

living-things

A senses walk outdoors

Lesson at a glance

Open indoors by inviting guesses about outdoor sounds and naming eyes, ears, hands and noses as the four senses that come outside. Model one full noticing cycle with a leaf and magnifier, then lead a short three-stop garden walk: looking, listening-and-smelling, then gentle fingertip touch. Back inside after handwashing, children point to eye/ear/hand/nose sketches and say one finding. Close by linking their notices to how grown-ups mind plants.

Learning objectives

- Use sight, hearing, touch and smell to notice something in the school garden
- Tell the class or a partner what one sense noticed outdoors

Before the bell – prep

Walk the route once and mark three short stops (hedge, grass, wall/planter) inside school grounds. Basket with class magnifiers and optional gloves; one leaf or laminated leaf photo for the indoor model. Wet-day fallback: doorway, shelter, or window-box trays ready by the door.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
chunky magnifying glass	1	pair	school kit	children make a viewing circle with finger and thumb to peep through
child-sized gloves	1	pupil	classroom	children use one bare fingertip only on teacher-checked safe surfaces and wash hands straight after
fresh leaf or laminated leaf photo	1	class	outdoors/ nature	use the classroom window view of the yard or a leaf already in a classroom nature tray
basket or tray for magnifiers and gloves	1	class	classroom	a cardboard box lid
mini whiteboard or door-side pad with marker	1	class	classroom	sketch eye, ear, hand and nose on the classroom board or IWB if the circle is indoors



Lesson 6

Safety watch-point

No tasting or picking; stay together on one route; steer clear of nettles, thorns, litter and dog mess; wash hands the moment you return.

Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Stand by the door or window. Keep kit in the basket. Take two or three sound guesses with a smile — none are wrong. Gently remind: four senses come outside; taste stays indoors.
- **Look and Wonder:** Point to eyes, ears, hands and nose as you name looking, listening, touching and smelling. Live-model one cycle with the leaf and magnifier: I wonder... I think... I look... I noticed.... Cup an ear and name one real room or yard sound. Say aloud: nothing near mouths; stay with the class.
- **Our Senses Walk:** Lead a short line; count heads at every stop. Stop 1: magnifiers out, looking only — revoice what children point to. Stop 2: ears cupped, freeze-and-listen, then a gentle sniff of safe air near soil or grass — no picking. Stop 3: one gentle fingertip on teacher-checked safe surfaces; hands off faces until wash. Gloves only if ground is messy or nettles nearby. Last minutes: gather, walk back, door mat ready for washing.
- **What Did We Notice:** Circle after handwashing. Sketch eye, ear, hand, nose on the nearest board or pad. Child points first, then says the finding with starters: I saw... I heard... I felt... I smelled.... Shy children whisper to a partner first. Capture one word or doodle under each sketch.
- **Make-Sense Talk:** Stay concrete with today's findings. If someone felt damp soil, link: grown-ups feel soil to know if plants need water. Leaf or flower looks link to checking plant health; smells link to noticing flowers and herbs. Close with hands-up: which sense helped most?

What it should show

Most infants name one clear outdoor finding — a bird sound, wet grass, a yellow flower, soil smell — and can point to the matching sense sketch. One solid noticing is success; a second sense is a bonus. If a child claims they tasted the air, gently redirect: outdoors we keep tasting for food time.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **I tasted the air / I can taste the garden.** — Point back to the four sketches and restate: looking, listening, touching and smelling only outdoors; tasting stays for food time. Invite them to pick the sense they really used.
- **Senses are only for fun games indoors.** — Take one child's real finding (damp grass, a leaf look) and place the grown-up beside it: gardeners use eyes, hands and noses as real tools to look after plants.

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Accept one pointed finding or a partner whisper; offer a choice prompt: eyes or ears? • Children who find noise hard can start with looking and touching only.	• Confident talkers whisper a second finding to you after their first share. • Revoice their word into a short I saw/heard/felt/smelled sentence for the class list.	• Ask which sense helped most and why, still using only today's garden findings. • Invite them to notice whether two senses told different things about the same stop.

Cross-curricular hook

Oral language: sentence starters I saw... I heard... I felt... I smelled... feed the Aistear/English talk circle.