

Unit 4: Light and Sound

Instructional Days: 20

Unit Summary

In this unit of study, students develop an understanding of the relationship between sound and vibrating materials as well as between the availability of light and the ability to see objects. The idea that light travels from place to place can be understood by students at this level by placing objects made with different materials in the path of a beam of light and determining the effect of the different materials.

The crosscutting concept of *cause and effect* is called out as an organizing concept for the disciplinary core ideas. Students are expected to demonstrate grade-appropriate proficiency in *planning and carrying out investigations*, *constructing explanations*, and *designing solutions*. Students are also expected to use these practices to demonstrate understanding of the core ideas.

Student Learning Objectives

Make observations to construct an evidence-based account that objects in darkness can be seen only when illuminated. *[Clarification Statement: Examples of observations could include those made in a completely dark room, a pinhole box, and a video of a cave explorer with a flashlight. Illumination could be from an external light source or by an object giving off its own light.]* [\(1-PS4-2\)](#)

Plan and conduct investigations to determine the effect of placing objects made with different materials in the path of a beam of light. *[Clarification Statement: Examples of materials could include those that are transparent (such as clear plastic), translucent (such as wax paper), opaque (such as cardboard), and reflective (such as a mirror).]* *[Assessment Boundary: Assessment does not include the speed of light.]* [\(1-PS4-3\)](#)

Plan and conduct investigations to provide evidence that vibrating materials can make sound and that sound can make materials vibrate. *[Clarification Statement: Examples of vibrating materials that make sound could include tuning forks and plucking a stretched string. Examples of how sound can make matter vibrate could include holding a piece of paper near a speaker making sound and holding an object near a vibrating tuning fork.]* [\(1-PS4-1\)](#)

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1-PS4-1	Plan and conduct investigations to provide evidence that vibrating materials can make sound and that sound can make materials vibrate
1-PS4-2	Make observations to construct an evidence based account that objects can be seen only when illuminated
1-PS4-3	Plan and conduct an investigation to determine the effect of placing objects made with different materials in the path of a beam of light
PS4.A	Sound can make matter vibrate and vibrating matter can make sound
PS4.B	Objects can be seen if light is available to illuminate them or if they give off their own light
PS4.C	People also use a variety of devices to communicate over long distances

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Enduring Understandings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound is a form of energy that is produced by the vibration of objects and is transmitted by the vibration of air and objects. • Light is a form of energy that travels in a straight line and can be reflected by a mirror, refracted by a lens, or absorbed by objects.
Essential Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are sounds made? • How are volume and pitch different? • How do different surfaces affect the properties of light? • Why do different materials reflect, refract or absorb light?

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Unit Sequence	
Part A: <i>How can you prove that you can only see something when someone shines a light on it or if the object gives off its own light?</i>	
Concepts	Formative Assessments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple tests can be designed to gather evidence to support or refute student ideas about causes. • Objects can be seen if light is available to illuminate them or if they give off their own light. 	<p><i>Students who understand the concepts can:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design simple tests to gather evidence to support or refute ideas about cause and effect relationships. • Make observations (firsthand or from media) to construct an evidence-based account for natural phenomena. • Make observations (e.g., in a completely dark room, using a pinhole box, using video of a cave explorer with a flashlight) to construct an evidence-based account that objects can be seen only when illuminated (from an external light source or by an object giving off its own light).

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Unit Sequence	
<p>Part B: <i>What happens to a beam of light when you put different kinds of things in front of it?</i> <i>How would you design an experiment to prove your thinking?</i></p>	
Concepts	Formative Assessments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple tests can be designed to gather evidence to support or refute student ideas about causes. • Some materials allow light to pass through them, others allow only some light through, and others block all the light and create a dark shadow on any surface beyond them, where the light cannot reach. • Mirrors can be used to redirect a light beam. <i>(Boundary: The idea that light travels from place to place is developed through experiences with light sources, mirrors, and shadows, but no attempt is made to discuss the speed of light.)</i> 	<p><i>Students who understand the concepts can:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design simple tests to gather evidence to support or refute ideas about cause and effect relationships. • Plan and conduct investigations collaboratively to produce data to serve as the basis for evidence to answer a question. • Plan and conduct an investigation to determine the effect of placing objects made with different materials in the path of a beam of light. Materials can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Transparent (clear plastic, glass) – Translucent (wax paper, thin cloth) – Opaque (cardboard, construction paper) – Reflective (a mirror, a shiny metal spoon)

