

Nature's Jamboree (an activity run by [Tracy S. Feldman](#) on 28 June 2014)

1. **Introductions:**

First, I introduced myself and the general goals of the activity (and had participants introduce themselves). There are many sounds in nature, and today I'd like people to have fun while paying attention to those sounds—you'll have opportunities to both listen to and make sounds.

2. Short game of **Noses** (based upon Cornell 1998, page 70):

I made up these clues about animals that use vocalizations—see the clues at the bottom of this text. I read the clues, and participants put their finger on their nose if they think they know the answer before I am done reading clues. Let them know that the clues are harder at first, but get easier. It helps to have several participants for this game especially.

3. **Listening to sounds in nature:** (from Cornell 1998, Sharing Nature with Children, page 40) (~10 minutes—3-5 minutes for listening, depending upon the group)

Close your eyes, holding your hands in fists. Each time you hear a sound that is different from others you've heard, put out one finger. Describe some of the sounds you heard.

4. **Making sounds in nature:**

Explore sounds you can produce with natural objects, with an eye toward making a good "found" instrument with natural objects. When you are looking for objects, please do not use anything that is currently alive, or kill/harm organisms in the process.

Try making at least 10 different kinds of sounds with different objects you find. Write down the 5 best sounding ones in your note book. (20-30 minutes)

Choose one instrument (your best noisemaker) to bring back to share with the group (it has to be portable).

5. **Nature Jamboree:**

We will get back together with our instruments, and talk about cool things we saw or heard while they were out exploring. (~10 minutes). I write them down in a notebook, also noting possible rhymes.

Then let's write a song together about one of those experiences/sightings, and we'll perform it on the instruments. (20-30 minutes).

This last step depends on your level of comfort with playing instruments, and with extemporaneous songwriting. The song we came up with this time was simple—I kept it that way on purpose, so people could sing, so they could understand the lyrics, and so they could clearly see their contributions. I had the participants give me input on the texture of the song (fast or slow, etc.).

Chorus (C, F, C, G):

Dragonfly, flying all around
Dragonfly, making buzzing sounds

I just sung the verses, and made them up as I went, weaving in things the participants suggested.

Clues for the short game of “Noses” about animal vocalizations (based upon the game by Joseph Cornell; Cornell 1998; Sharing Nature with Children, page 70)

1. Gray tree frog
 - a. I mostly make noise at night, but also during the day in response to loud noises like thunder.
 - b. I make noise that sounds like a grunt to attract a mate who is larger than I am.
 - c. I make my noise by pushing air through an inflated balloon of skin under my mouth.
 - d. I live up to 9 years, spending most of my time in trees in deciduous forests like Glennstone.
 - e. I only come down from the trees when I am ready to lay eggs.
 - f. I can change color from green to gray.
 - g. I breathe through my skin.
 - h. I have four webbed feet, and spend my earliest days swimming.
2. Songbird
 - a. I usually live for 2-3 years.
 - b. I may travel as much as 6000 miles each year, and travel my longest distances at night.
 - c. I make noises only during the daytime, for many reasons, including attracting mates and defending my home.
 - d. I can make a few different kinds of noises, and I even sound different than others of my kind in different places.
 - e. Unlike people, I can make two sounds at the same time, and up to 30 notes per second.
 - f. I make fewer sounds in late summer, because I cannot move as well then.
 - g. I eat small insects, sometimes moving along branches to find insects hidden in leaves.
 - h. I am small (usually 4-12 inches long), make nests in trees, fly, and lay eggs.
3. Cicada
 - a. When I am fully grown, I can fly, but I spend most of my time sitting still.
 - b. I am larger than a bee, but smaller than a hummingbird.
 - c. I live 2-5 years, and spend most of that time underground.
 - d. I dig my way out of the ground, and make noises in trees during late summer days.
 - e. I make noise by popping two hard parts of my body in and out.
 - f. I come out with lots of others of my kind, all making noises to find mates.
 - g. My mouth looks like a straw, and I suck juices from plant roots and stems.
 - h. I have no backbone, I leave my hard shells (exoskeletons) on tree trunks, and I have six legs.
4. Katydid
 - a. I make my noises mostly at night.
 - b. I have ears on my front legs, to hear noises made by predators and others like me.
 - c. I can fly, but I prefer to walk, climb, or hide.

- d. I make noises by rubbing rough parts of my wings together. I do this so others like me can find me.
- e. I am named for the noises I make.
- f. My body and wings look like the leaves I eat.
- g. I have jumping legs, but I don't jump as much as my cousins do.
- h. I have no backbone, but I have six legs and long antennae.