**Sound Map**

Extension Activity for All Grades

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When we write, we often forget to include all of our senses. Often, that is because we constantly block out sensory detail in order to focus on a few details. Here is a fun way to take note of the numerous sounds around us. This activity is best lead outdoors in an area of nature sounds, but can be completed just about anywhere to help you get a better sense of scene.

Sound Maps

Gather the students in one area for a group demonstration and then for older students move to another area for them to practice this individually. Have the student gather and get comfortable in an area that is not too hectic. Ask them to:

* Draw a large circle on a sheet of paper. The circle should be as large as they can make it.
* Write an “x” in the very middle of the circle.
* The circle represents the edge of their hearing. The “x” represents themselves.
* Become quiet and hear all of the sounds around you.
* Write, draw or otherwise note sounds on your paper so that you create a map of the sounds.
* Make up letters to indicate sounds that there is not a word for (onomatopoeia)
* If something is moving, you can add in lines to show the direction.
* Can you develop a technique to indicate how loud a sound is?

Afterwards, allow students to share their maps with a partner or the group. Study the maps to see if there are any patterns. Are the natural sounds or human sounds grouped in a certain area? Did you hear more in front of you? Behind you? On one side of you? [Most people will hear more in front of them because human ears are cupped forward.] What happens if you create cups with your hands and place them in front of your ears, facing backwards?

For your reference: Here is an example from my nature journal:

