

Incorporating Global and Latin American Sounds into the Classroom

About this Guide

This guide was produced in Spring 2022 by Emmy Tither, Jasmine Morse, and Whitney Wagner on behalf of the Latin American and Iberian Institute (LAI) at The University of New Mexico as part of a series on curriculum that addresses Indigenous activism and resilience in the climate justice movement. The purpose of this particular guide is to serve as a foundation for this work and to deepen students' understanding of the soundscapes of Latin America and Iberia. Students will build upon their critical thinking skills and analyze sounds - both near and far - of the world around them.

We are especially grateful to [Dr. Ana Alonso Minutti](#), who presented a workshop entitled "Living and Learning through Sound: Developing a Sonic Epistemology" as part of a broader workshop entitled "Incorporating Global and Latin American Sounds into the Classroom" which took place virtually at the LAI in February 2022.

Background on Using Sound in the Classroom

We live in a very noisy world. Learning how to listen to the world around us helps root us in time and place, as well as explore places further afield.

Listening to the world around us - and how those sounds have changed over time - is a form of environmental justice. More info can be found here:

- [The Sound of Life: What Is a Soundscape?](#)
- [Sound Justice: Citizen Science, Noise, and the Quest for Equity](#)
- [Sustainable Missoula: The soundscapes that surround us](#)

Even knowing this, using sound in the classroom can be a challenge. It's not a medium that is encountered that often - especially in isolation from anything visual. It's also a medium that students may be unfamiliar with.

With that in mind, this resource guide contains the following:

- A listing of resources for various audio sound content types (soundscapes, music, oral histories, podcasts), as well as general ideas on how to incorporate them into the classroom. These can be incorporated at all grade levels.
- A lesson plan for an "ear opening" activity for elementary-aged students (although this lesson can also be taught to older students)

Given our Institute's scope, and while the lesson plan below focuses on sounds from Latin America, we hope that this resource guide will aid you in incorporating sound into your classroom, regardless of what grade level or subject you teach.

Useful definitions

Soundscape – the sounds that are heard in a particular location. Soundscapes, as a concept, can be a bit amorphous to grasp at first; a comprehensive definition can be found [in this article](#).

Oral history – the collection of stories, memories, and recollections in sound recorded form with people who personally experienced historical events.

Podcast – a digital audio file of a sound recording available online, usually as part of a story series.

General Resources

Some general sound resources are presented over the next few pages.

These resources are organized by type of sound on the left-hand side. Resources containing many recordings from Latin America and/or Iberia are highlighted in green.

On the right-hand side, general suggestions are provided for incorporating these sounds into your classroom teaching.

What type of sound?	To do what with?
<p><i>Historical Soundscapes</i></p> <p>Sounds of Changes [Industrial Revolution/history of science]</p> <p>Historical Soundscapes of Granada and Seville</p> <p>Sound engineer recreates pre-Colombian sounds [short YouTube video of a sound engineer who has spent his career recreating ancient sounds]</p>	<p>Enrich content knowledge</p> <p>As historical evidence in a written response Compare and contrast two imagined soundscapes of the same place at different times</p>
<p><i>Contemporary Soundscapes</i></p> <p>Radio Apores [geotagged soundscapes]</p> <p>COVID-19 sound projects [a of COVID-19 specific sound projects]</p> <p>Record the Earth [geotagged soundscapes]</p> <p>Cities and Memory [geotagged soundscapes]</p> <p>Urban Soundscapes of the World [geotagged soundscapes]</p> <p>Sonoda - Mexico City [geotagged soundscapes]</p> <p>The Acoustic Ecology Institute - soundscape links [a list of soundscape projects]</p> <p>Escucha conmigo (elementary, Spanish language book)</p> <p>Suena México - UNAM Global (Spanish language book for children on the sounds of Mexico)</p>	<p>Enrich content knowledge</p> <p>Analyze contemporary global issues</p>

Sounds of Resistance/Colonialism

"[LA LLORONA IN NOISE: A TALE FROM THE RIO GRANDE](#)" by Dr. Ana Alonso Minutti [essay on sound and the story of *La Llorona*].

