

# Elements - Air : Sensory Hashing

This is a unique interpretation of a widely-pursued, social trail following activity.

## Ideas & Strategies

Established as a fun ‘paper chase’ type activity in 1938, hashing is a trail that leads participants around a variety of locations before ending back at the start point. It can be created using symbols (on ground), pictures or photos, brightly coloured ribbons, sounds (recorded or vocal) or through a sensory theme (see below).

### Sensory hashing

- This begins in the classroom, for example, by arranging coloured objects around the room to which young people travel in turn.
- Arrange a trail around the site, perhaps beginning indoors and then moving outside, consisting of small boxes or buckets containing a variety of items at several locations.
- The trail can focus on the stimulation of a specific sense using similar or contrasting material; for example:
  - different kinds of material swatches that can be placed in the hands or rubbed gently on the cheek or arm;
  - visual – torches, shiny or reflective surfaces, tracking (e.g. rolling balls) or bubble makers;
  - auditory – small musical instruments, drums or tambourines, shakers, small tape recorder (record voice and play back), tape or CD player;
  - tactile – textured material, ribbons, paper balls, smooth and rough wooden objects;
  - olfactory – perfumes, aromatherapy oils, food essences, dried or fresh fruit segments;
  - gustatory – smelly snack foods or fruit segments.

**Think about** – introducing a sound or smell, just before moving on, that the young person will find at the **next** station.



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## STEP

### Space

- Use available space in the immediate environment which may be familiar to young people.
- Adjust the trail to account for different needs; some very physically mobile young people may need longer active segments; others time to rest at each station.
- Objects within the space can be integrated into the trail; for example, looking for a specific tree, wall or bench.

### Task

- Activities associated within or as part of the trail can be adapted to support each young person's ability or to create challenge. For example:
  - movement between points on the course can be modified in different ways including speed variations, and ways of moving;
  - each stopping-off point can provide a different focus, for example, a group parachute activity at one station or individual dexterity using ribbons at the next.

### Equipment

- Some suggestions are given under Sensory Hashing; the possibilities are limited only by imagination. For example:
  - a sport-based hashing trail can feature different items of sports equipment around the route; as participants encounter these implements they can be supported to use them in conventional and other ways;
  - hashing trails can also be based on the natural environment, for example, a box of leaves that can be rustled or smelled (mint, basil, wild garlic).

### People

- A structure to the session, with warm-up, pre-trail preparation (eg, sampling food essence smells), moving progressively around the course, then an end-of-trail event, such as a song or picnic, can develop familiarity and predictability.

### Safety

- Ensure that any outdoor space used is enclosed or that sufficient helpers are available to support participants, particularly the most active.
- Check food tolerances

### How to improve

- Look for recognition and awareness of being outdoors. How do young people respond to:
  - temperature,
  - wind on their faces/hands
  - sounds of nature?

### Communication

- Helpers can use sounds to encourage awareness of trail options. As in regular hashing, a specific call always indicates the true trail path and can be used as a cue to proceed in a specific direction.



## Links

See the Sensory Hashing video clip for more ideas.