



National Park Service; Rock Creek Park Environmental Education

SENSORY STROLL

Seeing squirrels scamper through the forest, hearing birds sing melodious songs, smelling the lemony branches of sassafras and feeling the soft fur of a red fox are just some of the sensory experiences that students may encounter as they stroll through a forest. Children will discover many other simple wonders of nature by using their senses on this hiking adventure.

TOPICS: Five senses, animal adaptations, survival

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

We live in a very visual world. Most humans, for example, rely heavily on their sense of sight to find food or locate danger. Many of our other senses are relatively unused in day to day life. Life in the wild is very different. Few animals have eyesight as well developed as humans, although some do even surpass our abilities. Most animals rely on one or more of their other senses; tasting, touching, hearing, and smelling. By combining a short hike with inter-dispersed activities, the program will "look" at the world through these animals' experiences.

Where: Rock Creek Park Nature Center

Length: 1 hour

Who: 1st - 2nd grade classes

Students per group: maximum of 30

Chaperones per group: 5- 7

CURRICULUM BASE:

1st Grade; Learn about the five senses

2nd Grade; Make careful observation using all senses

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the program, students will be able to;

- 1) Name all five senses.
- 2) Identify an animal that does not see as well as a human.
- 3) Describe how that animal uses another one of its senses to help it survive.

SAFETY MESSAGE: Avoid Poison Ivy



SENSORY STROLL PRE AND POST- TRIP ACTIVITIES

Pre- trip activities: Prior to your visit to Rock Creek Park, please take a moment to read this pre-site. We suggest that you do one or more of the described activities with your class. The first activity, especially, introduces students to their senses. You may use the remainder as post- trip activities

- 1) Introduce "Sammy Sack" (plain brown lunch sack on teacher's hand like a puppet) to students. When he fails to respond, notice he has no ears. Have a student draw ears on Sammy for him to hear. Talk to "Sammy", asking if having ears to hear isn't better. As he nods, ask him if the class looks like a good group today. Notice he has no eyes. Have another student draw eyes on Sammy to see the class. Continue the procedure for the remaining senses of smell (nose), taste (mouth), and touch (hands). Introduce the five senses.
- 2) Count the number of sounds heard in five seconds in the classroom. Take the students outside and have them count sounds again in five seconds. Compare what they hear inside and outside and how many more (or less) sounds they hear outside.
- 3) Set up touch boxes in the classroom with mystery touchables. Allow the students to try to guess what the objects are by touch only.
- 4) To help the students better understand how important sight is to people, ask them to shut their eyes for a few minutes. While they have their eyes shut, ask them to describe things, maybe what you are wearing, the school, or the playground. Most students will use descriptions involving only their sense of sight. Discuss why.
- 5) Also test your students' sight memory by covering your desk or another familiar object. See if they can remember what was on it.