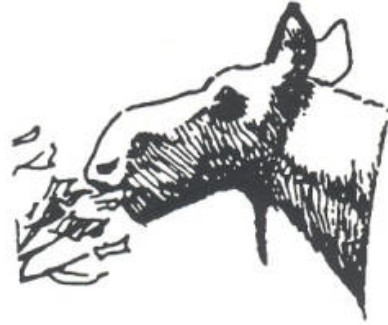


# THE NOSE KNOWS

Activity 13

AGE LEVEL = 9-12 (5-8)  
DURATION = 30-45 min.  
LEARNING STATION = Outdoors  
RELATED ACTIVITIES = None

WHEN =  



**UNDERSTANDING:** Nature provides a variety of odors. The ability to smell is an important survival tool for animals.

## MATERIALS:

For each child:

- A smelly bag (35mm plastic film canister, paper sack, small fabric bags or other) filled with one common household smelly object such as onions, garlic, spices, potpourri, scented candles, soaps, fruits, etc.
- A blindfold ([see Activity A](#))

For the group:

- A water bottle or mist bottle

**PREPARATION:** Prepare smelly bags in advance and create your blindfold smelly trail.

## LESSON:

**Warm-up:** Have everyone sit comfortably in a sharing circle. Ask them what kind of smells they have at home. Encourage everyone to describe a smell.

**Activity:** Explain that you have brought some smells from home. Pass around the smelly bags. After everyone has had a good whiff, have them identify the odor. Explain that similar smells can be found in nature.

Give each child one of the smelly bags and ask them to locate a similar smell in nature. Explain that the object should remain where it was found. After all the students have located a smell, take a tour of the objects, comparing odors with the smelly bags. Congratulate all the children for having such good “smellers.”

Explain that many animals can smell better than us. Ask anyone if they have ever felt a dog’s nose. What does it feel like? Tell the children that animals with wet noses are able to smell better because the moist air attracts odor particles similar to the way a magnet attracts steel. Follow by asking: Why would it be important for a dog (wolf) and a deer to have a better sense of smell than humans? How do other animals or plants use the power of odors and smell (i.e. pollen and nectar attracting the bee)?

Explain that it’s their turn to smell as well as a wolf or deer. Have them line up. Spray their nose and upper lip with the water bottle, then have them put on their blindfolds. Lead the children to several of the smelly spots you have prepared. Have them guess the smells and lift the blindfolds to check their answers. Periodically respray their noses.

**Wrap-up:** Discuss the following: 1) What was your favorite smell today? Did it remind you of another place, another time? 2) How do animals use their sense of smell? 3) How would you feel if your sense of smell was taken away? What smells would you miss?

#### OPTIONS AND FURTHER EXPLORATIONS:

1. Have a tea party. Have each child collect “good” smelling objects from the natural environment to put in their teacups. In a sharing circle, have each child name the tea and pass it around for others to smell.
2. Research which animals emit offensive smells as a means of protection (stink bug, skunk, garter snake).