

Lesson Starter: Fancy Nose, Fancy Words in “How to Be an Elephant”

Book: “How to Be an Elephant” written and illustrated by Katherine Roy

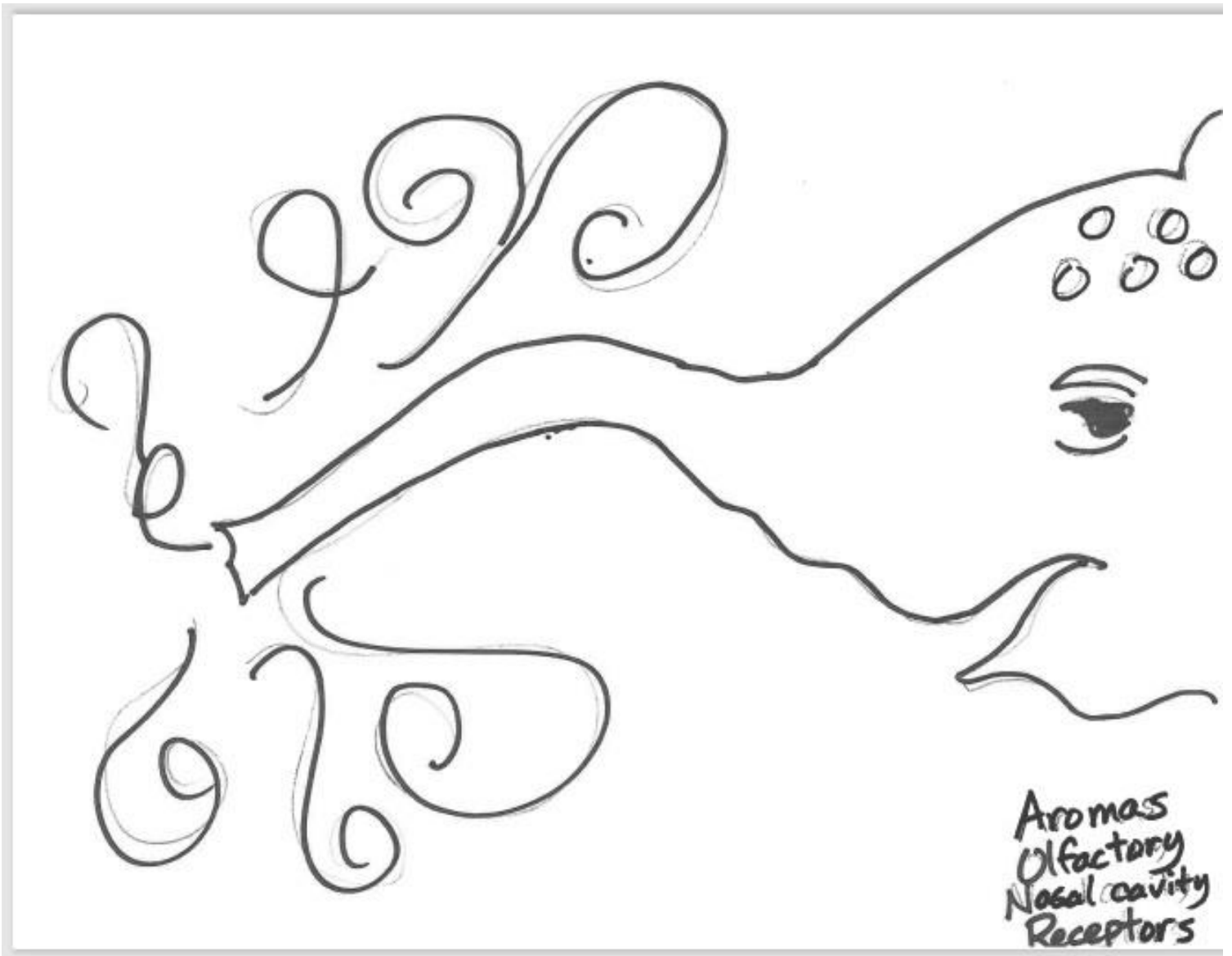
In a Nutshell: A vocabulary lesson related to some of the “fancy words” in the “Smell-O-Vision” and “Nose Job” sections in “How To Be an Elephant.” The teacher will draw a “picture story” of an elephant’s trunk and add related vocabulary words as they explain what each word means. Students will learn how to draw their own “picture stories” of the elephant’s trunk

Do This!

1. Read “Smell-O-Vision” and “Nose Job” sections. Stop to answer any questions and add commentary.
2. Say, “I’m going to read the ‘Smell-O-Vision’ section again. Pay attention to some of the words you don’t know and I’m going to write them down on the board.”
3. Do this.
4. You can draw your “picture story” on the whiteboard or a large piece of paper. You can draw lines in pencil to help guide you.
5. First, draw an elephant’s face, with ears and eyes, but an emphasis on the trunk. (Use the picture in “Smell-O-Vision” as your model. See also the printable below.)
6. “So, we have learned that elephants don’t see very well, but they do have a remarkable sense of SMELL. One really fancy word that means it is describing the sense of smell is OLFACTORY.” Write “olfactory” under the nose.
 - a. Additional question: “Why would you need another word that means SMELL?” – Possible answers: because it gets boring to say or write the same word over and over; because scientists like to use more specific words to show that they know more.
7. Point to your nose. “There’s another word that *sounds* like ‘nose’ but isn’t and that is *related* to noses is ‘nasal.’ That just means it’s part of a nose. The next fancy word is actually TWO words that go together, and that is ‘NASAL CAVITY.’ Does anyone know what a cavity is? In your tooth, right? It means a hollow part, like a tube. Well, ‘NASAL CAVITY’ then means a hole or tube in your nose, which every nose has so that you can get smells up into your nose.” Write ‘NASAL CAVITY’ in the tube part of the elephant nose, or next to it with an arrow to the tube part.
8. “Now, what kinds of things do you think the elephants are smelling with their OLFACTORY systems?” [Various answers: plants, other animals, poop, mother elephants, the air, etc.] “Another word for SMELLS, and it’s a great fancy word!, is ‘AROMAS’, so we can say that the smell of grass is an AROMA, and the smell of a baby elephant’s mother is another AROMA.” Draw curlicues with different words (grass, mother) and label each one ‘AROMA.’
9. “There’s one final fancy word to learn, and that is ‘RECEPTOR.’ These are special parts of the nose – you have them, too! – in the brain that figures out exactly what an AROMA or smell smells like. They ‘receive’ or “recept’ the aroma and then match it to the smell of grass or their mother.” Draw little circles inside the elephant’s head and label with ‘RECEPTORS.’
10. Point to each word and ask what each one means, explaining again if they don’t remember.
11. You can stop the lesson here, or you can have students learn how to draw and tell the same “picture story” with these vocabulary words using the template, below.

Use This!

See the printable, below, with a sketch of the elephant nose and the words to use underneath. There is also an “answer key” drawing for students to refer to as a guide.



ANSWER KEY

