

Nature Passport

Lesson Idea: What's That Scent?

Activity Summary

Challenge your students to search for objects using their nose rather than their eyes. Children love games and challenging their bodies. This activity offers both as they learn about themselves and the properties of nature. To find success, students need to muster their power of olfactory observation, prediction, memory and analysis. This activity could form part of a class inquiry project exploring the **Science** of the human body or botany. It could also be used to explore vocabulary and how we describe the world around us as part of the **English** curriculum.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Observe properties of natural materials using the sense of smell
- Predict the scent of a natural material using the sense of sight
- Compare natural materials using the sense of smell
- Match natural materials with vocabulary that describes scents in nature
- Write descriptions of natural materials using adjectives and nouns
- Make ethical decisions and actions to preserve natural spaces

Introduce the Activity

1. Ask students to name the best scent they have smelt and the worst scent they have smelt in their life.
2. Discuss why a sense of smell is important.
3. Remind students to only pick natural items off the ground, particularly when in a public space. Alternatively, run this activity in the school kitchen garden where leaves can be harvested, especially herbs.
4. Invite students to form pairs (ensure that both their Avatars are on the same account). If devices are limited, larger groups may be formed where three students work as a team of 'Pickers' to find three of the same items to offer their partners. The three 'Sniffers' then work as a team to find the matching natural item.

Lesson Reflection

1. Ask students to describe the strategies they used to observe, identify and match natural items according to smell.
2. Ask students to explain how they predicted whether an item would smell woody, fresh, dry or sweet. Are there any similarities in the appearance or texture of the items?

Extension Ideas

- Create a scent museum and categorise natural items according to scent.
- Choose a tree and find out how many scents it has. Do the leaves, bark, sticks, flowers, fruit smell different?
- Investigate the chemical and biological science behind scents. How do plants use scents to adapt to their environment?
- Use a thesaurus to find other words which could be used to describe natural scents. Write a poem about one of the natural items and include adjectives about its appearance and scent.
- Create a scent based scavenger hunt using the 'You're a Scavenger' activity.