



# The Sound of Silence 12



## You will need:

- Biro's, marker pens and pencils
- Icebreaker:**
- Gather a collection of noise-making objects and toys – things that can be wound up or turned on to make noises by themselves.
- A mobile phone:
- *Set the ring tone of the mobile phone to a very familiar tune, such as 'Happy Birthday'.*
- *But keep the volume low – only just loud enough to be heard when people are close to its hiding place.*
- *Hide the phone in the meeting room. Place it in a box or a bag. Make sure it is switched on and has a full battery.*
- *Then place all kinds of noisy toys and machines around the room. If you have some alarm clocks, set them to go off at about the time when the ice breaker should start.*
- *Use remote controls to turn on other sound machines and recruit some helpers who will switch on some of the other noisy things at the right time.*
- Mission Possible:**
- 'Noise' sheets – one per person
- Word Search:**
- One Word Search study per person
- Large sheets of paper – at least one per person
- 'Listening Words' posters (see resources)
- 4 Tables
- 4 plain white table-cloths for the tables
- *For more information on this section please see Word Search Activity Preparation Sheet in resources.*
- Coming Together:**
- 4 Large sheets of paper (Flip Chart size)
- On each sheet of flip chart paper write one of the following questions:
  - What did you like best about having some time to listen to God?
  - What do you think is the most important thing about listening to God?
  - What did you learn from this experience?
  - What would have made it easier for you to listen to God?
- Sticky tack for attaching the paper on the wall.
- Large pad of sticky notes – divided into sets of four sheets per person
- Family Focus Time:**
- One plain index card or postcard-sized piece of card per person
- Cups and drinks
- Family Prayer Time:**
- One instruction sheet per family.
- Jesus and Me (JAM) Session:**
- One set of journal pages for each person.
- Take-away Menu (optional):**
- One set of disposable ear plugs per person

## By the end of the session, the group members will:

- Know the importance of taking time to listen quietly to God.
- Feel a desire to experience being still and listening to God.
- Respond by experimenting with quietness and creating space in their life to listen to God.



# KID for Teens: Leaders Guide: The Sound of Silence



## Before you start:

1. Prayerfully read through the whole lesson at least twice
2. Gather all the materials you need for each section (see pg. 1)
3. Work with another team member and plan who will manage each section of the session.

## Leadership Personal Preparation:

Think about a time when you were still with God and just listened to him. What difference did it make to your life? If you have never tried being still and quiet with God for a significant period of time, try it for at least an hour this week. If the Holy Spirit invites you to do so, be ready to tell the story of your experience during the welcome or the conclusion. Otherwise use the inspiration of the story to fill you with enthusiasm for today's session.

## Welcome and Prayer – 5 mins

## Say:



Our lives today are filled with noise – mobiles, IPODs, radios, conversations, cars, television, music...there are very few moments in the day when we're totally silent and still, alone with our thoughts and God.

Today we are going to have a very different time together because we will be experimenting with being still, being quiet, and listening to God. This may be challenging for some of us because we are not used to being still and quiet in the fast paced, noisy world of the 21st century! But in Psalm 46:10 God invites us to 'Be still and know that I am God'. The ability to listen quietly for God's still small voice is an important part of worshipping him.

Quaker communities have long understood the need for silence and the importance of giving God our full attention. When we are quiet and still we often feel peaceful and refreshed, and we can listen more clearly to the things God is longing to say to us.





# KID for Teens: Leaders Guide: The Sound of Silence



## Ice Breaker - 7 mins

*You will need:*

1. The items prepared as listed on page 1.
- Tell the group that you want to check their listening skills. You have hidden your mobile phone in the room and you want to see how long it takes for someone to find it. Describe the ring tone tune so that everyone knows what it is.
  - Set off as many of the noisy things as you can! You may need to recruit helpers to switch all the sounds on.
  - Once the room is very noisy, use another mobile phone to call yours and set off the ring tone. If no one finds the hidden phone, call it again if necessary.
  - See how long it takes to find a quiet sound in a noisy place.

