

TUNNELWORKS

KS1 & 2 SOUNDSCAPE: LONDON THAMES

TEACHERS' NOTES

Soundscape is a three minute piece of contemporary classical music embedded with 10 evocative sounds, typical of what may be heard around the River Thames in London. Soundscape takes the children on an imaginative journey along the river as it flows through the city and is designed to provide an immersive and stimulating piece for the children to respond to creatively.

It has two key learning outcomes;

- To identify and respond to the sounds in Soundscape and create a river journey, expressing their thoughts and feelings through drawings, colours and creative writing.
- To explore and develop their ideas of Soundscape across the curriculum using musical vocabulary and instruments, creative writing, expressive language and dance.

Soundscape provides enriching learning opportunities for audio, visual and kinaesthetic classroom activities. If your school is local to the River Thames, it is a good way to get children outside and investigating the local area as well as using ICT to support learning.

The teaching notes provide background information, ideas for thematic teaching and relevant curriculum links. There are supporting worksheets, lesson plans and suggestions for extension activities. We have made it as flexible as possible. Soundscape can be used as a one off lesson or as a series of lessons over a term.

As we live in a visual world, it is a useful exercise for children to focus on listening, and it may surprise them how much they rely on sight to understand what is going on around them. It will also challenge them to explore other senses.

There are 10 sounds with the times they appear in the music as follows;

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Bicycle bell (0:12) | 6. Big Ben (1:43) |
| 2. London market trader (0:27) | 7. Cavalry troop (2:08) |
| 3. Rower in a boat (0:47) | 8. Ravens (2:26) |
| 4. Traffic noise (1:12) | 9. Ships hooter (2:40) |
| 5. Sirens (1:21) | 10. Seagulls (2:48) |

You may need to play the piece a few times for children to pick up on all the sounds. As some are harder to identify than others it will provide interesting discussion points to raise questions about what the sounds are and what they mean.

The optional visual presentation features images of London and the River Thames with captions describing the sound that can be heard, to assist children who have a hearing impairment.

Finally there is a version of the music without any sounds embedded which you may want to use in extension work in music.

This resource contains:

- Background information on Soundscape and facts about the River Thames
- Differentiated lesson plans for the core creative activity, plus music and dance
- Literacy and art lesson ideas to follow on from the core activity with curriculum links
- Eight worksheets

There are differentiated IWB presentations, please click on the Primary tab to play these:

- Audio presentation of Soundscape with no images
- Audio/Visual version of Soundscape for children with a hearing impairment
- Audio version of the music with no sounds

Resources required:

- A computer
- An audio system
- An Interactive Whiteboard

Feedback

We'd be delighted to see examples of your class's work so please scan and email them to us via the contact button on the Tunnelworks homepage.

Background information on the River Thames

- The River Thames, at 215 miles long, is the second longest river in the UK and has been an important trade and transport route throughout its history.
- The Thames flows through 16 cities and key towns and is tidal when it flows through London, downstream of Teddington lock.
- The River Thames rises in the Cotswold Hills in Gloucestershire, and flows eastwards past Oxford (where it is known as the River Isis), then the Chilterns and on through London to the North Sea.
- The first bridge in the capital was located where the current London Bridge stands. It has been rebuilt many times since the Romans first constructed a river crossing there around 2,000 years ago.
- The importance of the Thames can be seen in the settlements that line its banks. There are countless historic and iconic buildings built near to the river, including the Palace of Westminster, St Paul's Cathedral, the Tower of London and modern day structures such as the London Eye and the Shard.
- The Thames looks brown because of the tides which cause the mud at the bottom to be continually stirred up.
- Before engineer Sir Joseph Bazalgette built London's sewer system, much of the capital's waste was dumped in the river. During the summer of 1858, now known as the Great Stink, the smell caused by this 'open sewer' was so strong that parliament considered relocating to Oxford.
- The Thames Tideway Tunnel is a major new sewer, which is urgently needed to protect the River Thames from increasing levels of pollution.
- 39 million tonnes of untreated sewage flushes into the Thames in a typical year. That's enough to fill the Royal Albert Hall 450 times. It's an unacceptable problem, getting progressively worse.
- The project will help tackle the problem of overflows from the capital's Victorian sewers for at least the next 100 years, and enable the UK to meet European environmental standards.

