

Mapping Sensory Hotspots

TEACHER NOTES

Background Information

Our senses (sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch) influence how we might feel and also evoke happy memories. We can use senses to help improve our mood, and outside spaces like gardens, parks and woodlands have a diversity of sensory stimuli which can help us to feel happier, calmer and more peaceful. Sensory Mapping can be used to help locate areas with lots of sensory stimuli, particularly for people who are blind/partially sighted or deaf.

Activity Introduction

This is a group activity, allowing pupils to work and communicate together in pairs or as a team to create a simple sensory map of the school outdoor environment. The first task is to draw a map of a small outdoor area of the school. This could incorporate measuring and scale drawing. Once pupils have agreed on their map, they will explore the area together to add 'sensory hotspots' to their maps. These are spaces where pupils can identify strong sensory stimuli (sights, sounds, smells, textures and possibly even tastes if you have edible gardens). This will also be linked to the power of colour in affecting our mood, by exploring artworks from the collection at Cannon Hall Museum.

Cannon Hall Museum Links

A walk around Cannon Hall is ideal for a sensory experience, being set in 70 acres of beautiful, landscaped gardens and historic parkland. There is also a walled garden, where many fruits, vegetables and herbs are grown.

The museum holds an amazing collection of artworks, including landscapes by local artists.

- *Garden View*, Florence Hold (1860 - 1937)
- *Landscape of Cawthorne Village*, Benjamin Hold (1847 - 1917)



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Learning Outcomes

- Recognise the link between our senses and wellbeing.
- Identify the role of colour in affecting our mood.
- To develop listening and concentration skills.
- Develop awareness of their outdoor environment.

National Curriculum Links

- English - Speaking and listening
- Geography - Developing geographical skills
- PSHE - Learn what positively and negatively affects their physical, mental and emotional health
- Science - Life processes and living things

Required Resources

- Paper, Pencils and Clipboard
- Colouring pencils
- Pinecones or small pebbles
- Grapes - halved lengthways (or similar fruit)
- Small mirrors
- Selection of herbs
- Sensory Warm Up discussion cards
- Cannon Hall Gardens Sensory Hotspot images
- Painting Images -
Garden View and *Landscape of Cawthorne Village*
- Colour Mood images
- Colour wheel

PSHE Focus - Sensory Warm Up and Discussions

Warm up the pupil's senses by introducing the activity in an outside location that is particularly sensory-rich or use the sensory warm up props below to help pupils to think about and focus on their senses. Pupils could work in small groups to discuss the questions.

Hand out the Sensory Warm Up discussion cards to each group.



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Touch

explore the texture of a pine cone or a small pebble.

Discuss;

- What does it feel like in your hands, your cheeks or on your arm?
- Is it warm or cool?
- Is it smooth or rough?
- Does it have the same texture all over?



Taste

take a grape and carefully place it on your tongue and squash it with your teeth.

Discuss;

- What happens when you first put it in your mouth - is it hard or soft?
- What happens when you bite into the grape - is it juicy?
- Is it sour or sweet?



Sight

have a good look around, use the mirror to look at yourself. Look behind you.

Discuss;

- What colours can you see?
- What sights in particular attract your attention and why?



Sound

if you are really quiet and listen, what sounds can you hear?

Discuss;

- The sounds you can identify - do you know what they are?
- Are the sounds natural or made by humans?
- Are the sounds relaxing or do they make you alert to something happening?
- What sounds do you make when you are exploring the outside spaces?



Key Questions

Ask pupils to think about their favourite sights, sounds, tastes, texture and smells from nature (or choose some from the sensory warm up activity).

What memories or associations do pupils make with these different senses?

Does it make you think about being somewhere in particular?

How do these sensory memories make you feel?

Are there any sights, sounds, tastes, texture and smells from nature which make you happy?

Do they make you feel calm and relaxed?

Smell

can you smell any plants in the area you are standing?
Or identify some different herbs?

