Sound Mapping!
An outdoor exploration with Kayla and Nicole from the Education Department

Source: Sound Maps and many other nature activities can be found in a book we love—"Sharing Nature with Children" by Joseph Cornell.

Materials:
- Paper or note card with an “X”
- Pencil
- Attach the paper to a piece of cardboard with a rubber band to make a little DIY clipboard!

Getting Ready:
- Get your supplies ready. Let your child know that you’ll be making a special kind of map—a map of sounds. Scientists use their senses to learn about the world around so consider reviewing the five senses together!

Let’s get Started:
- Once in an appropriate spot outside. (Or use a video or audio clip online for an indoor version!)
- On your map, the "X" indicates your location. Use pictures, words, and/or symbols to indicate interesting sounds around you. We like to try to focus on the natural sounds!
- For example, a small wavy line could represent a small breeze, or a drawing of a bird could indicate bird songs.

Prompts to Use During Sound Mapping:
- What sounds do you hear?
- What will you use to represent that sound?
- Are the sounds close or far away?
- Do you hear any sounds of nature? The wind or birds? Do you hear sounds caused by people?

Encourage your child to close their eyes while listening for sounds. To help them increase their hearing ability, ask them to make “deer” ears by cupping their hands behind the ears. This hand position will create a greater surface area to capture sounds.

Note: This map could include the other senses too! We could add smells or sights to a “sensory” map, if you like.

Share:
- Afterward, share your maps with each other. You could make multiple maps in the same spot and compare them.
- Or ask your child to explain what symbols they used and why. Later, kids could color and add details to their map!