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COME TO YOUR SENSES: A SENSES-BASED LEARNING GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

"What does your teaching/learning smell like?" We often like to start discussions with this unexpected question. We love the range of answers: from lab cleaning products to old wooden-floored lecture halls, from symbolic refreshing peppermint to dust and mushrooms, it reflects the range of our experiences as teachers but also the range of our sensory imagination.

The idea of senses-based learning started to form at a meeting among friends over tea and chocolates. In this meeting, Prof. Dr. Emilie Sitzia, Ilse van Lieshout, and Prof. Dr. Anna Harris expressed their frustration that sensory training was not integrated into their teaching programmes at the university, even though the senses were so central to their research practices.

In a post-pandemic world, there seemed to be an urgency to reasserting the importance of the senses in teaching and research. It came from our conviction that integrating more senses into the learning process allowed for contextual, interdisciplinary, transferable, and better quality learning. Teaching through the senses also seemed to serve a more diverse range of students, emphasizing self-directedness, student-centeredness, and a more individually tailored learning experience. We also thought it would allow teachers to diversify not only

their teaching methods but also course content.

This idea turned into a proposal, which in turn bloomed into a three-year-long project where we could research the state of sensory education and design, realize various sensory courses and exercises, build a sensory network of like-minded professionals working with the senses, and generally spread awareness of the benefits of employing embodied pedagogies. But we're getting ahead of ourselves. What is senses-based learning?

Senses-based learning (SBL) is a pedagogical methodology for tertiary education that aims to explore and develop sensory awareness and skills while concurrently critically reflecting on their importance in research, education, and professional practice.

SBL aims to re-balance and reassert the importance of sensory skills in tertiary education and in professional practice. It does so through interventions in the existing tertiary education curriculum. Those interventions can take the form of specifically designed learning units (courses, electives, or parts of courses), learning resources (digitally presented in the Sensory Learning Lab), small in-class activities, or specifically designed internships, among others.

THE PROJECT

The SBL project was carried out at Maastricht University from 2021 in collaboration with Marres, House of Contemporary Culture. It ran for three years with a core team of five persons (Emilie Sitzia, Elene Kadagidze, Ilse van Lieshout, Anna Harris, and Joost Dijkstra) as well as faculty ambassadors from across the university. These ambassadors were:

- Nicolle Bassie van den Elst -School of Business and Economics
- Prof. Dr. Dominik Mahr School of Business and Economics
- Prof. Dr. Anke Sambeth Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience
- Andrea Smitten Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience
- Dr. Arthur Willemse Faculty of Law
- Dr. Roy Erkens Maastricht Science Programme
- Prof. Dr. Hans Savelberg Faculty of Health, Medicine, and Life Sciences

The first phases of the project consisted of gathering literature to develop an academic framework for SBL, which meant researching the impact the senses have on learning and how senses have been utilized in tertiary education. We started working on a literature review that explored the benefit of multisensory and embodied learning in this field. Simultaneously, we interviewed 48 teachers, course designers, artists, and various sensory practitioners (such as dancers, cooks, etc.) to gain insights into how the senses were used in professional life, and we started identifying courses or class activities that already used this methodology.

We proceeded to design micro-activities and learning material, exercises and courses, and to lead other pedagogical experiments that were integrated into existing classes. We also integrated and took inspiration from the Training the Senses programme, an initiative developed by Marres, House of Contemporary Culture. Each Training the Senses session combined the expertise of various academics and artists and aimed to share physical knowledge through practical experiments; as the Marres website explains, this can take the form of "walks with city flaneurs", exploring "the relationship between words and smell with neuroscientists and odor specialists". or it could see participants "spend an evening with a food designer, composer, surgeon, mosquito breeder or puppeteer". In the end, we realized there are four different approaches to designing a course on the senses and the choice depends on what one is trying to teach/learn/train.

ing the senses themselves. This
 entails picking a specific sense or
combination of senses to train them
directly with a specific goal in mind.
An example could be an art history course that focuses on training
sight to discern the small details in
a painting, or a biology course that

The first approach focuses on train-

The second approach focuses on the senses as objects of study themselves. It looks at senses through different historical or social perspectives and

trains the senses of smell and sight

ious plants.

