

Sensory Trail

Activity How-To Guide – Clockwise Trail

Session Outline

Time	Travelling clockwise	
	Location	Activity
10 mins	S2	Go Find It
5 mins	S4	Listening circle
15 mins	S5	Smelly potions
15 mins	S6	Blindfold trail/ sticky strips
5 mins	Centre	Plenary

Route

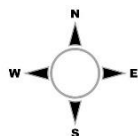
This session follows a marked trail through the woods, guided by coloured bands on posts placed at intersections. **The sensory trail follows the red bands.**

Sensory Trail


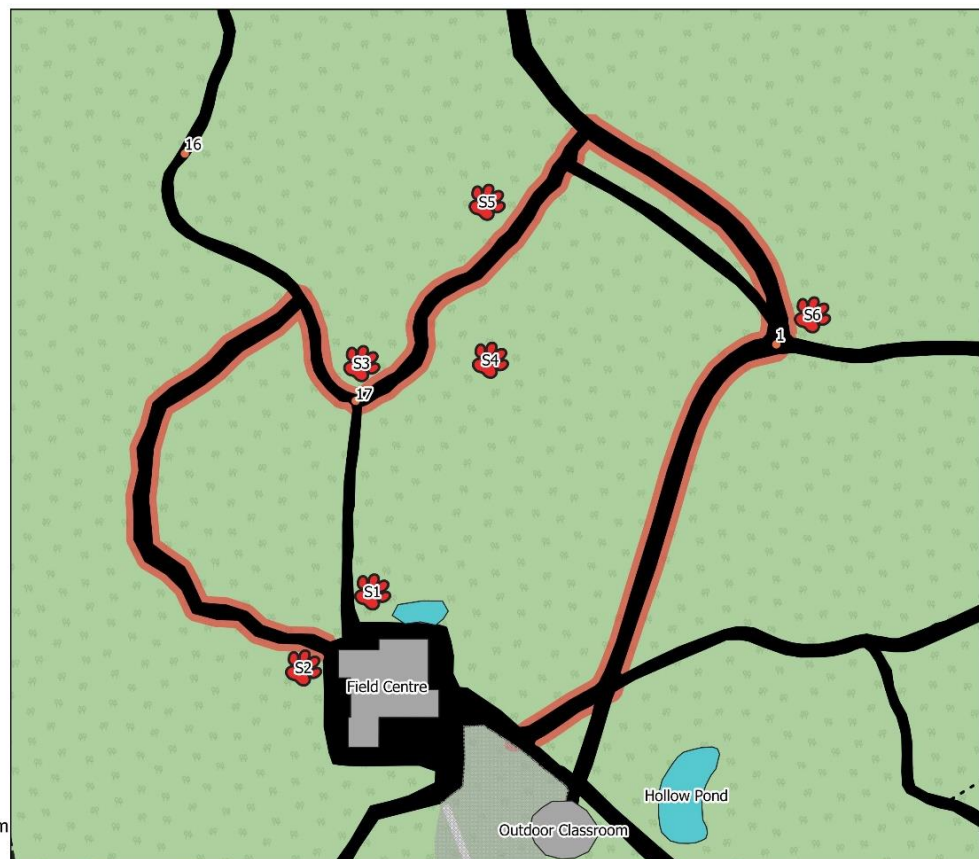
Legend

- Main Paths 
- No-go paths 
- Activity Route 
- Activity 
- Post Numbers* 

**If you get lost call
01372 379509**



0 25 50 m

Equipment

You will be able to borrow the equipment required on the day:

- Go Find It cards – one set per group of 15
- Cups for smelly potions – one between two
- Water bottle x 2 (one with vinegar, one with water and indicator solution) – for each group of 15
- Blindfolds – one for each child
- Sticky strips – one for each child
- A few pencils

Remember to ensure the right walk group leader has the medication for the children in their group.

Key Points

Short reminders for the key points of each activity. Please read on for full descriptions.

Activity	Key Points
Go Find It	Read out the adjective on each card, can the group find examples around them? What senses did they use?
Listening circle	Listen to the natural sounds around you for two minutes. What did you hear? Do all animals hear the same?
Smelly potions	Create smelly concoctions in a cup using natural materials – if magical themed, what spell are they going to cast? If scientific focus, why do plants make smells? Add a little water to enhance the smell and name your potion. Please empty the cups at the end.
Blindfold trail (optional)	Find out first-hand how a woodlouse experiences the woods by taking away the sense of sight and using feelers instead.
Sticky strips (optional)	Take something home with you by creating a nature sticky strip, picking items found on the reserve to add to the sticky strip.
Plenary	Can the children remember the activities they did? What have they learned?

Introducing the Trail

This session is all about our five main senses: taste, smell, touch, sound and sight. These senses are going to be used to explore the habitats around the wood and you will be thinking about how other animals in the wood use their senses too.

After your introduction, you can begin Go Find It straight away as you do this activity along the trail.

Go Find It

Introduce this activity around **location S2** before you set off on the trail.

This is a useful activity to keep children engaged with their surroundings as you travel through the woods.

Equipment

- Go Find It cards – one set per group of 15

Instructions

1. Read out the word on the card and ask the group to look for the best example of an object that matches the given adjective.
2. Ask them to look for objects at the side of the path - no need to trample on the habitats.
3. Get them to notice whether they have all found similar things or very different things? Was it easy or difficult? Name the objects if you know them!
4. Discuss which of their senses they used to find the object.
5. Then move on along the trail and select a new card.