Discuss;

- Words which describe the smells
- Are they nice or nasty? Do you like them?
- Do they remind you of anything? Maybe cooking or baking with the herbs.
- Can you think of any other familiar outdoor smells e.g. cut grass, rain.



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Activity 1 - Sights and Sounds

Each pupil has a clipboard and piece of plain paper. Ask them to add a cross marked in the centre, to represent their location.

1. Ask pupils to study their surroundings and add three or four 'landmarks' which they can clearly see (trees, large shrubs, play equipment etc.). Remind pupils to turn 360° and look behind them!
2. Explain the paper is now a map. Each time they hear a sound they should add it to the paper, to show where they heard the sound.
3. Emphasise that pupils should listen very carefully to try and recognise the difference between sounds. Can they 'draw' the sound on their map, discuss how they can represent different types of sound e.g. perhaps a musical note for bird song, a shoe for footsteps, faint pencil lines for quiet noises, wavy lines for soft noises and zig zag lines for loud noises etc. Older pupils may like to create their own key.
4. Ask pupils to find their listening point and spend five minutes really listening and adding the sounds to their maps.
5. Discuss how many different sounds pupils heard and how they represented them on the maps. Did they hear more or fewer sounds than they expected?
6. Ask pupils how they might add colours to their map to show how the sounds made them feel!

Activity 2 - Adding Sensory Hotspots

1. The activity is for pupils to explore the area they are mapping and add sensory highlights or 'hotspots' using their senses of touch, smell and taste (if you have safe, edible areas in your outdoor space).

Show the Cannon Hall garden images and discuss why each of the areas might be a 'Sensory Hotspot'. The activity could be done in pairs. Encourage pupils to feel different textures, smell leaves and flowers and taste leaves or fruit (please comply with any school hygiene and health and safety policies).

2. Pupils can add the location and information to their maps by using stickers, descriptive words or even pictures which give some details about each sensory hotspot. Older pupils could create more symbols for their own key.
3. Discuss with pupils how these sensory areas might change with the different seasons and the weather.



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Activity 3 – Colour in the Senses

1. Introduce the idea that artists can exaggerate the colours they see in nature in their paintings to make them more vivid or darker. This helps to create different moods or atmospheres. The use of colour in artwork to help show its meaning or message is very important.

Look at the painting Garden View, by Florence Hold. Discuss the use of vivid and bright colours, particularly used to enhance the flowers.

Compare this to Landscape of Cawthorne Village, by Benjamin Hold (Florence's brother). The colours are not as bright and the painter has mainly used different shades and tones of green and brown. Ask pupils to describe which painting they prefer and why, is this linked to how the colours make them feel?

2. Complementary colours are opposite one another on the colour wheel. When these colours are used next to each other, they look brighter and more vibrant and give the picture more contrast.

