



wildsight
EDUCATION

Sensory Wake-Up

Use this activity to help students “tune in” to the world around them. This activity has been adapted from the Coyote’s Guide To Connecting With Nature.



Device to view video OR copy of ‘script’ below to read



Grades: all



15-20 minutes



Safety Note: Please ensure kids have washed hands just prior to this activity. Due to current health protocols, feel free to modify activity by having student put their hands above, but not directly on their ears, eyes, nose, mouth

Introduction

To help get us in the right mood to be mindful of our surroundings, I’d like you to follow me on a little tuning in, or sensory wake up activity. It will get your senses feeling all alive and ready to enjoy all that nature has to offer. This will work anywhere -whether you’re at an open window, on a balcony, a backyard or elsewhere that is a safe space with nearby nature.

Let’s take a comfortable seat, it might be your favourite sit spot in your yard or a spot that is comfortable in a new place. If it’s not possible to sit you can also stand for this! We’re going to work our way through the 5 senses and wake each one up so we can immerse ourselves in nature.

Steps

Read slowly, with gaps to allow kids to follow along:

I’d like you to rub your hands together palms facing each other hard and fast until you can feel heat between them. Then if you’re seated, place your hands on your legs with your palms facing the sky.

If you’re standing, hold your hands out on either side of you, palms facing forward, like you’re a big strong

mountain. If you feel comfortable, please close your eyes.

Now, can you feel your body touching the ground? Your legs or feet pushing against the Earth? Can you feel wind or sun on your face or hands? Is there wind moving your hair or clothes? Can you feel your clothes against your skin?

Great work! That’s your touch/feeling senses woken up! Let’s carry on with the others.

Let’s rub our hands together again. Nice and fast, build up that heat! This time we’re going to wake up our sense of sight to its fullest. So now that your hands are nice and warm, close your eyes again and hold your hands over your closed eyes. Feel the heat there for a few seconds (pause). Now, take your hands back to your legs or by your side and gently blink your eyes open.

Without staring at one thing very hard - we call it having a soft focus, just have your eyes open, head still, and look around. What can you see close by? What can you see further away? Without moving your head what can you see out of the corner of your left eye? What about the right eye? Remember to keep your head still! What colours can you see? How many shades of green can you find? How about brown? Is there something human-made in your view? Anything that is alive?

Now you can move your head from side to side slowly—what can you see that you hadn’t noticed

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before? Look up at the sky? Are there clouds? Birds? A ceiling indoors perhaps? Look down at the ground, is it soil, sand, rocks, wood or carpet below you?

Wow! Fantastic effort. My sight feels totally tuned in and ready to go adventuring, exploring, or observing! Just a couple more senses to go... what ones have I forgotten? Ah yes! Let's do the sense of hearing next. Hearing is so important for lots of animals in the wild, and it can help us feel connected to nature more when we wake ours up!

You know what to do by now, rub those hands, generate that heat, attention and focus, and this time when we close our eyes we'll place our warm hands over our ears. Hold the hands there for a second or two, let the heat and focus drain from your hands into your ears and when you take your hands off now you can cup your ears like animals ears if you like. We've woken up our hearing and now we'll listen. How many different sounds can you hear? Start counting in your head any individual sounds. Stop when you get to ten. Can you send your hearing senses far away and listen to the furthest noise you hear? What about the closest one you can find? What can you hear that is continuous noise? Can you find a noise that comes and goes? Can you hear anything behind you? On your left? On your right? Can you hear something human made? Something natural? Your own breath? Your clothes rustling?

You can open your eyes now and remove your animal ears. Wow I heard so much that I wasn't paying attention to before. How about you?

There are two senses left and we're going to use them together. Smell and taste. Let's wake up the sense energy by rubbing those hands one last time... really fast, get them really warm! Now place your hands over your mouth and nose and feel the heat travelling to wake up the senses.

First smell. Release your hands to your legs or side and with your eyes closed take a big deep breath in through your nose. Can you smell anything? Dirt? Human smells? Cooking? Wood? Take another two big breaths in and see if you can smell anything different each time. Now taste. Now we don't really

want to be licking anything in nature or putting things in our mouth but we can stick our tongue out and see if we can taste anything from the air? If you don't that's totally OK.

Alright you can open your eyes now. How do you feel? Do you feel more grounded and "tuned" in to what's happening around you? Reflect on how you are feeling in your nature journal.

