

Feeling Your Way

A Touch of Sunlight

Overview: Students make observations with their largest sensory organ – the skin. Expect students to mention feeling the warmth of the sun, coolness of wind or other sensations of touch. Thermometers are used to enhance and quantify the sense of touch.

Materials: Thermometers (optional)

Time: 5 – 15 minutes

Action:

- Circle Up and sit in a grassy shaded area. What do students feel? (Hard ground, tickle of grass, cool shade, dampness, crawling insects)
- Discuss the largest sensory organ. Which areas are very sensitive (finger tips, lips, neck) or least sensitive?
- Estimate the temperature of the grass here in the shade?
- Enhance and quantify sensory skills by using a thermometer to measure temperature.
- Move the circle to the sun?
- What new sensations do they notice with sense of touch? (warmth, perspiration, dryness, etc.)
- Estimate, then use the thermometer to measure grass temperature. Compare grass temperatures in sun and shade. This is a good time to discuss the value of trees in our natural and human-made environments.

Vocabulary: Build the word bank with comparisons: warm/warmest/hot, cool/coolest, thermometer, temperature, comparisons, estimates, measurements.

Management Strategies: To enrich science concepts, compare temperatures on the sidewalk, asphalt parking lot, metal surfaces. For older students who can read thermometers, send them on a scavenger hunt to find the warmest and coolest areas in the schoolyard. Be sure to define their boundaries.



Teachers learn to make outdoor observations in a Jeffers workshop.