



Five Senses Literature Lessons

Wonderful World Level: Orange

A year-long curriculum of hands-on,
easy-to-use, age-appropriate
learning for children ages 4–8.

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Five Senses Literature Lessons – Wonderful World – Level: Orange
Version 2.0

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Published by
Laura Sowdon
Five Senses Learning, LLC
Woodbridge, VA

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Why this curriculum?

Today, many curriculums for small children are not based on childhood development. They skip over the importance of play and move into reading, writing and math despite the fact that those things require brain development that is very individual. Five Senses Literature Lessons will introduce your child to beautiful children's books, some new and some old. It provides a variety of different ideas to play with your child to help them develop both their bodies and minds, whether or not they are ready for reading and writing.

Five Senses Literature Lessons is designed to be used with any child in the 4-8 age range, regardless of where the child stands on academic readiness. How is that possible? Because it is developmentally appropriate. Average children, those with challenges and those who are gifted are all learning about the world around them at this age and need to experience it through play, hands on activities, and fun stories. This is how children are made to learn.

As an occupational therapist I have a unique perspective on child development. I have seen the benefits in therapy settings of using play and activities to help children learn, grow and develop. I have found that even in children who show little interest in academics do like learning about animals, plants and the world around them. So I created a curriculum that teaches those topics. I also added hands on activities that help children develop the motor skills they will need later in their education. Many of the games, activities and art projects are therapy methods I draw on when working with children who need to develop hand strength and control. These activities benefit all children. The children who struggle with them begin developing the skills they need. The children who excel refine existing skills, often doing the activity for longer or with more precision, further solidifying skills needed for adulthood.

I took all that wonderful perspective, and then I put my ideas through the lens of a hard working homeschool mom. I worked to create a curriculum you can use with minimal stress. Homeschooling is not for the faint of heart. Homeschooling multiple children means I don't have time for complicated directions, finding a million go along things myself, or learning a complicated skill like knitting before the next day's lesson. I wanted to create a curriculum that would give kids the most benefit with the least stress on mom, so that's what I've done.

Where did this curriculum come from?

In 2007, my first child became old enough for kindergarten. She was a bright child, but not ready for a long day that looked more like first grade than kindergarten at my local schools. I decided to homeschool her. I experimented with Waldorf, Montessori, Charlotte Mason, classical education, unschooling and literature units. What I found was that my child needed the free space of an unschooler, but we were both happier when we had planned activities to help fill our days. Work books were boring, she hated doing the same thing twice. Yet she really wanted to learn about the world. Thus I began making up my own lessons based around the children's books she enjoyed, the best ideas I had learned from my curriculum research, and my own knowledge of child development.

Over the years I have taught my younger two children, as well as many co-op classes full of children ages 4-8. I realized that these young minds enjoyed activities like graphing and science projects, singing songs and learning about the world around them but without the pressure to read or sit still for a long time. These small children learned best through play. I created go along play activities, ones that developed fine and gross motor skills that help children become coordinated people who can later read and write. I used my knowledge as an occupational therapist to make sure each activity was developmentally appropriate and that we had hands on sensory experiences to help their little minds learn and retain more.

This curriculum is made up of the best activities, books and lessons I have done over the course of teaching my children for the last 10 years.

How do I use this curriculum?

This curriculum is designed to be used at your own pace, and however works best for your child or children. You may use this curriculum with multiple children in the age range at the same time, making your homeschool day easier. Below is my suggestion for a low stress week of using Five Senses Literature Lessons.

Read the lesson plans for the week and obtain the books you will need for the week. For some weeks you need a specific book, for others you can choose from the list or see what your local library has to offer on the topic you will be covering. Collect your supplies and plan ahead of time what you will do each day.

Lesson 2 - Bats



Reading of the week

Stellaluna by Janelle Cannon



Additional reading

- *Bats* by Gail Gibbons (non-fiction)
- *Bats at the Beach* by Brian Lies
- *Bat Jamboree* by Kathi Applet
- *The Magic School Bus Going Batty* by Joanna Cole



Supplies needed for this week

- Mango
- Various seeds for trees: acorn, cherry pit, etc.
- Blind fold
- Pencil
- Paper



Memory Verse

Bat, bat come under my hat,
And I'll give you a slice of bacon,
And when I bake,
I'll give you a cake,
If I am not mistaken.



Sensory and Physical Play

In the story, Stellaluna has to learn to live right side up, like the birds. But, at the end of the story she returns to hanging upside down. Help your child experiment with looking at the world upside down. You can do this by having the child bend down and look between their knees or having them do a hand stand, head stand or hang from a playground bar. Since all of those can be dangerous, be close to help your child and prevent injuries. Once the child is upside down you can try reading, eating or talking. Is it harder to do those things upside down? Ask your child if they noticed anything while upside down that they had not noticed before. Sometimes a new perspective helps us see things in a new way.



Life Skills – Food

In the story, Stellaluna eats a mango. Try a mango with your child. The skin is rubbery and can be difficult to peel. It also has a large pit. However, when ripe the fruit is very soft and easy to cut. In addition to eating the fruit, help your child investigate the peel. Is it thicker or thinner than the skin of an apple? What about a banana? Look at the pit; what is it? Discuss with your child how this is a seed for a tree. Look at other tree seeds: cherry pits, acorns, etc. Does the size of the seed determine the size of the tree? Why not?



Science

Bats use echolocation to find their way in the dark. This means they sense sound waves in a way we humans cannot. Have your child try finding their way based only on sound. If you have a group of children to play this game it works even better. Make a circle of people around the blind-folded “bat.” Without telling “the bat” who it is, have one person in the circle be “it” and make small noises for the bat to follow. The bat then walks to the sound and tags that person. That person then becomes “the bat,” putting on the blind-fold and starting again in the middle of the circle with a new “it” being chosen in secret. If you do not have a group to play this game with, you may want to post your “bat” in one place. Then, have “it” choose a place in the room that the bat must follow them to by sound alone. Be sure that the floor space is clear so that no one falls.



Language Arts

Bats and song birds are interesting to compare and contrast. Help your child make a list of things that the two have in common; two wings, two eyes, two feet, both come in many sizes based on their species. Now list things that are different about them; one has fur and the other has feathers, bats have thumbs at the ends of their wings that birds don’t, bats prefer night and most song birds prefer daylight. Use these facts to fill in a Venn diagram.

Bats:

- Have Fur
- Have live babies
- Awake at night
- Have thumbs
- Have a nose
- Have big ears

Both:

- Eat fruit or bugs
- Have 2 eyes
- Poop
- Are alive
- Fly
- Come in many sizes

Song Birds:

- Sing
- Awake during the day
- Have feathers
- Lay eggs
- Have a beak



A venn diagram template is available in the Appendix on page 93.

Bats vs. Song Bird Venn Diagram - Unit 2 - Lesson 3: Bats, Language Arts

