

Our five senses: exploring the world

Lesson at a glance

Open by asking children what they still notice with eyes shut, then reveal the five senses one at a time on the IWB, pointing to eyes, ears, nose, hands and skin, and tongue. Place body-part labels on the board figure together. Run a whole-class sequence, one kit at a time along each row: feely-bags, sound jars, smell pots, magnifiers, then teacher-handed fruit cups. Children record one example on the Investigation Journal stem, then talk which sense helps most for a closed lunchbox versus a lost pencil.

Learning objectives

- Name the five senses and the body part each one uses
- Record what one sense found out
- Say which sense was most useful for a given job

Before the bell – prep

Night before: pack 5 feely-bags (cloth, block, pine cone, sponge); 6 sealed sound jars; 6 lidded smell pots; 6 magnifiers with a leaf/shell/coin tray; washed fruit pieces in individual cups. Check the class allergy list before any tasting. Keep all kits shut on your desk until each sense opens.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
feely-bag with 3–4 safe classroom objects (cloth, wood block, pine cone, sponge)	5	class	classroom	clean socks or pillowcases with classroom stationery and fabric scraps
sealed sound jars (rice, pasta, paper clips, cotton wool, beads, dried peas)	6	class	classroom	clean yoghurt pots with taped lids
lidded smell pots (dried orange peel, mint, cinnamon, coffee grounds, soap shavings, lavender)	6	class	supermarket	cotton wool with a drop of safe food essence in small pots
hand magnifier	6	class	school kit	one shared class magnifier passed along the rows
small safe objects for looking (leaf, shell, coin, fabric scrap)	1	class	outdoors	classroom objects such as buttons, leaves from the yard, or pencil shavings on paper
washed fruit pieces in individual cups (for example apple or banana)	1	pupil	supermarket	if tasting is not possible, skip taste and name the sense with a picture card of food instead
Investigation Journal page (Observation sheet)	1	pupil	provided printable	plain paper with the heading Sense / Body part / What I found out

Safety watch-point

Check the allergy list before tasting; teacher hands out fruit cups only. Gentle sniff on smell pots. Wash hands after shared objects and tasting; seal pots and wipe tables on pack-away.

Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Ask children to close their eyes briefly and notice the room. Take two or three quick answers only. Keep the feely-bags visible but shut so curiosity builds without naming all five senses yet.
- **Today's words: our five senses:** Reveal one sense at a time on the IWB. Say the name, read the short meaning, point to the body part together, then a one-word check ("Eyes or ears?") before showing the next. Keep sense name, body part and what we find out linked every time.
- **Point to the body parts:** Drive the body-label interactive. Place eyes, ears, nose, hands and tongue with the class as you name each sense; say "hands and skin" as hands go on. Ask "Are they right?" so the whole class stays involved. Move a wrong label calmly and restate the pair.
- **Senses sequence: one kit at a time:** Whole-class sequence, not a carousel: open only one kit at a time and advance the IWB to that sense only. Chorus sense and body part, then a quick prediction before each pass. Feely-bags, jars, pots and magnifiers travel back along each row (~2 min each); taste stays in your hands after allergy checks. Collect before opening the next. Listen for sense name, body part and one finding word.
- **Record what one sense found out:** Keep the stem "I used _____. My _____ helped me. I found out _____." and "one example only" on the board. Circulate and scribe a word where needed. If a child only drew, ask them to name the sense so you can add a label together.
- **Which sense helps most?:** Pairs think for about a minute on the lunchbox job; take two or three shares. Pose the pencil-under-the-table contrast and take one or two more. Revoice so the class hears sense, body part and reason. Head off the idea that one sense is always best; do not restart the kits.

What it should show

Most children will name each sense with its body part and offer one finding word (soft, rattle, minty, tiny lines, sweet). On the Journal, expect one clear triple such as hearing–ears–jar rattled. For the jobs talk, smell or hearing often wins for the lunchbox and sight for the lost pencil; affirm any reasoned choice and gently redirect "one sense is always best."

Misconceptions & interventions

- **"My brain is a sense" or naming the object instead of the sense.** — Hold the link steady every time: sense name, then body part, then what we found. Point to eyes/ears/nose/hands/tongue on yourself or the board figure and restate the pair.
- **"Touch is just hands" or mixing tongue with mouth/teeth for taste.** — Say "hands and skin" and "tongue" every time you name touch and taste. When placing the board labels, touch your own hand and tongue as you chorus the words.
- **"Sight is always the best sense."** — Use the lunchbox versus lost-pencil contrast: revoice answers so children hear that different jobs need different senses, and that smell or hearing can beat sight for some jobs.



Lesson 4

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Scribe the Journal stem while the child draws the body part and points to it; accept one spoken finding word. • Stay near the teacher end of the row so the first turn is modelled with you.	• After recording one example, ask "Which body part did that sense use?" for a second oral check. • Invite a full sentence on the jobs talk: sense name, body part and why.	• Challenge them to explain why ears could not do the job of eyes using sense and body-part language. • Ask which other sense might also help the lunchbox or pencil job and why.

Cross-curricular hook

Links to SPHE body awareness and oral language: children rehearse sense-body-part sentences in partner talk and class share.

