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# AUDITORY

Resident's Copy



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# Auditory Score A: Neighbourhood Listening

## Purpose:

Actively listen to sounds that shape the soundscape of your neighbourhood streets.

## Type:

Solo activity.

You can conduct this activity with your eyes open or closed.

If you decide to blindfold yourself or keep your eyes closed to attune yourself better to the soundscape, ask someone to accompany you.

To avoid any collision-related risks, ask your companion to hold your hand during the soundwalk<sup>1</sup>, but request they stay as quiet as possible to help you stay focused on listening.

In addition, request they do not direct you to any sounds as per their liking or disliking. Taking interest in any specific sound is solely your decision. Your companion is only responsible for ensuring your safety while you conduct the soundwalk on the street with your eyes closed.

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## Site:

Start on a sidewalk on a neighbourhood street. Conduct the soundwalk on at least 3 streets in your neighbourhood – one on your street, two on adjacent streets.

## Materials:

- 👂 A sound recorder. You can also use your smart phone.
- 👂 A blindfold (optional).
- 👂 A pen or pencil to write down your reflections.

## Tasks *(20 minutes/soundwalk/street)*:

- 👂 Start the soundwalk on your street. Walk slowly, listen actively and deeply to the sounds of your street.
- 👂 Listen for the macro<sup>2</sup> and the micro<sup>3</sup> sounds that make up the soundscape.
- 👂 Pause, listen, and observe how you feel about the sounds that catch your attention.
- 👂 Use your recording device to record the macro and micro sounds of your streets.
- 👂 After your soundwalk, narrate your subjective experience, and use your device to record the narration. Mention the street name, day, and time.

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- 👂 Repeat this soundwalk 3 times a day – morning, afternoon, and evening – for 3 days, on 2 weekdays, and a Saturday or a Sunday.
- 👂 To explore further, repeat this soundwalk every month and compare the acoustic characteristics of your neighbourhood by month and by season.

## Reflections:

Listen to the recordings you made of the streets, and to your personal narrations during the soundwalks. Reflect on:

- 👂 What type of sounds – natural, social, mechanical – are dominant on the streets you investigated? How do they vary between the streets?
- 👂 Think about the less dominant sounds on each of these streets. What are they?
- 👂 Imagine these sounds more present in your neighbourhood. How would they re-shape your relationship with these streets?

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- 👂 How does the soundscape vary between different times of the day on each street? Between weekdays and weekends? Compare the variations between the streets as well.
  - 👂 Are there specific sounds that repeat at certain times of the day? What type are they?
  - 👂 How does the nature of each street's soundscape shape your understanding of the neighbourhood? How does sound affect your mood (if at all) and how does your mood vary between the streets?
  - 👂 If you repeated this activity every month and each season over 1 year, how did it inform you about the neighbourhood's sonic environment pattern? Did this new sonic understanding help you develop a stronger sense of place about your neighbourhood?
- <sup>1</sup> **Soundwalk** is a tool widely used by acoustic ecologists, sound researchers and artists to actively participate in the sonic environment. In its basic form, it consists of simultaneous actions of walking and listening. During the walk, participants walk slowly and listen attentively to everything that the soundscape affords – natural, physical, social, cultural sounds – and in doing so develop a critical understanding of the 'sense of place'.
  - <sup>2</sup> **Macro** sounds are almost always present in the background, and are heard from almost everywhere in the neighbourhood: sounds from automobiles, transit vehicles, traffic signals, construction sites, etc.
  - <sup>3</sup> **Micro** sounds are localized and not always audible: sounds from wind-chimes, a water fountain in a front yard, or sounds from social activities such as a garage sale or children playing in a cul-de-sac, etc.

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# Auditory Score B: Walking in Search of a Human Sound

## Purpose:

Here we are particularly interested in finding auditory evidence of human life on neighbourhood streets.

Residential streets within suburbia and on the outskirts of the urban centres of many contemporary cities are almost always empty and devoid of social life.

