

Our senses help us investigate

Lesson at a glance

Open by closing eyes and noticing classroom sounds, chair feel and lunch smells. Pupils label eyes, ears, nose and hands on the diagram-labeller interactive, then look closely at a leaf or fabric scrap. After a two-minute modelled feely-bag observation, groups rotate through touch, sound and smell stations, capturing one note each time on the Investigation Journal page. They upgrade those notes with the board word bank, then share science words in a talk.

Learning objectives

- Use touch, hearing and smell carefully to make scientific observations, and use sight when looking closely
- Record observations using clear science words on the Investigation Journal page

Before the bell – prep

Print one Investigation Journal page per pupil, three station cards and science word cards. Prep four sealed feely bags, four sound jars and four smell pots (check allergies; swap scents if needed). Keep one spare sealed bag for the model. Set stations before the bell.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	provided printable	a plain page ruled into sense and observation rows
opaque feely bags or clean socks with sealed objects (smooth stone, pine cone or rough sponge, soft fabric, wooden block)	4	class	classroom	paper bags taped shut with safe classroom objects inside
opaque sound jars or yoghurt pots with lids (dry rice, paper clips, cotton wool, buttons or coins)	4	class	classroom	any opaque snack tubs with dry safe fillers
smell pots with cotton wool (orange peel, mint leaves or mint tea bag, coffee grounds or cocoa, plain soap scrap)	4	class	supermarket	three pots only using scents already safe in your classroom (soap, orange peel, dry tea)
magnifiers	4	class	school kit	one shared magnifier or careful looking without one
science word cards (smooth, rough, soft, hard, cool, warm, round, loud, quiet, rattly, muffled, strong smell, gentle smell)	1	station	provided printable	write the same words on the board for pupils to point to
station instruction cards (Touch, Sound, Smell)	1	station	provided printable	handwritten A5 cards with the same short station text only
leaf or fabric scrap for whole-class sight look	1	class	outdoors/nature	any classroom object with an interesting surface (pencil case zip, book cover)

Safety watch-point

Check smell-pot allergies before set-up. No tasting; wave smells toward the nose; shake jars away from faces; wash hands after the round.

Teaching moves

- **Body parts and senses:** Drive the diagram-labeller on the IWB: pupils call out, you drag eyes, ears, nose and hands into place. Stress that touch, hearing and smell give real science evidence, not only sight. Hold up the leaf or fabric scrap for a 30-second whole-class look and model one clear phrase such as cool, smooth and round.
- **Scientist's senses stations:** Model one sealed bag live: wonder, predict, feel slowly, say cool, smooth and round, show the journal line. Send about six groups of four to five; two groups share a station and rotate on a clap or timer every four minutes. Show only the active station on the IWB. Coach science words, stop peeking, keep shakes gentle, and teach the hand-wave for smells. End by writing the class word bank on the board.
- **Record careful observations:** Show a filled model row first. Pupils stay on paper and upgrade the station notes they already made — name the sense and finish my careful observation. Push vague words: swap nice for soft and fluffy, smelly for strong orange smell. Offer stems aloud if stuck: With my hands/ears/nose I noticed...
- **Share our science words:** Take two or three offerings per station and revoice into the shared bank. Reveal one bag, one jar and one pot only if time allows; keep a mystery if short. Draw out that two groups can use similar science words even when first guesses differed.

What it should show

Most pupils name touch, hearing or smell and record real qualities — cool/smooth/rough, loud/rattly/quiet, strong or gentle smell — rather than only object guesses. Common wobble: writing the secret name (stone, rice) with no texture or sound words; affirm the guess, then ask what their hands or ears actually noticed.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **Only looking with your eyes counts as real science.** — Point back to the labelled figure and ask which part investigates a bag you must not open. Remind them the stations use hands, ears and nose on purpose.
- **Pupils write nice, weird or smelly instead of a checkable observation.** — Hold up the model line cool, smooth and round and the board bank. Ask them to swap one vague word for two science words someone else could picture.
- **Guessing the hidden object is the goal, so they peek or taste to win.** — Stop the group gently and restate the job: one careful observation without peeking or tasting. Praise the science words, not the correct secret name.



Lesson 3

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Let pupils point to station word cards or the board bank and draw the observation if full sentences are hard; offer the stems With my hands/ ears/nose I noticed... aloud.	• Prompt a second quality on the same object (smooth and cool; loud and rattly) using the word bank before they rotate.	• After the bags at Station A, add one extra sight observation on the side leaf or fabric scrap; in share-time, compare whether two groups used similar science words for the same bag.

Cross-curricular hook

Links to English oral language — replacing vague words with precise describing words peers can picture.