Teaching and learning with Soundscape

Core activity

We have produced two lesson plans for the core activity; one for KS1 and one for KS2 with links to art and literacy. In both, children listen to Soundscape and respond creatively to the combination of music and sounds that they hear.

The aim of the activity is for children to engage with their senses by listening to a music piece, which has been embedded with sound effects that could be heard around the River Thames.

We have provided an A4 sheet (worksheet 1), which you may like to enlarge to A3 for children working in groups, with the outline of the River Thames for children to create their river journey and have made suggestions of how to organise the activity, but the lesson plan is flexible. For example, some children may want to write descriptive words, stories and poems, whilst others may use art tools and materials to represent the colours and textures of the River Thames. There are differentiated activities for lower and upper KS2, which can be adapted as necessary.

In addition, there is a cross-curricular Sound Walk activity (worksheets 2 and 3) for children to explore the aural landscape in their immediate environment.

Dance

There are separate dance lessons for KS1 and KS2, which have the potential to be developed and taught across a number of lessons, reflecting the theme of journeys and the River Thames within Soundscape. Children create interesting travelling movements based on descriptive words that reflect river movements and journeys. They work in pairs and small groups, practising, evaluating and improving their work before putting together in a performance.

Whilst the lesson objectives are similar for both key stages, each lesson plan has been differentiated and can be adapted to the requirements of your class.

Music

There are two lesson plans, one for KS1 and one for KS2. The lessons provide strong links to Soundscape, as children talk about sounds heard along River Thames and reflect on sounds they hear in other environments.

At KS1, children focus on describing the different sounds heard in Soundscape and in their immediate environment. There is an optional worksheet to take children on a Sound Walk around school which will challenge children to listen and describe sounds around them.

At KS2, children discuss the texture of sounds in the music piece. They discuss Soundscape in more depth and think about the composition of the music with the overlaying sound effects. They can experiment with layering sound using instruments or body parts, before organising a short composition of a journey or scenario to create their own soundscape.

Geography

If you are doing a topic on rivers or want to explore the River Thames further with your class, then the following geography based lesson ideas and questions for discussion may be useful to follow on from the core activity lesson. If you can visit the River Thames, there are opportunities to carry out fieldwork, take photos and record information.

You will find images of the river in the visual presentation of Soundscape, which you could use with these discussion questions and lesson ideas for KS1 and KS2. You may also find Google maps useful.

KS1

1. Where is the River Thames?
 2. Can you describe what the river looks like?
 3. What can you see in the environment around the River Thames?
 4. Who do you think uses the river?
 5. Where do you think the river leads to?
 6. Do you think the River Thames is important? Why/why not?
- Show children a landscape picture of the River Thames from the visual presentation. As a class, create a mind map of ideas to describe the landscape of the Thames, how the river is used and its importance. This could include; trade, tourism, wildlife, jobs, buildings/structures.
 - Locate key features of London on a map, including your school if you are nearby.

Curriculum links: Geography 1a, 1c, 2a, 2c, 2d, 3a, 3b

KS2

1. Can you describe where the River Thames is located?
 2. Where is your school located on the map? How far is it from the river?
 3. What human and physical features in the environment can you identify?
 4. Who uses the river and how do they use it?
 5. Do you think the River Thames is important? Why/why not?
 6. How do you think the River Thames has changed over the last 100 years? What is different?
- Display an image of the River Thames from the visual presentation. Discuss the landscape and identify human and physical features in the environment.
 - In groups, ask children to discuss and write down their ideas of who they think uses the river and how it is used. Consider how activities around the river impact on people's lives and the settlements, buildings and tourist attractions that demonstrate its importance. Groups research the River Thames and create a poster or booklet to provide information to people who want to know more about the river and how it is used.

Curriculum links: Geography 1a, 1c, 2a, 2c, 2d, 3a, 3b

Literacy

Soundscape creates a strong link to literacy, with the opportunity for children to explore the River Thames and London through creative writing, drama and ICT. Cross curricular links in geography and history are also referenced.

Poetry

KS1 - Children create a poem using their senses to describe a journey exploring the sights, sounds, tastes, textures and smells around London and the River Thames. For example, repetitive sentences such as “drifting down the river I heard...drifting down the river I smelled”. Children can write their poetry in the shape outlines that are provided. There are templates for the River Thames, Big Ben, a seagull, a fish and a boat.

