

# 2 Mindful smelling

Pupils focus their attention on smells, exploring different objects by smelling them.

**Intention:** Pupils bring focused awareness to what they're doing and notice how it feels to pay close attention.



**SEL competency: Self-management** Focus on what you're doing

**Materials:** Four or five different boxes or bags with things to smell inside them, e.g.: a soap bar, soil, coffee, chocolate, orange peel or whatever you have to hand

**Duration:** 10–20 minutes

**Key words:** *senses, smell*; names of the objects used

## Instructions:

### Prepare

- 1 You may want to pre-teach the key words for this activity.
- 2 Set up your different boxes or bags with the objects to smell and make sure pupils can't see inside. Each bag has one object to smell. If the group is large, you might have two or three bags with the same object inside. Label them 1 to 5.
- 3 Introduce the activity: *We're going to practise focusing on our sense of smell.*

### Practise

- 4 Say: *Imagine you have just arrived from another planet and this is the first time you've seen this object (the box or bag with the thing to smell in it). You must explore it through your sense of smell.*
- 5 Demonstrate the activity by taking the bag, closing your eyes and smelling it and then passing it on: *Now in turn close your eyes and using your sense of smell, take a long breath in, smelling the object. Don't say what you think it is yet. Notice if you like the smell or not. Ask yourself, how does it make you feel? How does your body feel? Do you want to smell it again or not?*

- 6** Allow all pupils to smell each of the objects in turn. Then invite them to share as a group what they think each one was and how they knew. What else did they notice? The sense of smell is strongly connected to memory so invite pupils to notice if any of the smells reminded them of anything – a time or a place, i.e.: *Did the soil smell remind you of anywhere?*

## Reflect

- 7** Use pupils' first language if necessary: *Was it easy to focus on smelling the object? Did things smell like you expected, and if not, how was it different? Did you like focusing on just one thing? Do you normally notice the smells of things?*
- 8** Bring the activity to a close: *Today we focused on smell. We learned that our senses help us to focus.*

**Focus on one thing at a time.**