

Notice the Details

Observe the World Around You

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Time Needed: 10-20 minutes

Arts Focus: Literary Arts

Age Range: 4-8

Mini-Lesson Description:

In this mindfulness lesson, learners will read a poem and use all 5 senses to notice the details of a found stone. They will then use sensory details to imagine going inside a stone and write about its hidden life.

Key Concepts:

The 5 Senses; Observation; Sensory Details; Poetry; Imagination; Inside; Outside; Descriptive Language.

Materials Needed/Prep:

- Blank paper, any size
- Pencil
- Found and cleaned rock(s)/stone(s)

Step-by-Step:

1. Together with the learner(s), read this poem, "Stone", by Charles Simic:

*Go inside a stone
That would be my way.
Let somebody else become a dove
Or gnash with tiger's tooth.
I am happy to be a stone.*

*From the outside the stone is a riddle:
No one knows how to answer it.
Yet within, it must be cool and quiet
Even though a cow steps on it full
weight,
Even though a child throws it in a
river;*

*The stone sinks slow, unperturbed
To the river bottom
Where the fishes come to knock on it
And listen.*

*I have seen sparks fly out
When two stones are rubbed,
So perhaps it is not dark inside after all;
Perhaps there is moon shining
From somewhere, as though behind a hill -
Just enough light to make out
The strange writings, the star charts
On the inner walls.*

2. Practice noticing sensations and sensory details with the learner(s). Observe and share what details you notice alongside the learner in your environment (what do you hear, smell, touch, feel, see...).
3. Collect a small stone (one you can fit in the palm of your hand) or other object from home or outside—one for you, and one for each learner participating.
4. With the learners, close your eyes and hold the rock in your hand. Guide the learner(s) to observe the rock using touch, then smell, hearing, even taste (only after cleaning the rocks with soap and hot water!).
 - Touch: *What does it the rock feel like?* Suggested temperature words to describe: hot, cold, warm. Texture words to describe: bumpy, smooth, wet, dry, sticky, hard, soft, heavy, pointy.
 - Imagine: With eyes closed, ask the learner(s): *What color does the rock feel like?*
 - Look: Open eyes then observe using sight. Ask the learner(s): *What color is it? What shape is it? Does its shape remind you of something else? What can you see when you get very close up?*
5. Have the learner(s) draw and/or write about their stone. Demonstrate how you can trace its shape on a piece of paper, then draw or write inside and/or around it. You can also name your stone!

Variations and Next Steps:

As the learner(s) to imagine going inside the rock, ask: *How would you get inside? Or become a rock? What worlds do you imagine inside this rock?*