[Radical Sounds Latin America](#)

[contemporary music online platform and music festival exploring identity, colonialism, and migration through music]

[Music and Resistance in Colonial America](#)

[blog post about music and resistance in the colonial era]

[The Sound of Indigenous Resistance](#)

[article about an Indigenous artist using modern technology mixed with sounds of their ancestors]

[Sonic Resistance: Indigenous Women and Social Justice](#) [panel discussion and resources examine the relationship between sound and resistance of Indigenous women in North America]

Understand different facets of resistance such as sound and music
Analyze and understand colonialism in the Americas
Compare music/sound as resistance to other forms of resistance

Re-imagined Soundscapes [Taking soundscapes and reimagining them into sound art (music, etc.)]

[Cities and Memory](#) [remixed field recordings]

[The Sound of Indigenous Resistance](#)

[article about an Indigenous artist using modern technology mixed with sounds of their ancestors]

Compare and contrast unmixed and remixed recordings
Create soundscapes of a local place and/or space
Create a dreamscape of a historical place or character
To inspire creative written or drawn responses

<p><i>Music</i></p> <p>Folkways [historical and contemporary music from around the world] Protest songs [a listing of global protest songs] Radio Garden [livestream of radio stations across the globe] Radical Sounds Latin America [music from Latin America] Indigenous Hip Hop [Smithsonian page featuring music videos of Indigenous Hip Hop groups] Sounds of Latin America [playlist from the Smithsonian featuring artists from Latin America] New Sounds of Peru [music videos featuring new Peruvian artists] Sound and Colours [a library of global music broken down by regions featuring many tracks from Latin America]</p>	<p>Enrich content knowledge of historical or contemporary issues Practice visual, sonic, and media literacy Analyze lyrics via discussion HIPPO the source Use lyrics as evidence in a written response Make a playlist that describes a certain time or location Compare/contrast historical or cultural responses</p>
<p><i>Oral History - Primary Source</i></p> <p>OHA Directory [directory] Columbia Center for Oral History [directory] Story Corps [directory, contemporary focus] Groundswell - Oral History of Social Change [directory, social justice focus] Yale Latinx Oral Histories [database for many oral history projects pertaining to the Latinx community]</p>	<p>Teach / enrich content knowledge HIPPO the source As a source in a written response Compare + contrast viewpoints / analyze bias in historical sources Inspiration for a Socratic discussion</p>
<p><i>Oral History - Dramatizations [People reading scripts/writings (usually historical) of other people's life and experiences]</i></p> <p>Howard Zinn - People's History</p>	<p>Teach / enrich content knowledge HIPPO the source As a source in a written response Compare + contrast viewpoints / analyze bias in historical sources Inspiration for a Socratic discussion</p>

<p><i>Oral History - DIY</i></p> <p>Montana Historical Society - Oral History in the Classroom Talking Gumbo Audacity is a free audio editing software</p>	<p>Summative assessment Longer class project Localize the broad scope of history or geography</p>
<p><i>Podcasts</i></p> <p>This American Life [cultural and historical aspects of American life] 1619 [history of American slavery] Revisionist History [“overlooked and misunderstood” history] The Memory Palace [short historical narratives] Stuff You Missed in History Class [sometimes-untold histories] Anthropocene Reviewed [history, culture, and environment] Stuff the British Stole [historical + contemporary connection] Latino USA [American-based Latinx culture] Radio Ambulante [journalism from Latin American] Las Raras [cultural/historical/contemporary stories of people fighting for social change] El Hilo [cultural and historical aspects of Latin American life] Tres Cuentos [literary podcast featuring episodes in Spanish and English] Así Como Suenan [historical + contemporary stories focused on Latin America]</p>	<p>Teach / enrich content knowledge HIPPO the source As a source in a written response Compare + contrast viewpoints / analyze bias in historical sources Inspiration for a Socratic discussion More info</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More examples + in-depth analysis • The Atlantic - article
<p><i>Podcast - DIY</i></p> <p>Teaching Podcasting: A Curriculum Guide for Educators Audacity is a free audio editing software</p>	<p>Summative assessment Longer class project Localize the broad scope of history or geography</p>

Lesson Title

What does Latin America sound like? An ear-opening activity.

Grade Levels

While this lesson is designed for students in upper elementary school (grades 3 -5). The lesson can be taught across grade and age levels by modifying the prompts and materials provided.

Time Needed

One 60-minute class block, with some time for pre-lesson introduction activities. The lesson can be adapted to be longer or shorter depending on the amount of time available.

