

Inside the Music: A Midsummer Night's Dream Teacher's Resources

Part 4: Sounds & Environments

Overview

- This section is about how music reflects places and environments.
- Your students will build a soundscape based on an environment they know.

Before you start

- Watch the example soundscape provided in the video, and think about how different ideas might slot together.
- Decide whether you'll use body-percussion and vocal sounds, or classroom percussion.
- You might want to think of some example sounds of your own to use as prompts for your students.

Exercise length: 30 mins / could also be stretched over multiple sessions

Activity set-up: group task

Materials required: none / classroom instruments (optional)

Musical learning: creating a musical soundscape; composing; improvising

During the Exercise

- Put your pupils into small groups (around 5 people in a group).
- Separate spaces for them to work will help with sound levels, so everyone can focus on their own parts.
- Either provide each group with an environment to think about, or ask them to think about their own.
 - **TIP: this might be a good place to link in the geography or science you're currently learning, or link to a wider curriculum topic.**
- Ensure the group selects items to reflect first, then decides on sounds to reflect those elements. After that, the group can choose how to structure their soundscape: one after the other, layered, or in sections.
- Try to ensure everyone is contributing to the group ideas, and everyone is being listened to.
- Give reminders on how much time is left for the group work: 5 minutes left, 2 minutes left, final practice.
- Ask prompting questions, such as: Who is starting each section? Will there be any repeats? How could you make a contrasting section? What is the opposite of that idea? How could we vary that? Are we playing a solo, a duet, or all together?

Finishing the Session

- Make a performance space, so the groups can share back to each other: this could be at the end of the session, or you could build these ideas into an assembly or performance.

Extension Exercises

- Structure critique sessions after each performance: ask the audience which bits they enjoyed - this can be a great time to try out constructive feedback.
- Allow groups to try out another environment, thinking about how that would feel different.
- Try the exercise with classroom instruments.