

My Creative School Tools

Arts-led, schools-focused tools for exploring
new approaches to school development

Soundscape activity

A tool for setting a scene before writing

We found that pupils creating their own soundscapes in groups inspired new vocabulary, as it creates an imaginary environment to draw inspiration from for writing. Use this tool to explore a new topic, a theme from a book or as inspiration for a new piece of poetry or writing.

Build a soundscape using voices and body percussion

This activity can be used to create the sounds of all sorts of environments: a beach, under the sea, a city, etc. For this example, we will create a forest soundscape.

1. Stand in a circle.
2. Establish a drone. It is a continuous tone that grounds the piece. A bed of sound best achieved by humming.
3. Add the sound of the wind in the leaves.
4. Add the sound of a babbling flowing stream.
5. Add the sound of insects.
6. The occasional sound of a bird...

Conducting tips

- Make eye contact with who you want to communicate with!
- Point to start a sound!
- Hands up = get louder
- Hands down = get quieter
- Hands on lips = stop that sound

Develop it

1. A storm is coming!
2. Rain drops... starting lightly, getting heavier...
3. Thunder coming from afar...
4. Thunder up ahead!!!
5. Storm going away again.

Ways to use this in class

- Ask a child to conduct.
- Take a journey, a walk through a forest to the beach.
- A walk through a city.
- A step back in time - to Cairo, to Rome, to Athens...
- Under the sea, on a boat?
- In the desert?
- At a station?
- Use the soundscape to inspire a poem or story. Explore adjectives that describe the sounds to help inform and enrich the writing.
- Perform the soundscape to accompany a reading of the poem or story.

What else could you explore? Is there a topic area this could support? How?

Sound tool box

- Humming
- Tapping
- Shhhhh
- Kakaawww
- Tweet tweet
- Twit Two
- Ribbit
- Buzz
- Oooooooooohhh
- Whistle
- Rubbing hands together
- Clicking, clacking

Add some of your own!

Sample soundscape audio files

Ideas and inspiration for your own soundscape, created by year 3 and 4 pupils at St Peter and St Paul Catholic Primary Academy, Bromley:

<https://soundscapes-stpeterstpaulschool.bandcamp.com/releases>

This tool was originally developed by Lucy Claire Thornton (creative practitioner), with Erika Mint and Daniel Stringer (class teachers) at St Peter and St Paul Catholic Primary Academy (Bromley).

To learn more about this project go to:

<https://www.anewdirection.org.uk/what-we-do/schools/my-creative-school>