

SOUNDBITES ACTIVITY #8

AUDIO RECORDING

AUDIO SCAVENGER HUNT

SET-UP:

GUIDING QUESTION: How do you convey concepts and emotions through sound?

TOOLS:

- Internet connection
- Smartphone or computer and speaker (for playing audio/video)
- Smartphone or other digital audio recording device (for audio recording)

VOCABULARY:

- **Sound design:** The art and practice of using sound and music for a variety of needs, including shaping an intended feeling. It involves specifying, acquiring or creating auditory elements using audio production techniques and tools.

INTRODUCTION

What's the sound of the color red? What about the sound of love? Of regret? Join us on an audio scavenger hunt.

This activity is inspired by the [Acoustic Ecologists](#) and [Todd Shalom/Elastic City](#) sound walks.

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EAR OPENING

We'll begin by turning on our ears.

You must be completely quiet. Put your phone on mute. For three full minutes, we invite you to sit silently, and notice what you hear.

As you listen, consider these questions:

1. What is the quietest sound you can hear?
2. What is the most distant sound you can hear? The closest?
3. What sounds of your own body can you hear?
4. What is the mix of natural and human-made sounds in this place?
5. Pay attention to, as you might watch, a sound that travels through your listening space. Try to notice a sound just as it becomes audible, and follow it until it is barely perceptible.
6. Try putting your ears closer and farther away from interesting-sounding objects.
7. Of all the sounds you heard, what is your favorite sound?

GATHERING SOUND

Now that we've turned on our ears, we're going to collect sounds!

On the next page, you'll find a list of sounds to collect. You can interpret each sound however you'd like. Be as creative as you want. Find as many sounds as you can. If you'd like, record them on your smartphone or other recording device.

Recording with a smartphone: If you're recording with an iPhone, use the Voice Memos app. On Android, there are many free recording apps you can download. Hold the bottom of your phone (that's where the microphone is) close to the sound you want to record, about four inches away. For more info on recording with a smartphone, see [SoundBites Activity #2](#).

GET INSPIRED

Before you start your scavenger hunt, listen to this one-minute excerpt from the 2013 RadioActive podcast episode [I Can't Believe I did That](#). In it, teens Ian Dangla, Kendra Hanna and Maddie Ewbank record sounds of regret.

[> LISTEN: The Sound of Regret \(1 min\)](#)

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Interpret these sounds however you'd like. Be creative! See how many you can find.

- The feeling of loneliness**
- The feeling of joy**
- The sound of betrayal**
- The sound of heat**
- A hum**
- An airy sound**
- A ticking sound**
- The sound of red**
- Roundness**
- Your favorite sound**
- _____

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DISCUSS

You can write your answers down, discuss them with a partner, or think through them in your head.

1. What was the most fun part of this activity? The most challenging?
2. Which sound are you most proud of?
3. What did you notice about about sound that was new to you?
4. Listen to an episode of your favorite podcast (or choose one of the links below). What sounds do you hear? How do those sounds make you feel? How would the podcast be different if those sounds were not there?

SHARE YOUR RESULTS WITH US

We would love to hear your recordings! If you share your audio recordings with us, we may feature them on kuow.org.

To share your audio recordings, email them to us at radioactive@kuow.org with the subject line "SoundBites Activity #8 - Scavenger Hunt." Be sure to let us know which sound is which.

MORE ON CONVEYING CONCEPTS AND EMOTIONS THROUGH SOUND

- [Rippin' the Rainbow a New One](#) (Radiolab, 2012)
In this audio story, colors are conveyed through sound.
- [Sound as touch](#) (Radiolab, 2007)
In this audio story, we hear parents across cultures and languages convey their love for their children through sound.
- [Negative Space](#) (Here Be Monsters, 2019)
In this audio story, a podcast episode has all the words taken out of it, so all you hear are the sounds in the background. How does it make you feel? Listen to the whole episode, or skip the beginning and start at 7 minutes and 30 seconds in.
- [Sound Design: Haley Shaw](#) (Transom, 2018)
In this article, Gimlet podcast **sound designer** Haley Shaw shares how she conveys feelings through sound. She covers world building, stacking sounds, effects tricks, and the software she uses.