Things such as children playing on the street, neighbours communing in public spaces, etc., that created the public life of the community in the past, have gradually moved into the private spaces of our homes, leaving public spaces feeling desolate and alienated.

In addition, our over-reliance on automobiles has insulated our bodies inside the private space of our cars.

Has the embodiment of public streets become no longer vital to the development of an active citizenship within our neighbourhoods?

This score is an opportunity to investigate. With a tad of poetic touches to them, its instructions ask you to search for human voices and sounds on your streets in order to reflect on them, then measure the ‘public socialness’ of your neighbourhood.

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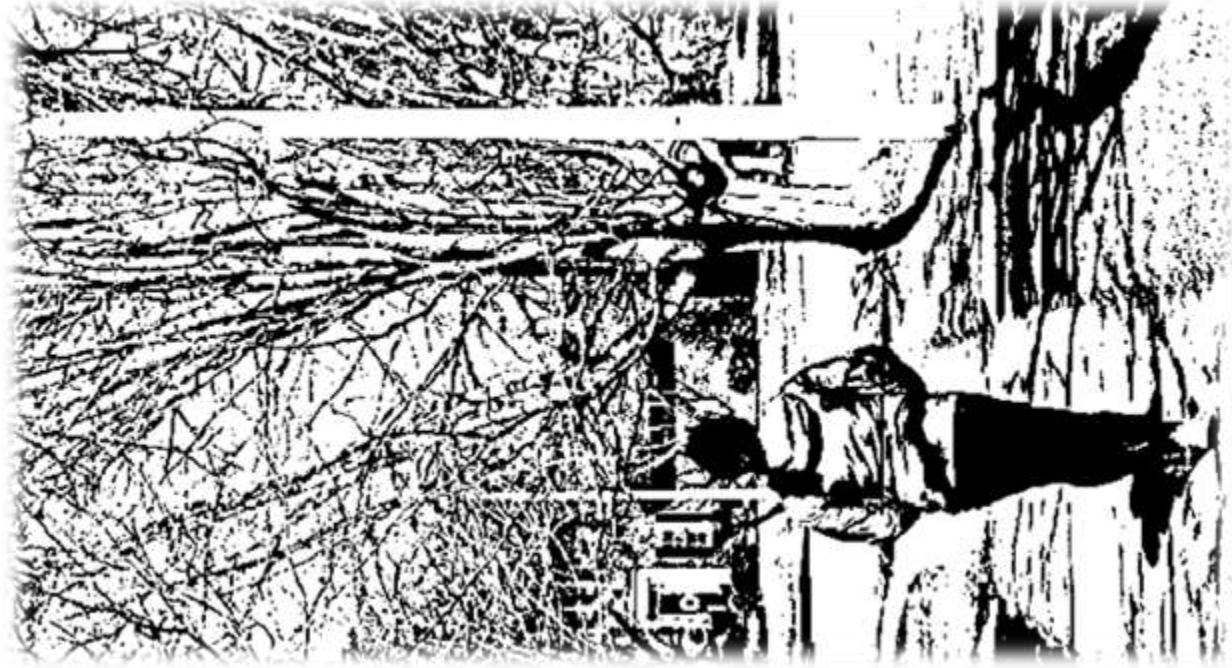
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### Type:

Solo activity.

Conduct this activity with your eyes open, during different times of the day  
- morning, afternoon, evening - 3 days in a row.





On each street, spend 15 minutes. Then move to the next street.

Each day, follow the same route and the same time schedule.

In the morning start your soundwalk at 10am, in the afternoon at 2pm and in the evening at 8pm.

Repeat this activity in every season.

### Site:

Sidewalks of your neighbourhood's streets. Conduct the soundwalk on as many streets as possible within your neighbourhood.

### Materials:

A notebook and a pen to take notes and to write down your reflections.

### Task:

Follow these instructions for your soundwalk:

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Walk on your street, blindfolded or not.

Walk there many times.

How many? Who can guess?

