

DAY 2 EXPERIMENT

Making Sense of Senses

Materials (for every mate)

- Optical Illusions Sheets
- Two 1-in. squares each of four different textured fabrics
- Brown paper bag
- Four 1-oz. or 2-oz. condiment cups with lids
- $\frac{1}{8}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$ t. vanilla
- Pinch of salt
- Pinch of sugar
- Pinch of coffee grounds

Pre-prep

Cut four fabrics with different textures into 1-in. squares. Place two of each type of fabric in a brown bag so each mate ends up with eight total. Prepare the four condiment cups by putting a pinch of salt in one, a pinch of sugar in one, a pinch of coffee grounds in one, and $\frac{1}{8}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$ t. vanilla in one. Label the lid of the salt with 1 and the lid of the sugar with 2.

Class Time Directions and Dialogue

God gave us really great gifts when he gave us our senses. Everyone, take a big sniff of our fresh, VBS air. *Do so.* When you did that, you used your sense of smell. God gave you the sense of smell as a gift so you can enjoy different scents and use them to make decisions. Think of what decision you might make if you smell smoke in your house! Or what decision might you make if you smell pizza?

Let's brainstorm at least ten good smells in the next ten seconds. Just shout them out. On your mark, get set, go! *Do so,* then say, "Thank you, God, for our sense of smell!"

Now let's rub our fingertips together. *Do so.* You just used your sense of touch. God gave you the sense of touch as a gift so you can enjoy warm hugs and handshakes, feel the pleasure of a dip in the pool, and, in this fallen world, be warned if something is hurting you. It also helps you know the temperature of cold water or a hot sidewalk.

Let's brainstorm at least ten soft or cold things to touch. On your mark, get set, go! *Do so,* then say, "Thank you, God, for our sense of touch!"



Okay, now lick your lips. *Do so.* God gave you the gift of taste so you can enjoy all kinds of flavors. Imagine what it would be like if everything you put in your mouth had no taste—it just tasted like nothing.

Let's brainstorm at least ten things that are nice to taste. On your mark, get set, go! *Do so,* then say, "Thank you, God, for our sense of taste!"

Now, look over there! *Point to an object across the room.* When you did that, you used your sense of sight. God gave us the gift of sight so we can see all kinds of interesting objects and beautiful colors in God's creation.

Let's brainstorm at least ten things to see. On your mark, get set, go! *Do so,* then say, "Thank you, God, for our sense of sight!"

And hearing is another sense God gives us. Say a sentence to a partner without speaking it out loud. Can you figure out what was just said? *Do so and take responses.* The ability to hear makes it much easier to communicate with each other.

Let's brainstorm at least ten sounds we hear. On your mark, get set, go! *Do so,* then say, "Thank you, God, for our sense of hearing!"

These are all great gifts from our great Creator.

Today we're going to test some of our *senses*. Are you ready?

1. First, let's test our sense of smell. Open and smell what's in the two cups with the dark substances. Is everyone able to smell a difference between these two things? *Take responses.* Does anyone know what the dry, grainy substance is? *Take responses.* Coffee! What about the liquid one? *Take responses.* Vanilla! Raise your hand if you think the vanilla smells good. Great job using your sense of smell. *Add more items to smell as you have time.*
2. Next, let's test your sense of taste. Take a tiny taste of the vanilla. Does it taste like you were expecting? *Take responses.* No, it tastes bitter. Now look at the two cups with the white granules. Are you able to tell what they are by using your sense of sight? *Take responses.* No, not for sure. But your sense of taste can let you know what they are. Open sample 1 and take a tiny taste, but don't say what it is until everyone's done. So what is it? *Take responses.* Right, salt. Now try sample 2. What is it? *Take responses.* Right, sugar. Great job using your sense of taste!
3. Now to our sense of touch. Without looking, reach into your brown bag and pull out only one piece of material. *Do so.* There's another piece with that same texture still in the bag. Use your sense of touch to reach back in and try to find it. If you don't get it right away, that's okay. Just keep trying. *Do so.* Great job using your sense of touch!
4. Do you think it would have been easier to match those fabrics using your sense of sight? *Take responses.* What if all the pieces were the same color and looked the same but only felt different? *Take*

responses. Something to think about! Any time you open your eyes and look around, you're using your sense of sight. But now we're going to trick our eyes with some optical illusions. *Show the Optical Illusion Sheets.* Great job using your sense of sight today!

Read Proverbs 20:12. God designed us with different senses so that we can glorify him and enjoy this world. Because we live in a sin-cursed world, we also use our senses to protect us from danger. So let smells and sights and sounds and tastes and touches remind you to love God and praise him! Use these great gifts for his glory.

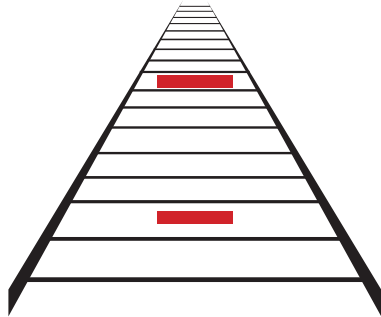
Tip Corner

- Remind the mates not to share their opinions of what they are smelling, tasting, seeing, and feeling until others have had their turn to try it.
- Be sensitive to students who may not be able to use one or more of these senses. God has created each person—including those who are blind or deaf—with great care and purpose and in his image. God reminded Moses that he is in control of how he creates each person for his glory and for the good of all of us (Exodus 4:11). For many people who live with the loss of one sense, their other senses are heightened in ways that a typically developing person's senses may not be. We can be friends with anyone as we look for what we have in common with others and learn from them when we can.
- If vanilla cups are being prepared more than one week in advance, add extra vanilla to compensate for evaporation.
- A science term introduced today is *senses*.

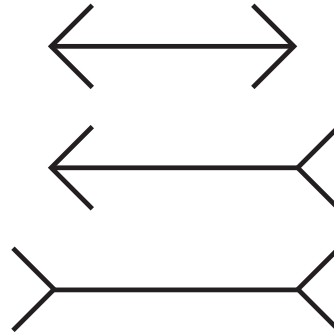
see for yourself . . .

Do you still think optical illusions could never stump you? Try seeing through these cognitive illusions!

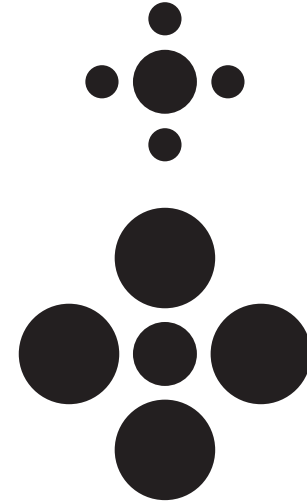
DISTORTING ILLUSIONS



Which line is longer?



Which line is longer?



Which center circle is larger?

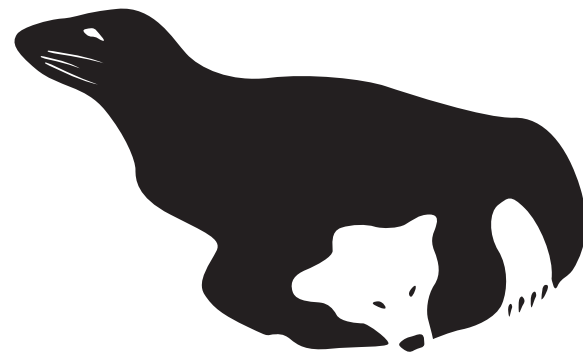
AMBIGUOUS ILLUSIONS



Do you see a young woman
or an old woman?



Do you see a musician or
a girl?



Do you see a seal or
a polar bear?