

Sound Safari



What Is this Activity?

You can't always see animals, but you sure can hear them! Crickets, frogs, crows, and many other animals make sounds we can easily hear, even when the animals are hiding. What kinds of sounds—animal and other—will you hear on a walk around your neighborhood?



Exploring your world,
one mission at a time
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Topic
biodiversity,
communication

Activity Type
indoor and
outdoor

Activity Time
60 minutes

ACTIVITY

Part A

What You'll Need

- Field notebook
- Pens or pencils
- Timer or stopwatch
- *Sounds in our Neighborhood* handout (optional)

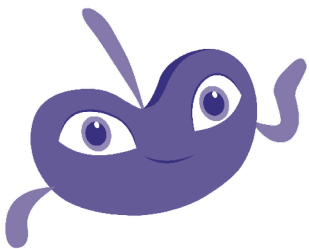
Noises in the Neighborhood

Talk with your child about the kinds of sounds you might hear if you went for a walk in the neighborhood.

Ask:

- Would you hear nature sounds, like animals' noises or leaves moving in the breeze?
- Sounds made by people talking, moving around, or working?
- Traffic sounds?
- Where would you go if you wanted to hear nature sounds?

Explain that you are going on a Sound Safari, hunting for sounds in your neighborhood. Think of two or three places—such as the street in front of your house, a nearby playground, or a vacant lot—where you'll hear different kinds of sounds.



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by WGBH Boston

MAJOR FUNDING



ADDITIONAL FUNDING

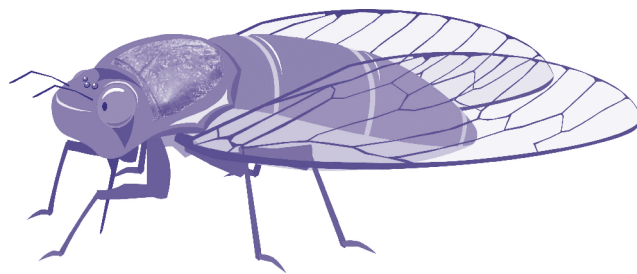


Sound Safari

- 1 Grab your field notebook and pencils and head outdoors. Find a place to sit, if possible.
- 2 Set a timer for two minutes. Close your eyes, remain quiet, and listen.
- 3 At the end of two minutes, say “STOP.”
- 4 Talk with your child about some of the sounds you have heard.

Ask:

- What made the sound? What did it sound like?
- Was it loud or quiet?
- Do you think the sound was made by something large or something small?
- Why do animals make sounds?
Animals make sounds for different reasons, including to communicate, to warn others, and to scare off predators.



- 5 Jot down in your field notebook or on the *Sounds in our Neighborhood* chart some of the sounds you heard, and describe where you are.
 - 6 Repeat the listening activity in a new location.
- Ask:**
- Do you hear the same sounds or different ones? How are they different?
 - What do the sounds tell us about where we are?

EXPLORE SOME MORE

Sounds around the Clock

Try this activity at different times of day or different times of year. How are the sounds of nature—and the sounds made by people—different in the morning than at sunset or in the middle of the day? You could also do this activity in different seasons or during different kinds of weather. If it's snowing, bundle up, step outside, and listen. Notice how other sounds, such as cars on the road, become muffled when the snow piles up. If it's raining, grab some umbrellas and step outside. What does the rain sound like? Are any animals making sounds, or are they all quiet?



Identifying Animal Sounds

A number of websites and apps help in identifying common bird, insect, mammal, and frog calls. Listen to the chatter of squirrels and chipmunks at Cornell University's Macaulay Library. The University of Florida has recordings of crickets, katydids and other insects you might hear on a summer evening, even in a city. The U.S. Geological Survey's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center has recordings of common frogs and toads, such as spring peepers and American toads. Do any of them sound like they're saying "ribbit" or "croak"? Birds, of course, are the most obvious of nature's noisemakers. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has a comprehensive resource on birdsong.

To discover more about this amazing planet we call home, check out **PLUM LANDING** at pbskids.org/plumlanding where you'll find games, videos and, of course, Plum!