

## Lesson 3 · living-things

## Our senses help us investigate

## Lesson at a glance

Open by passing a feely-bag and asking pupils to name a hidden object by touch alone. Introduce the science words one sense-row at a time, pairing each with a real object — a pine cone, a rice jar, a smell pot. Model the full notice-and-name cycle aloud, then split the class into three groups rotating through touch, sound and smell stations. Pupils carry an ObservationSheet and record a science word (write, draw or whisper) at each station, finishing it at their seats before a display-only share.

## Learning objectives

- Use my senses carefully to make scientific observations
- Record observations using science words

## Before the bell – prep

Set up three stations before the bell. Touch: a feely-bag per child holding one safe object (pine cone, pebble, conker, sponge, feather, shell). Sound: lidded jars of rice, pasta, paperclips, a little water. Smell: foil-covered pots (pin-holed) of orange peel, mint, coffee, lavender. Check the class allergy list before any smell pot. Print one ObservationSheet per child.

## Materials

| Item  | Qty | Per   | Source      | Low-cost substitute                        |
|---|-----|-------|-------------|--|
| feely-bags (drawstring or sock) with one safe object each (pine cone, pebble, conker, sponge, feather, shell) | 6   | class | outdoors    | a clean sock or a shoebox with a hand-hole |
| sound jars (lidded jars holding rice, pasta, paperclips, a little water)                                      | 4   | class | classroom   | clean yoghurt pots with lids taped on      |
| smell pots (small pots with orange peel, mint, coffee, lavender, foil lid with a pin-hole)                    | 4   | class | supermarket | cotton wool dabbed with vanilla or lemon   |
| ObservationSheet (Investigation Journal page)   | 1   | pupil | classroom   | plain paper folded into a three-box grid   |

**Safety watch-point**

Check the class for nut and food allergies before any smell pot, and use only teacher-prepared pots — no tasting. Wash hands after the station round.

**Teaching moves**

- **Words That Help Us Notice:** Don't read the whole word table out cold — it's a lot for a 7-year-old. Take one sense-row at a time: pass the pine cone, then read only the touch words and have pupils point to the one that fits in their hand. Repeat with the rice jar for sound, the smell pot for smell.
- **Watch the Scientist Notice:** Model the full cycle eyes-closed, thinking aloud: feel, describe with two science words, then 'so I think it is...'. Do all three senses — feely-bag pebble, rattly jar, fruity smell pot. The 'so I think it is' beat is the bit pupils most often skip, so stress it each time.
- **The Senses Station Round:** Three stations, three groups, rotate every 5–6 minutes. The touch station has a bag each so all work at once; at sound and smell, have pupils take turns one jar/pot at a time or work in pairs (one describes, one records). Walk the room asking 'What word would a scientist use? What do you think it is?'
- **Record Our Careful Observations:** Settle pupils at their seats to finish the ObservationSheet they carried round — one row per sense, two science words each, with a draw box if writing is tricky. Check every child has a touch word, a sound word and a smell word before tidying up.
- **Share What We Found Out:** Display-only science-talk: each pupil shares one science word and which station it came from. Revoice it back as praise — 'So you noticed it felt rough and bumpy — that's a careful observation!' — to model the language.

**What it should show**

Most pupils will land on touch words readily (bumpy, hard, smooth, soft) and enjoy guessing the object. Sound is often the trickiest to put into words — expect 'rattly' or 'crinkly' to need prompting. Smell pots draw strong reactions but vaguer words ('nice', 'horrible'); steer to sweet, fruity, strong. A pupil who can't name the object still succeeds if they describe it well — the describing is the skill, not the guess.

**Misconceptions & interventions**

- **Pupils say a vague word like 'nice' or 'yucky' instead of a science word.** — Hold the object yourself and model the swap aloud: 'Not just nice — let's say exactly. It feels smooth and a bit cold.' Ask them for one describing word from the touch row before they guess.
- **Pupils think the goal is to guess the object right, not to describe it.** — Praise the describing first: 'You said rattly and soft — that's brilliant noticing!' Make clear at the share that two good science words beats a lucky guess.

**Differentiation**

| Emerging  | Developing  | Proficient   |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer a word bank aloud at the station (smooth, rough, bumpy, soft) and let pupils point to or whisper a word.</li> <li>• Drawing the object or saying the word aloud counts — pupils don't have to spell it.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask pupils to give two describing words before they guess the object.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have pupils add a 'so I think it is...' guess to each row and explain which word gave it away.</li> </ul> |

**Cross-curricular hook**

Link to English oral language — pupils build a bank of vivid describing words (rough, jingly, fruity) they can reuse in their own talk and writing.

