

1st Grade Activity: See, Smell, and Taste Like a Fruit Bat

Some bats use their sense of sight and smell to find food.

(NGSS Disciplinary Core Ideas 1-LS1.A Structure and Function; 1-LS1.D Information Processing)

Pre-Activity Questions

- How do fruit bats find their food?
- What senses do you think are a bat's best senses?
- Are bats blind?

Activity

- We learn in the echolocation game that there are two different groupings of bats: **MEGABATS** which are fruit and nectar feeding bats and **MICROBATS** that feed off of insects or other forms of protein.
- While microbats use echolocation to find their food, megabats do not! Instead, they use their keen sense of smell to find food. They also have excellent eyesight, which helps them determine if fruit is ready to eat.

Try out your skills as a fruit bat!

Materials

- Ripe fruit
- Overripe fruit
- Unripe fruit
- Bowls
- Blindfold or eye covering
- Marker
- Small pieces of paper

“Smell Like a Fruit Bat” Steps

Adult Directions

1. Select and separate the **ripe fruit** from the **unripe or overripe fruit**.
2. Put each group of fruit in a small **bowl**, and cover the child's eyes with a **blindfold or other eye covering** (the child should not be able to see the fruit).
3. Place all bowls of fruit on a table or flat surface.
4. Use a **marker** and small piece of **paper** to label each bowl A, B, C, etc.

Child Directions

5. Use your nose only to investigate the fruits, as a fruit bat might.
 - a. Can you tell by smell which fruit is good to eat?

“See Like a Fruit Bat” Steps

1. Remove your eye covering so that you can see the fruit inside.
2. Use your eyes only to investigate the fruits.
 - a. Can you tell by sight which fruit is good to eat?

“Taste Like a Fruit Bat” Steps

1. Now that you have investigated by sight and smell, eat the fruits that you think would be tastiest based on your observations!
2. If you want to eat like a bat, you need to mush the fruit in your mouth and drink the juice, spitting out the rest!
 - a. To do it properly, use only your index fingers, curled like a hook (now you’re using your sense of touch the way a bat would!) to hold the fruit.
 - b. Tip your head upside-down!
3. Enjoy!

Post-Activity Questions and Activities

- Was there fruit that smelled unripe/had no smell but your eyes told you was ripe?
- Fruit bats “juice” their fruit and spit out seeds and pulp. How is this helpful to their environment?
- Why else are fruit bats an important part of their ecosystem?
- Where do you think the phrase “blind as a bat” came from? To learn more about bats that do not use their eyesight when searching for food, check out our other bat related activities!