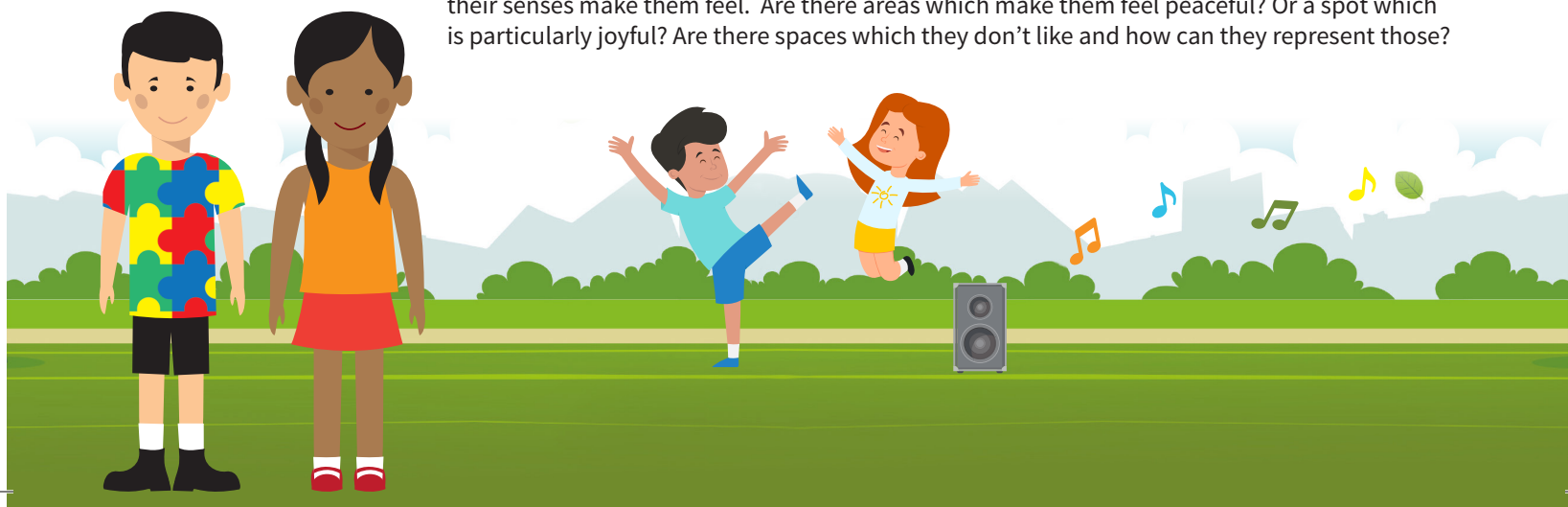
Show the colour wheel and point out some pairs of complementary colours e.g. red and green, blue and orange, yellow and purple.

- Warm colours are colours on the red side of the wheel. These are red and include orange, yellow, browns and tans.
- Cool colours are colours on the blue side of the wheel. These are blue and include green, violet and most greys.
- Black, white and grey are called neutral colours.
- But when you mix these pairs of complementary colours together, they will make grey.

Show pupils the colour images and discuss what different colours mean to us and how they can make us feel.

- **RED** – angry, aggressive, strong, warm. Red is attention grabbing!
- **BLUE** – calm, relaxed, unfriendly, cold. Blue can be soothing.
- **YELLOW** – friendly, optimistic, confidence. Yellow can make us feel happy.
- **PINK** – joy, happiness, warmth. Pink is often associated with love.
- **ORANGE** – fun, security, warmth. Orange is a stimulating colour.
- **GREY** – cold, depressing, tired, boring. Grey is often used to represent sadness.
- **GREEN** – rest, balance, harmony. Green can make us feel more peaceful.

3. Direct pupils to stand back in their 'listening' point and look around them thinking about all their senses and the information they have already added to their maps. Now add coloured areas to their maps, choosing colours which represent how their senses make them feel. Are there areas which make them feel peaceful? Or a spot which is particularly joyful? Are there spaces which they don't like and how can they represent those?



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Plenary - Show and Tell

In small groups, or as a class, pupils can share how they created their personal sensory maps.

You could also revisit the Key Questions from the Sensory warm up.

Extension Activities

Music – Outdoor Orchestra!

Ask pupils to think about how they could recreate the sounds that they heard and to experiment with instruments. Do they sound different outside?

Challenge pupils to make a musical instrument which mimics the sounds of nature. This could be decorated, inspired by the colours and textures pupils explored.

Can they perform a piece of music using their new instruments, as an outdoor orchestra?

Art & Design

Challenge pupils to create an artwork based on the outdoor space they mapped, similar to the 'Cannon Hall' ceramic vase made by Sian Leeper, 2007 which was inspired by the walled garden and fruit growing at Cannon Hall.

Pupils could research different landscape paintings and choose one which makes them feel positive, then create their own piece of artwork using similar colours to create their own artwork.

Risk Assessment

Ensure pupils wash their hands thoroughly after touching/handling natural objects.

Cut fruit lengthways for the tasting session, to avoid choking hazards.



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Supporting Images



Cannon Hall Sensory Hotspots



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Landscape of Cawthorne Village, Benjamin Hold



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Garden View, Florence Hold



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