

Inferring

Activity: Science Mystery Bags

Purpose: To practice inferring in science class.



1. Before class, teacher fills and staples shut paper bags with items that give clues about what is inside bag. Bags might contain items such as peeled onions, pennies, potato chips, etc.
2. Teacher observes bag and models to students how he uses his sense of smell, hearing, and touch to infer what is in the bag.
3. Teacher predicts what is in the bag and confirms inference by opening the bag.
4. Paper bags are placed around the classroom and students working in pairs circulate the classroom using their sense of smell, hearing and touch to infer what is in the bag.
5. After all of the students have observed each bag, the teacher facilitates a whole group discussion and inferences are made about the contents of the bags. Remember, it is important to ask students which clues helped them make their inference. Each bag is opened and the inferences are proven correct or refuted.
6. This activity leads to a discussion about the scientific process and how scientists collect information and draw conclusions.