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Level 1 – 10th September 2026

Traffic noise may be making birdsong less calming

FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2609/260910-birdsong-and-traffic-noise-1.html>

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Please try Levels 0, 2 and 3. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2609/260910-birdsong-and-traffic-noise-1.html>

Listening to birds singing is positive for our mental health. Birdsong is one of nature's most beautiful sounds. Conversely, noise from traffic can increase our stress. A study from the UK suggests that traffic noise may reduce the positive effects of birdsong on our mood. A researcher said traffic noise reduces the benefits on our well-being of natural sounds. She said we needed more green spaces in towns. She also suggested lowering speed limits.

More than 1,500 people took part in the study. They listened to natural sounds and traffic noise. They then answered questions about how relaxed they felt. The researchers found that listening to traffic noise reduced people's feelings of well-being. A researcher said we need to find out more about how much traffic noise affects sounds in nature. She added that we need more outdoor spaces to help people who are stressed.

Sources: <https://academic.oup.com/condor/article/128/2/1/8487786>
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/aug/26/mood-boosting-benefits-of-birdsong-drowned-out-by-traffic-noise-study-finds>
<https://phys.org/news/2026-08-traffic-noise-birdsong-stress-relieving.html>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2609/260910-birdsong-and-traffic-noise-1.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. singing is positive for our mental | a. speed limits |
| 2. one of nature's most | b. on our mood |
| 3. noise from traffic can | c. health |
| 4. A study from | d. well-being |
| 5. the positive effects of birdsong | e. beautiful sounds |
| 6. reduces the benefits on our | f. in towns |
| 7. we needed more green spaces | g. the UK |
| 8. lowering | h. increase our stress |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. More than 1,500 people took | a. out more |
| 2. natural sounds | b. questions |
| 3. They then answered | c. they felt |
| 4. how relaxed | d. are stressed |
| 5. noise reduced people's feelings | e. part in the study |
| 6. we need to find | f. spaces |
| 7. we need more outdoor | g. and traffic noise |
| 8. help people who | h. of well-being |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2609/260910-birdsong-and-traffic-noise-1.html>

Listening to birds singing (1) _____ our mental health. Birdsong (2) _____ nature's most beautiful sounds. Conversely, (3) _____ can increase our stress. A study from the UK suggests that traffic noise (4) _____ positive effects of birdsong on our mood. A researcher said traffic noise reduces the benefits on our well-being (5) _____. She said we needed more green spaces in towns. (6) _____ lowering speed limits.

More than 1,500 people (7) _____ the study. They listened to natural sounds and traffic noise. They then answered questions (8) _____ they felt. The researchers found that (9) _____ noise reduced people's feelings of well-being. A researcher said we (10) _____ out more about how much traffic noise (11) _____ nature. She added that we need more outdoor spaces to help people (12) _____.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2609/260910-birdsong-and-traffic-noise-1.html>

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BIRDSONG SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2609/260910-birdsong-and-traffic-noise-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about birdsong in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.
When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____
- e) _____
- f) _____

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____
- e) _____
- f) _____

WRITING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2609/260910-birdsong-and-traffic-noise-1.html>

Write about **birdsong** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner's paper.

[illegible]