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# TAKE CHARGE of your senses

Mini Lesson




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# tips for use

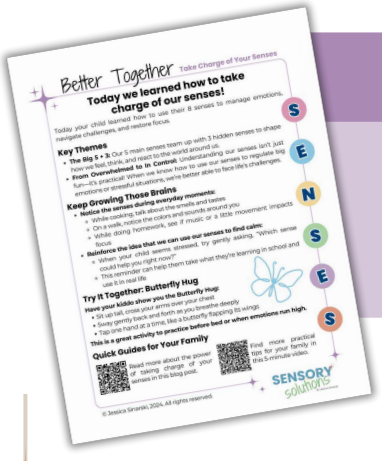
**ASCA standards:**
- M 4
- B-SMS 2
- B-SMS 7

This mini lesson helps students understand the power of their sensory systems.

Use this lesson to introduce the **Take Charge of Your Senses poster**.

Keep the conversation going with questions from ***Your Amazing Brain* Discussion Guide**.

Revisit these tools often to empower students to make helpful sensory choices.


Better Together Take Charge of Your Senses

**Today we learned how to take charge of our senses!**

Today your child learned how to use their 8 senses to manage emotions, navigate challenges, and restore focus.

**Key Themes**
- **The Big 5 + 3:** Our 5 main senses team up with 3 hidden senses to shape how we feel, think, and react to the world around us.
- **From Overwhelmed to In Control:** Understanding our senses to regulate big emotions or stressful situations, we're better able to face life's challenges.

**Keep Growing Those Brains**

**Notice the senses during everyday moments:**
- While cooking, talk about the smells and tastes.
- On a walk, notice the colors and sounds around you.
- While doing homework, see if music or a little movement impacts focus.

**Reinforce the idea that we can use our senses to find calm:**
- When your child seems stressed, try gently asking, "Which sense could help you right now?"
- This reminder can help them take what they're learning in school and use it in real life.

**Try It Together: Butterfly Hug**

**Have your kiddo show you the Butterfly Hug:**
- Sit up tall, cross your arms over your chest.
- Gently tap back and forth as you breathe deeply.
- Keep gently tapping at a time, like a butterfly flapping its wings.

**This is a great activity to practice before bed or when emotions run high.**

**Quick Guides for Your Family**

Read more about the power of taking charge of your senses in this blog post.

Find more practical tips for your family in this 5-minute video.

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## Building Bridges

To bridge the gap between home and school, send **Better Together: Take Charge of Your Senses** home with each student.

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# Mini Lesson

## Learning Objective

Students will use their sensory understanding to choose effective coping strategies.

## Spark Curiosity

- Invite students to sit comfortably and take 3 slow, deep breaths together, focusing on the feeling of air moving in and out. For younger students, you can try laying on the ground with a stuffed animal or small object on the belly so they can see the rise and fall of their belly.
- Ask students to identify the senses that activity engaged. Answers might include hearing, smell, and - for your more sensory savvy students - interoception.

## Lesson

- Ask students: “Have you ever wondered why certain sounds, textures, or even smells grab your attention, while some are super annoying? Our senses do more than help us navigate the world. They play a big role in how we feel, think, and react. Let’s explore how tuning into your senses can help you feel more cool, collected, and in control.”
- Introduce the **Take Charge of Your Senses poster** and explain or remind students that all these senses influence our mood, energy, and focus.

### The Big 5 + 3

Split into groups or generate responses in other creative ways to discuss each sense:

- **Sight:** Helps you take in and process everything from reading text to noticing a friend’s expression.
- **Hearing:** Affects your ability to focus in noisy environments or relax with calming music.
- **Smell:** Connects you to memories and emotions, like the smell of grandma’s house or your favorite meal.
- **Taste:** More than just flavors, it can impact mood. Ever notice how a favorite snack can improve your day?
- **Touch:** Whether it’s textures, pressure, or temperature, this sense can soothe or distract you.




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# Mini Lesson

(continued)



- **Movement / Balance (Vestibular):** Ever felt unsteady after spinning? That's your vestibular system in action. It also helps you hold your head up and focus your eyes.
- **Body Awareness (Proprioception):** Helps you know where your body is in space without looking—like walking up stairs without watching your feet.
- **Inner Sense (Interoception):** Allows you to feel what's happening inside—like hunger, thirst, or even stress.

**Summarize the Discussion**

"Your senses are like signals your brain interprets, and sometimes those signals can feel overwhelming. But they can also help you refocus, relax, or recharge when you're feeling off. Let's stay curious about what helps us here at school so we can take charge of our senses."

**Closing Activity**

Teach students the Butterfly Hug to feel the calming effect of pressure (proprioception) and movement (vestibular).

1. Sit up tall, cross your arms over your chest, and squeeze.
2. With your hands on your shoulders or upper arms, begin to sway back and forth.
3. Close your eyes if you would like.
4. Tap one hand at a time, like a gentle butterfly flapping its wings.
5. Breathe slowly—in through your nose and out through your mouth—as you continue to tap and sway.
6. Take one more big, deep breath and blow it all the way out as you release your hands.



**Keep the Learning Going**

- Send home **Better Together: Take Charge of Your Senses** to help parents and caregivers reinforce the lesson.
- Hang and use the poster often, modeling, teaching, and practicing taking charge of our senses to create a more cool, collected, and in control classroom.


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