

Imagine that you are preparing a project with your friend. You have found some interesting material for the presentation and you want to read this text to your friend. You have 1.5 minutes to read the text silently, then be ready to read it out aloud. You will not have more than 1.5 minutes to read it.

Cobras in snake-charming acts are responding to the sight of the flute, not its sound. Snakes don't really hear music though they are certainly not deaf. They have no external ears or eardrums, but can sense vibrations transmitted up from the ground into their jaw and the belly muscles. They also seem to be able to detect airborne sounds via an inner ear. It used to be thought that snakes could not hear at all because they don't respond to loud noises but research at Princeton has shown that they have acute hearing.

The key discovery was how the snake's inner ear functions. It appears that their hearing is tuned to the frequency range of noises and vibrations made by the movement of larger animals, so music would be meaningless to them. Charmed cobras stand upright if threatened and sway in response to the movement of the instrument. If they strike at the flute, they hurt themselves, so they don't do it again.