



# Sound Poems

**Level:**

Grades 4 -10

**Time:**

20 minutes on the trail; 1 hour in class room

**Environment:**

Inside and outside

**Size:**

Group or individual

**Materials:**

- Journal
- Pencil
- Tape recorder (optional)
- Simple instruments: wood block, water glasses, rhythm sticks, chimes, bells, rain stick, drum
- On-line compass tutorial, written for young people.

**Objective:**

To use the outdoor experience as a springboard for heightened sensory awareness, particularly musical. To provide opportunities for creativity and self-expression.

**Procedure:****On the Trail**

1. Choose a spot where the group can comfortably sit together without blocking the trail.
2. With eyes closed, have students sit very still and listen. Questions to think about: What can you hear? Is the sound random? Repetitive? Did other sounds intrude? Is there melody? Rhythm? Different tones? High or low sounds? Soft or loud sounds? What sounds predominated? Listen for at least two minutes. (For some classes and grades, you may need to go over music, rhythm, melody, etc. prior to this activity).
3. Have students write in their journals what they heard and what sounds sounded like.
4. Give every student an opportunity to share what they heard.
5. Have students add to their sound list what others have shared. Save for classroom activity.

**In the Classroom:**

1. Using sound lists from their journals, have small groups of students create their own sound poem. Emulate "trail sounds" with either "found" objects or simple instruments.
2. Have sound poem last thirty seconds at most. Practice sounds. When a group has a cohesive idea, write it down using devised notation (symbols for sounds; for example \* could denote a bell sound, \*\*\* for three bells, etc.).