Walk forward slowly.

Walk backward slowly.

Listen deeply and mindfully.

Is anyone talking?

Laughing?

Anyone crying?

Yawning?

Walking?

No? Then keep walking.

Are you tired, already?

Pause and sit down in front of a house.

Can you tell if there's a living  
soul inside?

Any children laughing, crying?  
Music playing?

Nothing, eh?

Do not give up!

Walk during the day. Walk at night.

In search of a human voice  
by your side.

Have you heard one? Not yet?

Walk on every street in your  
neighbourhood and listen.

Do not give up.

There is always tomorrow.

Did you hear a voice today? Where on  
your walk was it? When was it?

How did it make you feel? Did it make  
the street tremble with life?

Remember this moment because it wasn't  
earned easily.





## Reflections:

On these 'Reflection' pages write down the time and location every time you hear a human voice or a human sound during your walk.

👂 If you heard a human voice/sound, where was it on the street? When was it? How long after you started your first soundwalk did you hear it – within the first 10 minutes of your first walk or on the 2nd, etc.? Consult your notes on the 'Reflection' pages to ponder these questions.

👂 If you repeated this activity in different seasons, when was it the easiest to come across a human voice/sound? When was it the hardest?

👂 How does the minimal versus the healthy presence of human sounds on the streets shape your relationship with your neighbourhood's public spaces? What kind of experiences do your auditory senses gather when you walk the streets at different times of the day?

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## Reflections

# Reflections

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# Auditory Score C: The Cultural Listening

## Purpose:

Explore how our public spaces are sonically shaped by the diversity of languages commonly found within Canadian residential neighbourhoods.

## Type:

Solo activity.

Conduct this activity with your eyes open.

## Site:

A social junction like a neighbourhood square, or open public space or sports field, etc.

## Materials:

👂 A pencil/pen to write down your reflections.

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## Task *(take as long as you like)*:

- 👂 Conduct soundwalks in the public social junctions of your neighbourhood during gatherings such as sporting events, cultural festivals, community days, etc. These happen often in the summer, and many residents take part in them.
- 👂 Walk close to and alongside the audience from an audible distance, and between people.
- 👂 Listen actively and mindfully to the variety of languages people use when they speak.

This score's intention is to tune yourself in, not to the content of the conversation, but to the language being used to converse, as well as to the diversity heard in accents.

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## Reflections:

- 👂 How many languages did you hear during your soundwalk?
- 👂 Close your eyes and imagine being among the same crowd you met during the soundwalk. Does this evoke any memories? Any sensations? If yes, what are they?
- 👂 How would your relationship with your neighbourhood's public spaces change if this sonic diversity disappeared one day?



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Reflections



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# Auditory Score D: Eavesdropping on Youth

## Purpose:

Explore how youth's social activities in public spaces contribute toward creating soniferous experiences within residential neighbourhoods.

## Type:

Solo activity.

Conduct this activity with your eyes open.

## Site:

A sidewalk along a neighbourhood public school site, preferably a secondary school.

## Materials:

👂 A pencil/pen to write down your reflections.

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## Task *(take as long as you like)*:

- 👂 Take a stroll down the street during the school's lunch break. Listen for secondary school students leaving the premises to walk to the nearest plaza.
- 👂 If you converge with them, walk with them from an appropriate distance. Listen actively to their conversations. Notice that they walk in small groups.
- 👂 Some groups talk loudly, some whisper, some laugh, some swear, some yell, some sing. Try to eavesdrop on each.
- 👂 You do not need to understand what they're saying. Simply listen to the rhythm of their conversations.
- 👂 Repeat this activity 3 times during the week. Only during the school lunch break.
- 👂 Then conduct this walk 1-2 times between 11am and noon (school's lunch break) when the school is closed for a holiday or on summer break.

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## Reflections:

- 👂 How do sounds generated from youth activities on the streets during lunch break shape the soundscape of your neighbourhood?
- 👂 How does their multitude of sounds work against or with the macro sounds of your neighbourhood?
- 👂 What differences do you feel in the soniferous experience of your neighbourhood when students are on holiday?





