

Out and About: A SENSE OF PLACE

The joy of sensory exploration can be experienced at any age, and these Out and About activities will provide structure for any school wishing to develop a sensory trail or garden area with their pupils. We've deliberately not aimed this Out and About at a particular age or ability range, as we feel the activities could be adapted to suit any ability, and enjoyed by children and adults of any age. Sharpen your senses, and get Out and About in the school grounds!

How could you use these activities?

This series of activities can be used in a number of ways and adapted to suit any ability:

1. As part of a school grounds development project, these exercises will allow pupils to take a full and active role in the creation of a sensory garden or trail.
 - Curriculum focus: DT, Geography, Art and Design, Expressive Arts, Environmental Studies
2. The activities will lend 'real world' meaning to an exercise based initially on developing literacy skills
 - Curriculum focus: Literacy, Geography, Language, Environmental Studies
3. As an exploration of the world around us, the activities will allow pupils to investigate the accessibility of their school grounds, and consider how facilities for children with special needs might be improved.
 - Curriculum focus: Citizenship, PSHE, Geography, PSD, Environmental Studies

Overview:

This Out and About activity actually comprises three separate but linked lessons of about an hour long. Together, they focus on different aspects of the development of a sensory trail, raising issues related to sustainable development and citizenship. Individually they focus on curriculum objectives

as detailed below. Each lesson could stand alone, but we think pupils will gain the most by working through all three and thus directing their learning into a tangible (not to mention fun) outcome.

Lesson One:

- In the classroom (or outdoors if a suitable location is available), pupils will investigate the senses, synonyms, oxymorons and idioms associated with the senses; compiling a list of 'instructions' for use in the next lesson.

Lesson Two:

- The list of Sense Words from Lesson One is used to identify objects, features and places that could become elements in a Sensory Trail. These are marked onto a plan of the grounds, and recorded, where possible, using a variety of media.



Lesson Three:

- Focusing on creating resources to support the Sensory Trail, and starting to plan the implementation of it.

Follow up:

- Creation of a sensory trail in the school grounds.

You will need:

Lesson One:

- Texts relating to the five senses; access to the internet to find senses websites and ideas
- Dictionaries and thesauruses
- Large sheets of thin card and marker pens



Lesson Two:

- List of sense words and phrases
- String, blu-tack, barbecue skewers
- Digital camera, sketch pads, tape recorder (or Dictaphone)
- Plans of the school grounds - on A3 or A4 paper

Lesson Three:

- Large scale plan of the school grounds - on A2 or A1 paper
- Magazines, newspapers and books; access to the internet to find appropriate websites
- Paper, card, coloured pens and pencils, scissors, glue, etc.

Developing the concept:

Lesson One:

- Write the five sense words - See, Hear, Taste, Touch and Smell - onto individual pieces of card, or a whiteboard. Read about and research the five senses. This may involve the use of a Big Book for shared reading, or the use of the Internet or school library to investigate why the senses are important to humans and animals.
- As a whole class or in smaller groups, brainstorm the sense words. Find as many synonyms as possible and write them onto the sheets of thin card. Think about other meanings these synonyms could have.
 - o E.g. vision (miracle), spying (secrecy), spot (acne!), clock (time), view (vista), lookout (careful).
- Discuss the purpose of idioms. What idioms are there relating to the senses? Add these to the sheets of card.
 - o E.g. blind as a bat, deaf as a post, touchy-feely, smell a rat, sourpuss
- Cut the lists into individual cards with each word or phrase on it. These are the Sense Card 'instructions' to be used in the next lesson, when pupils will be finding places to match the words.

Lesson Two:

- Provide small groups of pupils with their own copy of a plan of the school grounds. From memory, identify areas on the plan which could correspond to the words which are on the Sense Word cards.

- Each group should take their Sense Cards out into the grounds, and find places, objects and features which could be described using one (or more) of the words or phrases.
- The place should be marked onto the plan, along with a note referring to the word or phrase used.
- The Sense Card should be left at the appropriate place, using blu-tack or string or stuck into the ground like a plant label using a barbecue skewer.
- Review the lesson's work by taking the whole class on a tour of the sensory trail - encouraging pupils to describe the reasoning behind their choices.

Lesson Three:

- Compile all of the Sensory Trail plans onto one large-scale plan of the school grounds.
- Use magazines and the Internet to find examples of sensory features to include in your learning resource pack. If you took photos of the Sensory Trail during Lesson Two, use them too.
- Pupils should use the information they have researched and the trail they have created to develop learning resources for other pupils. For example:

- o How will other pupils know the trail exists? Does it need signs? What could they be made of and what will they look like? What labels might be needed for various areas of the trail?
- o How does a key make map reading easier? Devise a key for the Sensory Trail plan.
- o How do we take account of different ages and abilities? What activities on the trail could be planned to promote inclusion?
- o Could pupils with special needs make use of the trail? Could they move around it easily? If not, what measures could be taken to make it accessible?

- Make up the resources into a Sensory Trail pack. Pupils might like to introduce their work in an assembly, in which case - start planning!

Follow up:

Use the LTL Toolkit to help you plan the creation of a permanent Sensory Trail. The Toolkit will provide advice on funding, participation, implementing ideas and managing and maintaining the changes you make in the grounds.

