



What does purple sound like?

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What?

Synaesthesia is a neurological condition/trait where **senses normally expected to be processed independently are merged**. For example, people with synaesthesia experience occasions where they can **see a sound or hear a colour**.¹

Why?

Research on synaesthesia provides insight with regards to **brain development shortly after birth**¹, as well as to differences in brain function among different individuals. Research on synaesthesia has focused on various topics, including its **association with autism**² or its potentially **higher prevalence among art students**³.

What a person with synaesthesia might experience

“Rain tastes like blueberries”⁴

“You might read the word "street" and taste citrus fruit.”⁶

“The letter A elicits the colour red”⁴

“If I hear my dog bark, I experience the taste and texture of runny custard in my mouth”¹

“You might hear the name "Alex" and see green.”⁶

“Individual voices have taste and texture, as does all music.”¹

“The word “like” tasted of yoghurt”¹

Who?

Synaesthesia affects **1-4% of the population**⁴, with the rates going up to **4.4%** for different types and degrees of the condition⁵. It might result from **emotional distress, head trauma**¹, or it might be **drug-induced**⁴.

Author Comments

Synaesthesia is a fascinating area of research which might shed light to specific aspects of **brain function**. Given that **both the genome and the environment** are involved in its development, future work on the populations affected the most, particularly on **their full genetic profile** could be very enlightening.

References

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