

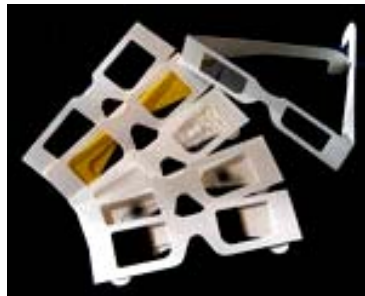


## Gerontological Nursing Learning Activity

TOPIC	Sensory Changes
Description	Introduces the students to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensory changes frequently experienced by older adults.</li> </ul>
When is it introduced?	Beginning students, nursing fundamentals or health assessment.
Preparation	<p>Faculty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sensory Kits (one per student)</li> </ul> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">   </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Laminated photos of medications from old drug handbooks (use these when looking through the plastic baggie or the yellow cellophane; demonstrates visual difficulties experienced related to medications)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Unfair hearing test (free online from <a href="http://odeo.com/audio/9052683/view">http://odeo.com/audio/9052683/view</a> or it can be purchased as a CD from the Sight and Hearing Association <a href="http://www.sightandhearing.org/products/knownoise.asp">http://www.sightandhearing.org/products/knownoise.asp</a>)</li> </ul>
Content/Assignments	<p>If you or your students are not familiar with age-related sensory changes, consider using these resources or educational activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check out the AJN series “A New Look at the Old,” Articles can be downloaded as PDF files by going to <a href="http://www.nursingcenter.com/ajnolderadults">http://www.nursingcenter.com/ajnolderadults</a>.            Scroll down and click on:  <i>Sensory Impairment in Older Adults: Part 1: Hearing Loss</i>  <i>Sensory Impairment in Older Adults: Part 2: Vision Loss</i></li> </ul>

- Enhance student empathy for the experience of age-related sensory changes by utilizing:
  - ✓ “Sensory Kit” found in the Awareness module on (Felver, L. & Van Son, C., 2005). *A Focus on Older Adults*-CD-ROM. ([Handout](#))
    - Additional props include cotton balls to reduce hearing
    - ACE wraps to minimize mobility
    - Set of 7 VisualEyes™ Simulator Glasses (\$30.00) from <http://www.eldereye.com> –7 cardboard frame glasses that simulate the visual conditions of: Macular Degeneration, Glaucoma, Cataracts, Stroke, Normal aging vision issues, CMV Retinitis, and Color loss.



- Or you can make your own using discarded or cheap reading glasses smeared with Vaseline or covered strategically with tape to simulate various visual impairments.

- ✓ “Unfair” Hearing Test (free, interactive, 5 minute audio clip that illustrates hearing losses with aging) <http://odeo.com/audio/9052683/view>
  - Participants need to take a blank sheet of paper and make three columns. Each column is numbered 1-10. Start the recording and have participants listen and write down the words as they are spoken. Each of the columns represents different levels of hearing loss and augmentation. Most individuals have difficulty with the first two columns and get most of the third column correct.
  - This activity also can generate a discussion regarding
    - cerumen build-up and hearing,
    - the use of hearing aids and the short time the batteries last,
    - issues related to hearing aids being forgotten when clients move from one setting to another and can make an individual appear cognitively impaired when they aren't.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite an audiologist and/or a low vision specialist (optometrist) to lecture in an accompanying theory course about sensory issues.</li> </ul>
Clinical application:	This activity can be used in pre/post clinical conference, or in didactic settings. The activity has been used with one individual and as many as 250+ (providing everyone has a kit)
Strengths:	Promotes active engagement by the student by providing a kinesthetic/visual & auditory learning activity.
Activity Feedback:	Student & faculty feedback has been positive. Has been used with several hundred students and faculty report great success using these exercises.
Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Felver, L. &amp; Van Son C., (2007) <i>A Focus on Older Adults: Competency Development and Evaluation for Health Professionals and Others who Work with Older Adults</i>. (CD-ROM)  <a href="http://www.geronursinged.org/documents/order.pdf">http://www.geronursinged.org/documents/order.pdf</a></li> </ul>
Developed by:	Catherine R. Van Son PhD, RN <a href="mailto:vansonc@wsu.edu">vansonc@wsu.edu</a> Washington State University-College of Nursing, Spokane, WA
Revised:	January, 2008

## ***Resources for Teaching Nursing Care of Older Adults***

A SERIES PROVIDED BY

**The Northwest Coalition for Geriatric Nursing Education** Website: [www.GeroNursingEd.org](http://www.GeroNursingEd.org)

**The John A. Hartford Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence at Oregon Health & Science University**

Website: [www.ohsu.edu/hartfordcgne.org](http://www.ohsu.edu/hartfordcgne.org)