



# Sensory Walk

Teachers/parents/guardians: Here's a fun activity for kids to incorporate with CLiF's winter writing contest! Dress warmly, and grab pencils, paper and clipboard, or a voice recording device (a cell phone works great, and can also be used for taking pictures!), and head outside for a walk together!

## Logistics:

- ☐ Choose four stopping points, using each one to focus on a different sense: "**Smell**," "**See**," "**Hear**" and "**Touch**."
- ☐ Kids can use a clipboard to make notes, a phone to save voice memos, or choose to simply move through the walk and collect mental observations.
- ☐ Customize the activity by choosing to experience each sensory stop in one outing, or breaking it up into several separate walks, each focused on an individual sensory stop.

*If using a voice recorder, don't forget to start recording at each stop!*

### Smell

**SAY:** "Close your eyes and breath in through your nose."

**ASK:** "What smells do you notice? What does winter smell like?"

**TIP:** To elicit concrete words and phrases, when you hear, "It smells good," ask:

- "What makes it smell good to you? "
- "What does 'good' smell like? Are there different parts to it that you notice?"
- "What does the smell remind you of?"

Repeat several times so that an opportunity is given to smell many things. Spend a couple of minutes on notes, voice memos, or mental observations, then move onto the next stop.

## See

**SAY:** "Look around. Let your eyes move and really use them to see your surroundings."

**ASK:** "What do you see that reminds you of winter?"

**TIP:** This question will probably elicit a noun. As a follow-up question, ask:

- "What word could you put in front of [noun] that tells others about it?"

Repeat several times so that an opportunity is given to see many things. Spend a couple of minutes on notes, voice memos, or mental observations, then move onto the next stop.

## Hear

**SAY:** "Let's close our eyes and listen with our ears."

**ASK:** "What sounds do you notice? What do you hear? What does winter sound like?"

**TIP:** To elicit concrete words and phrases, ask:

- "Can you tell me more about that sound."
- "When have you heard that sound before?"

Repeat several times so that an opportunity is given to hear different things. Spend a couple of minutes on notes, voice memos, or mental observations, then move onto the next stop.

## Touch

**SAY:** "Let's take off our gloves and find something we want to touch."

**ASK:** "What do you feel? How does it 'feel' like winter?"

**TIP:** To elicit concrete words and phrases, ask:

- "What words can you use to describe what you are feeling?"
- "Tell me more!"

Repeat several times so that an opportunity is given to touch several things near them. Spend a couple of minutes on notes, voice memos, or mental observations, then head back inside!

## After the Walk

☐ **Together, discuss your observations from the walk. Possible questions to ask:**

- “What was your favorite winter sense today?”
- “What was your best describing word today?”
- “Would you tell me one word or phrase you used today from each of our stops?”

☐ **Read and show the writing prompt. Options for response creation:**

- General approach:
  - Ask them to choose a couple of the sensory images they’ve collected to use in their response to the prompt.
  - Respond to the prompt several times, each time with a new two sentence combination.
  - Share a favorite response or two, and discuss if there are describing words that could be added that would help a reader picture their thoughts more clearly
- Figurative Language add-ons:
  - *Alliteration*: Is there a place for words that begin with the same sound to create flow and add interest to the description?
  - *Simile*: Could you use "like" or "as" to turn one of your touch sensory descriptions into a simile to help a reader “feel” it?

☐ **Have them choose a favorite response and write it on the submission form.**

- Illustrations welcome! (But not required.)
- Add adult narration for clarity as needed for emergent and pre-emergent writers