

## Kindergarten: Using Your Five Senses

Students use their 5 senses to explore the garden.

**Students first receive instruction on garden safety** – ask about any allergies in advance. Never put anything in your mouth/taste anything you are not 100% certain is safe to eat. Edible foods are only grown in the raised beds, not the theme beds in front of the brick school wall. Always ask an adult before tasting anything. Handle plants gently. Take only pieces/samples and never take the last flower/fruit/leaf unless an adult OKs it, etc. The garden is an outdoor classroom. What are your indoor classroom rules? Which of these should apply to an outdoor classroom?

**Students review:** How do scientists investigate or learn about the natural world? How do they discover new things? By using their 5 senses to compare and contrast both living and non-living things.

Sight  
Sound  
Smell  
Touch  
Taste

Prompt students as to which **parts of their bodies** scientists use:  
“What can you do with your tongue? Your ears? Eyes? Nose? Hands?”  
“What can you do with your head/brain?”

Using **empty egg crates** to collect their ‘treasures’, students work in pairs to find living and non-living things in the garden to later explore using their senses. They should try to locate 12 items (6 living, 6 non-living) and put one item each (or piece of an item) in each space in the carton. Teachers assist students with collecting.

Students convene at picnic tables to use their 5 senses to **compare and contrast** what they collected using specific, descriptions as much as possible. Which items are edible? Which are smooth, rough, pointy, slimy? Teachers can make a list of the adjectives these young scientists are using either in a notebook or with chalk on the school brick walls or on the sidewalk. Fill a bucket with water to let students test which items sink or float. Use a magnifying glass to look more closely at textures/details. Blindfold a few students and hand them items they can only describe using their hands/noses etc.

**Expansion:** Which senses do animals use to explore their natural habitats? Do some animals have heightened senses? Are their senses better than ours? How well can a dog smell, a bat use echolocation, an owl use night vision, etc. Which is YOUR strongest sense? If you were a superhero – what would your “super sense” be and what kind of amazing things would it allow you to do?!