Lesson Context/Summary

In this stand-alone lesson, students will explore global sounds, particularly in the context of Latin America. They will do this by learning about the concept of “soundscapes”, as well as by completing an “ear opening” activity by listening to soundscapes recorded in Latin America.

This lesson is easily adaptable to a range of contexts and subject matters. For example - if teaching science, you could complete this lesson plan with a soundscape pertinent to the unit currently being studied (example: the Amazon rainforest).

Common Core Standards

Standards covered will vary depending on the grade level but will focus on the ELA – Speaking and Listening standards. Below is an example from an applicable 5th grade standard:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.4](#) - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Essential Question (EQ)

What do soundscapes tell us about a place?

Learning Objectives (LOs)

Students will be able to describe a place’s geophysical (earth), biological (animal), and human sounds.

Students will be able to craft a creative response to a soundscape they have listened to.

Key Vocabulary Terms

Soundscapes – all the sounds heard in a specific location

Environment – the natural world of a specific location

Audio Ecology – using sound to understand how human beings relate to their environment

Geophysical – relating to the earth

Biological – relating to a living creature

[Note: some of these vocabulary words are quite advanced; feel free to adapt to your students' needs.]

Learning Activities

Before the lesson – 15 to 60 minutes (teacher preference)

[Note: these pre-activities could take place over one day or over several days, depending on the amount of time available.]

Provide the students with various examples of soundscapes to explore, along with the prompt - “*What sounds do you hear? Describe them.*” This could be done in the classroom, by using a variety of instruments and noise-making objects; on school grounds, by taking a walk outside; or at home, by asking students to listen to the sounds in their own home. Choose whichever option works best for you and your students. During this process, define the lesson’s vocabulary terms using you and your students’ preferred method; [some techniques are listed here](#).

Students may answer the prompt in spoken, written, or recorded form. This would also be a great opportunity for a class discussion, either led by the teacher or by the students.

The goal of this pre-lesson activity is to accustom the students to the act of listening to the world around them, as well as to accustom them to the vocabulary that will be used in the lesson ahead.

Differentiation: the pre-activities, particularly the exploration of sounds, can be adapted to fit your students’ interests and preferred form of media. For example, one student could explore podcasts with a strong soundscape element while another student could explore the soundscape of the classroom. The prompt can also be answered by the students in oral, written, or drawn form – depending on student preference.

Opening - 10 minutes

When students enter the classroom, ask them to answer the lesson's "Do Now" question: *What can sounds tell us about a place?*

After thinking time, students will be prompted to answer the question verbally or in writing (on paper or in the video call chat box).

The teacher will ask two students to share their answers with the class (one volunteer, one cold call).

Provide students with the learning objectives and road map for the lesson ("*What are we doing today and why is it important?*"):

- *Students will be able to describe a place's geophysical (earth), biological (animal), and human sounds.*
- *Students will be able to craft a creative response to a soundscape they have listened to.*

Pause for questions.

Direct Instruction (I Do) - 15 minutes

Direct instruction on soundscapes. What are they, what can they tell us about the world? How do places sound different? During this process, remind students of the vocabulary terms introduced earlier.

[Note: should you need it, more information on soundscapes and audio ecology is provided in the "resources" section of this guide.]

Play this video - [What Do Healthy Ecosystems Sound Like? | NOVA](#) - then ask the question, "*What are the three categories of sounds heard in an ecosystem? Give examples of each.*". Using the [think-pair-share method](#), ask students to discuss amongst themselves before sharing their answers. Teacher will ask two pairs to share their answers with the class (one volunteer, one cold call).

Teacher gives instructions for the group work portion (see below) and pauses for questions.

Differentiation: the above information can also be presented in a different form. For example, students could read a transcript of the NOVA video if they prefer. Students may also work individually or in small groups to answer the question prompt.

Group Work (We Do) - "Ear Opening" - 15 minutes

Explain that there are projects which record and save soundscapes from around the world. Today, they are going to listen to a soundscape from a place in Latin America. On a projected map, show students where this place is located. Then, show the

website of a sound scape project and zoom in on the geotagged soundscape that will be listened to.

[Note: two soundscape projects with recordings from throughout Latin America are [Record the Earth](#) and [Cities and Memory](#). Other projects are listed in the “resources” section of this guide.]

