



Nature's Perfume. It's Herbtastic!

SEN FOCUS

PMLD – sensory exploration of smell, showing pleasure/displeasure from a range of herbs

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

In this activity, pupils explore different herbs, petals, leaves and oils for their scent. Their challenge is to create their own 'herbtastic' perfume.

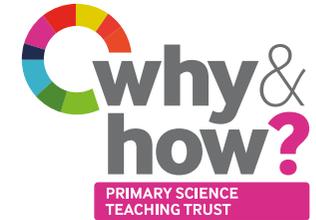
Key vocabulary/symbols required: smell, nose, herbs, nice, nasty, leaf, petal, cut, crush, rub

Description of Activity

- Wave a range of herbs under the pupil's nose and record the response. Do the pupil's eyes flicker? Does the smell generate a smile? Does the pupil's mouth open?
- After sampling the smells of all the herbs, select the pupil's favourite herbs and with their help, crush the herbs and cut the leaves.
- Pour some oil into the jar and add the chosen herbs. Use the wooden spoon to smash and stir the herbs into the oil and make a natural perfume.

KEY FACTS/SCIENCE

Smell is a very 'direct sense'. In order to smell something, molecules from the source (in this case, herbs) need to travel to the nose. Everything we smell, therefore, is giving off molecules. These molecules are generally light, volatile and easy to evaporate chemicals that float through the air into the nose. At the top of the nasal passage, there is a patch of special sensory cells called 'olfactory neurons' that have hair like projections called cilia. The odour molecule binds with the cilia to trigger the neuron and cause the brain to perceive smell.



RESOURCES

Clear pots with lids

Range of herbs, flowers and/or leaves

Wooden spoons

Bowls

Pestle and mortar (if available)

Carrier oil - such as olive oil, coconut oil or almond oil*

*Health and Safety advice: check for possible allergies first

QUESTIONS/FURTHER LEARNING

- Does using a different oil with the herbs change the smell of the perfume?
- Does crushing or cutting the herb create a stronger smell?
- What gives out the best scent, fresh herbs or dried herbs?
- Can you make a perfume with petals?