to learn to differentiate between var-



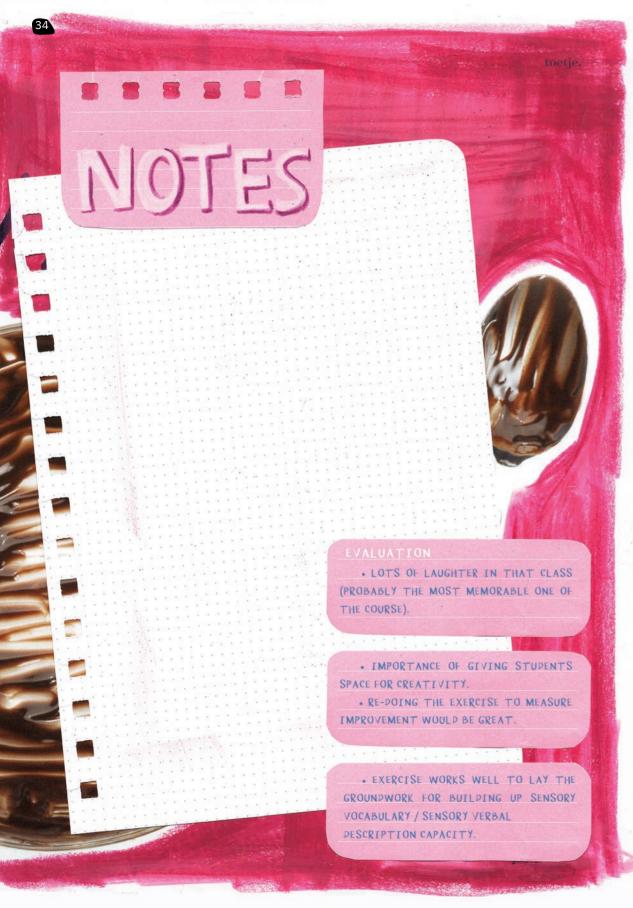


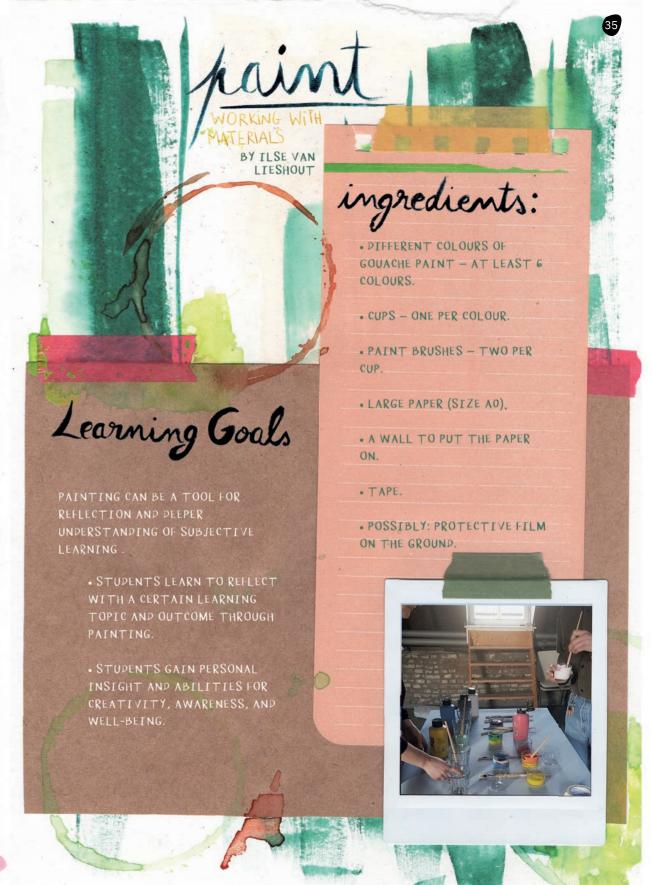
LIST OF WORDS



FOR DESCRIBING
THE SENSES













LEARNING GOALS

DEEPENING YOUR LISTENING IDEAS.

IMAGINING SPACES WHILE LISTENING.