## Feedback Questions:

- Why was it so hard to hear the mobile phone?
- How was the noisy time like our own noisy lives?
- How easy is it to concentrate when there are so many noisy distractions?
- What if the call to the mobile was urgent or important and we couldn't hear it because of all the other noise?
- How do you think God feels when we don't take the time to listen to him properly?

## Mission Possible - 10 mins

*You will need:*

1. 'Noise' sheets - one copy per person
  2. Pens
- Give each person a 'Noise' sheet to read and reflect on. Provide spare writing materials if necessary.
  - Allow a generous 5 minutes of total silence as people read this sheet of paper and begin to identify the noises in their lives.
  - After 5 minutes invite people to share any thoughts they may have about the 'Noise' sheet.

## Word-Search - 25/35 mins

*You will need:*

1. One Word Search study per person
  2. Pens
  3. Large sheets of paper – at least one per person
  4. Marker pens
  5. 'Listening Words' posters (see resources)
  6. The tables set out as indicated in Word Search Activity Preparation Sheet.
  7. Computer and projector
- Give each person a copy of the Word Search to study and read. It is only short because the focus this week is on listening to God.
  - Then invite them to explore the different areas and tables and find a place where they can truly listen to God.
  - Allow at least 20 minutes for this activity.

## Coming Together - 10 mins

*You will need:*

1. Ready prepared papers with the questions on them, stuck onto the wall with sticky tack.
  2. Pens
  3. Sticky notes – four sheets per person
- Call people back to the larger group and ask them to write the answers to the following questions on different sticky notes:
    - What did you like best about having some time to listen to God?
    - What do you think is the most important thing about listening to God?
    - What did you learn from this experience?
    - What would have made it easier for you to listen to God?
  - Then ask them to stick their sticky notes on the large sheets of paper under the relevant questions.
  - Allow people time to look quietly at each other's responses and to think about the different ideas and experiences that the other group members had during the Word Search time.





# 12 KID for Teens: Leaders Guide: Feasting on God



## Family Focus Time - 10/15 mins

*You will need:*

1. Sheets of plain paper
  2. Pencils and pens
  3. Drinks and cups.
- Let the everyone re-assemble into their family groups, collecting a drink on the way.
  - Give them a large copy of the instructions (in the handouts for today's session) so that everyone in the family knows what to do without speaking.
  - As a family they will spend five minutes being silent and quiet together. They will focus on the question, 'What does God want to say to our family?'
  - Write or draw any thoughts and ideas that come into your minds as you listen to God. But if nothing comes into your mind, don't worry, just imagine you are sitting close to God and enjoy being near him.
  - After five minutes, silently show each other what you have written down or drawn.
  - Spend a minute or so looking quietly at each other's words and drawings.
  - Then talk about what you have each experienced during your Family Focus time.
  - What thoughts and fresh ideas emerged for your family from listening to God in this way?

## Family Prayer Time - 15 mins

*You will need:*

1. One instruction sheet per family
- Pray silently for each other in your family using the following technique.
  - Sit in a circle.
  - Ask the oldest person in each family to guide the silent prayer by naming each person in turn starting with the youngest. Include absent family members too, if you wish.
  - After a person has been named, allow at least one minute for everyone else in the family to focus their silent prayers on the named person.
  - The silent prayers can be structured in the following way:
    - Praising God for creating the person in such a wonderful and unique way.
    - Confessing to God any things you may have done to hurt the named person.
    - Thanking God for the different gifts you have seen in their lives.
    - Asking God to help the person with the specific challenges they are facing.
  - Finally pray in the same way for the oldest person in the family group.

