



Sensory Detectives Lesson Plan

Overview: In this hands-on lesson, students gather clues about objects by using different senses. Students will use a combination of two or more senses to try to identify different everyday objects.

Grades: Preschool and K-2

Length of Lesson: 30-45 minutes

Related Video: “Vulture’s Volcano” episode

Learning Goals:

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- Use their senses to identify everyday items.
- Gain more complete information about an object by using two or more senses than by using only one.
- Know what type of information they can gain from each sense and how they can combine the information gathered to gain a fuller understanding.
- Describe how each sense can help them understand something in a different way.

Related Goals from the Space Racers™ Curriculum:

Scientific Inquiry/Observation:

- Use any of the senses or a combination thereof to gain information.
- Take note of a variety of properties and describe as accurately as possible (e.g., number, shape, size, length, color, texture, weight, motion, temperature, other physical characteristics, etc.).
- Scan/analyze an object or event from multiple positions in order to capture different perspectives.
- Make comparisons to identify similarities and/or differences.
- Inspect/investigate in detail in order to sort, group, classify, or sequence according to size or other characteristics.
- Monitor objects to detect changes over time or patterns.
- Develop questions and predictions based on observations.
- Communicate findings verbally or by using pictures, graphs, charts, and/or representations.

Materials:

- 12 brown lunch bags in which to hide objects
- a blindfold or mask (optional)
- 10 pennies (or other coins)
- a ball that is soft in texture
- 5 common household or school items (Note: You will need 2 of each item.) Some suggested items: marbles, a ruler, magnet, magnifying glass, super ball, block, cup, beach ball, pen, crayon, stuffed animal, playdough, doll, spinning top, scrabble tiles, uncooked macaroni or rice, toy instrument, toy vehicle

Sensory Detectives Lesson Plan

Prep:

- Gather the materials for this lesson. (See materials list.)
- Place the coins in a brown paper bag and the ball that is soft in texture in another bag. Seal both bags with tape.
- Label five of the brown paper bags with numbers 1-5 and do the same with the remaining five bags. (You should have two bags with each number, from 1-5.)
- Place one object in bag #1 and then place another similar object in the other bag #1. (For example, place a block in one bag #1 and another block in the other bag #1.)
- Continue placing items in the remaining bags, making sure each bag with the same number contains the same or similar item. (If you put a toy car in bag #2 for one team, put another toy car in bag #2 for the other team.)

Lesson Activities:

Activity 1:

1. Pick up a pen. Ask your students what it is. (*A pen.*) Ask them how they knew that. (*By looking at it.*) Ask students if they had a blindfold on and couldn't see the pen, how could they find out what the object was. (*By touching it, listening, hearing someone else describe it, etc.*)
2. Pick up the brown bag filled with coins and shake it. Ask students to guess what is in the bag.
3. Ask a few students to come up and feel the outside of the bag and to use their words to describe what they feel to the rest of the class. Then ask the class to guess what might be inside.
4. Then ask volunteers, one at a time, to reach inside the bag and feel to try to guess what the objects are. Ask students to explain why they made the guess that they did. After students have explained their reasons, pour out the coins to reveal what is inside.
5. Lift up the sealed bag with the ball inside and shake the bag. Ask students to guess what they think could be in the bag. Pass the bag around, asking students to feel around the object from the outside of the bag and describe what they feel. Roll the bag on the floor to some of the students. Ask students what they think is in the bag. Ask for a volunteer to open the bag to reveal the ball.

Activity 2:

1. Divide the class into two teams. Provide each team with the sealed brown bags labeled 1-5. Have each team shake and feel the outside of each bag. Ask students to do the following to try to figure out what is inside each bag:
 - Listen to the sounds that each object makes.
 - Look at the shape of the object from the outside of the bag.
 - Feel around the outside of the bag.
2. Ask them to make a guess about what is inside each bag.
3. Then, unseal one of the #1 bags and then, one at a time, have students stick their hands inside the bag and verbally describe what they are feeling to the rest of the class. Now, ask the teams to make a final guess about what they think is inside the bag. Once both teams have guessed, ask them to take the object(s) out of bag #1 to show what is inside.
4. Repeat the step above with bags 2-5.

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Activity 3 (optional):

1. Ask each team to gather five new objects to put in their five bags. (Give students guidelines before picking their objects. For example, ask them to select objects from a particular area of the room to make sure they are not including sharp or fragile objects).
2. Ask students to place one item in each bag and then seal the bag with tape.
3. Ask team 1 to guess the objects hidden in team 2's bags, by using their senses. Ask team 2 to guess the objects hidden in team 1's bags. The team that correctly guesses the most objects, wins.

Wrap-up:

1. Lead a discussion about how different clues (sounds, sights, feel, etc.) helped the class identify the hidden objects.
2. Ask students to describe how they used a combination of different senses to gather information about the objects.
3. Ask them to describe the type of information they were able to get by using their sense of hearing. Then ask them to discuss the type of information they were able to get by using each of the following senses: sight, touch.
4. Ask students to describe how they can use their senses of smell and taste to gather clues about things they come across in their daily lives.
5. Ask students to give examples of how they use multiple senses on a daily basis to gain information about the world around them. For example, when walking outside they can see a tree, smell the tree, hear the tree blowing in the wind, touch the bark of the tree; when they are sitting in the classroom, they see the room and people around them, feel the chair/rug, etc. they are sitting on, touch objects in the room, hear the different sounds in the room, etc.