

LISTENING TO THE WORLD: BIOACOUSTIC MONITORING



BIG IDEA

- Scientists use sound to learn about the environment, animals, and people.
- Listening carefully helps us notice patterns and changes in the world around us.

LEARNING INTENTIONS

Children will develop focused listening skills, identify and categorise sounds, use descriptive language, and understand that sound provides information.

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK (EYLF) V2.0 ALIGNMENT

Outcome 2.4	Outcome 4.2	Outcome 4.3	Outcome 5.1
<i>Awareness of the environment through sound</i>	<i>Inquiry and investigation through experimentation</i>	<i>Transfer learning across contexts through testing and adjusting</i>	<i>Communication of observations and ideas</i>

SETUP AND DELIVERY

Book

The Listening Walk
Paul Showers

Materials

- ☐ Outdoor or indoor space
- ☐ Optional sound recordings on iPad/phone/recorder
- ☐ Clipboards
- ☐ Listening checklist or bingo card

Experience suggestions

- Read *The Listening Walk* to introduce the idea of learning about the environment through listening.
 - Discuss what the character noticed.
- Conduct a listening walk outside, pausing regularly to identify sounds.
- Categorise sounds as animals, people, machines, or nature.
- Indoors listening activity. Lower all other senses (turn lights down, lie or sit still).
- What noises can you hear in the room?
- Where are they coming from?
- Sound guessing game. Use objects from around the room and get children to guess what they are.

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EDUCATOR PROMPTS

Noticing and describing

- ☐ What do you hear right now?
- ☐ Is the sound loud or quiet?
- ☐ Is it a long sound or a short sound?
- ☐ Is it a high pitched or a low pitched sound?
- ☐ Does the sound stay the same or change?
- ☐ Can you hear more than one sound at the same time?

Locating and spatial thinking

- ☐ Where do you think that sound is coming from?
- ☐ Is it close to us or far away?
- ☐ Is it inside or outside?
- ☐ Did the sound move or stay in the same place?
- ☐ Can we turn our body to face the source of the sound?

Interpreting and inferring

- ☐ What do you think made that sound?
- ☐ How can you tell?
- ☐ What clues did you hear?
- ☐ Could it be something else?
- ☐ What would you expect to hear next?

Connecting to experience

- ☐ Have you heard that sound before? Where?
- ☐ What does that sound remind you of?
- ☐ When do we usually hear that sound?
- ☐ Do you think we would hear this sound at night? Why or why not?

Comparing and classifying

- ☐ How is this sound similar to another one we heard?
- ☐ How is it different?
- ☐ Which sounds belong together? Why?
- ☐ Is this a natural sound or made by people?

Predicting and wondering

- ☐ What do you think we might hear next?
- ☐ What sounds do you think we won't hear here?
- ☐ What would happen if we went somewhere quieter/louder?
- ☐ I wonder what we would hear if we came back later?

Focus and control of attention

- ☐ Let's stay very still - what can you hear now?
- ☐ Can you find the quietest sound?
- ☐ Can you hear a sound that others might miss?
- ☐ What changed when we stopped talking?

Meta-listening

- ☐ How did listening carefully help us today?
- ☐ What did we notice when we slowed down?
- ☐ How is listening different from looking?
- ☐ What did you discover just by using your ears?

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RISK ASSESSMENT

ACTIVITY

Outdoor listening walk

RISK LEVEL

Low

HAZARDS

- Walking in outdoor environments (trip hazards, uneven ground)
- Environmental exposure (weather, noise levels)
- Distraction leading to reduced awareness of surroundings
- Possible loud or sudden sounds (e.g. sirens)

CONTROL MEASURES

- Conduct walk in a safe, familiar, enclosed area
- Maintain appropriate educator-to-child ratios and supervision
- Establish clear boundaries before the walk begins
- Stop in designated safe listening spots away from hazards
- Remind children to stay aware of surroundings even while listening
- Prepare children for unexpected loud sounds
- Use indoor listening as an alternative in poor weather

HYGIENE / INCLUSION CONSIDERATIONS

- Provide quiet spaces for children sensitive to sound
- Allow opt-out or modified participation if overwhelmed