



RCSD Summer of Discovery

Title: Owl Eyes and Deer Ears: Using our senses to explore the world

Grade level(s): K-2nd grade

Concept: Animals often have heightened senses that are used to aid in their survival. In this lesson we will learn more about some of these super senses and the different ways these senses help the animal survive and thrive in their environment. We will use our own senses to explore our natural surroundings and learn more about how we interact with our environment.

Goals/Objectives:

- Students will consider how their senses contribute to their understanding of their environment.
- Students will understand how different animals' heightened senses help them survive in their environment.

ENL/SpEd modification:

I can use my senses to understand how my environment works

I can understand how animals use their senses to survive in their environment

Materials:

- Essential oils
- Cotton balls
- Small tupperware containers
- Food items to taste test (ex: apple slices, a couple of berry varieties, cucumber slices, pepper slices, milk chocolate, dark chocolate)
- Sit spots
- Clip boards
- Worksheet: Check for learning and during the walk activity:
 - K-3 (with space to draw):
[Check for learning- senses worksheet k-3rd](#)
 - 3-6 (Just space to write):
[Check for learning- senses worksheet 3rd grade- 6th grade](#)



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Guiding Questions: How do your 5 senses help you move through your community and environment? How do animals depend on their senses for survival?

Vocabulary:

- Visible: Something you can see
- Perception: Understanding that is based on the senses
- Fragrant: Having a sweet or pleasant smell
- Odor: A smell or scent
- Waft: To carry through the air
- ENL/SpEd Vocabulary: heightened, senses, survival

Optional: [Senses YouTube Video 1](#)

[Senses YouTube Video 2](#)

Background:

Take a moment to listen with your deer ears, look around with your owl eyes, smell with your skunk nose, and touch with your otter fingers. What can you learn about your environment with your 5 senses? Can you smell what type of dinner your neighbor is cooking? Or hear kids playing basketball in the nearby driveway? Can you see birds flying overhead and feel the wind blowing on your face? How do your senses help you paint a picture in your mind of your community or local environment? What can you learn by just focusing on one of your senses?

Prior to the lesson:

- Please feel free to take students outside at any time during the lesson. Many of the activities can be done outside
- Materials Needed:
 - writing utensils
 - Essential oils
 - Cotton balls
 - Small tupperware containers
 - Food items to taste test (ex: apple slices, a couple berry varieties, cucumber slices, pepper slices, milk chocolate, dark chocolate)



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- Sit spots
- Clip boards
-  LESSON 1 SENSES
- ENL/SpEd:
- Create a word wall of new vocabulary learned
- Create a sensory vocabulary word chart
- Worksheet: Check for learning and during the walk activity:
 - K-3 (with space to draw):
 -  Check for learning- senses worksheet k-3rd
 - 3-6 (Just space to write):
 -  Check for learning- senses worksheet 3rd grade- 6th grade

Lesson/ Instruction:

- **Pre Teaching/ Introduction to the lesson:**
 - Please consider starting this lesson with a community circle focusing around SEL concepts
 - Lesson Title: Owl Eyes and Deer Ears: Using our senses to explore the world
 - Learning targets:
 - I can identify ways my senses contribute to my understanding of the environment.
 - I can explain the cause and effect relationship between different animals' heightened senses and their survival in their environment.
 - Guiding Question:
 - How do your 5 senses help you move through your community and environment? How do animals depend on their senses for survival?
 - Check for background knowledge:
 - What are the 5 senses?
 - Go over them, an optional video/ flocabulary is linked in the slides
 - VOCABULARY:
 - Visible: Something you can see.
 - Perception: Understanding that is based on the senses.
 - Fragrant: Having a sweet or pleasant smell.
 - Odor: A smell or scent



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- Waft: To carry through the air.
- Take students outside:
 - Take a moment to listen with your deer ears, look around with your owl eyes, smell with your skunk nose, and touch with your otter fingers.
 - What can you learn about your environment by your 5 senses?
 - Can you smell what type of dinner your neighbor is cooking?
 - Or hear kids playing basketball in the nearby driveway?
 - Can you see birds flying overhead and feel the wind blowing on your face?
 - How do your senses help you paint a picture in your mind of your community or local environment?
 - What can you learn by just focusing on one of your senses?
- **Teaching/ Engagement:**
 - **1. Smell/ Taste stations: Stop and smell the flowers**
 - Let's see how our sense of smell helps us explore our environment. Many animals rely on their sense of smell for many things, including finding food, communication, marking their territory, and finding a mate.
 - Animals often have heightened senses that are used to aid in their survival. In this lesson we will learn more about some of these super senses and the different ways these senses help the animal survive and thrive in their environment. We will use our own senses to explore our natural surroundings and learn more about how we interact with our environment.
 - During these stations there is a chart for them to fill out, that is attached at the end of the lesson
 - Smell station:
 - You will have essential oils in several different containers. Each container has a symbol and we will have the key
 - Teach your students how to smell unfamiliar or strong scents by waving a hand over the smell instead of directly inhaling (wafting technique).
 - Students use the attached chart to record their reactions to each numbered container and guess what the smell is. Have them record how the smell makes them feel, or what types of images or memories the smell conjures.



