

## Sensory Garden

### Gardens Stimulate All the Senses

Sensory Gardens are designed specially to engage the five senses of Sight, Sound, Touch, Smell, and Taste.

#### ***Sight***

Plants offer an array of color and texture throughout the season. Notice how different the colors of green can look – some bright with hints of yellow, others dark with hints of purple and everything in between. Look at all of the flowers! So many colors and shapes! Some plants look almost feathery, moving when there hardly seems to be a wisp of breeze while others are stout with sturdy leaves and barely seem to move.

As you look out over the garden, notice the textures and shapes. High, low, vining, sprawling, tight little clumps, airy, plants come in every imaginable size and shape and color. Gardens light up our eyes!

#### ***Sound***

Listen for the garden sounds. Block out the street noise and just listen for a minute or two. Can you hear the insects buzzing and flying around? Sometimes we can hear bees working close to us while we hear others farther away. Once in a while we can hear big huge bees that fly very loudly! Keep listening and looking toward the sound until you find that bee! Hummingbirds sound as fast as they look, whirring; sometimes moving in and out of flowers in a fascinating dance of sound and movement. Leaves rustling on the ground can be the wind, but if you look at where the sound was...is that a lizard? Or a toad? Or a bird hopping to find seeds to eat? Sound is all around us in the garden. Enjoy sitting on a bench in this garden and listen to the sounds of a growing, healthy place that all sorts of creatures can live in and thrive.

Can you hear the rustling of the leaves and grasses as the air moves through them? Spending time here throughout the year, a person can notice the change of seasons just by the sound of the plants, at first quiet and lush then, as the year moves toward fall, a more dry and rustling sound can be noticed. Nature is not quiet, but sometimes we have to be quiet to hear nature. Come back often to experience the changing seasons in the Discovery Garden.

#### ***Touch***

Touch the plants, gently, but touch them and feel them. Notice the velvety smoothness of a flower peddles, the roughness of tree bark, the prickliness of Sunflower stalks and leaves, the oiliness of the lavender plant. Some plants feel very strong and rugged, others feel flimsy and delicate. Enjoy touching and getting close to the plants.

## ***Smell***

The plants in this garden are chosen especially for their fragrance. Herbs are especially fragrant when you rub and “bruise” the leaf. Many blooming flowers smell sweet, others not as sweet. Some smell like perfume in a bottle and others seem to have no aroma at all. With many plants, the hotter the sun, the more scent is released from the plant.

In Autumn a very different, sweet smell can fill the garden. As leaves fall to the ground and natural breakdown takes place, an earthy smell of wet leaves decomposing fills the air.

## ***Taste***

In the Discovery Garden we plant strawberries, gooseberries, and raspberries. Enjoy the ripe fruit you find in the garden; it is here for you taste and experience. No pesticides are used in the garden, so the food is safe to eat.

The Sensory Garden is designed especially for children to explore and experience, though we find that young and old alike enjoy this lovely garden.

## **Website Resources:**

<https://visit.rogersgardens.com/sensory-garden/>

<https://www.jgplants.com/sensory-garden/>

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/special/accessible/sensory-garden-ideas.htm>

## **Video Resources:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SP2nT5tcGbo>

## **Recommended books from the MCPLD collection**

### **Adults:**

The garden in every sense and season

Slow gardening: a no-stress philosophy for all senses and seasons

Creating a garden for the senses

### **Children:**

On a magical do-nothing day

Biscuit in the garden

Up in the garden and down in the dirt