

Sensory Wake Up Ideas

Winter brings on a whole new sensory experience. Help your students tune in to the sounds, sights, smells, and feelings of winter with these activities.

Winter Scavenger Hunt

Print this scavenger hunt for a fun adventure that helps students to see, to hear and to feel this winter.

Winter Listening Walk

Head out to your school yard and let your students know you'll be going on a winter listening walk. Practice your deer ears and walk quietly so not to scare away birds or other wildlife. Walk to a spot a short distance away from the school and sit or stand in a circle.

Hats and Headbands: Encourage students to pull their winter hats or headbands down to cover their eyes so they can really focus on what they hear. Listen quietly for about 3-5 minutes (or as long as possible).

Turn and Talk: Have students share what they heard with a partner.

Math Connections: When you return to the classroom, chart and graph how many different sounds you heard made by nature and how many made by humans and machines.

Sip on some Conifer Tea

Review the different types of trees found in your school yard. What are some of the different uses of trees (food and shelter for animals, wood for houses, shade from the sun, etc.)? Pine and other conifer needles trees have been used traditionally to make a tea that helps relieve coughs. Many cough syrups you can buy at a pharmacy today use the same ingredient. Research the uses by First Nations people in your area for various tree types by asking local elders and knowledge-keepers.

To make your tea:

1. Collect conifer needles on your next nature walk.
2. Boil some water.
3. Rinse your collected needles.
4. Cut the needles using kitchen scissors or chop with a knife, removing the brown ends.
5. If you have a loose-leaf tea steeper, place the needles inside and cover with recently boiled water (not boiling). Use a ratio of roughly 1/2 c needles to 3 c water.
6. Steep at least 10 minutes, ideally 20 minutes.

Optional: Add in some dried orange peel, rose hips, star anise or other herbs for a more dynamic flavour!



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