

## Making a Sound Map in Your Neighborhood

10-30+ min

Learning to recognize and appreciate the rich fabric of sound we live in is simple: just close your eyes. Sound mapping is a great activity to destress and find pleasure in our socially distanced lives.

To make a sound map, find a comfortable place outside where you won't be disturbed. You will need a blank piece of paper to write on and something to write or draw with. Once you've found your spot and gotten comfortable, start by drawing your favorite emoji in the center of the paper. This will represent you. Close your eyes and listen to the sounds around you. As you hear a sound, write down what you hear (you can open your eyes while you write). Place your words on the page to show where you hear the sound; was it far off to your left? Coming from the grass in front of you?

Give yourself at least 5 minutes sitting quietly with your eyes closed to hear all the sounds around you. Once you have recognized and mapped all the sounds you can hear, open your eyes and look at your sound map. Were there any sounds that surprised you? What types of wildlife are most common where you were listening? Was it easy or hard to know where the sounds you heard were coming from?

A few more activities to continue with sound maps:

Check out this website where you can listen to soundscapes from around the world: <http://www.naturesoundmap.com/> Try making a sound map of [wildlife on the african savanna](#), or listen to the [ice groaning on Yosemite's Dog Lake](#).

Try going for a hike and making sound maps in a few different places then compare what you heard.

After you've made your first sound map, get your art supplies out and draw each sound that you heard. You can draw the thing that makes the sound, or get creative and draw whatever shapes and colors make you think of that sound.