as symbols. Pupils could explain their sound map to a partner. Can the 'read' each other's maps?

Record a series of sounds using a tape recorder or computer. Can pupils identify the sounds?