



Curriculum links

Science

Sc2:1b Life processes, animals (including humans) use their senses to understand the world.

English

E1b Speaking, to choose words with precision

Learning objective

To explore how our senses can help us to learn about the natural environment.

Introduction

The pack is suitable for use with around 30 participants divided into up to 5 groups. In the pack there are:

Instructions showing how to use the activities.

Materials and equipment for 5 groups and their leaders.

A risk assessment for the site and the activities in the pack.

A checklist of contents.

Activities for Key Stage 1:

- Adjective bank
- Sense scavenger hunt
- Sound map
- Bat sense
- Scents
- Meet a tree
- I am a camera
- Colour matching

Activities for Key Stage 2:

- Adjective bank
- Sound map
- Bat sense
- Meet a tree
- I am a camera

Using the site

Please begin your visit with a talk about using the site.

Wildlife sites are home to many animals, plants and insects and you'll meet some of them on your visit, please treat them with respect. Human visitors who come to enjoy the wildlife too, so please keep the site looking good. When you have completed an activity, please try to put everything back as you found it, e.g. turn any dead wood you have looked underneath back over or scatter the leaves you picked discretely.

If there site has a pond and wet areas, make sure you know where these areas are and if you are using any of them, that participants are supervised.

Checklist

Please ensure that everything is there before you return the pack and report any losses.

Labelled egg boxes

Clipboards

Pencils

Paper

Plastic containers

Compasses

Blindfolds

Paint charts

Double sided sticky tape



Adjective bank KS1 and 2



Anywhere



A big sheet of paper and marker pen, or if they are available, voice recorders.



Most of the following activities (except the sense scavenger hunt) focus on one sense and ask participants about how they would describe the things they have smelt, felt, seen and heard, so alongside the activities you could make an adjective collection of words for things they have experienced and record them on voice recorders or on paper. These adjectives could then be the basis for some creative follow up work.

Sense scavenger hunt KS1



Anywhere



Labelled egg boxes, one per pair



The aim of this hunt is to walk around the site, working in pairs to find objects that match sense adjectives. The objects are collected in egg boxes, with each hollow labelled with an adjective. Take the participants on a walk around the site, allowing them time to find objects to match the adjectives in the egg box.

When you have completed the walk, look at the objects that you have found and discuss which senses you used to detect the characteristics of each, for many of the adjectives our senses need to work together. When you have finished ask the participants to scatter the objects they have collected.

Sound Map KS 1 and 2



Anywhere



Clipboards, paper, pencils, compasses



The idea of this exercise is to produce a diagram of the sounds around you. Find a site where the group is likely to hear a variety of sounds: insects, birds, the wind rustling leaves, the wind between tree branches, drops of water falling, passing traffic. Everyone has a clipboard, a sheet of paper and a pencil. In the centre of the paper, make an X, this shows where you are, explain that when they hear a sound they mark a dot on the paper representing the direction of the sound from the central point 'X' where they are sitting. They can then draw something which represents the sound, for example, wavy lines and a leaf for rustling leaves, or a bird's head and beak for birdsong. Depending on the age and ability of the participants they can also use the distance from the central X to represent how far away they think the sound is.

Once everyone has found a listening spot, (move participants apart if they are close enough to start talking) point out which way is north, so that it can be marked on the sheet of paper and participants can orientate themselves. Explain that the sketches are just to remind them of the sound. They need to concentrate on listening not drawing. It will help if they close their eyes and cup their hands round their ears to concentrate on sounds from different directions.

Give them 5 minutes to play the listening game and then call them back together

Go through all the sounds the participants heard and add them up. Which sounds did they like best? Which did they like the least? Did they hear any mysterious sounds? Why did closing their eyes help them to focus on the sounds?

Adapted from Scottish Natural Heritage outdoor learning activities, original source: Sharing the Joy of Nature by JB Cornell (1989)

Bat sense KS 1 and 2



A reasonably large area, free from trip hazards.



Blindfolds



Sound helps us to tell where a noise is coming from. Our ears are on opposite sides of our heads, so a sound that is coming from the left will reach our left ear a tiny bit earlier than our right ear. Our brains use the time difference to work out where the sound is coming from.

Bats use sound as their main way of telling where they are and what is going on around them and are much better at it than humans. As the bat flies along, it is constantly making a noise and listening for an echo made by the sound bouncing off something. The bat uses the length of time it takes for an echo to return and the strength of the echo to work out how far away and even what it is. Bats use this technique to avoid flying into things and to find and catch insects to eat.

In this game you will find out what it is like to be a bat and use echolocation. This game works best with about 5 people, so split the group if necessary. In a clearing without too many obstacles, the group leader chooses who will be a bat first. The rest of the group spreads out around the space but within hearing. The bat is blindfolded and the group leader tells chooses another participant to be the insect, without the bat hearing.

The bat makes a beep noise and listens for the insect to reply with an 'echo', then walks towards where they think the sound is coming from. The rest of the group needs to be quiet enough for the bat and the insect to hear each other. For the first few games you can make it easier for the bat by having the insect and the other participants stay still, in later games the other participants and the insect can move slowly around . The bat continues making beeps and listening for the echo until they think they have found the insect. The bat takes a bonus point if they can identify the insect as well as find them. Change roles and begin again until everyone has had a turn.

Scents KS 1



Anywhere



Plastic containers



Walk around the site, looking for things that you could use to make a perfume. This could be leaves, a few flower petals, seeds, berries, and anything else you like the smell of. Put them into your container, and find a stick to mash them up with. When you have finished collecting gather round and have a sniff of each others' perfumes. Did you manage to make a nice smelling perfume, or a horrible one? Ask each participant to use one adjective to describe the smell, and go around the group until no more can be thought of.

Meet a tree KS 1 and 2



Any wooded area



Blindfolds



Begin the game in a clearing. Divide the participants into pairs, one in each pair is blindfolded and is first disorientated (spun around or led on a random route) by their partner and then taken to meet a tree. The blindfolded participant touches the tree to establish its girth, the texture and pattern of its bark, whether it has anything growing on it etc., describing what they find. They are then led back to the centre of the clearing, the blindfold is removed and they can see if they can guess which tree they have just met. Participants then swap roles and repeat.

I am a camera KS 1 and 2



Anywhere



Paper, clipboards, pencils



Divide participants into pairs, one taking the role of the camera, the other the photographer. The photographer leads the camera, with their eyes shut to find a striking picture. When the photographer is ready to take a picture they press the shutter by tapping the shoulder of the camera, the 'camera' opens their eyes and after a minute or so, the photographer releases the shutter by tapping their shoulder again. The participants then swap roles so that they can both experience being the camera. Participants can then record the image by sketching what they saw as the camera. It helps to use your fingers to form a frame around the image that you want to remember, so that you know what will be in your picture and what falls outside.

Colour matching KS 1



Anywhere



Paint charts, double sided sticky tape



Prepare sections of paint chart with a strip of double sided sticky tape running over the colours. See if you can find colours to match using natural materials and stick these on the to tape. Did you succeed in finding a match for each colour? What kind of colours is it easiest to find at this time of year?