5 Senses
Foundation and Key Stage 1
1 hour 30 mins

This hands-on tour around the Botanic Garden enables pupils to use all five senses to engage with their surroundings. Pupils will smell herbs, taste tropical fruits, listen for natural sounds, find colourful plants and feel a whole variety of textures. Pupils will visit the steamy rainforest and arid desert as well as having the chance to explore the beautiful Garden outdoors. We will discuss which parts of our body are linked to our senses, and have a truly immersive experience. This session is part guided and part self-guided tour.

Learning outcomes

During this session pupils will:
- Identify the five senses
- Identify which parts of the body are associated with which sense
- Use their senses to explore the Garden and Glasshouses
- Gain an appreciation of the diversity of the plant world

National Curriculum subject areas

Early Years Foundation Stage:
Communication and language – listening and attention, understanding, speaking
Personal, social and emotional development – self-confidence
Understanding the world

Key Stage 1:
Science Year 1: plants – basic structure of plants
Science Year 1: animals – parts of the human body associated with each sense
Science Year 2: plants – plants need water and light to grow and stay healthy

Pre visit activities

Classroom discussion
- What is a Botanic Garden? What kind of plants and trees grow here? Where did they come from originally? What else might you see on a visit to the Botanic Garden?
- Take a look at our website to find out more:
  http://www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk

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Make sense of your senses

• What are the five senses? Can you label them all on an outline of the human body? How do you use your five senses at school?

Take one away

• How easy is it to work without one of your senses? Ask pupils if they think they could identify different fruit if they couldn't see them. Working in pairs, ask one pupil to think of a fruit and describe it for their partner to guess.

• Pupils can then make “feely” boxes out of old shoe boxes, and put “mystery” fruits inside, and see if they can guess each other's fruits.

Post visit activities

Favourite senses

• Can you compile a list of the things your class most likes to smell, taste, touch, listen to and look at? Give pupils a selection of things to experiment with and then vote to compile a class league table of their favourite things.

Make a collage

• Make a collage to stimulate all five senses. Use colour, textures, shapes and smells. See if you can collect natural items to attach to the collage.

Nature’s colours

• Give each pupil a strip of card with some double-sided tape on it, and go out into your schools grounds. Ask pupils to find and pick up small items of different colours to add to their pallets (only from the ground, not still growing!). See how many you can find, you may even find a whole rainbow of natural colours!

Sow and grow

• Try your hand at growing some sensory plants. Sow plants like nasturtium, calendula and cosmos for beautiful flowers. Try chives, lemon balm and coriander for tasty and smelly plants.

Resources

“My Big Book of the Five Senses” by Patrick George. ISBN 1908473118.
“The 5 Senses (Let’s Learn about)” by Nuria Roca & Rosa Maria Curto. ISBN 0764133128.

If you have any comments or feedback on these activities, or need any further information, please contact Vicki Yates or Ruth Jordan, Education Officers, education@obg.ox.ac.uk.