

ScienceNews

Activity Guide for Students: Making Sense of Animal Worlds

Directions:

In this activity, you will read and discuss an article about how jumping spiders use their senses to interact with their environment and with other spiders. You will then research and write creatively about how another animal uses its senses.

The setup

For homework, read the background information sheet on literary devices as well as the *Science News* article "[Jumping spiders' remarkable senses capture a world beyond our perception.](#)" Then answer the following questions and summarize the article in your own words. If you need help summarizing the article, review the *Science News in High Schools* resource "[How to write a summary.](#)"

1. What is the main point of the article?

2. What details does the author provide to support the main point? Identify at least three supporting ideas or details.

3. Use your answers to the previous questions to write a three-paragraph summary of the article for other students in your class.

4. What literary devices did the author use in the article? For each literary device you identify, provide an example from the article.

Class discussion

As a class, you will discuss the *Science News* article and literary devices. Answer the following question during the discussion.

1. How did the author's use of literary devices improve your understanding of complex concepts about the vision of jumping spiders?

Independent research

You will be writing creatively about how an animal perceives the world. First, research the senses of an animal that interests you and answer the following questions. Later, you will use the information to support your creative writing.

1. What animal will you research and write about?
2. What do you already know about this animal, their habits and their senses? Make a claim about the animal and support your claim with evidence and reasoning.
3. How does this animal sense the world? Conduct research about the animal you chose. Use internet resources, including the *Science News* and *Science News for Students* archive to find information about your animal. Find and record at least three reliable resources.
4. What is the animal's primary sense, or what sense is most interesting to you?
5. How does the animal's primary sense compare to the same sense in humans?
6. What environment does your animal live in?
7. How do the animal's senses relate to its habitat and lifestyle?
8. Do the animal's senses change as it moves through different stages of its life cycle?

Planning a writing project

After you have researched the senses of your chosen animal, use the following questions to plan your creative writing project.

1. What form of creative writing will you use to tell your story? Some forms of creative writing include fictional narratives, poetry, scripts, song lyrics and nonfiction essays or reports.

2. What are the key characteristics of that form of writing? If necessary, you can research your chosen form of creative writing using [Lexico](#), the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) or another source.

3. What is the primary topic of your piece, and what supporting details will you include?

4. Will you write in the first, second or third person?

5. Who is the audience for your piece?

6. How long will your piece be?

7. What period will the piece cover? You could choose to describe a second, minute, hour, day, week, month, year or lifetime.

8. What literary device(s) will you include to make your piece engaging or to deepen the reader's understanding of the topic?

Creative writing

Based on your plan, write a creative piece about the animal you chose and how it senses the world. Submit your piece to your teacher when you have finished.

