

Sniffing Around

Being a Bloodhound

Overview: The Bloodhound Hike emphasizes how much we use our sense of smell.

Materials: none required

Time: 15 – 20 minutes

Action:

- Take a deep breath. Expand your nostrils as you inhale. We are smelling all the time -- although we don't always realize it.
- Many animals depend on their sense of smell more than we do. Bloodhounds have an amazing sense of smell. And you are going to be bloodhounds as we take a hike to observe with our sense of smell.
- Plan the path around the campus: Past the cafeteria, open the door to the custodian's closet to notice chemicals for cleaning, pass the art room or gym. Now head outdoors to the bus stop. What odors come to mind? These are all human-made scents that you have smelled.
- Now concentrate on nature-made scents. Visit the flowerbeds. Compare fragrances of the flowers. Find a pine or cedar to compare with oak or maple.
- Visit the school vegetable garden and rub a tomato or potato leaf gently between your thumb and index finger. Careful not to hurt the plant. Then smell your fingers?
- Rub and sniff leaves of other herbs or vegetables. Do they all smell the same?
- Sit in a circle on the lawn. Explain that students will explore on hands and knees as they smell the grass, the soil, tree bark, green leaves, dry leaves and other aromas. Does crushing a leaf give a different odor?
- As wrap up, students describe their sensory experiences and increase their vocabulary.

Vocabulary: Observation, sense of smell, nostrils, sniff, inhale, odors, aromas, fragrances, scents, odorless, musty, sweet, stinky, earthy.

Optional warm up before hike: Place cotton balls saturated with a variety of scents in pill bottles or small jars and ask students to identify the odors. Examples: vanilla, lemon, cinnamon, onion, garlic, damp earth, salt water, vinegar.

Management Strategies: Delineate the boundaries and have students spread out before they explore on hands and knees.