

Unit 2 Sounds interesting

Exploring sounds

ABOUT THE UNIT

This unit develops children's ability to identify different sounds and to change and use sounds expressively in response to a stimulus. During this unit, children make a variety of sounds with their voices, bodies, found objects and instruments, and explore how these sounds can be changed and used expressively in response to a stimulus. They use this knowledge to select sounds that reflect the mood of chants and songs. This leads to the creation of a class performance that uses sounds to heighten the effect of a chosen story. This unit could be revisited using a different story, poem or play.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

This unit links to the ongoing skills unit (unit 1) by reinforcing and extending understanding of the use of the voice as a sound source. It leads to units 3, 4, 5 in the use of instruments and unit 6 in the development of composition skills. It leads to units 7, 9, 13 and 18 in the development of descriptive skills.

This unit can make a significant contribution to listening in English and to the development of awareness of others through the need to be quiet and attentive to sounds made by the class and individual pupils (PSHE).

PRIOR LEARNING

It is helpful if children and teachers have:

- heard and identified different sounds
- begun to explore classroom instruments

VOCABULARY

In this unit children will have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to:

- dynamics, eg *loud, quiet*
- tempo, eg *fast, slow*
- pitch, eg *high, low*
- timbre, eg *words describing the qualities of sounds, such as rattling, smooth, tinkling; words relating to sound production, such as hitting, shaking, scraping*

RESOURCES

Stimulus:

- stories, eg *Peace at last* by *Jill Murphy*

Sound sources:

- everyday objects
- classroom instruments

EXPECTATIONS

at the end of this unit

most children will:

identify different ways sounds can be made and changed; use and choose sounds confidently in response to a stimulus

some children will not have made so much progress and will:

begin to focus their listening and recognise and control how sounds can be made louder, quieter, faster and slower

some children will have progressed further and will:

carefully choose sounds and instruments and suggest how they should be used and played

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

LEARNING OUTCOMES

POINTS TO NOTE

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN

CHILDREN

INTRODUCTION: WHAT SOUNDS CAN WE HEAR?

- to recognise different sound sources
- Ask the children to listen to different sounds and make a list of all the sounds they can hear. Start in the classroom and move out beyond the school by using their memory or going on a class walk. *What sounds can you hear in the park, the kitchen, the swimming pool?* [Link to unit 1: Listening]
- Ask the children to describe both sounds that they hear and sounds they remember. *Are they loud/quiet, high/low, now and then or all the time?*
- Play the children music which uses sound in different ways.

- identify different sound sources

- Introduce children to the words given in the vocabulary section of this unit. Encourage their use throughout all the activities.
- **Extension activity:** Children could record the sounds made around the school and play them to each other to see if they can guess where the sounds came from. A tape recorder with tape counter is much easier to use as the children can find the sounds quickly. [Link to ICT]

EXPLORATION: HOW CAN WE MAKE AND USE SOUNDS EXPRESSIVELY?

- to explore different sound sources
- Encourage the children to explore different sounds that can be made using hands, feet, mouth and tongue, lips, teeth. [Link to unit 1: Singing (using the voice)]. Make descriptive sounds to describe words, *eg using voice sounds to describe raindrops*.
- Ask the children to write down the different sounds that can be made with the voice, *eg repeated consonants (eg 'ttttt'), diphthongs (eg 'chch'), sustained vowel sounds (eg 'oo')*. Ask the class to make sounds together, *eg long sounds with their voices, short sounds with their feet, fast sounds with their hands*. Ask the class to try changing sounds to see if they give different messages, *eg fast knocking and gentle knocking, quiet walking, tip-toe and stamping*.
- Make a collection of objects that make sounds. Play 'Treasure chest'. Hide a variety of sound sources, including instruments, in a box and put it behind a screen. Select a sound source and ask the children to guess what is making the sound and say how it is being played, *eg loudly*.

- make sounds and recognise how they can give a message

- **Extension activity:** Ask children to find objects that make particular sounds, *eg high tinkling sounds*, and bring them into school. These could be grouped on a sound table with the describing words written above the objects.
- 'Treasure chest' is a game that can be repeated often using different sound sources. Gradually the names of the classroom instruments can be learned. A development is to introduce a new instrument and see if the children can imagine how it will sound.
- **Extension activity:** Ask if anyone can draw a shape to describe one of the sounds. See if the rest of the class can guess which sound.