WWW.EARPHONE.SPACE
INSTA @EAR_U_





YOU WILL
HEAR THE INSIDE
OF THE CONTAINER YOU
ARE HOLDING.



NOTES:



INGREDIENTS :

- A SMELL KIT: SELF-MADE WITH

 READY-TO-HAND MATERIALS AND

 ATTEAST FIVE CONTAINERS
- . PLACE: A GARDEN

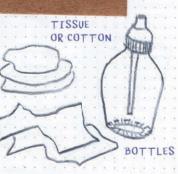
SMELL CAN SERVE AS A RESEARCH TOOL IN SEVERAL WAYS:

1. DURING THE RESEARCH PHASE
(AS A TOOL TO TAKE OTHER
PEOPLE'S PERSPECTIVE OR TO
COME UP COME UP WITH NEW
QUESTIONS FOR THE RESEARCHER
AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS
INVOLVED).

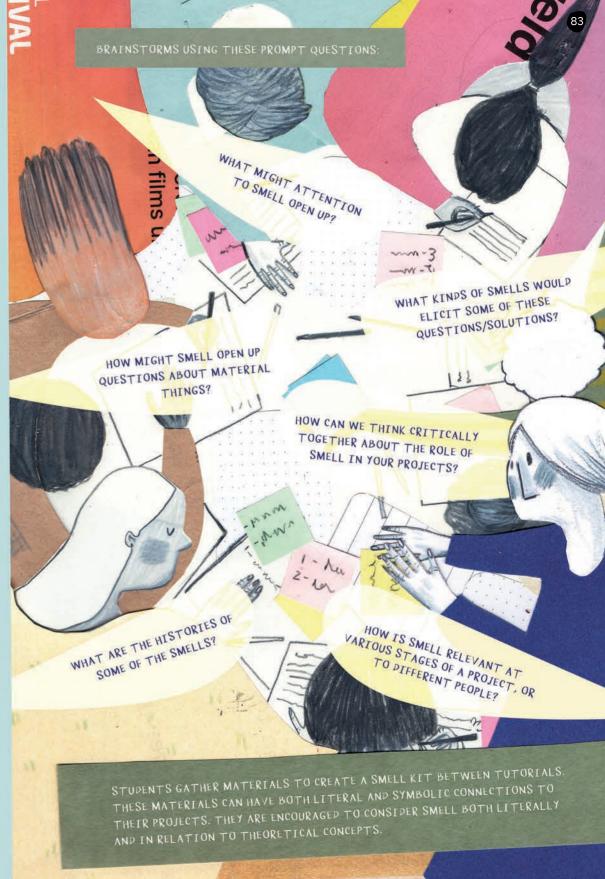
- 2. FOR ANALYTICAL PURPOSES TO THINK THROUGH THEIR CHALLENGES MORE CONCEPTUALLY.
- 3. AND ALSO AS A POTENTIAL FACTOR FOR THE INTERVENTIONS THAT THEY WILL COME UP WITH FURTHER ALONG THEIR TRAJECTORY.

WHAT YOU NEED TO MAKE YOUR











Noprdereiland



YANA PINKELMEYER, AND ZSANETT TOTH

· LOCATIONS WITHIN CYCLING OR WALKING DISTANCE: 1) BIRD CAGE IN A PARK, PETTING ZOO OR ZOO; 2) A FIELD; 3) A RIVERBANK.

· A MAP WITH THESE PLACES.

· PENS, PENCILS, AND PAPER.

. FOR THE THIRD EXERCISE, A FEW BOTTLES FOR RIVER WATER, PAINTBRUSHES, PAINT AND PAPER.

LEARNING GOALS: (BROADER PROTECT)

LEARNING TO WRITEA SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW.

INTERVENTIONS.

REFLECTING ON

ENGAGING IN ACADEMIC AND SOCIETAL DEBATES ON STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING THE ANTHROPOCENE THROUGH TEACHING OR ARTIVISM.

THE RESEARCH PROCESS AND METHODOLOGIES.

DEVELOP AN INFORMED AND CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE ON CONTEMPORARY EXAMPLES OF PEDAGOGICAL AND ARTIVIST

lillesluis



