

## Learning Laguna Magnified Volume 1

The Learning Laguna school program teaches students to notice nature everywhere. Students also learn that using our senses to explore nature is a great way to connect to the land and water that surround us. Try some of these Learning Laguna activities that foster deeper relationships to ourselves and the environment.

**Sound Map:** Tune in to the everyday sounds of our environment—nature *and* the built world.

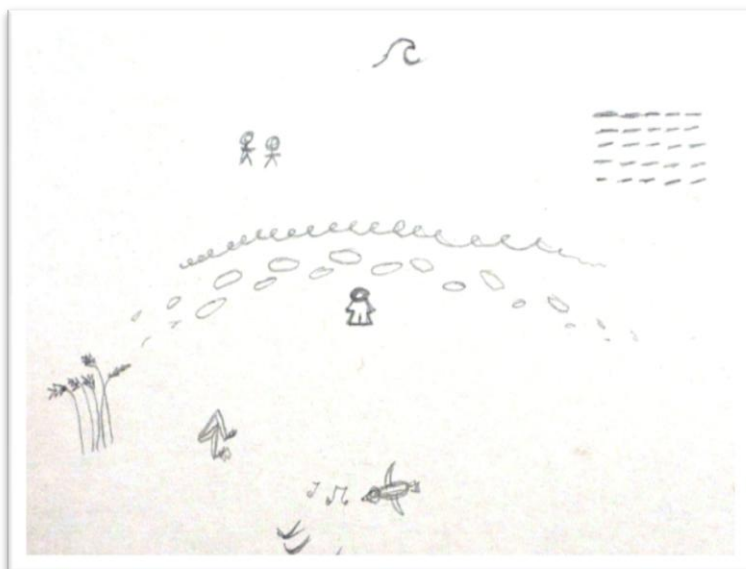
Solo or in a group, go outside and find a comfortable place to sit. Close your eyes. Spend 5 minutes listening and noticing what you hear. Come back together and talk about the experience using these prompts:

- What was it like to sit and just listen?
- Were there loud sounds?
- Were there quiet sounds?
- Were some of the sounds communicating anything? Like what?
- What did you hear above you? Were there any sounds below you?
- Which direction were most of the sounds coming from?
- Which sound did you like best? Why?
- Which sounds did you like least? Why?
- Did you recognize any of the sounds?
- Did any of the sounds surprise or excite or startle you?

Try cupping your ears with your hands like a jackrabbit or coyote. Turn different directions to see if you can hear even better or if you notice different sounds.

Extend the activity by making it a tuning in *and* drawing experience. Get a clipboard or hard cover book, some paper and colored pencils or markers. Spread out and sit on the ground. Draw an image of yourself in the center of the paper. As you sit quietly, mark where the sounds are coming from in relation to yourself in the center of your paper. Draw pictures of what you think you are hearing.

Do it every day! Visit different spots. Compare your experiences! Turn your observations into a *Sounds Journal* and see how things change throughout the seasons and over time.



**Scavenger Hunt:** Everybody loves the chance to be a detective! Before you go exploring, make a set of cards with one of the below prompts on each card. Or, get a piece of paper, draw a bunch of boxes on it and write one clue in each box. Make sure your boxes are big enough to include the prompt and to describe or draw what you find that matches.

See if you can find and or draw something from each of these categories:

- Flying
- Swimming
- Thorny
- Smells pleasant
- Smells bad
- Feels rough
- Feels smooth
- Red in color
- Useful to an animal
- An animal home
- Evidence of an insect or insect activity
- A bloom
- A traveling seed

**Spending most of your time inside?** Create a list of categories that make sense for the indoor environment.

Try these as a start:

- Something green
- Something that would make a nutritious snack
- A place where a spider could make a web
- A place where a mouse could take a nap
- Find something growing
- Find evidence of decomposition
- Find something that will still be here in 100 years
- Find 10 things made from plants
- Find something *that could* become a plant

Create your own lists and share them as a game. After all, careful observation is where science starts!

**Leaf Rubbings:** Grab some crayons or colored pencils, printer paper, and clipboards if you have them (or a book with a hard cover) and head outside, anywhere.

- **Respectfully** collect a couple leaves from interesting plants.
- Put the leaves vein-side up on your clipboard.
- Cover the leaf with paper and rub your crayon or colored pencil over the covered leaf. Magic! The leaf appears on your paper!
- Next to your leaf rubbing, write some interesting details about where the plant is growing, what is growing next to, above or below it. Add a sentence or two about what the weather is like. Write a story about a year in the life of your leaf and the plant it came from
- Try identifying the plants or make up your own name based on what it looks like.
- Turn your art and story into your own leaf book! *Voila!* You have started a nature journal! Keep up the practice to build observation skills, relationship, memories and scientific thinking!