## Jam Session (Jesus and Me) - 5 mins

*You will need:*

1. One set of Journal Pages per participant
- Allow at least 5 minutes for this activity, so that the group members have a chance to be very quiet with God and plan some listening time into their week. During this time, play some quiet, reflective, peaceful, Christian music.

## Take-Away Menu (optional)

*You will need:*

1. One set of disposable ear plugs for each person
- Give each person a pair of disposable ear plugs to take away as a reminder for them to take a break from sound and to spend time listening to God.

## Closing Prayer





# 12 KID for Teens: Leaders Guide: Word Search Preparation Sheet



Decorate the walls around the tables with the Listening Words posters (see resources)

### *Gather together:*

An assortment of beautiful plants and rocks, seed pods, old bird's nests, etc, or use beautiful photographs of nature and scenery

An assortment of different symbols such as a cross, a handful of long nails and a mallet, a glass of grape juice, a small loaf of bread wrapped in a white cloth napkin, a candle, a jug of fresh water, a simple heart-shaped object, a jar of honey, a salt cellar, etc.

An assortment of simple, white craft materials  
Plain white paper and card

White tissue paper

White play dough, clay or Crayola Model Magic

Pencils, crayons, scissors, glue sticks etc

Several Bibles in different contemporary translations  
Computer and projector for showing the YouTube clip (optional):

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4e87vIRpds](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4e87vIRpds)

Floor cushions (optional)

Set up the following areas on different tables:

## Area 1 – Nature Table

On this table make an arrangement of beautiful plants and rocks. Add other interesting natural objects such as seed pods, or old bird's nests, etc. If this is too difficult, find beautiful photographs of nature and scenery and arrange them in a display on the table.

## Area 2 – Symbols Table

On this table arrange different symbols such as a cross, a glass of grape juice, a small loaf of bread wrapped in a white cloth napkin, a candle, a jug of fresh water, a simple heart shape, a jar of honey and a salt cellar.

## Area 3 – Creative Table

On this table place some very simple craft materials: pencils, crayons, scissors, plain white paper and card, glue sticks, tissue paper, white play dough, clay or Crayola Model Magic.

## Area 4 – Word Table

On this table place several Bibles in different contemporary translations. Arrange some comfortable chairs around the table, or a heap of cushions on the floor.

## Area 5 – Plain Space

Arrange some well-spaced chairs – at least 150 cm apart – 1-2 metres from a plain wall with no distractions. Or project the video from youtube onto the wall. Play it silently (turn the sound off) and in a continuous loop if possible.





# 12 KID for Teens: Handout: The Sound of Silence Noise



There are all kinds of noises in our lives that stop us from listening to God. Think about some of the different noises inside and outside of your head and how they might be distracting you from hearing God speak to you. Write your name on the line in the vortex below.

**Physical Noise:**

- Music
- Web-surfing
- TV
- Movies
- News-addiction
- Texting friends, etc.

**Mental Noise:**

- Complaining
- Whining
- Feeling sorry for myself

**Emotional Noise:**

- Dreaming about being in love
- Fantasising
- Planning revenge
- Wanting latest fashions
- Concerned about local sports team, etc.

**Bad Spiritual Noise:**  
Sin blocks out the voice of the Holy Spirit.

**Good spiritual noise:**  
Listening to Christian music and reading lots of Christian books can distract us too.

HELLO, \_\_\_\_\_  
CAN YOU HEAR ME?

Think about the noises that fill your mind and stop you from listening to God.

- Which of the noises is the loudest in your life at the moment?
- What could you do to take a break from these noises?
- How can you focus on being still and quiet so that God can tell you the wonderful things he wants to say to you?
- He has some amazing secrets to share with you that will change your life. He wants to tell you he loves you,

say how wonderful you are and remind you of his forgiveness. He wants to give you promises and warn you about things that could harm you. He wants to guide you through the challenges and the times of uncertainty that you face. He wants to encourage you to do what is right...

Are you listening? Are you sitting comfortably? The King of the Universe would like to speak to you.

