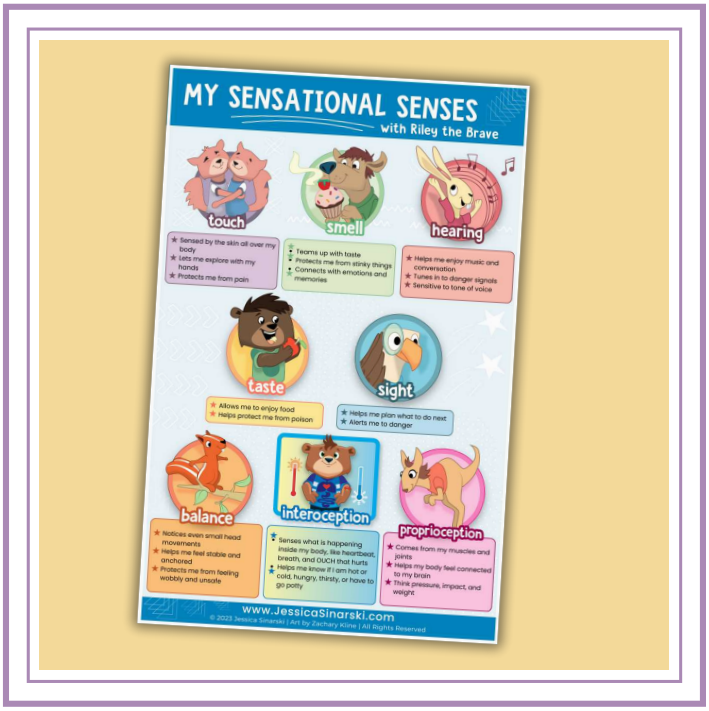
SENSORY solutions™

WHY do we have SENSES?

Mini Lesson



© Jessica Sinarski, 2024

tips for use

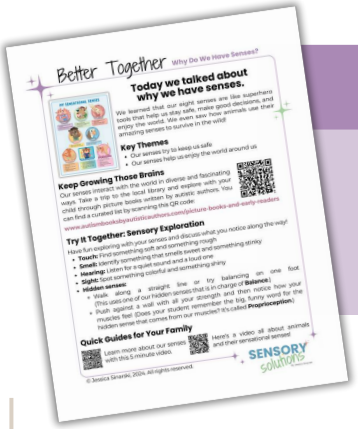
ASCA standards:
- M 4
- B-SMS 3
- B-SMS 7

This mini lesson teaches students how their senses work together to keep them safe and in control.

Use this lesson to introduce the **My Sensational Senses poster**.

You may need to break out a regulation exercise after the excitement of the scavenger hunt in order to transition to reflection.

For older or more curious students, **share this video** about arctic foxes' extraordinary senses.


Better Together Why Do We Have Senses?

Today we talked about why we have senses.

We learned that our eight senses are like superhero tools that help us stay safe, make good decisions, and enjoy the world. We even saw how animals use their amazing senses to survive in the wild.

Key Themes
- Our senses try to keep us safe.
- Our senses help us enjoy the world around us

Keep Growing Those Brains

Our senses interact with the world in diverse and fascinating ways. Take a trip to the local library or explore with your child through picture books written by autistic authors. You can find a curated list by scanning this QR code.

www.autismbooksbyautistics.com/picture-books-and-early-readers

Try It Together: Sensory Exploration

Have fun exploring with your senses and discuss what you notice along the way!
- **Touch:** Find something soft and something rough
- **Smell:** Identify something that smells sweet and something stinky
- **Hearing:** Listen for a quiet sound and a loud one
- **Sight:** Spot something colorful and something shiny
- **Hidden senses:**
  - Walk along a straight line or try balancing on one foot. (This uses one of our hidden senses that is in charge of **Balance**.)
  - Push against a wall with all your strength and then notice how your muscles feel. Does your body remember the big, funny word for the hidden sense that comes from our muscles? It's called **Proprioception**.

Quick Guides for Your Family

Learn more about our senses with this 5-minute video.

Here's a video all about animals and their sensational senses!

SENSORY solutions

© Jessica Sinarski, 2024. All rights reserved.

