

Insect Senses

Estimated Time: 30-45 minutes

SUMMARY

Insects view their world differently than we do, in part because of their unique sensory system. In the following activity your child will pretend to be a bee or similar insect that uses antennae and compound eyes!

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- Using sensory input to navigate like a bee
- Differences between human vision and bee vision

Materials Used per Student	Resources Used
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper for drawing tests • Pencil or pen • Colored pencils or crayons • 34 plastic drinking straws with bend • Scissors • Toilet paper tube • 8x10 or larger cardstock • Tape • Objects for obstacle course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://andygiger.com/science/beye/beyehome.html

WHAT TO DO

1. Bundle 30 straws and cut into 4 even pieces. Pop open any straw pieces that pinched shut from cutting. Cut the toilet paper tube into half so that you have two cylinders. Set the cylinders upright and stack the straw pieces into each. These are your compound eyes.
2. Look around the room using your compound eyes. You might need to use one at a time and put a hand over your other eye. Look down at your paper and try and write your name or draw a picture.
3. Using your regular vision, write your name or draw a picture – compare to your bee eye drawing.
4. Bee eyes see color differently, too. Humans can see shades of red, green, and blue. Bees see yellow, green, blue, and ultraviolet. Draw two flowers. Color your first flower with yellow and red. Now draw the same flower, swapping out the red for green and then use your pencil or a black crayon or pencil and draw a pattern on your flower. Many flowers have patterns that guide bees to the center where the nectar (and pollen!) are concentrated.
5. Next, cut your cardstock into strips – you want your strips to be 2.5 - 3 inches wide. Make the cardstock strips into a band that fits snugly around your head.
6. Take four straws and attach them to your band. For an insect like a bee, they have two antenna that extend off their head. You can use one set of straws and attach to your band and then extend them by attaching an additional straw.

7. Set up an obstacle course on your floor. You can use books, chairs, stuffed animals, etc. Place the band on your head either over your eyes or on your forehead. If you aren't covering your eyes, make sure you keep them closed. Crawling on the floor, move your head back and forth so that your antenna hit the objects in your path. Go slow and try to only rely on the vibration of the antenna hitting the obstacles.