KS2 - Expand on the poetry written in the core activity to create their own style of poetry. Children study river or city poetry and write haikus, acrostics or focus on similes, metaphors or personification poetry. There are templates for the River Thames, Big Ben, a seagull, a fish and a boat (worksheets 5 to 8). Add pictures and colour to create a class display.

Curriculum links: EN2 3e, 3f, En3 1a, 1d, 7b, 12

Descriptive writing

Using the postcard template (worksheet 4), children write to a friend or family member recalling their trip along the River Thames. Encourage them to use a range of descriptive language. Have the word bank available for some children who may find it more challenging. It can be their own ideas of what they've seen or heard on their trip in London or the ideas from Soundscape.

Curriculum links: EN3 1a, 1b, 1c, 1e, 9a

Instruction writing

This is a KS1 and lower KS2 activity and the aim is to write a set of instructions for a scenic river cruise along the River Thames for tourists. Consider what/where/when/why/who type questions. Children will include details of what time tourists need to arrive, where they will meet, how long the trip will take and sights they will be able to see and take pictures of along the way. Show children a range of leaflets and look at the format so they see how to present the instructions.

Extension for KS2: Role play activity.

Curriculum links: EN3 1a, 1b, 1e, 9d, 12

Character description

Use Soundscape again to create character descriptions from the animals and people they identify along the river. Typical sights they may see could be a tourist, a child visiting London for the first time or a seagull. Consider what/where/when/why/who type questions to create the character description. Challenge children to write it in 50 words. They can draw their characters and write up their stories to be used in a class display.

Curriculum links: EN1 3 12 EN1 1b, 1c, 2d, EN3 9b

Drama

For this upper KS2 activity, children imagine they are going to be a tour guide for tourists wanting to take a trip along the River Thames. Use drama techniques to become tourists and tour guides, for example performing role plays or freeze frames. Children research the River Thames and produce a script for their drama, thinking about what information will be most useful. Use differentiated success criteria based on the information they need to provide to the tourist. For example, from the size and speed of the river, local tourist attractions and the environment around them, to investigating how the Thames is used in modern society, pollution issues and even references to the history of the river.

Extension: You or the children film the performance and offer peer feedback.

Curriculum links: EN1 1c, 1d, 2d, 4a, 4b, 4d

Art & Design

The following art ideas can be used as an extension from the core activity. They are suitable for KS1 and KS2.

Objectives:

- To experiment with colours, patterns and textures of different art equipment and discuss their effect
- To think about the mood Soundscape presents and represent this through art by drawing, painting, making sculptures and collages
- To create a landscape picture with physical/human features

Curriculum links: 1a, 2a, 2b, 2c, 3a, 4a, 4b, 5a

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- As an extension to the core activity, children explore colour and textures in the environment by creating a picture using different artistic techniques. One example is to do a rubbing of a tree which can be turned horizontally to produce a textured river. Layer different coloured tissue paper to explore the colours of the sky or the river. Create stamps using sponges or cardboard with string attached to add texture to their scenic picture.
 - Consider the physical and human features of the River Thames and London. If possible, take the class on a field trip and visit an area of the River Thames and sketch the features that can be seen in their immediate environment.
 - Children study a landscape picture of the River Thames or an image of London which can be found in the visual presentation of Soundscape. What physical and human features can be seen? Use this to create a scenic picture of London and the River Thames. Contrast the natural and human features of the city by using different art tools and textures. For example, the river and sky could be water colour whilst the bridge could be sketched in black chalk to create a silhouette effect.
 - Create a class display of the landscape of the River Thames and London. Print off large pictures of typical London features such as Tower Bridge or Big Ben, which will be used as outlines for a collage. Alternatively, children can draw large pictures. Offer a range of materials and children choose appropriate colours and textures to build up their picture in 3D. For example, scrunch up tissue paper or use mod roc to create sculptures. Use scrap such as bottles, newspapers, to simulate pollution in the river.

Worksheets

Worksheet 1

Outline of the River Thames for use in core activity, art and poetry

Worksheet 2

Sound Walk (KS1)

Worksheet 3

Sound Walk (KS2)

Worksheet 4

Postcard template with guidelines

Worksheet 5

Poetry shape outline of boat with integrated lines for writing

Worksheet 6

Poetry shape outline of seagull with integrated lines for writing

Worksheet 7

Poetry shape outline of Big Ben with integrated lines for writing

Worksheet 8

Poetry shape outline of a fish with integrated lines for writing