

The five senses of a verb by Kat Law

Age: Teenagers / Adults
Level: Pre-intermediate +
Time: 30 minutes
Objectives: To build confidence and encourage fluency through intensive oral practice of the different verb forms
Key skills: Speaking
Materials: One copy of worksheets 1 and 2 per student

Procedure

Part 1: the five senses

1. Ask if students can explain what the 'five senses' are.

Hand out Worksheet 1. Point them towards Activity 1. Depending on the level of your class, you can a. elicit the five senses and the accompanying verbs, write them on the board and then have students use the words to complete the table; or b. get them to complete the table in pairs before checking the answers with the class.

sense	verb
sight	to see
smell	to smell
hearing	to hear
taste	to taste
touch	to touch

2. Ask students to complete the table in activity 2, separating the verbs into regular and irregular.

regular	irregular
taste	see
touch	hear
smell	smell

Note: The verb *smell* is an interesting exception as, in British English, it can be both regular (*smell – smelled*) and irregular (*smell – smelt*).

3. Check that students are familiar with the different forms of see (*see – saw – seen*) and hear (*hear – heard – heard*).

4. Ask students to brainstorm other verbs that are related to the five senses e.g. *eat, drink, bite* instead of *taste*.

Part 2: the five senses of a verb

5. Explain to the students they are going to do an activity around the 'five senses of a verb', that is those elements that influence verb formation. Ask if they can think of anything that influences verb formation (students should at least be able to identify two: person and tense).

6. Hand out Worksheet 2 and take a moment to explain each term.

- The verb tells us *what* the action, or state, is.
- The person tells us *who* initiates an action (or receives it, in the case of the passive).
- The tense tells us *when* something takes place in time.
- The aspect tells us *how* something takes place in time.
- This category includes the affirmative (e.g. *I see*), the negative (*I don't see*) and the interrogative (*Do you see?*).
- The voice tells us from what angle we look at the action (depending on the level of your students, you may wish to use only the active voice for the activity, although it is useful to note that two voices exist).

7. Choose one of the regular verbs from Worksheet 1 or another verb from the students' brainstorming session to demonstrate how the activity works. For example, write on the board *She tastes* and, using the information on Worksheet 2, identify the five parts of the verb as follows:

- person: third-person singular
- tense: present
- aspect: simple
- affirmative, negative, interrogative: affirmative
- voice: active

8. Ask students to propose a change to any one of these elements. Only one change at a time! Write the new verb form on the board. For example:

- If we change:
the person to the first-person plural, the result is *We taste*.
- If we then change:
the tense to the past, the result is *We tasted*.
- If we then change:
the aspect to the continuous aspect, the result is *We were tasting*.
- If we then change:
to the interrogative, the result is *Were we tasting?*

9. Divide the class into two groups. Write *He sees* on the board.

Each group takes it in turn to propose one change to the 'five senses' of the verb; the other group must then give the new verb form.

For example, starting with *He sees*:

- Group A challenge to Group B:
Change the aspect from simple to perfect.
- Group B answer *He has seen*. New challenge:
Change the tense from present to past.
- Group A answer *He had seen*. New challenge:
Change from affirmative to interrogative.
- Group B answer *Had he seen?* New challenge:
Change the aspect from perfect to simple.
- Group A answer *Did he see?* New challenge:
Change from interrogative to affirmative.
- Group B answer *He saw*.






Each correct response earns one point. The first group to arrive at ten points can propose a new verb (preferably an irregular one). Be sure that, if a state verb is proposed, students are aware they do not have the option of the continuous aspect. Start each new verb in the third-person singular of the present simple.

Note: It is possible, in some cases, to combine two options: the negative with the interrogative (*Doesn't he taste?*), and the continuous aspect with the perfect aspect (*She has been tasting*). Whether you accept this as part of the activity or not will depend on the level of your students.

10. Keep score and, at the end of the activity, announce the winners!

Adapting the activity for different levels: This activity can be adapted for elementary level by limiting the number of options – for example, students could just use the present tense and the simple and continuous aspects, changing mainly the person and between the affirmative, negative and interrogative. It can also be adapted for higher-level students, who could use more, or all, possible options and combinations (things can get very complicated when you start combining the perfect and continuous aspects in the passive voice!). You could increase the level of challenge by imposing a time limit, too.

1. Name the five senses and the verbs associated with them.

	sense	verb
		
		
		
		
		

2. Now, place each verb in the correct column.

regular	irregular

