



## Theme: Water (Grades 6-8)

### Post-Visit Activity #2 Sounds of the Springs Preserve Cienega

#### Overview:

Students will have the opportunity to study more about the animals that they learned about in the Cienega at the Springs Preserve. Additionally, they will enhance their writing skills by creating a poem.

#### Objectives:

- Students will recognize organisms found at the Springs Preserve Cienega by sound.
- Students will comprehend the characteristics of an onomatopoeia poem as it relates to nature.
- Students will write their own onomatopoeia poems.

#### Materials:

- Pencil
- Paper
- Pictures of organism from Springs Preserve Cienega
- Computer
- Overhead projector
- Copy of sample poem

#### Background:

"Onomatopoeia" is an ancient Greek word meaning "name-making." Onomatopoeia is a word, when said, that sounds like the actual sound to which the word refers to. Some examples of onomatopoeia's are, "pop," "sizzle," and "crash." Poets often use this writing device to imitate natural sounds into word form. Sometimes the word names a thing or action by copying the sound. A number of animals, especially birds, get their names from the onomatopoeic link with the calls they make, such as the Cuckoo and the Chiffchaff. Advertising uses onomatopoeia as a mnemonic device so consumers will remember their products. For example:

- Rice Krispies - "Snap, crackle, pop" when you pour on milk
- Alka Seltzer - makes a "plop, plop, fizz, fizz" noise when dunked in water

**Activity:**

1. Show students two examples of sounds found at the Springs Preserve Cienega:  
Water - found in the Cienega can "Gurgle"



Gambel's Quail - Male call to female sounds like a "COW"



2. Tell students that many species have their own distinctive sounds. Animals communicate that way; many offspring communicate to their parents in order to tell them they are hungry or to warn them of danger. Plants make sounds as well. Have you ever heard a willow's leaves rustling in the wind? Perhaps you did while on your visit to the Springs Preserve.
3. Many times, people incorporate the sounds they hear into poetry. Read the following poem to students or choose one of them to read it. Have the students close their eyes to get the full effect of the poem.

The rusty spigot  
sputters,  
utters  
a splutter,  
spatters a smattering of drops,  
gashes wider;

slash,  
splatters,  
scatters,  
spurts,  
finally stops sputtering  
and plash!  
gushes rushes splashes  
clear water dashes.  
by Eve Merriam

4. After you read the poem, ask students what they pictured and how they felt. Did they imagine that they were water? Where were they? What images came to mind? How did the words help illustrate the poem?
5. Tell students that they will now have the opportunity to create their own onomatopoeia.
6. As a warm-up activity, have students work in groups of three to four. Ask them to brainstorm for approximately 5 minutes. Have the students list all the onomatopoeia words that they can relate to their visit to the Springs Preserve wetland habitat—they can choose a particular animal, exhibit, plant, or water itself to help narrow the field.
7. Now that the groups have had the opportunity to brainstorm, give them a list of organisms that can be found at the Springs Preserve. Each group should choose one organism to write about. They may need to do some background research on the sounds that their organism/item makes. Have them write a 5-line descriptive poem that contains at least one example of onomatopoeia in each line. Their paragraph should describe the action and include as many onomatopoeia words as possible.
8. Have each group read their poem to the class. What ideas did each group get while doing the brainstorming activity? Did having the list of organisms found at the Springs Preserve help? What was the most challenging part of the activity? Did they know that many organisms in nature, especially birds, are identified by sound rather than sight?

### **Teacher's Guide:**

The following is a list of many organisms found at the Springs Preserve Cienega.

#### **Plants:**

- Catclaw Acacia
- Gooding's Willow
- Fremont's Cottonwood
- Narrowleaf Willow
- Screwbean Mesquite
- Southern Cattail
- Western Honey Mesquite

- Yerba Mansa

Invertebrates:

- Sphinx Moth
- Dragonfly
- Southern House Mosquito
- Midge
- Harvester Ant
- Damselfly
- Carpenter Bee

Birds:

- Black-chinned Hummingbird
- Gambel's Quail
- Greater Roadrunner
- Red-tailed Hawk
- Snowy Egrets

Reptiles:

- Coachwhip (racer snake)

Mammals:

- Desert Cottontail
- Gray Fox
- Coyote
- Humans
- Western Pipistrel Bat
- White-tailed Antelope Ground Squirrel