

Certain smells take you back to your childhood

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Scientists have found out why certain smells recall feelings of nostalgia and can recall distant memories. The scientists say an area of the brain is responsible for assigning memories to smells and for storing them for decades. The area can instantly recall the memories with great clarity years later if a person encounters the smell again. Christina Strauch, from the Ruhr University in Germany, said smells are stored in the olfactory brain. The word olfactory means anything related to the sense of smell. She said: "It is known that the piriform cortex is able to temporarily store olfactory memories. We wanted to know if that applies to long-term memories as well."

There are a multitude of scents that can transport us back to our childhood. Smells from cookies baking in the oven or the perfume of an elderly aunt can bring back surprising recollections of growing up. Professor Strauch said certain scents can take you away to another point in time. Strauch said some odours can make you wish you were actually back in a certain point of time, or make you want to escape. She said it depends on whether or not the smell has a positive or negative association. Aromatherapists partly depend on this for their patients. Smells can even encourage you to buy things in stores. Many stores introduce fragrances to shoppers to evoke nostalgic memories to buy things they loved years ago.

Sources:
thehealthsite.com / psychologytoday.com / myrepublica.com

Writing

The sense of smell is one of the most important senses. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

scientists / smells / nostalgia / memories / clarity / brain / temporarily / long term / transport / childhood / aunt / growing up / positive / negative / shoppers / years ago

True / False

- Scientists know nothing about the link between smells and memories. T / F
- The brain stores memories associated with smells for decades. T / F
- The researcher is from a university in Germany. T / F
- The researcher wants to know how the brain stores long-term memories. T / F
- The article says there are many smells that remind us of our childhood. T / F
- Odours never make you wish you were back in a moment in time. T / F
- Aromatherapists don't rely on smells with their patients. T / F
- The article says stores use fragrances to make shoppers walk faster. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 1. certain | a. large number |
| 2. recall | b. meets |
| 3. instantly | c. briefly |
| 4. encounters | d. connection |
| 5. temporarily | e. remember |
| 6. multitude | f. break free |
| 7. scents | g. bring to mind |
| 8. escape | h. particular |
| 9. association | i. aromas |
| 10. evoke | j. immediately |

Discussion – Student A

- What are your favourite smells, and why?
- What do you think of perfume?
- What smells can you recollect from your childhood?
- How often do you get nostalgic about the past?
- What smells can you remember of your elementary school?
- Why is the sense of smell important?
- Do you have a good memory?
- What's your earliest memory?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. certain smells recall feelings | a. smell |
| 2. recall distant | b. for decades |
| 3. storing them | c. for their patients |
| 4. anything related to the sense of | d. transport us back |
| 5. that applies to long- | e. memories |
| 6. a multitude of scents that can | f. point in time |
| 7. Smells from cookies | g. of nostalgia |
| 8. take you away to another | h. nostalgic memories |
| 9. Aromatherapists partly depend on this | i. term memories as well |
| 10. evoke | j. baking in the oven |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Which is better - the smell of baking bread or brewing coffee?
- What's the worst smell in the world?
- Which is worse – body odour or bad breath?
- What point in time would you like to go back to?
- What do you think of aromatherapy?
- What smell would people associate with you?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Spelling

- feelings of tnasogai
- storing them for aesdced
- tslitnayn recall the memories
- if a person nectounrs the smell again
- reamptiory store olfactory memories
- We wanted to know if that elisppa
- a eulidumtt of scents
- the perfume of an eyerldl aunt
- back in a rtaniec point of time
- a positive or negative onaicistsoa
- depend on this for their etpsaitn
- stores introduce feaagsrrcn to shoppers

Answers – Synonym Match

| | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. h | 2. e | 3. j | 4. b | 5. c |
| 6. a | 7. i | 8. f | 9. d | 10. g |

Role Play

Role A – Freshly Baked Bread

You think freshly baked bread is the best smell. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their smells aren't as nice. Also, tell the others which is the least nice of these (and why): perfume, coffee or the countryside.

Role B – Perfume

You think perfume is the best smell. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their smells aren't as nice. Also, tell the others which is the least nice of these (and why): freshly baked bread, coffee or the countryside.

Role C – Coffee

You think coffee is the best smell. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their smells aren't as nice. Also, tell the others which is the least nice of these (and why): perfume, freshly baked bread or the countryside.

Role D – The Countryside

You think the countryside is the best smell. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their smells aren't as nice. Also, tell the others which is the least nice of these (and why): perfume, coffee or freshly baked bread.

Speaking – Smells

Rank these with your partner. Put the best smells at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------|-----------------------|
| • cinnamon | • freshly baked bread |
| • vanilla | • perfume |
| • forests | • coffee |
| • the sea | • cotton candy |

Answers – True False

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | F | b | T | c | T | d | T | e | T | f | F | g | F | h | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.