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Reflections



# Auditory Score E: Soundbathing in the Neighbourhood Greenspace

## Purpose:

Explore and experience the soundscape of your neighbourhood's greenspaces, such as a forest, ravine, conservation area, etc.

## Type:

Solo activity.

Conduct this activity with your eyes open.

## Site:

Neighbourhood greenspace: forest, ravine, conservation area, etc.

## Materials:

- 🔊 A sound recorder. You can also use your smart phone.
- 📝 A pen or pencil to write down your reflections.

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## Tasks (take as much as you need during each soundwalk):

- 👂 Take a very slow walk in a forest/ravine/conservation area within or on the outskirts of your neighbourhood.
- 👂 Listen actively to different natural sounds that this public space offers you.

### *If you see a bed of tall grasses:*

- 👂 Walk up close.
- 👂 Find a comfortable spot to stand.
- 👂 Close your eyes and listen to the sound of the grass's movement.
- 👂 Imagine you are one of the tall grasses. How will you move?
- 👂 Move with the sound.

### *If a tall, large, mature tree in the forest attracts your attention:*

- 👂 Lie down under the tree. Stay there for 15 minutes with your eyes closed.
- 👂 Imagine the tree leaves are talking to each other, and to you. What are they saying? Are there any rhythms in their conversations?



### *Listening to the forest floor:*

- 👂 Listen to the sound of your footsteps as you walk slowly across different surfaces of the forest floor.
- 👂 Compare this sound to the sound of your footsteps on the streets in your neighbourhood. How do the differences between the sounds shape your relationship with these public spaces?

### *If you come across a water source such as a creek or a river:*

- 👂 Walk slowly along its bank and listen deeply to the sound of the water.
- 👂 How does the sound of water relate to the other sounds of the surroundings?
- 👂 Now choose a spot along the bank and stand there. Close your eyes, and imagine you are the water.
- 👂 What sounds do you hear now? What feeling or memory (if any) do these sounds evoke in you?

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*If you come across a valley:*

- 👂 Start clapping while you walk or make a loud sound. Imagine you are calling your friend. How does the echo of your sound make you feel?
- 👂 Repeat this activity with your eyes closed.

*Soundbathing in different seasons:*

- 👂 As the season changes, so does our natural environment. To develop a more sonic awareness of your neighbourhood public green spaces, try these activities during different seasons. Visit the same places, noticing the changes in their acoustic environment.

## Reflections:

- 👂 How do the various activities in this score shift your relationship with your neighbourhood greenspaces?
- 👂 What do you know about these public spaces now, through sounds, that you did not know before?
- 👂 How does the soundscape of these public spaces shape the lived experience of the neighbourhood?

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# Reflections

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# Auditory Score F: Winter Listening

## Purpose:

Explore and experience the sound of winter in your neighbourhood.

## Type:

Solo activity.

Conduct this activity with your eyes open.

Wear snow boots.

This activity is not recommended for people with arthritis, with any existing injuries, or at high risk of injury or of inconvenience from a slip and fall on ice and snow.

## Site:

On a sidewalk or boulevard during the winter months – mid-December to mid-March.

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## Materials:

- 👂 A pair of snow boots.
- 👂 A sound recorder. You can also use your smart phone.
- 👂 A pen or pencil to write down your reflections.