Building Bridges

To bridge the gap between home and school, send **Better Together: Why Do We Have Senses** home with each student.

SENSORY solutions™

© Jessica Sinarski, 2024



Mini Lesson

This mini-lesson introduces students to the essential role their senses play, highlighting how these "superhero tools" keep them safe and enrich their lives. By linking sensory awareness to real-world behavior, students can improve self-awareness and decision-making skills.

Learning Objectives

- Understand how our senses help us navigate the world safely, respond to danger, and enjoy various experiences.
- Identify and explain how different senses work individually and together to protect us and enhance our experiences.

Spark Curiosity

- Begin with a question: "What would life be like if we couldn't see, hear, smell, taste, or feel anything?" Give students a moment to imagine and share.
- Explain: "Our senses are like superhero tools that help us stay safe, connect with others, and enjoy the world around us."

Lesson

- Use **this video** to help students see how animals use their super senses to stay safe and find food.
- Ask students what cool or surprising thing they saw about how animals use their senses. Encourage simple, enthusiastic responses.
- Make connections: "Just like animals use their senses to stay safe, we do too! For example, we hear a fire alarm to know there's danger, or we taste food to check if it's yummy and safe to eat."

Make it fun with a sensory scavenger hunt.

Students will use all their senses to explore the classroom or an outdoor area. Provide a simple checklist appropriate for your class's reading abilities and the resources available for them to explore. For example:

- **Touch:** Find something soft or something rough.
- **Smell:** Smell something sweet (like a scented marker) or something less pleasant (like a crayon or pencil).
- **Hearing:** Listen for a quiet sound (e.g., whispering) or a loud sound (e.g., clapping hands)

© Jessica Sinarski, 2024. All rights reserved.

Mini Lesson

(continued)

- **Sight:** Spot something colorful or something shiny.
- **Taste:** Try something sweet (like a small piece of fruit) or salty (like a pretzel).
- **Balance:** Set up a simple line on the floor to walk on or have students try balancing on one foot.
- **Proprioception:** Push against a wall and notice the feeling in your muscles or give yourself a gentle "bear hug" and feel the pressure.
- **Interoception:** Take a deep breath and notice how it feels in your chest. Or, place your hand on your stomach and describe how your body feels (e.g., hungry, full, calm).

Group Reflection

Bring students back together and discuss. Ask students:

- Which sense was the most fun to use?
- Which sense was the hardest to use?
- Did you feel safe as you used your sensational senses? Did you notice any other feelings?
- Can you think of a time when one of your senses helped keep you safe or helped you have fun?

Wrap Up

Help students see the connection between the video and the scavenger hunt with the following statements:

- In the video, we saw how animals use their senses to survive and thrive in the wild. During our scavenger hunt, we discovered how our own senses help us feel safe, stay balanced, and enjoy the world around us.
- Just like animals, our senses are powerful tools that keep us connected to everything happening around us.
- Remember, whether it's listening for danger or letting you know you need to eat, your senses are always working hard to take care of you!

After the Lesson

- Encourage students to pay attention to how their senses work together in the coming days.
- Remember to send home **Better Together: Why Do We Have Senses** home with each student.

© Jessica Sinarski, 2024. All rights reserved.

TERMS OF USE

1 LICENSE

This toolkit and all items therein are licensed for use exclusively by the purchasing school and its authorized staff. This license is non-transferable and non-exclusive.

2 USAGE

The toolkit may be used solely for educational purposes within the purchasing school. Any commercial use, resale, or further distribution is strictly prohibited.

3 MODIFICATION

Users may not modify, adapt, or create derivative works from the toolkit without prior written permission from the provider.

4 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

All content within the toolkit, including but not limited to text, graphics, and videos, remains the intellectual property of the provider and is protected by applicable copyright laws.

5 LIABILITY

The provider is not liable for any damages resulting from the use or misuse of the toolkit. Users assume all responsibility for ensuring the toolkit meets their needs and complies with applicable regulations.

6 TERMINATION

The provider reserves the right to terminate the license if the terms of use are violated. Upon termination, the user must cease all use and return or destroy all copies of the toolkit.

7 GOVERNING LAW

These terms are governed by the laws of the jurisdiction in which the purchasing school is located.