



Classroom Activity

10 Big Question: What is life?

It's all in the nose

The taste of your wine - or any other drink or food - is highly dependent on what you smell, not just what you taste. Wine scientists and winemakers run descriptive analysis panels to determine the taste of wine. To get an understanding of the different flavours they use sensory standards of very specific compounds such as chocolate, coffee or berries. The following experiments will put you in the shoes of a panel member and will show you how difficult this task is, and how much you need your nose to do it!

'Blind' tasting

For this activity you will need fruit candies with specific flavours such as strawberry, citrus and blackberry and a friend to test them on. Blindfold your test subject and ask them to pinch their nose. Have them taste one flavour of candy without seeing it.

Could your test subject correctly identify the flavour? Try another flavour. Are some flavours easier to identify than others? Switch with your friend and give it a go yourself.

Aroma identification

For this part of the activity you will need to prepare a series of 'aroma standards' from common food items and additives. For example, you could use black pepper, clove, mushroom, apple, peach, toast, confectionary, liquorice, coffee, vanilla, green capsicum and lemon (or whatever you have readily available!). Place the standards into individual containers and wrap them in foil or blindfold your test subject so they can't see what the standards are. Have your friend smell each standard and try to identify the aroma.

It may help to provide them with an aroma wheel like the one in this article which can be printed from: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wine_Aroma_Wheel.jpg