Give each student a copy of the “Ear Opening” worksheet (found below). Explain that the soundscape of this place will be played twice. The first time, all they need to do is listen to it in silence. The second time the soundscape is played, each student should list the geophysical, biological, and human sounds they hear in the recording. While this happens, the teacher circulates to check for understanding.

Differentiation: Students may complete their worksheet by taking notes in another form if they wish.

In groups, students then share the sounds they heard in the recording. Did their classmates hear any sounds that they didn't? While this is happening, write three columns on the board – geophysical, biological, and human.

After they share with their classmates, ask students to come up and write a sound they heard under in its appropriate column.

If there is time, ask the students – *how were the sounds you heard on the recording different than the sounds you heard in our pre-lesson listening activity? Why do you think these differences exist?*

Independent Assessment (You Do) - 15 minutes

Explain that the students will now write a creative response to the soundscape they heard.

Imagine that you are in the location of the soundscape you just heard and you are walking around. Describe what is going on around you. What sounds do you hear? What do you smell? What do you see? How do you feel? Where are you walking to?

Using the soundscape you listened to as inspiration, write a paragraph that describes the location of the soundscape as if you were there.

As students work, the teacher will circulate to answer questions and check for understanding, as well as provide extension resources (see section below) and 1:1 and small group support as needed.

Differentiation: students may complete the independent assessment in another form if they prefer (examples: discussion with teacher, drawing, etc.).

Assessment

Teacher will determine student mastery by assessing their responses to the assessment assignment above.

Closure - 5 minutes

At the end of class, the teacher brings the students back to ask the closing question – *What do soundscapes tell us about a place?*

To close, the teacher restates the learning objectives, provides extension resources if students wish to learn more, and answers any last questions.

Lesson Materials

Ear opening worksheet (see below)

Computer with speakers and projector to play audio clips and video (if in-person); ability to share screen and audio on a video call (if virtual)

Whiteboard – physical or virtual

Differentiation and Modification Options

In addition to the below, see differentiation options included in the above lesson plan.

Content: see resources below for different forms of content (videos, podcasts, etc.)

Process: students can work individually or with a trusted partner on assignments if they prefer.

Product: students may provide their assessment work in a format that best suits them (PowerPoint, podcast, poster, writing, etc.).

Learning Environment: lesson can be provided in an in-person, virtual, or hybrid format using drawing software such as *Jamboard* or [MS Paint](#).

Extension resources: students may explore the resources provided below for extra content and evidence for their assessment work.

English Language Learners (ELLs): Vocab words defined in detail during direct instruction; can use notes in assessments; extended time.

IEPs and 504s; lesson can be modified in content, process, and product to reflect learning accommodations.

Acknowledgements

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This lesson was inspired by the following lesson plans:

- [Developing a Child's Sense of Place](#) by the Acoustic Ecology Institute
- [The Value of Listening](#) by the Global Oneness Project

Resources Specific to This Lesson Plan

- Additional information on sound and soundscapes
 - [“LA LLORONA IN NOISE: A TALE FROM THE RIO GRANDE”](#) by Dr. Ana Alonso Minutti
 - [Escuchá conmigo](#) (elementary, Spanish language book)
 - [Suená México - UNAM Global](#) (Spanish language book for children on the sounds of Mexico)
 - [Global Soundscapes - Learning](#)
 - [Soundscape Ecology - Story Map](#)
 - [Soundscape Ecology: The Science of Sound in the Landscape - BioScience](#)
- Other soundscape/audio ecology projects [*potential extension resources for this lesson plan*]
 - [Urban Soundscapes of the World](#)
 - [Sonode - Mexico City](#)
 - [The Acoustic Ecology Institute - Soundscape Links](#)
- Other lesson plans using soundscapes
 - [National Geographic - Soundscapes](#) (elementary)
 - [Tideway - Soundscape Lesson Plan](#) (elementary)
 - [Sound & Noise Education Module](#) - NYC Environmental Protection (all ages)

Name:

Ear Opening Activity

Instructions:

You will listen to a soundscape from a certain place two times. Below, write where the soundscape is located in the world.

The first time, you and your classmates will listen to it quietly.

The second time, list the sounds you hear in each of the categories below.

I am listening to a soundscape from:

Geophysical (Earth) Sounds	Biological (Plant and Animal) Sounds	Human Sounds