## Tasks (*10 minutes of soundwalk per surface*):

- 👂 Find a quiet street in your neighbourhood, between 10am and 1pm or between 6pm and 8pm. Neighbourhood streets are usually quieter during these hours in the winter months.
- 👂 Conduct your soundwalk right after a fresh snow has fallen. Listen to the sound of your footsteps on the fresh snow. Walk slowly and carefully to avoid a slip and fall.
- 👂 Carefully listen to the sound for 7 minutes.
- 👂 Continue walking. Hold the sound device in your hand and point its mic toward the ground to record the sound of your footsteps on the snow for 3 minutes.
- 👂 Stop walking, pointing the mic toward the ground. Record the ambient sounds of the ground,

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- 👂 As the snow changes from its soft cotton-like texture, to a glass-like brittle surface, to watery slush in response to varying temperatures, continue your sound walk and recording.
- 👂 Listen to the sound of your footsteps on these various forms of snow: fresh, ice, slush, etc. through the winter season.
- 👂 Record the sounds.
- 👂 And listen and record the ambient sounds of the ground.



## Reflections:

- 👂 Listen to the recordings in chronological order. How does the sound of your footsteps vary during the winter season?
- 👂 Record your footsteps and the ambient sounds of the ground at the same locations during summer months. Compare these sounds with your winter recordings. Describe the differences in the sound of your footsteps between these two seasons.
- 👂 Compare the ambient sounds of the ground from the two seasons too. What differences do you hear in the ambient sounds of the ground between these two seasons? Can you hear any tiny living animals and plants?

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Reflections

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# Auditory Score G: Traffic Dance

## Purpose:

Actively listening to the sound of traffic in neighbourhood streets.

## Type:

Solo activity.

Conduct this activity with your eyes open. Ask someone to assist you to film this activity.

## Site:

On sidewalks at the street intersection.

## Materials:



A camera.



A pen or pencil to write down your reflections.

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## Tasks *(10 minutes of soundwalk per surface)*:

- 👂 Walk to the street intersection nearest to your home. Stand at the street corner. Close your eyes.
- 👂 Stay in one spot while actively listening to the surrounding street soundscape.
- 👂 Ask your companion to video record your activity from across the street.
- 👂 Create a short body movement every time you hear a vehicle sound: car, bus, truck, motor bike, bicycle etc. The movement could be as simple as a gentle roll of your right shoulder or a gentle forward movement of your head.
- 👂 Do not make more than one movement per traffic sound you hear. Do not continue the movement after the vehicle has passed.
- 👂 Pause.

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## Reflections:

- 👂 Watch the recordings your companion made. How often were you bombarded by traffic sound at the street intersection? How did traffic sounds vary between different intersections within your neighbourhood?
- 👂 What was your sound experience like when you were conducting this activity at the busiest intersection in your neighbourhood? How was it when you were at the quietest?
- 👂 As a resident of the area, how does this traffic soundscape shape your relationship with your neighbourhood street experience?



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# Auditory Score H: Earth Listener

## Purpose:

Actively listening to the sound of the ground.

## Type:

Solo activity.

## Site:

On sidewalks, on forest grounds, on park trails, on park grounds etc.

## Materials:

- 👂 A pen or pencil to write down your reflections.
- 👂 A sound recorder or your cell phone (Optional)

## Task *(take as much time as you need at each spot):*

- 👂 Lie down on the ground at your chosen site. Lie down with your belly/chest touching the ground. Close your eyes.
- 👂 Carefully listen to the sound of the ground.
- 👂 Now stand up and listen to your surrounding. Keep your eyes closed.
- 👂 Following your listening exploration at this location, narrate your experience of it and record your narration using a sound recorder or your cell phone.



👂 Walk to the next location. Keep your eyes open when you walk between locations.

👂 Repeat the task at multiple locations at the site. For instance, on a park ground, your locations could be- close to the road, away from the road, in the middle of the ground, at different corners of the ground etc. On sidewalks, your locations could be at different corners of the sidewalk, in the middle of it. You can also repeat the task on different sidewalks within your neighbourhood.

## Reflections:

👂 What did you hear when you lie down on the ground?

👂 How did it vary from location to location? How did the sound of the ground differ from the sound of the surrounding? What sensations, if any, this difference brought to your experience?

👂 Other than listening sensations, what other sensations did the activity bring to your experience?

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# Reflections

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## Reflections - Overall

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## Reflections - Overall

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## Reflections - Overall

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