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- Taste Station:
 - You can replicate this with TASTE as well. Have a small amount of fresh fruits, vegetables, and a sweet treat (like milk and dark chocolate chips) available for students to taste test, record their reactions to the item, and what images or memories the food item conjures.
 - ***check on food allergies prior to doing this activity with students**
- **2. Go on a sensory walk**
 - Bring your students outside. Have them bring journals or paper/pencil. Begin in a circle, and have them listen with their deer ears, look around with their owl eyes, feel the grass/ground with their otter fingers, and smell the air with the skunk nose. What observations can they make using their senses?
 - Go on a walk and focus on exploring with 1 or all of your senses (except taste). Point out the feel of a rough tree trunk, the smell of fresh cut grass, the sight of a hawk flying overhead, or other observations. Have students focus on using descriptive words when making observations.
 - At the end of the walk, have students find individual spots to sit and observe their surroundings.
 - While students are sitting and observing the outdoors, have them write a short story explaining their location from the viewpoint of an animal (ex: a hawk flying high above, a field mouse creeping through the grass, a bee flying flower to flower).
- **3. Meet as a class**
 - In the classroom create a chart or outside discuss, what have you noticed from your senses? What connections to the environment or your own life did you make based on what you noticed?

Sense	Notice	Connections
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After the Lesson:

- **Assessment/ Check for learning:**
 - Our senses are powerful, they can bring back memories or transport you to another time and place. Think back on a memory you have



centered around a certain sound, sight, feeling, smell or taste and write about it, making sure to fully describe the taste using descriptive words and how your other senses contribute to the memory (“I could hear Grandma’s laughter in the kitchen.” “I could feel the scratchy picnic blanket beneath me.” “I could hear the bee’s buzzing in the yard”). Draw or write about that memory.

– **Extension activities:**

- Can you think of some animals that rely on a heightened sense to survive? Foxes can smell a mole beneath several feet of snow! Owls can see their prey from across a football field! Snakes taste the air to learn more about their surroundings and locate prey! Think about the way the 5 senses help animals move through their ecosystem.
- What about people? Think back to the story you wrote for the “Stop and Smell the Flowers” lesson? How do your senses help you interact with your environment? What do you learn about your surroundings by using your senses? What sense do you think you rely on most when outside? Write or draw to answer the questions.



Chart for SMELL/TASTE station:

Item #	What is it (guess)?	Do you like/dislike it?	Adjective	Memory/Image
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				



Assessment Rubric:

Assessment Guidelines	Proficient (P)	Developing (D)	Introductory (I)
Student has an understanding of the associated vocabulary. Can use vocabulary in the correct context.			
Student can identify their 5 senses and explain how they help them explore their environment.			
Student connects how animals senses play a key role in their survival and role in their ecosystem.			
Students recognize their connection to the natural world, and uses sensory vocabulary to describe ecosystems.			
Student demonstrates empathy and care.			



NYS Standards:

SCIENCE:

- (3- PS2-3): Ask questions that can be investigated based on patterns such as cause and effect relationships.
- (3- PS2-2): Science findings are based on recognizing patterns.
- (3-PS2-1): Science investigations use a variety of methods, tools, and techniques.
- (4-PS4-1) Science findings are based on recognizing patterns.

READING (RELEVANT SCIENCE STANDARD INCLUDED):

- 3R1- Develop and answer questions to locate relevant and specific details in a text to support an answer or inference. (3-PS2-1),(3-PS2-3)
- 3W6- Conduct research to answer questions, including self-generated questions, and to build knowledge. (3-PS2 1),(3-PS2-2)
- 3w7- Recall relevant information from experiences or gather information from multiple sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories. (3-PS2-1),(3-PS2-2)

SEL:

- CASEL 5 Social-Emotional Learning: Self-Awareness, Relationship Skills, Self-Management, Responsible Decision-Making, Social Awareness