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Unit Sequence	
Part C: How do instruments (band) make sound?	
Concepts	Formative Assessments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound can make matter vibrate, and vibrating matter can make sound. • Simple tests can be designed to gather evidence to support or refute student ideas about causes. 	<p><i>Students who understand the concepts can:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and conduct investigations to provide evidence that vibrating materials can make sound and that sound can make materials vibrate. • Examples of vibrating materials that make sound could include tuning forks and plucking a stretched string. • Examples of how sound can make matter vibrate could include holding a piece of paper near a speaker making sound and holding an object near a vibrating tuning fork.

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What It Looks Like in the Classroom

In this unit of study, students plan and conduct investigations and make observations as they explore sound and light energy. Students describe the relationships between sound and vibrating materials and the availability of light and the ability to see objects. They also investigate the effect on a beam of light when objects made of different materials are placed in its path. Throughout the unit, students will use their observations and data as evidence to determine cause-and-effect relationships in the natural world.

Students begin this unit by observing objects with and without available light. They need opportunities to observe a variety of objects in both illuminated and non-illuminated settings. For example, observations could be made in a completely dark room, or students can use a pinhole box to observe objects. Students can also watch videos of cave explorers deep in the earth, using light from a single flashlight. With experiences such as these, they will come to understand that objects can be seen only when illuminated, either from an external light source or by when they give off their own light.

Next, students plan and conduct simple investigations to determine what happens to a beam of light when objects made of various materials are placed in its path. Students need the opportunity to explore the interaction of light with a variety of materials, and they should record what they observe with each one. When selecting materials to use, teachers should choose some that allow all light to pass through (transparent), some that allow only a portion of the light to pass through (translucent), some that do not allow any light to pass through (opaque), and some that redirect the beam of light (reflective). Examples could include clear plastic, glass, wax paper, thin cloth, cardboard, construction paper, shiny metal spoons, and mirrors.

As students observe the interaction between light and various materials, they should notice that when some or all of the light is blocked, a shadow is created beyond the object. If only a portion of light is blocked (translucent materials), a dim shadow will form, and some light will pass through the object. If all the light is blocked (opaque materials), students will see only see a dark shadow beyond the object. They will also observe that shiny materials reflect light, redirecting the beam of light in a different direction. Students should use their observations as evidence to support their explanations of how light interacts with various objects.

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After investigating light energy, students continue to plan and conduct investigations to develop an understanding of some basic properties of sound. Students can use a variety of objects and materials to observe that vibrating materials can make sound and that sound can make materials vibrate. Students need multiple opportunities to experiment with a variety of objects that will make sound. Some opportunities could include:

- Gently tapping various sizes of tuning forks on a hard surface.
- Plucking string or rubber bands stretched across an open box.
- Cutting and stretching a balloon over an open can to make a drum that can be tapped.
- Holding the end of a ruler on the edge of a table, leaving the opposite end of the ruler hanging over the edge, and then plucking the hanging end of the ruler.
- Touching a vibrating tuning fork to the surface of water in a bowl.
- Placing dry rice grains on a drum's surface and then touching the drum with a vibrating tuning fork or placing the drum near the speaker of a portable sound system.
- Holding a piece of paper near the speaker of a portable sound system.

As students conduct these simple investigations, they will notice that when objects vibrate (tuning forks that have been tapped and string, rubber bands, and rulers that have been plucked), sound is created. They will also notice that sound will cause objects to vibrate (sound from a speaker causes rice grains to vibrate on the surface of a drum, the vibrating tuning fork causes ripples on the surface of water, and sound from the speaker also causes paper to move). Students should use these types of observations as evidence when explaining the cause and effect relationship between sound and vibrating materials.