Meditate

Beast



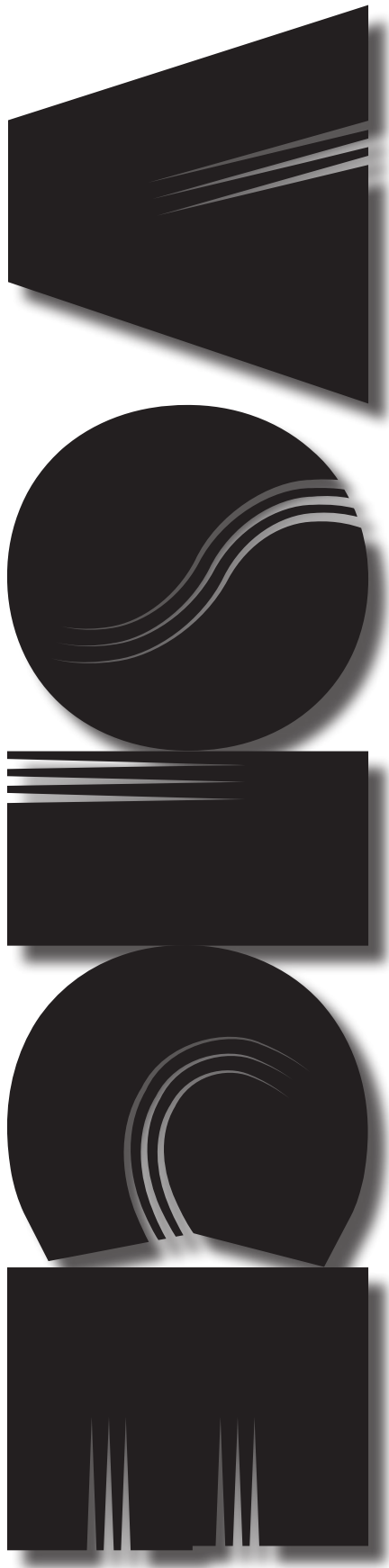
1. SUTED



# Be Still

# TWO THEMES EXPLORE

W  
H  
I  
S  
P  
E  
R



# WORLDWIS

# FOCUS



# SPEAK

# Responsible



# 12 KID for Teens: Handout: The Sound of Silence Family Focus Time: Instructions



As a family spend five minutes being silent and quiet together.

Focus on the question:

## What does God want to say to our family?

Write or draw any thoughts and ideas that come into your minds as you listen to God. But if nothing comes into your mind, don't worry, just imagine you are sitting close to God and enjoying being near him.

After five minutes silently show each other what you have written down or drawn.

Spend a minute or so looking quietly at each other's writings and drawings.

Then talk about what you have each experienced during your Family Focus time.

What thoughts and fresh ideas emerged for your family by listening to God in this way?





# 12

## KID for Teens: Handout: The Sound of Silence Word Search: The Sound of Silence



Before you explore the quiet spaces in the room, take a few minutes to understand more about how God speaks to us.

What are some of the different ways God spoke to his people in the past? Match the verses to the different ways in which God has communicated with humans down through the centuries, and today.

### *Verse*

### *STYLE OF COMMUNICATION*

Hebrews 1:1

Through the scriptures

Romans 1:20

Through the Holy Spirit speaking in our minds and telling us the messages that God wants to say to us personally

Acts 10:9-20

Through stillness

1 Kings 19:11-13

Through the stories and histories of his people and through our own histories and experiences of his work in our lives

Psalms 46:10 – first part

Through angels

Jeremiah 18:1-6

Through quiet whispers

John 16:12-15

Through lessons we can learn from the everyday objects around us (object lessons)

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Through visions

Luke 1:26-38

Through his power and character seen in nature and his creation

Psalms 107:43

Through prophets who spoke to the people

Did you know that even though elephants have really big ears they often listen for faraway sounds through the vibrations they feel under their feet?

