

Sounds all around us

Lesson at a glance

Open with eyes closed for ten seconds so 1st/2nd class pupils name classroom sounds and where they came from. Teach sound source, loud/quiet and near/far with point and hand signals on those live sounds. After a short partner chat on what they think they will hear, run a quiet indoor listen then a short outdoor sound hunt with no clipboards. Back inside, pupils draw or write each sound and its source on the Investigation Journal page, then whole-class sort loud/quiet and near/far.

Learning objectives

- Identify sources of sound in the indoor and outdoor environment
- Sort familiar sounds as loud or quiet and near or far

Before the bell – prep

Check weather and pick a safe outdoor stop close to the classroom door (yard edge, garden path, or covered porch on a wet day). Stack clipboards, pencils and Investigation Journal pages by the door inside—pupils collect them only on return. Agree quiet signal, short route and yard boundary before you leave.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
clipboard	1	pupil	classroom	a piece of stiff card or a hardback book cover to rest paper on
pencil	1	pupil	classroom	a crayon or colouring pencil
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	classroom	a blank A4 page headed with sound, source, loud or quiet, near or far

Safety watch-point

Stay together outdoors; no running during the quiet listen; clear yard boundaries; return indoors as one group. Hands washed if pupils touched outdoor surfaces.



Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Keep it spoken and light. Capture two or three named sounds on the board (chair, clock, bird). Revoice every idea as coming from a person, animal or thing. Invite a quieter pupil to point toward the source if they prefer not to speak yet.
- **Today's sound words:** Take one board sound at a time. Model the noticing cycle aloud, then every pupil points to the source, shows big/small hands for loud/quiet, and points close or stretches for near/far. Repeat with a second pupil-named sound so all act, not only the speaker.
- **What will we hear?:** Partner talk only—take three or four ideas onto the board without a long list. Use “what do you think we will hear,” not prediction language. Before leaving, lock the quiet signal, walking route and boundary; leave writing kit stacked inside.
- **Sound hunt:** Indoor first: model cupping an ear and naming source, loud/quiet, near/far; pupils whisper to partners, then three or four share aloud. Outdoor: short calm walk, stop as a class, same whisper pattern. Coach anyone who says “a noise” back to a person, animal or object. Count lining-up into the outdoor minutes so recording time is protected.
- **Record what you heard:** Model one board example of sound plus source only—no loud/quiet or near/far on the page. Circulate asking “what made it?” for anyone who wrote only the noise. Accept drawing, one word with a picture, or a short phrase.
- **Loud or quiet, near or far:** Whole-class sort from journal entries: loud side or quiet side first, then near or far. Fish for disagreement—the same sound loud for one child and quiet for another usually means different standing distance. If nobody disagrees, offer the school bell from the far gate yourself.
- **What did our ears tell us?:** Revoice: every sound has a source; we can sort loud/quiet and near/far; classroom, yard and home are full of sound once we notice. One forward sentence only on feeling the wobble next time—do not open pitch or vibration now. Optional home chat: three sound sources, loud or quiet, told to an adult.

What it should show

Pupils typically name voices, chairs scraping, the clock, corridor footsteps, birds, wind, distant traffic or a door. Success is at least two named sources plus one loud/quiet and one near/far sort (spoken or gestured). A page that only says “a bang” or “a noise” needs the source coach—“what made it?”—before the sort.



Misconceptions & interventions

- **Pupils say “I heard a noise” with no person, animal or thing attached.** — Ask “who or what made it?” and have them point toward the source. Revoice their answer as a full sound source before moving on.
- **Pupils think the same sound must be loud for everyone, or quiet for everyone.** — Slow down on any disagreement during the sort. Link it to standing distance: the school bell is loud beside you and quieter from the far gate—that is near and far doing the work.
- **Pupils treat a far-away sound as “quiet” only, without noticing distance as a separate idea.** — After loud/quiet, sort the same entries again as near or far with point-close or arm-stretch. Ask “is it soft, or just a long way off?”

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Allow pointing to the source or a partner naming it; accept a drawing with one dictated word on the Investigation Journal page.	• Prompt for one indoor and one outdoor source, then one loud/quiet and one near/far sort in the class talk.	• Ask them to find one near and one far sound on the hunt, or explain to the class why the same sound felt loud for them and quiet for a classmate.

Cross-curricular hook

Oral language: pupils rehearse full sentences naming the source—“The robin in the hedge is quiet and far.”