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Connecting with English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics*English Language Arts/Literacy*

To integrate the CCSS for English Language Arts into this unit, students need opportunities to read informational texts in order to gather information about light and sound. With adult guidance, they identify the main topic and retell key details from texts and ask and answer questions about key details. Students should also participate in shared research and writing projects. They can gather information from a variety of preselected, grade-level appropriate texts and resources, and use that information to answer questions about light and sound. In pairs or small groups, students can use pictures and words to create simple books about vibration (sound) and illumination (light). The students' writing should include facts about the topic and have a sense of closure. Throughout the unit of study, students need multiple opportunities to share their experiences with light and sound in collaborative conversations with adults and peers, in small and large group settings.

*Mathematic***N/A**

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Modifications

Teacher Note: Teachers identify the modifications that they will use in the unit. The unneeded modifications can then be deleted from the list.

- Restructure lesson using UDL principals (<http://www.cast.org/our-work/about-udl.html#.VXmoXcfD UA>)
- Structure lessons around questions that are authentic, relate to students' interests, social/family background and knowledge of their community.
- Provide students with multiple choices for how they can represent their understandings (e.g. multisensory techniques-auditory/visual aids; pictures, illustrations, graphs, charts, data tables, multimedia, modeling).
- Provide opportunities for students to connect with people of similar backgrounds (e.g. conversations via digital tool such as SKYPE, experts from the community helping with a project, journal articles, and biographies).
- Provide multiple grouping opportunities for students to share their ideas and to encourage work among various backgrounds and cultures (e.g. multiple representation and multimodal experiences).
- Engage students with a variety of Science and Engineering practices to provide students with multiple entry points and multiple ways to demonstrate their understandings.
- Use project-based science learning to connect science with observable phenomena.
- Structure the learning around explaining or solving a social or community-based issue.
- Provide ELL students with multiple literacy strategies.
- Collaborate with after-school programs or clubs to extend learning opportunities.

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Research on Student Learning

N/A

Prior Learning

This is the first formal opportunity for students to engage with the disciplinary core ideas.

Future Learning

By the end of Grade 2, students understand that:

- Different kinds of matter exist and many of them can be either solid or liquid, depending on temperature. Matter can be described and classified by its observable properties.
- Different properties are suited to different purposes.
- A great variety of objects can be built up from a small set of pieces.

By the end of Grade 4, students understand that:

- An object can be seen when light reflected from its surface enters the eyes.

Connections to Other Units

In Unit 5, Communicating With Light and Sound, students will continue to develop their understanding of the relationship between sound and vibrating materials, the idea that light travels from place to place, and the relationship between the availability of light and the ability to see objects. Students will apply their knowledge of these science concepts as they engage in engineering design to solve a simple problem involving communication with light and sound.

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Sample of Open Education Resources

The "[What it Looks Like in the Classroom](#)" section of this document describes several student sense-making tasks.

The [Utah Education Network](#) has created several resources for fourth grade science teachers.

[Michigan NGSS Moodle](#): The purpose of this website to provide K-5 Science teachers with resources, lessons, and activities based on the NGSS which were created by teachers in our region.

Teacher Professional Learning Resources**NSTA Web Seminar: *NGSS Core Ideas: Waves and Their Applications in Technologies for Information Transfer***

This web seminar took place on September 24, 2013, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. eastern daylight time. The presenter was Ramon Lopez from the University of Texas at Arlington. The program featured strategies for teaching about physical science concepts that answer questions such as "How are waves used to transfer energy and information?" and "How are instruments that transmit and detect waves used to extend human senses?"

The web seminar is available at: http://learningcenter.nsta.org/resource/?id=10.2505/9/WSNGSS13_Oct22

Science Shorts: Making Waves

Children do not have to live near the coast to experience effects of water waves. They can throw stones into a pond and see the waves ripple outward, bob up and down while floating in a swimming pool, and splash water about while in a bathtub. As students discover how waves form and move, they can apply this understanding to other types of waves such as sound waves, light waves, and microwaves. (Adams, B., 2007)

This journal article is available at: http://learningcenter.nsta.org/resource/?id=10.2505/4/sc07_044_05_50

NSTA Web Seminar: Teaching NGSS in K-5: Constructing Explanations from Evidence

Carla Zembal-Saul, Mary Starr, and Kathy Renfrew, provided an overview of the NGSS for K-5th grade. The web seminar focused on the three dimensional learning of the NGSS, while introducing CLAIMS-EVIDENCE-REASONING (CER) as a framework for introducing explanations from evidence. The presenters highlighted and discussed the importance of engaging learners with phenomena, and included a demonstration on using a KLEWS chart to map the development of scientific explanations of those phenomena.