When we take the time to be still, God can speak to us in different ways and we can also learn to listen to him in different ways.

Spend a few minutes in stillness, focussing on who God is and what he means to you.

Then explore the areas in the room. Find the kind of quiet place that best suits you as you spend time listening to God today.





# KID for Teens: Jesus and Me Journal: The Sound of Silence



Think of a time when you experienced God speaking to you in some way. Perhaps it was the Holy Spirit encouraging you to be generous with someone. Maybe you saw a beautiful sunset which spoke to you of God's power and wonder. Perhaps you read a verse in the Bible and suddenly thought, 'this has been written just for me!' Or maybe you heard God in the quiet spaces you experienced during this session today.

## Write about your experience here:

What was happening when you experienced God speaking to you?

What did he communicate to you?

How did he say it?

What effect did it have on your life?

## Noise Fast

We often hear about people fasting from food, but it is also useful to fast from words, noise and information so we can give God the space to speak to us.

Obviously you have to work, study and function in a noisy world, but make a plan to take a break from noise this week. Maybe you will sit for 15 minutes a day in a quiet park, garden or other beautiful place. Maybe you will sit quietly and focus on God as you sit in a comfortable chair in your living room, instead of watching the news. Maybe you will put your MP3 player away and listen to God as you walk down the street. Or shut yourself in your room for a while and imagine there is only you and God in the whole universe.

## My Noise-Fast Plan

This week I will take time to be still with God by...

I particularly want to hear what he has to tell me about...





# 12

## KID for Teens: Jesus and Me Journal: Listening to God's plans for my life



As you listen to God, ask him which area he most wants to talk to you about and write down what you think he is saying to you

### MY PRESENT LIFE

What God is telling me to do today

### MY FAMILY

What God is telling me about the ways I can show his love to my family

### MY FUTURE

What God is telling me to do in the future

### MY MISSION & PURPOSE

What God is telling me about my role in his plans





# 12 KID for Teens: Jesus and Me Journal: More ideas for listening to God



Choose one or more of the following ideas. Which ones helped you listen to God?

## *Focussing on Listening*

Load a book of the Bible onto your IPOD or MP3 player. Listen to it during the week instead of your usual music.

When you are with other people this week, stop talking for a while and listen. Pause for a moment to ask God what he wants you to say or do.

Make or find something that will remind you to listen to God. Place it where you will see it often.

## *Focussing on the Bible*

Try a quiet day. Several organisations run these for Christians of all denominations. They work in different ways. Google 'Quiet Days' to see if there is one near you that you would feel comfortable visiting. Or discover how to do a quiet day (you can buy books of ideas for quiet days) and host one for your church.

Take a Bible verse and focus on it for as long as you can. Write it in the middle of a piece of paper and jot down all the thoughts that come to you as you think about the words. Which of those messages do you think is especially for you today?

Keep a Bible verse in your pocket. Focus on it when you are doing mundane work, travelling or eating.

## *Focussing on Quiet Times*

Set your phone to vibrate, once every couple of hours. Use it to remind you to stop what you are doing and listen to God. Notice the difference it makes to your life when you listen to God regularly.

Try using ear plugs to help cut out the distracting noises around you. Some ear plugs may have been given to you as a take-away item during the session.

Find a quiet place away from everyone else and stay there as long as you can, quietly listening to God. Maybe you could visit an old local church and sit in the pews or a little chapel. Maybe you like the forest. Maybe you know a special secret place to be quiet with God.

## *Focussing on the World*

When you are walking around look for secret messages of God's love, or his strength, or whatever you need. You might find them in the everyday things around you, or in the natural world. Notice the details of flowers and clouds and trees and the simple beauty in people's faces. Experience what God is communicating to you through the things you are seeing. Take photos of the objects that speak to you of God. Put them in your journal, together with a few lines about God's messages to you.

