Science Week 2026 Outdoor Activity Pack

'Curiosity: What's your question?'

Nature noise makers

Curiosity question: Which natural materials make the best sound?

Preparation

Gather a variety of materials to help children identify sounds e.g. bowls, containers (variety of material types and sizes).

Print out the sound prompt cards, *see last page*, and hang/place these around the outside of the central space you will be working.

Resources

- Natural items
- Variety of materials for making sound - *see preparation*
- Sound prompt cards - *see preparation*
- Recording table *(1 per group)* - optional

Top tips!

If you don't have many natural items in your space, use our Natural Loose Parts guide in the Hub to help create a bank of them.

National Curriculum/Working Scientifically links:

Y1 - Everyday Materials: describe the simple physical properties of a variety of everyday materials
Y4 - Sound: identify how sounds are made, associating some of them with something vibrating

KS1 - WS: using their observations and ideas to suggest answers to questions
LKS2 - WS: using results to draw simple conclusions, make predictions for new values, suggest improvements and raise further questions

Nature noise makers

Starter

> Go on a sound hunt around your outdoor space.
> Ask children to take a walk around your space, in pairs, and see what sounds they can hear e.g. traffic, birds, machinery, wind etc.
> Come back together, share findings and talk specifically about any natural sounds that were heard.
> Pose the focus question:
Which natural materials do we think make the best sound?

Main

> Have laid out for children a variety of different equipment they can use to test sound, *see preparation for examples.*
> In small groups, have children go to find natural loose parts around your space (e.g. sticks, pebbles, shells, pine cones etc.)
> They will then use these natural items to create sound.
Direct them to the various prompt cards *(see preparation)* around your outdoor space for them to investigate creating sounds in various ways.
> Children will need to record their findings in some way - you may choose to use the template table to do this, or have them use their own method.

Nature noise makers

Plenary

> Come back together and share findings.
> Share ideas of how they decided what the best sound was.
For example: Was it how loud it was? What sound they found the most appealing? How long the sound lasted? etc.)
> Have groups compare their findings with another group.

If time allows, have groups create a small musical piece using their chosen ‘best’ natural sound makers. Share these together as a class.

Does your natural material make the best sound when . . .

it's used in a wind chime.

1. Create a cross with your sticks and bind them together with string
2. Cut the string to various lengths and wrap these around the sticks and knot
3. Along these lengths of string, tie in your chosen natural material, repeating a few times
4. Then give your wind chime a shake (to replicate the wind) and see what sound is produced.

Does your natural material make the best sound when . . .

it's placed in a container.

Put your chosen natural items inside a container of your choosing

Shake the container to hear the sound it makes!

Does your natural material make the best sound when . . .

it’s tapped against a surface.

For example: a tree, the floor, a bench, a metal pole

Does your natural material make the best sound when . . .

it's tapped against another natural item of the same type.

	Does it make a sound . . .			
Natural item	on a wind chime.	in a container.	against a tree.	when tapped.