

To Kill A Mockingbird: Sound Effects

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD: SEEING THE FILM THROUGH THE LENS OF MEDIA LITERACY

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For this exercise, cue the DVD to Chapter 17 “A Sound In The Night,”

a scene that runs about 2 minutes. You can stop the scene as Jem discovers something at the tree.



Ask students if they remember a time when they were younger, when they might have been left home alone. This is the setup for the scene students will be listening to initially, and then viewing.

Ask them to close their eyes and listen. After listening, they will make a list of everything they hear in this scene.

The list should include things like:

- scratching branches from a tree
- wind
- crow or other bird call
- Jem nervously calling out for his father
- scary or dramatic music (drums, piano with strings)
- creaking chairs
- squeaky sound

After students share the list of what they've heard, ask them to imagine what might be happening visually on the screen. In other words, what action might be taking place? After

students have a chance to share their ideas, play the scene again, allowing them to see how the director used various sound elements to create and communicate “fear.”

Recommended Websites

Film Language
Sound <http://www.filmeducation.org/secondary/concept/filmlang/docs/lang6.html>
Exploring Language Sound
http://english.unitecology.ac.nz/resources/resources/exp_lang/sound.html
Film Sound Design/Film Sound Theory <http://www.filmsound.org/>
The Art of Foley <http://www.marblehead.net/foley/>
Motion Picture Sound Editors <http://www.mpse.org/home.html>