The web seminar is available at: http://learningcenter.nsta.org/products/symposia_seminars/NGSS/webseminar49.aspx

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Appendix A: NGSS and Foundations for the Unit

Make observations to construct an evidence-based account that objects in darkness can be seen only when illuminated. *[Clarification Statement: Examples of observations could include those made in a completely dark room, a pinhole box, and a video of a cave explorer with a flashlight. Illumination could be from an external light source or by an object giving off its own light.]* [\(1-PS4-2\)](#)

Plan and conduct investigations to determine the effect of placing objects made with different materials in the path of a beam of light. *[Clarification Statement: Examples of materials could include those that are transparent (such as clear plastic), translucent (such as wax paper), opaque (such as cardboard), and reflective (such as a mirror).] [Assessment Boundary: Assessment does not include the speed of light.]* [\(1-PS4-3\)](#)

Plan and conduct investigations to provide evidence that vibrating materials can make sound and that sound can make materials vibrate. *[Clarification Statement: Examples of vibrating materials that make sound could include tuning forks and plucking a stretched string. Examples of how sound can make matter vibrate could include holding a piece of paper near a speaker making sound and holding an object near a vibrating tuning fork.]* [\(1-PS4-1\)](#)

The performance expectations above were developed using the following elements from the NRC document [A Framework for K-12 Science Education](#):

Science and Engineering Practices	Disciplinary Core Ideas	Crosscutting Concepts
<p>Planning and Carrying Out Investigations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and conduct investigations collaboratively to produce evidence to answer a question. (1-PS4-1),(1-PS4-3) <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make observations (firsthand or from 	<p>PS4.A: Wave Properties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound can make matter vibrate, and vibrating matter can make sound. (1-PS4-1) <p>PS4.B: Electromagnetic Radiation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objects can be seen if light is available to illuminate them or if they give off their own light. (1-PS4-2) 	<p>Cause and Effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple tests can be designed to gather evidence to support or refute student ideas about causes. (1-PS4-1),(1-PS4-2),(1-PS4-3)

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<p>media) to construct an evidence-based account for natural phenomena. (1-PS4-2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use tools and materials provided to design a device that solves a specific problem. (1-PS4-4) <p>Connections to Nature of Science</p> <p>Scientific Investigations Use a Variety of Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science investigations begin with a question. (1-PS4-1) • Scientists use different ways to study the world. (1-PS4-1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some materials allow light to pass through them, others allow only some light through and others block all the light and create a dark shadow on any surface beyond them, where the light cannot reach. Mirrors can be used to redirect a light beam. (Boundary: The idea that light travels from place to place is developed through experiences with light sources, mirrors, and shadows, but no attempt is made to discuss the speed of light.) (1-PS4-3) <p>PS4.C: Information Technologies and Instrumentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People also use a variety of devices to communicate (send and receive information) over long distances. (1-PS4-4) 	<p>Connections to Engineering, Technology, and Applications of Science</p> <p>Influence of Engineering, Technology, and Science, on Society and the Natural World</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People depend on various technologies in their lives; human life would be very different without technology. (1-PS4-4)
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English Language Arts	Mathematics
<p>Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure. (1-PS4-2) W.1.2</p> <p>Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of “how-to” books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions). (1-PS4-1),(1-PS4-2),(1-PS4-3) W.1.7</p> <p>With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question. (1-PS4-1),(1-PS4-2),(1-PS4-3) W.1.8</p> <p>Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups. (1-PS4-1),(1-PS4-2),(1-PS4-3) SL.1.1</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Common Vocabulary	
<p>Light</p> <p>Illuminate</p> <p>Engineering</p> <p>Mirror</p> <p>Reflect</p>	<p>Sound</p> <p>Design</p> <p>Model</p> <p>Characteristic</p> <p>Speed</p>

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