

Close Your Eyes and Open Your Ears: Using Sounds as Phenomenon in the Classroom



In [this article](#) by National Geographic featuring Bernie Krause, a soundscape ecologist, there are two recordings of the same location in Lincoln Meadow, California. The first recording is before the forest was logged and the second recording is after logging.

Compare and Share

Follow this learning sequence to introduce students to the impact humans have on the acoustical diversity of an ecosystem.

- Without revealing this information to students, play the two recordings for students and have them write down any observations about what they hear in each recording and any differences or similarities they notice between recordings. (You may have to play the recordings more than once.)
- Have students share and discuss their observations with each other and develop some questions and inferences based on the similarities and differences they heard.
- Provide students an opportunity for more in-depth analysis by using the information in this [Science of Soundscapes article](#) to identify the biophony, geophony, and anthrophony in the recording.
- Once students have had time to think, share, and formulate questions, share with them that these two recordings were taken from the exact same location. With this new piece of information, have students further discuss and develop hypotheses about what might be causing these differences. Discuss in small or whole group.
- Reveal to students that one recording is before a logging event and one was after a logging event. Ask students to determine which is which and use reasoning to defend their argument.
- BONUS: Have students make their own recordings of the ecosystems around them. Students can choose what they would like to compare. (i.e. two different locations at the same time of day, same location different time of day, same location same time different day, before or after rain, etc.) Students can present recordings and share their personal analyses of the acoustical diversity.