

SOUNDS OF DISASTER

Required:

iPod/MP3 player
Headphone splitter
2 noise-cancelling headphones
Downloaded tracks (details below)
A4 poster (provided)

Ages: 5 plus

Optional:

Prize stickers

Warning: check the noise level is not too loud – some tracks are louder than others.

Set-up

Download the sound effects tracks listed below onto the iPod/MP3 player. Use the splitter to play the sounds over both headphones simultaneously. Print out the A4 poster and laminate it (if possible).

Tip!

This activity is portable, and it works really well if it's taken away from the stall. It needs two volunteers to run, and those volunteers need to "sell" the activity by approaching people. Not everyone is happy to work away from the stall, or to approach people. But the activity relies on this – so try and get a good salesperson to volunteer!

What to do

Ask two people if they want to find out what hazards sound like. Play each sound, hold up the poster, and ask them to guess which pictured hazard they are listening to. If there are two people, make it a competition. After each sound, explain a little about why it sounds the way it does (see Tips & Suggested Downloads). If you have “Master of Disaster” stickers, use them for prizes.

Suggested downloads and tips:

- Volcanic eruption: *Disaster Sounds, Track 46 Large volcano eruption and destruction*. This is a constant roar, with explosive pulses throughout. Before they listen, try hinting about the repeated explosions; afterward, talk about how long explosive eruptions can last.
- Earthquake: *Disaster Sounds, Track 31 Earthquake rumble background*. This is really quiet! Before they listen, try hinting about what might be the quietest hazard; afterward, talk about how earthquakes are quiet compared to other hazards.
- Tornado: *Disaster Sounds, Track 58 Tornado rolls through farming community*. This starts out with wind chimes, then growing wind and banging debris. Before they listen, hint about the picture which shows a house with tornado; afterward, talk about how a tornado can arrive this quickly – making it hard to get to safety.

- Wildfire: *Disaster Sounds, Track 39 Out of control forest fire.* This is a steady crackle. Hint about crackling sounds and how they are familiar from Bonfire Night.
- Lightning: *Storms Weather Thunder & Lightning, Track 58 Lightning strike 2.* This is only 6 seconds, so it should be a really easy one to guess. Longer tracks have thunder, rain, and wind which can get confusing.
- Hurricane: *Disaster Sounds, Track 57 Hurricane whipping debris past.* This sounds quite different to the tornado wind – this is steady, unrelenting. Before they listen, tell them to listen for the banging of debris; afterward, talk about how hurricanes last for much longer than tornadoes, and there is plenty of warning, and that winds are slower than in the stronger tornadoes.