

**TEACHER'S NOTE FOR THE  
TEST YOUR POWERS OF OBSERVATION EXERCISE**

This exercise will encourage students to be alert and observant as they go through their daily activities. To present the exercise you will need:

(a.) a random display of items on a table- or desk-top. The display might include: coins of different denominations; a soda can; a CD; pens and pencils; a candy wrapper; beads; book(s); one or more small toys; a flower; photo(s); a floppy disc; ticket stubs; a video. Whatever you choose, make it a colorful and cluttered jumble of items.

OR

(b.) a photo or illustration display. This may be a single, large, very "busy" photo/illustration with lots of detail (think, "Where's Waldo?") or a collection of several, very different photos or illustrations. Give them lots of images to observe.

Place the display as far from student desks as possible. Consider covering it until ready to conduct the exercise. Divide the class into small groups so each student can get a clear view. Give each group five seconds to observe the display (do not allow anyone to make written notes.) As students return to their seats, have them list the objects or images they can remember on their Observations List. Follow up by asking volunteers to read their lists aloud while you compile a master list on the board.

Discuss how accurate observation of their surroundings can help students keep themselves safe by avoiding potentially dangerous situations. Also talk about the importance of being able to give accurate descriptions of people and events in case they ever witness or become embroiled in an accident, mugging, or other violent incident.