

Suggested Use for Teachers

Introduce the kit and give a brief explanation of how using the samples will help the students identify culinary herbs and spices by aroma and taste. Research has shown that language, which is processed in a different part of the brain, reduces the impact of the aroma and taste experiences¹. The process of sampling each flavor should only take 1-2 minutes each. PDF forms for student responses are available on our website: www.educatedpalate.com

The Sampling Process:

- 1) **Demonstrate the procedure for inhaling the aroma (physically do this):**
 - a) Open a specific vial, example: flavor no. 101.
 - b) Hold the vial up to the nose.
 - c) Move vial back and forth under your nose while inhaling the aroma.

- 2) **Ask the students:**
What does it make you think of? A place, a person, an event, a name?

- 3) **Demonstrate the tasting method (physically do this).**
 - a) Turn the open vial upside down over your tongue. The orifice reducer will prevent spillage.
 - b) Using your index finger, tap the bottom of the vial once to release one drop of the flavor onto the tongue.
- 4) **Have the students (on the form provided) write down thoughts, comments or impressions about the flavor.**

- 5) **Ask the students:** What do you think it is?

- 6) **Have them write their answer in the space provide on the form.**

- 7) **Have students cleanse their palates with neutral, unsalted bread or cracker (i.e. Bremmer water crackers) and a sip of purified water.**

- 8) **Repeat Steps 1-7 with next flavor sample.**

- 9) **When you have finished with the flavor samples, go over each sample individually and provide the students with the correct flavor names while students self-correct their forms.**
 - a. When you provide the correct names for the flavors, it is important to show the actual flavor source (i.e. a bay leaf) or a picture of the source (photos may be downloaded from our website) so students can identify the source of the target flavor visually.
 - b. Elicit comments about the students' previous experience with that flavor.
 - c. The name of the flavor will be further imprinted in students' memories if they write the name themselves on a blank label before affixing it to the vial (blank labels are provided). They may want to put the labels on the bottom, where they can not be seen, in order to test themselves later and gauge their improvement.

OPTIONAL

After sampling the flavors:

Provide a brief description of the olfactory and gustatory systems. It is important to remember that the taste buds only have the ability to sense four (sweet, sour, salty, bitter), possibly five (umami/savory), tastants. Most of the work in flavor identification (the combination of taste and smell) is done by the olfactory system, which in humans can distinguish over 10,000 scents. You may decide to discuss some flavor descriptor words such as earthy, smoky, piney, woody, citrus, vegetal, etc., to help in future samplings.

Students should be encouraged to practice using the kit on their own.

¹ Schab ,Frank R. and Crowder, Robert G., editors, Memory for Odors (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1995), 17.