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Level 2 – 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-2.html>

Contents

The Reading	2
Phrase Matching	3
Listening Gap Fill	4
No Spaces	5
Survey	6
Writing and Speaking	7
Writing	8

Please try Levels 0, 1 and 3. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2609/260910-birdsong-and-traffic-noise-2.html>

Listening to birds singing is positive for our mental health and well-being. Birdsong is one of the most beautiful sounds in nature. Conversely, noise from traffic can increase our stress. A new study from a UK university suggests that the noise from traffic may reduce the positive effects of birdsong on our mood. An environmental psychologist said traffic noise affects the benefits on our well-being of natural soundscapes. She said we need to think more carefully about green spaces in towns. She also suggested making speed limits lower near parks.

More than 1,500 people took part in the study. They listened to soundscapes of natural sounds and traffic noise. They then answered questions about how relaxed they felt after listening to the sounds. The researchers found that listening to traffic noise, even at low levels, reduced feelings of well-being. A researcher said the modern world is noisy. She said we need to find out about how much traffic noise affects sounds in nature. She added that we need to find more quiet outdoor spaces to help people who are feeling 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-2.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Listening to | a. spaces in towns |
| 2. positive for our mental health | b. sounds in nature |
| 3. one of the most beautiful | c. birds singing |
| 4. reduce the positive | d. more carefully |
| 5. environmental | e. effects of birdsong |
| 6. She said we need to think | f. lower near parks |
| 7. green | g. and well-being |
| 8. making speed limits | h. psychologist |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. More than 1,500 people took | a. world is noisy |
| 2. soundscapes of | b. questions |
| 3. They then answered | c. low levels |
| 4. how relaxed they felt | d. spaces |
| 5. traffic noise, even at | e. part in the study |
| 6. A researcher said the modern | f. nature |
| 7. traffic noise affects sounds in | g. natural sounds |
| 8. find more quiet outdoor | h. after listening |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2609/260910-birdsong-and-traffic-noise-2.html>

Listening to birds (1) _____ for our mental health and well-being. Birdsong is one (2) _____ beautiful sounds in nature. Conversely, noise from traffic can (3) _____. A new study from a UK university suggests that the noise from traffic may (4) _____ effects of birdsong on our mood. An environmental psychologist said traffic noise affects the benefits on our well-(5) _____ soundscapes. She said we need to think more carefully about green spaces in towns. She also suggested making (6) _____ near parks.

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

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

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BIRDSONG SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2609/260910-birdsong-and-traffic-noise-2.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-2.html>

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

[illegible]