



Senses

Children are born scientists – they love to explore and discover. There are many activities that you can enjoy doing at home with your little scientist.

QUESTIONS

- How do we find out about the world?
- What do you see with? What do you hear with? What do you smell with? What do you taste with? What do you feel things with?

TRY THIS AT HOME

Listening Boxes

See a video demonstration of this *Science Time* activity at www.questacon.edu.au

You Will Need

- Five containers with lids (any sort of containers as long as they're not see-through. Film canisters work well.)
- Four things to put inside the containers (such as rice, salt, chick peas, rocks etc.)

WHAT TO DO

1. Fill two of your containers with the same thing and the remaining three with the other things. Pick things that will sound different when you shake the containers. Close the lids tightly.
2. Shake the containers and listen to the noise each one makes. Try to find the two that sound the same. Which sound is the same?

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Your brain hears the sounds and compares them to the sounds you remembered from the other containers to find a match.

DISCOVER MORE

- Which one is loudest or quietest?
- What other words can you use to describe the sounds?



DID YOU KNOW?

- We can see things because of light entering our eyes. Light reflects off objects around us and travels into our eyes and hits the retina at the back of the eye. The retina then sends a nerve signal to our brains, which tells our brains what we see.
- When we hear a sound wave, it vibrates a part inside our ear called the ear drum. This causes several other bones and special hairs inside our ear to vibrate and send a nerve signal to our brains which tells our brains what we are hearing.
- Some people don't have full use of their senses such as their hearing or vision. Discuss this with your child.
- Our sense of taste depends not just on the taste buds on our tongues but also our sense of smell.

Open 9 am to 5 pm every day.
Closed Christmas Day.
Admission fees apply.
King Edward Terrace, Canberra
t 02 6270 2800



TRY THESE OTHER ACTIVITIES

- **Feeling:** Can you tell which toy is which just by feeling them, without looking? Put a toy in a pillow case and use your hands to feel the toy.
- **Hearing:** Collect noise makers from around the house. Put them out of sight and make the noise. Ask your child to guess which item it is by the noise it makes.
- **Smelling:** Can you tell what something is just by smelling it? Cut up different fruits on a plate. Ask your child to close their eyes and play a smelling guessing game. Use your sense of taste to enjoy eating the fruit after you've played the game.
- **Taste:** Encourage your child to taste different foods that they may not usually eat. Use different words to describe the tastes. Does the food taste sweet, bitter, sour or maybe spicy?

SING SONGS

Sing this song with your child. Don't forget to do the actions if you know them!

- **Eyes and Ears, Mouth and Nose** (version of Heads and Shoulders, Knees and Toes)
- **A Sailor Went to Sea, Sea, Sea**

READ BOOKS

Have fun finding more at your local library, book store or online.

- *Paul Needs Specs* by Bernard Cohen
- *The Magic School Bus Explores the Senses* by Joanna Cole and Bruce Degen
- *The Five Senses* by Keith Faulkner

GO ON AN EXCURSION

Go on a sensory excursion! Here are some suggestions in the Canberra region.

- National Zoo and Aquarium and learn about how other animals use their senses.
- Go to the garden or flower shop and use your nose to smell all the lovely flowers.

INVESTIGATE WEBSITES

There are also many websites for children about senses. We suggest you start with:

- **Questacon** Watch the *Science Time Senses* video at www.questacon.edu.au
- **Scope** Find out about animal senses www.csiro.au/scope/episodes/e58.htm