

# Sensory Walk

## Outdoor Activity

Humans share the world with millions of types of living things that have a variety of shapes, colours, smells, sounds and taste. In this activity, students participate in a sensory walk discovering the diversity of life through their senses.

### Instructions

1. Prepare the sensory cards in the material list. For the texture cards do the following:
  - a. Bumpy (pebbles under wide masking tape)
  - b. Smooth (laminated paper or acetate)
  - c. Prickly (piece of old scrub brush)
  - d. Furry (piece of fun fur)
  - e. Rough (piece of sandpaper)
2. Head outside to your schoolyard, local park or nearby natural area.
3. Read a storybook or share a personal story of a special place. Ask students to describe a special place they have and why it is special. Set the stage for the sensory walk and build up student excitement on the sensory explorations for discovering a new special place.
4. Divide your students into small working groups of 4-5 students. If you have volunteer adults, assign one to each group.
5. Explain to students' nature is filled with a variety of living things including animals, plants and insects. This variety of living things is called biodiversity. In our walk, we will explore the variety of living things with our senses.
6. For each of the following explorations, give each group the set of materials required. Pending on time available, you can spend 10-15 minutes exploring each "sense". Encourage students to find as many things as possible in nature for each sense they will be exploring.
  - a. Touch – give each group a set of 5 texture cards. Ask students to compare the textures of their card with those they find in nature.
  - b. Sight - students will look for items in the nature which are the same colour as one of the rainbow chips they are given. Repeat this activity with shapes. Discuss student observations.

### Materials:

- Set of 5-10 Rainbow Paint Chips
- Set of 5 shape cards (square, rectangle, triangle, circle, oval)
- Set of 5 texture cards (bumpy, smooth, prickly, furry, rough)
- 5 bottles of "magic liquid" (small spray bottles with water and blue food colouring)
- 5 blindfolds
- Raspberries (or another fruit to share)

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- c. Smell - using their bottle of “Magic Liquid” students will explore spraying a variety of natural objects with their liquid and then smelling it. Discuss the variety of smells they discovered.
  - d. Taste - Hand out raspberries (or other fruit to share) and explain how this represents one of the tastes of nature. Discuss other tastes students have experienced from the wild. Caution students that they should never eat from the wild without an adult’s permission.
  - e. Sound - Have each student find their own personal spot in nature where they can sit quietly and listen to sounds of nature. Encourage them to be as quiet as they can in order to hear nature. Afterwards, discuss the variety of sounds they heard.
7. Concluding Discovery – Blindfold Walk. In this discovery activity, students will use all their senses to discover a tree. Working in pairs, give each group a blindfold. Have the student with sight lead their blindfolded partner to a tree. Using all their senses, the blindfolded student is to find out as much as they can about the tree. They are then led away from the tree and their blindfolds are removed. Can they now find their tree with all their senses? Switch roles.
8. Journaling – give students time to capture in words and pictures why the space they explored is special.

## Discussion

Sensory walks are a great method to immerse students into the variety of living organisms with whom they share their world. Through their explorations, students will discover nature is rich with shapes, colours, smells and sounds that represent the variety of living things or the biodiversity of Alberta.