



## Performing Arts with the Sounds of Nature

This handout, created by Caity Church for [Write Out](#), will guide you through 3 improvisational acting exercises, with each exercise building on the previous one.

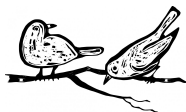
### Before you play:

Allow participants to explore the sounds in the playing space.

- what can you hear?
- what makes that sound?
- what does the sound remind you of?
- how often do we hear that sound?
- is the sound fast or slow?
- what kind of pitch does it have?
- what is the tone and mood of the sound?

*For younger participants:* Together, develop some movements to interpret each sound. Encourage the participants to use their whole bodies for the movements and to make each movement for the sounds different from the others. These movements, as well as new ones, will be used throughout the exercises.

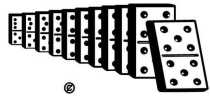
Now you are ready to play!



### “Nature Machine”

1. Participants can act in small “machine” groups of 3-5. Each participant will choose a sound.
2. When they hear the sound, they move about in their space in a fashion that imitates the sound repeating movements the group developed or making up a new movement! They only move that way when they hear the sound, so they will stop and go as the sounds do. (It’s okay if two or more choose the same sound as long as the movements are different.)
3. Leaders should determine a time for each “round” of acting out. Switch up the groups and try on different sounds and movements. Have fun!

\*Tip: This activity would be interesting if even human-made sounds, like traffic, construction or recreation, could be heard as well to be included in the acting.



### “Chain reaction”

1. Participants choose one other person from the whole group to be the “catalyst” for their reaction. A Catalyst is something that makes something else happen, like that first domino in a row of dominoes.
2. The participant will carry-out their short, nature-inspired movement every time their “catalyst” moves.
3. The group chooses a high-frequency sound to be the Trigger; facilitator chooses one participant to react every time they hear that Trigger sound, which will set off a chain of reactions. Only the starting participant reacts to the Trigger, the others are watching for their catalyst to set-off their reaction.

\*Tip: Try this with varying sizes of groups, but practice a few times in smaller groups with younger participants first!



### “Making a Scene”

1. Participants get into groups of 2-4.
2. Each participant in the group chooses a sound that has a lot of emotion and develops a movement to match. The group/ facilitator can work together to brainstorm the mood of the sounds. How might these sounds act if they were characters? How can the sounds indicate what might be happening in a scene among these sound characters?
3. Groups interact with one another miming out the actions and/ or emotions that the sound resembles. Groups could take turns performing for a predetermined time while others become audience members. (learning how to be a good audience member and/ or provide constructive feedback is important!)

### What’s next?

First, enjoy the experience! Second, feel free to share some aspect of your performance with others engaged in [Write Out](#); to share on social media use the hashtag #writeout.