

10/06
2026
10:06

THE INTERNATIONAL MINUTE OF SCENTS

Breathe, feel, write



PROTOCOL FOR A GROUP OR A CLASS

This protocol is intended for teachers, facilitators, and group leaders who wish to run **THE INTERNATIONAL MINUTE OF SCENT** experience with a group.

The sense of smell, often underestimated, plays an essential role in how we perceive the world. **THE INTERNATIONAL MINUTE OF SCENT** is a sensory writing experience, based on an idea by writer **Mathieu Simonet**, inviting everyone to become aware of the importance of smells in our environment and in our memory.

On June 10 at 10:06 a.m., participants go outside to explore the world with their noses. As soon as a smell catches their attention, they take time to experience it and then describe it on a card (4x6 inches). The collected cards must then be gathered by the group leader and sent to: Atmo Normandie, 3 place de la Pomme d'Or, 76000 Rouen, France.

PREPARATION

📍 Decide in advance on the location for olfactory observation and define a perimeter that participants should not exceed (for example, a schoolyard or a nearby park).


⚠️ This "smell exploration" area should be large enough for everyone to have their own sensory experience without being disturbed by others, while still being small enough for supervisors to easily monitor participants, especially if they are children.


👤 To encourage concentration and avoid mutual influence, ask participants to carry out the experience individually.


✍️ Distribute the cards before going outside. Each participant should have a pen and, if possible, a surface to support writing outdoors. Don't forget to dress according to the weather.


🕒 Allow enough time before leaving the room to reach the observation area so that the experience can start exactly at 10:06 a.m.


PROCESS

 Take time to introduce The Minute to participants. You can rely on the introduction text of this protocol and the resources available on the Atmo Normandie website.


 Then explain how the experience will unfold before going outside and make sure everyone understands it. Clarify that this is both a scientific and artistic approach. If working with students, reassure them that there is no evaluation and no right or wrong answer.


 A sound signal (bell, whistle, music from a phone, etc.) can be used to mark the beginning of the experience at 10:06 a.m. and give it a solemn tone. The experience should not last too long: it is recommended to end it around 10:16 a.m., also with a second sound signal.


 If some participants do not perceive any smell, invite them to indicate it on their card, for example by writing: "I didn't smell anything." Emphasize that this is still a valid result scientifically, a zero result is still a result.

 Group supervisors are also encouraged, if they wish, to take part in the experience: by filling in a card like the other participants, and by noting their observations on a colored card (how the activity unfolded, group reactions, general impressions, etc.). These can be sent along with the participants' cards to Atmo Normandie.

VALORIZATION

 To strengthen the collective and participatory dimension of the experience, it is recommended to plan a sharing moment at the end. The group can gather in a dedicated space to exchange and share impressions.

 Each participant may, if they wish, read aloud what they wrote on their card. This reading should be done in turns, with respect and attentive listening, without comments or judgment from others, in order to preserve freedom of expression. It is important not to start discussions during the reading phase.

 The reading can be followed by a discussion time. This allows participants to express more broadly what they felt during the experience—what surprised, moved, or struck them. This step highlights individual perceptions while showcasing the diversity of experiences and sensitivities within the group.

 This closing moment helps give meaning to the experience by encouraging collective awareness of the importance of smells in our environment and in our sensory memory.

 At the end of the experience, gather all the group's cards and send them to Atmo Normandie at the address provided.

Congratulations, you have organized a session of the International Minute of Scents! We hope this experience will inspire you to repeat it with other groups and in future editions. **Thank you!**

More information on atmonormandie.fr and



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Atmo Normandie is accredited by the French Ministry Education