- to focus their listening
- Use instructions written on pieces of paper, *eg play quietly, play fast, make a rattly sound, etc*, and put them in a hat or box. The children pass the container around singing (to the tune of *London Bridge*):
 - Take the hat and pass it around
 - Pass it around, pass it around
 - Take the hat and pass it around
 - Stop, read, make a sound

The child with the hat or box picks out a piece of paper, reads it, chooses an instrument and makes the sound requested. The listening children guess what was written on the card.

- listen carefully and create sounds in response to descriptive words

- From the very beginning, stress the importance of listening quietly – place a greater emphasis on the very quiet sounds so the children have to listen carefully.
- **Extension activity:** Play 'Hide and seek'. Each child is given a piece of paper with a word that describes a type of sound, *eg hissing, squeaking*. Do not use more than five different sounds. Spread out the class and ask them to make their sounds quietly. Using their listening skills, they should try to find other children who are making the same sound.

- to explore instruments
- Encourage the children to explore the different sounds that can be made from one instrument passed around a circle, *eg loud, quiet, tapping, shaking, scraping*. When all possible sounds have been used start with a new instrument. Ask the children to describe the sounds.
- Sit in a circle with a selection of instruments in the middle. Ask the children to suggest which instruments would make a certain sound, *eg the sound of a doorbell*. Let the children demonstrate and give reasons for their choice. Ask the rest of the class what they think.

- play instruments in different ways and create sound effects

- Include instruments that the children may be learning outside the classroom, *eg violin*.
- Electronic keyboards can provide a rich source of different sounds, *eg explosion, storm*. These sounds could be used in this unit.

- to control instruments
- Ask the children to respond to stop/go signals given by a leader or to signals indicating loud or quiet. [Link to unit 1: Singing ('Follow the leader')]
- Play the 'Quiet as a mouse' game with the children. See if the class can pass around a tambourine or jingles without making any sounds.

- follow visual instructions
- handle and play instruments with control

- **Extension activity:** Ask the children to respond to two instructions at the same time. This demands considerable concentration. Making it into a game can encourage the children to focus their attention.

- to explore expressive use of sounds
- Use a tambour to accompany contrasting songs, *eg Rock-a-by baby and The grand old Duke of York. How is the drum played differently?*

- make and select sounds to reflect the mood of a song

- **Extension activity:** Ask children to decide how a song should be sung, which instruments should accompany it and how they should be played.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER: HOW CAN WE USE SOUND TO DESCRIBE EVENTS, FEELINGS, MOODS?

- to use sounds expressively to illustrate a story
- Select a story that uses many images and events, *eg Peace at last by Jill Murphy*. Read it and then ask the class to suggest what sounds could be added to make the story more interesting. Encourage them to use the sounds they have explored. Find one or two sounds that everyone can make. Make a tape and play it back. Discuss it with the children. *What sounds were the best? Why? How can we make it better?*

- select sounds and sound sources carefully in response to a story

- Concentrate on listening and choosing sounds really carefully. Practise them and make improvements. This could include combining sounds and selecting subtle differences in the way sounds are made. All the children need to be involved.
- **Extension activity:** Use pictures, signs and symbols to help the children remember what sounds to play and when to play them.

EXTENSION AND FUTURE LEARNING

In addition to the examples given in the 'Points to note' section, children could go on to:

- put the sounds they hear around them into categories, eg *animal, man-made, sounds with patterns and sounds without pattern*
- make up their own short story with sound effects for the rest of the class
- go on a 'sound trail', recording sounds and listening carefully to what is heard, eg *a walk in a nearby park or around the school*. Listen carefully and identify the sounds heard. Record them. Note the sounds which are moving away or coming nearer. Listen for weather sounds. Which sounds were quiet/loud, low/high, long/short? On returning to the classroom the class could make a sound map showing the different sounds they heard on the route. This could provide a link to geography and science

ENRICHMENT

- The local theatre, dramatic society, or radio station could be invited to give demonstrations, describing how they create sound effects.
- The children could work with a storyteller to create a class story using different voices and sound effects.