There are wooden carvings of some of our native species in the woods around this area. As you follow the path, keep an eye out and see what you can spot!

Carry on following the path on the map to **location S4**, which will be a small hollow on the right with wooden stumps for sitting on.

Listening Circle

At **location S4**, sit the group down on the stumps.

We recommend around 5 minutes should be allocated for this activity.

Instructions

1. This activity is very simply to sit for a few minutes and tune in to the sense of hearing
2. The children will sit still, close their eyes and listen to the sounds of the wood around them for two minutes
3. Ask the children to count how many different sounds they hear on their fingers as they listen
4. When the two minutes are up, ask them to recall what they have heard

What were the natural sounds that they heard?
What were the non-natural sounds?
What was their favourite sound?
Are there any sounds they don't recognise?

Do all animals hear the same?

- Dogs can hear very well and they can hear high pitched sounds that we can't
- Pigeons can hear well too and they can hear low pitched sounds that we can't
- Some animals like dogs and horses can move their ears to hear sound from lots of directions
- Lots of animals including insects hear through the ground, feeling vibrations

Why do animals make sound?

- Communication over distance
- Safety in groups
- Finding a mate
- Alerting danger
- Defending territories
- Do the children have any other ideas?

Bonus facts:

- Bats use hearing as echolocation to avoid obstacles when flying in the dark by listening for echoes bouncing off surfaces
- Birds call when danger is near to alert other birds of the predator
- Dolphins and meerkats even have names for each other that they use while communicating

When you finish this activity, go back to the path and up the steps to a wooden table which is **location S5** on the map.

Smelly Potions

At **location S5**, gather the group in front of the table.

We recommend around 15 minutes should be allocated for this activity.

Equipment

- Plastic cups – one between two
- Bottle of water

Top Tip: This activity can be focussed towards scientific investigation of why plants have certain smells e.g. for defence against herbivores or fresh leaves vs decomposing leaves... or it can be focussed more towards imaginative play such as making a spell; good spells have good smells and bad spells smell awful – what will their spell cause to happen?

Instructions

This activity brings the children's focus to their sense of smell and the natural smells that can be found in the woods. The children will be in pairs for this activity and each pair will be given a cup.

1. They are going to create a smelly potion in their cup using only natural materials from around the area. They can use things like leaves, sticks, stones, feathers, sand, mud, bark, moss and anything else they find.

NB: We don't pick flowers, mushrooms or use living animals in our potions.

2. They can choose to make a good smelling potion or a bad smelling potion, and they need to decide what ingredients will help.
3. When they have gathered their ingredients, they need to find a stick on the floor for mixing up their potion and come to an adult for a splash of water from the bottle. The water wets the ingredients and helps to lift the smells and make them stronger.
4. Once the children have finished their smelly potions, they need to think of a name for it e.g. 'the scent of sunshine', 'woodland wonder' or for a bad smell it could be 'mud monster' or even 'l'eau d'fart'!
5. Everyone can take turns smelling each other's creations and deciding if they are good or bad smells. They might not all agree!

You could introduce ideas about why plants may have different smells - to deter herbivores or attract pollinators. Flowers can smell sweet to attract bees or some smell rotten to attract flies!

When you are finished, ask the children to empty their cups onto the ground before handing them in. Try to get as much out as possible to help our staff clean the cups later on.

Follow the trail to the **location S6** on the map.

Blindfold Trail or Sticky Strips

Depending on the other sessions booked, the activity will be either the blindfold trail or sticky strips.

Explain this activity at **location S6**.

This should take around 15 minutes.

Blindfold Trail

Equipment

- Blindfolds – one per child

Instructions

This activity brings the children's focus to their sense of touch.

1. Explain to the children that they are going to find out how a woodlouse experiences these woods. Woodlice, like many creatures that lives under logs, don't rely on their sense of sight like we do. They use feelers (antennae) to feel their way through a dark world.
2. Show the children how to hold one hand outstretched in front of their face to protect them from branches etc., while the other hand holds on to the rope to guide the way.
3. Line the children up and give them a blindfold each.
4. Once they are wearing their blindfolds guide them one by one to the beginning of the rope trail, placing their guiding hand on the rope. **Ensure their protective 'feeler' hand is outstretched in front of their face.**
5. Set them off along the rope with at least 5 paces between them to help avoid traffic jams.
6. Meet them at the end of the trail and help them to remove their blindfolds. Try to keep them quiet until everyone has finished the trail, then let them express how moving with no eyes made them feel!

Sticky Strips

Equipment

- One sticky strip per child
- A few pencils

Instructions

1. Holding up a sticky strip, peel away a short section of the double-sided tape. It is important not to expose the whole strip as it will lose its stickiness.
2. Find an item from nature (no creatures or fungi) and stick it on to the very far left of the strip, leaving room for more leaves as you go along. The item can be a theme e.g. colours, textures, describing words.

Make sure adults collect the discarded tape strips from the children so that no one accidentally drops them in the woods – and don't forget to put your own names on them too!

Sensory Trail Plenary

5 minutes should be spent on this activity.

This can be done at the benches around the centre.

1. Ask the children if they can remember each of the activities they did and which sense they used for it.
2. Can they remember any animals and how they use senses differently to us?
3. What was their favourite part of the session?
4. If you have key points you want to recap, you can go over these now to reinforce learning.

Wet Weather

There is the option to do a few activities in the classroom in an event of bad weather. This can include potions, bat and moth game or colouring symmetrical butterflies.