



LISTENING WALK

People and animals use their senses to learn about the world around them. This month, go for a walk together to listen to the world around you! What do you think you might hear?

Do it yourself!

Time: 10-15 Minutes

Materials: Nothing for your walk; paper and drawing supplies back at home for an optional extension

What to do:

1. Go outside on a walk together. During your walk, find a comfortable spot to sit or stand for a few minutes.
2. Take three deep breaths (in through your nose, out through your mouth) to calm your mind and body.
3. Close your eyes and listen to the sounds around you. Take turns telling each other what you hear. Are there many different noises? Are some sounds quieter than others?
4. Can you figure out where the sounds are coming from? Use your other senses and your imagination. Try to find a sound made by nature and one from something humans made. Compare and contrast the sounds.
5. Find a new listening spot and repeat steps 2-4. What sounds do you hear that are the same? Do you hear any new sounds in this new spot?

Listening with intention helps your child understand that there are many ways to learn about their surroundings.



Play for all ages!

For ages Birth-3, take your child's lead and look where the sound is coming from. Try to copy the noises you hear. If something moving is making the sound, copy the movement together.

For ages 3-8, when you get home, draw a picture or write a story using the sounds you heard on your listening walk. Working together can be extra fun, with the child drawing pictures and the adult writing down the story as the child tells it! Doing so also supports early literacy.

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Adult Guide

Take action! Did you hear any birds on your listening walk today? It is very likely that bird calls or songs were one of the sounds you heard. Late winter is a good time to start listening for bird calls, as many species start looking for mates around this time of year. If your child enjoys seeing and hearing birds, you can join the Great Backyard Bird Count at birdcount.org! This bird count happens yearly in February.

What is my child learning?

Young children are learning about their world at incredible speed! The [Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines](#) (**bolded** below) help us see what they're learning and how the adults in their lives can maximize their potential.

Research tells us* being outdoors helps children regulate their emotions and reduces stress.



When you spend time outside with your child, they are **building relationships**, not only between your family members, but with nature and the animals around you. Your child increases their physical connection to their body and their surroundings by **touching, seeing, hearing, and moving around**. Sharing the sounds that they hear and having conversations about them lets your child practice **communication**. Focusing on one of their senses at a time (hearing, in this case) helps improve their self-regulation skills, an important part of executive function.

Teaching standards met by this activity:

Next Generation Science Standards

[LS4.D Biodiversity and Humans](#) *There are many different kinds of living things in any area, and they exist in different places on land and in water.*

To connect to this standard, extend your discussions:

- o Which sounds did you hear that were made by animals?
- o How many different animals did you hear?
- o When you moved to a different location, did you hear different animals? If so, why do you think there might be different animals in those two places? If not, why might the same animals be in those two places?

* See [How Nature Helps Manage Our Emotions](#) by Miles Richardson