Artful Isolation Activities

## Week Three: Sound Riddles

Listen to the world around you, capturing the sounds of your home and neighbourhood.

What is a Sound Riddle? Sound riddles are a way to explore and play with the process of listening. When we listen, our ears don't just receive sounds; they send them directly to the brain and set off a creative thinking process. Listening is a marvellous combination of thoughts, hearing processes, and discovery.*

Why Sound Riddles? Our Southern Artistic Director, Shaunna Dunn, was scheduled to participate in a Reggio Emilia study group in Italy in March 2020. While the trip was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, she has been utilizing Reggio resources with her young children now that they are home from school. In her own words, "I'm drawn to this approach to learning because it values curiosity and often looks to the arts and the environment as pathways for exploration. I came across these sound riddles, and when I shared them with my children, the audio cues ignited their imaginations. From there, we began taking time to do more attentive listening throughout our day and started recording sounds we might have otherwise overlooked." You can read more about Reggio approach underline.

* https://www.reggiochildren.it/en/athomewiththereggioapproach/
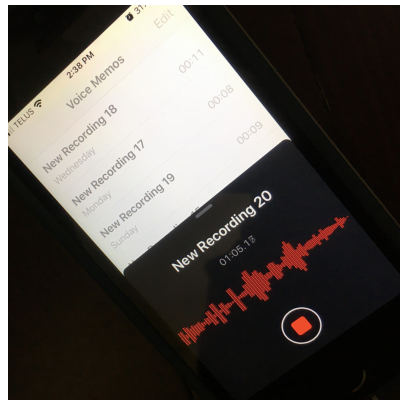
Suitable For: All Ages (note that wee ones will need technical support and supervision).

What You'll Need: A device capable of audio recording (phone, tablet, tape recorder, etc.). Most smart phones come with a voice recording app that will work well.

Getting Ready:
- Listen to the sounds Shaunna's family has provided here or explore sound riddles online here and here. What do you hear? Are some sounds easier to decipher than others? How do sounds activate your imagination?
- Take time to practice listening. Try listening with your eyes closed. Notice how keeping your body still and voice quiet helps to open your ears. Use your ears to search for sounds that are often present (the hum of lights or buzz of a dishwasher), and listen for the complexities of these sounds.
- Review the use of your devices. How do you capture, save, playback, and delete recordings? Be mindful of things that will impact the quality of your recording such as wind, background noises, or echos. These things may be interesting to explore or they may overshadow the sound you are trying to capture.
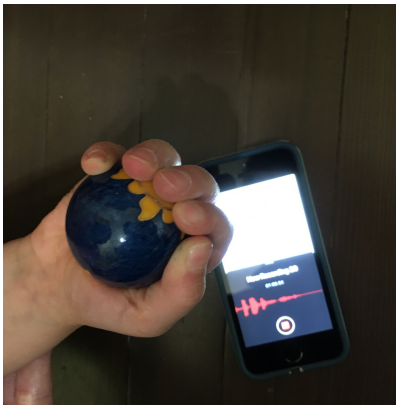
Activity:
- First, listen to the world around you. This can be done in your home or outside. What do you hear? What sounds draw your interest? When you find a sound you want to capture, use your recording device to record a 10 to 15 second clip. Recordings should be long enough to give a sense of the sound quality but short enough to share easily through email or text. Record the same sound a couple of times and save the best version after you've listened to them.
- Then, share your sounds with friends or family via text, email, or live audio playback, but don't tell them what the sound is. This crucial step of sharing the sounds you've captured can become a guessing game or act as a creative catalyst. Can your recipients figure out what sounds you've recorded? Ask: "What is the sound? What does it remind you of? Where might you have heard this sound before?" Encourage listeners to respond to the sound by drawing a picture of what it makes them think of. This can be real or imagined. Drawing a response works particularly well with children ages 8+.

Reflection:
- After listeners have shared their guesses or drawings, discuss the original source of the sound.
- Whether listening to sounds in an exchange or simply on your own, consider some of these questions: Did you notice new qualities to sounds that are familiar? Did the activity lead you to listen more attentively during the rest of your day? What sounds did you like or were you surprised by?
- Share your sounds and photographs of your exchanges with us via Facebook or Instagram, tagging **@skcommonweal** and using the hashtags **#cwsoundriddles** and **#cwneighbours.**