

Module 2

LISTEN TO YOUR SENSES



LEARNER'S HANDOUT



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Module 2: LISTEN TO YOUR SENSES

Why this activity is important and how it helps you when you renovate real places.

Why we do this activity

Before learning to design spaces that respond to people's needs, you need to understand your own sensory experiences.

Everyone perceives space differently: some feel relaxed in quiet rooms, others prefer bright colors; some like soft textures, others dislike clutter.

This activity helps you practice listening to your own senses first, so you can later understand how others might experience a space.

You will explore touch, hearing, smell, taste, and sight to notice your own preferences, dislikes, and emotional reactions.

This is why we do the LISTEN TO YOUR SENSES activity. It helps you learn:

- To recognize how different sensory stimuli affect feelings;
- To connect emotions and bodily sensations;
- To practice self-reflection and awareness before considering the experiences of others.

What the LISTEN TO YOUR SENSES activity is

The activity is carried out through guided sensory experiences using touch, sound, smell, taste, and sight. You will express what you feel using drawing, colors, shapes, words, or simple collages.

There is no right or wrong answer. You express yourself in the way that feels easiest to you.

The activity helps you practice sensory awareness on yourself first, so you can understand how others might experience space in the future.

Why you do it for yourself first

Before you can interpret the needs of others, it is important to understand your own feelings.

When you explore what makes you feel safe, what colors calm you, what textures are pleasant or uncomfortable, what sounds or smells affect your mood, you can better understand how sensory experiences influence wellbeing.

This is the first step to becoming a designer who works with care, respect, and empathy.

How this activity helps you in real life

During the course, you will be learning to design spaces for people's comfort and wellbeing.

By exploring your own senses first, you learn to:

- Notice your personal reactions to sensory stimuli;
- Recognize what makes you feel comfortable or uncomfortable;
- Reflect on how sensory experiences influence emotions and behavior.

The LISTEN TO YOUR SENSES tool trains you in these skills.

Example: Imagine you are going to design a bedroom for someone in a shared house. Before deciding on colors, furniture, or lighting, you reflect on your own experience with the LISTEN TO YOUR SENSES tool: which sounds, textures, scents, or lighting made you feel comfortable or uncomfortable?

By noticing your own reactions, you begin to understand how sensory experiences influence feelings of comfort, calm, or unease. This helps you recognize that different people have different preferences and sensitivities.

Later, when thinking about the person who lives in that space, you can use this insight to observe and interpret their responses. For example, you might ask them to try out the LISTEN TO YOUR SENSES activity, letting them explore textures, smells, sounds, or light in the room. Observing their reactions – what makes them feel relaxed, stimulated, or uneasy – gives you concrete information about their sensory needs.

By first experiencing the tool yourself, you can guide them more empathetically, ask the right questions, and notice subtleties in their responses. This ensures that the design decisions you make – from lighting to materials, colors, and layout – truly reflect the inhabitant's comfort, wellbeing, and identity.

What is the most important skill you learn here?

REFLECTION AND SENSORY AWARENESS

Reflection and sensory awareness mean:

- Noticing how your own senses react to colors, textures, sounds, lights, and smells;
- Realizing that your reactions are personal – others may feel differently;
- Thinking about how these sensory experiences affect comfort, emotions, and well-being;

This skill will help you:

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- Understand how sensory experiences influence how people feel in a space;
 - Reflect on your own reactions so you can better understand others;
 - Design with attention to what really matters for comfort and well-being.

Being aware of senses and reflecting carefully makes your design more thoughtful and caring.

What you will do in this activity

When using the LISTEN TO YOUR SENSES tool, you will explore your own sensory experiences. You will do this by touching, smelling, listening, and tasting different items. You will be asked to represent what you feel and notice by drawing, writing, coloring, making collages, or using any creative means you like.

At the end, you will reflect on what you sensed and experienced. You may choose to share some of your reflections with the group, but only if you feel comfortable.

This is not a test. The activity is a way to learn about yourself first – your preferences, dislikes, and reactions – so that later you can better understand how spaces can support the well-being of others.

EVALUATION

1. What is the main purpose of the LISTEN TO YOUR SENSES tool?

- a) To judge which sensory experiences are best
- b) To explore your own sensory experiences and emotions
- c) To create the most visually appealing drawings

2. Why is it important to do this activity on yourself first?

- a) To know your favorite colors
- b) To practice using drawing materials
- c) To recognize your own sensory preferences so you can better imagine how others might experience a space

3. How can this activity improve your empathy?

- a) By assuming everyone experiences spaces the same way you do
- b) By reflecting on how others might experience spaces differently
- c) By testing your memory of colors, sounds, and textures

4. During the activity, what is the best way to approach sensations you find strange or uncomfortable?

- a) Explore them carefully and notice what you feel, without judging
- b) Avoid them completely
- c) Compare your feelings with others immediately

5. This activity helps you practice reflection by...

- a) Writing detailed descriptions of every sensation
- b) Paying attention to what you feel and thinking about why you feel it
- c) Following strict instructions exactly

6. Which of these statements is true about the outputs (drawings, colors, words, shapes) you create in the activity?

- a) They must look “correct” or “nice”
- b) Every mark is meaningful because it shows your personal sensory experience
- c) Only the facilitator can interpret them

7. How does this activity prepare you for designing spaces for others?

- a) It teaches you to predict exactly what others will like
- b) It helps you understand that people perceive spaces differently and that design should respond to feelings and needs
- c) It ensures everyone will have the same experience of the space



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