

Sense-sation

Different animals rely on different senses to survive in the wild. Try the activities below to gain a better understanding of some of these unique adaptations.

Raccoon Touch

Background: Raccoons have hands that are incredibly sensitive, with five elongated fingers and nails, but no thumbs! A raccoon's lack of thumbs means they can't hold or pick up objects the way humans can. Instead, these critters use both forepaws for lifting and then manipulate objects with concise precision.



Instructions:

- Explain that while it might look like some raccoons wash their food, this is actually a myth. These animals do often wet and rub an object, but experts believe that water enhances a raccoon's tactile ability, so doing this helps them to 'see' objects and gather information. Touch can be as important a sense as hearing, smell, and sight.
- Blindfold or ask participants to close their eyes. Pass objects around to see if they can identify them with only touch.