

What's that Smell? Parent Instructions

This experiment will allow your child to explore the sense of smell by using the steps of scientific inquiry: 1) observe, 2) hypothesize, 3) experiment, 4) conclude.

Materials:

5 paper bags

cotton balls

5 non-toxic smelly things (perfume, peanut butter, banana, vanilla extract, etc)

Step 1: Observe

Have your child take a walk around the house and find things that are smelly. What is smelly? What does it smell like? Why is it smelly? Have your child write down his or her observations in the experiment log.

Step 2: Hypothesize

Read the Kid's Instructions page with your child. Ask your child to think of some other smelly things. Which of these are the easiest to recognize? Have your child write these answers in the experiment log.

Step 3: Experiment

Station 5: The Smoke Stacks

1. Place one smelly thing in each paper bag. If you are using liquids, like perfume, put some of it on a cotton ball and put the cotton ball in the bag. If possible, use some of the smelly things that your child thought of in step 2.
2. Fold the tops of the bags to close them.
3. Give the bags to your child and ask him or her to sniff the smell and guess what is inside. No peeking! Have your child write down his or her answers.

Step 4: Conclude

Open the bags. Did your child guess correctly? Which smells were the easiest to recognize? Which were the hardest? Have your child write down his or her answers under "My Conclusion" in the experiment log.

What's that Smell? Kid's Instructions

How good is your sense of smell? Find out with this Hands-on-Activity!

Step 1: Observe

Look around your house for things that you can smell.

What can you find? What does it smell like? Why is it smelly?

Write down your observations in the experiment log.

Step 2: Hypothesize

Think of some other things, like foods or plants, that are easy to smell.

Would you know what they were if you couldn't see them? Which smells are the easiest to recognize?

Write your hypothesis in your experiment log.

Step 3: Experiment

1. Have your parent or another adult put 5 different smelly things in paper bags. Don't watch!
2. Smell the top of the bags without looking inside. Do you know what is inside?
3. Guess what is in each paper bag and write your answer on the experiment log.

Station 5: The Smoke Stacks

Step 4: Conclude

Look at what is inside the bags. Did you guess right?

Which smells were the easiest to guess? Which were the hardest?

Write your answers on the experiment log, under "My Conclusions."

Experiment Log: What's that Smell?

1. What I Observed:

2. My Hypothesis:

3. What I Thought Was In The Bags:

4. My Conclusion: