

Where do sounds come from?

Lesson at a glance

Open with ten seconds of eyes-closed listening and three quick calls of what pupils heard. Name sound source with real classroom objects, then briefly preview natural/made-by-people and loud/quiet. Drive the string interactive so the class links sound to the wobbling string, not the board. Pairs take a short two-stop sound hunt (indoor plus yard edge or doorway), jotting sound and source only. Back in class they record two or three finds in the Investigation Journal and run a two-pass N/P then L/Q sort before a display-only share.

Learning objectives

- Locate and name sources of sound in the indoor and outdoor environment
- Sort sounds as natural or made by people, and loud or quiet

Before the bell – prep

Ready one clipboard per pair with a plain jot page or Investigation Journal underneath before the lesson starts. Check weather and mark outdoor boundaries (or a porch/open window fallback). Open the string interactive on the IWB; set enableTone false if the room needs quiet.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
clipboard	1	group	classroom	a stiff hardcover book or piece of card to lean on
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	classroom	a plain page for sound, source, and N/P (natural or made by people), with optional loud/quiet
pencil	1	pupil	classroom	none needed
plain jot page for the clipboard (optional if journal page is taken on the hunt)	1	group	classroom	back of scrap paper

Safety watch-point

Stay together on clear outdoor boundaries; walk, do not run. Keep pairs off the road near gates. Wipe muddy footwear and wash hands after outdoor stops.



Teaching moves

- **What is a sound source?:** Teach in three short beats with a point-and-name after each: (1) sound source — your voice, then a clock or chair scrape; ask whether a corridor beep comes from the wall or a phone. (2) One natural and one made-by-people example only as a preview. (3) Loud = school bell; quiet = clock tick. Do not link loud/quiet to distance.
- **A string that sings:** Run the string scene in explore mode. Pluck or slide so the class sees the wobble, then ask: is the source the whole board or the wobbling string? Revoice: the source is the string that is wobbling, not the air. Skip or shorten this if time is tight — protect the hunt.
- **Sound hunt:** Pair up and hand out clipboards before you move to the door. Model once aloud: wonder → predict the clock → observe the tick → name the source. Default to two stops (classroom/corridor, then yard edge or doorway). At each stop: 20–30 seconds quiet listening, whisper sound and source, jot those two only. Fold the class between stops with oral natural/people finds.
- **Record our sources:** One-minute settle: pairs restate one clear sound and source orally. Show a filled example row on the IWB (tick · wall clock · P · quiet). Required: sound and source; N/P via word bank or codes; loud/quiet optional. Circulate for precise sources — not 'outside' but 'wind in the trees' or 'a car on the road'.
- **Sort the sounds:** Two passes on the same journal list, not new piles. Pass 1: finger on each row, tick N or P; call a few placements with a reason tied to the source. Pass 2: same rows, tick L or Q. Accept reasoned mixed cases (wind on a metal gate). Share line: one natural and one made by people.
- **What did we notice?:** Display-only talk. Take four to six shares and revoice with source, natural, made by people, loud, quiet. Draw out that quiet natural sounds are easy to miss when people-made sounds are loud. Optional STEM eyes: notice one new source on the way home (talk only).

What it should show

Pairs should name three or four distinct sources across indoor and outdoor-environment stops (e.g. wall clock, footsteps, wind in trees, a bird, distant traffic). Journal rows need a clear sound plus a precise source; N/P sorts should match the maker (bird/wind = natural; bell/car/voice = people). Surprising blanks usually mean the jot never named a source — re-ask 'what thing made it?'

Misconceptions & interventions

- **Pupils say the sound 'is in the air' or 'comes from my ear'.** — Point back at a real object: 'Your ear hears it, but the source is the thing that started the sound — the clock, the string, the bird. What started this one?'
- **On the hunt they write only 'outside' or 'a noise' with no named source.** — Stop the pair and revoice the model: sound first, then the thing making it — 'a car on the road', 'wind in the trees'. Partner says it; writer jots both.
- **They treat loud/quiet as 'near/far' or invent new sounds for the second sort.** — Hold the journal list: same rows again. Loud means a strong sound, quiet a soft one — not how far away. Finger on the row and tick L or Q only.

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Less confident pairs point and say the source only; the partner writes sound + source on the clipboard and journal. • Offer the board word bank (Natural/N · Made by people/P · Loud · Quiet) and one filled example row to copy the pattern from.	• Push for two or three precise sources and a full N/P pass with a spoken reason tied to the source. • If time allows, add the optional L/Q circle on the same rows.	• Challenge mixed cases with a reason (person whistling = people; wind on a metal gate = reasoned choice). • In the share, compare which quiet natural sources were easy to miss beside loud people-made sounds.

Cross-curricular hook

Link to English oral language — pairs whisper precise source phrases, then justify N/P sorts in full sentences during the share.