

## 能品尝文字的人 People who can taste words

Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Neil. And I'm Sam.

大家好。这里是 BBC 学习英语栏目的六分钟英语。我是尼尔。我是萨姆。

Many people have favourites – a favourite colour, a favourite flavour, a favourite word.

很多人都有自己的最喜欢的东西，最喜欢的颜色，最喜欢的味道，最喜欢的词。

What's yours, Neil?

你呢，尼尔？

Hmm, my favourite colour is green, my favourite flavour is sweet-and-sour, and, well, I don't know if it's my favourite, but there is a word I really like saying out loud – 'nincompoop'.

嗯，我最喜欢的颜色是绿色，最喜欢的味道是糖醋味。我不知道这算不算“最喜欢”，但我真的很喜欢大声说“nncompoop”这个词。

It means a silly person.

它的意思是愚蠢的人。

For me, it's the taste of coffee, and the smell of lavender, or freshly baked bread.

我最喜欢的味道是咖啡味，和薰衣草或新鲜出炉的面包的味道。

Hm. Our favourite tastes, smells and colours are controlled by our five senses – sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch.

我们最喜欢的滋味、气味和颜色由我们的五种感官控制：视觉、听觉、嗅觉、味觉和触觉。

For most of us they don't mix.

对于大多数人来说，这五种感觉不能混淆。

We see colours and taste flavours, but we can't taste sounds.

我们能看到颜色、尝到味道，但我们不能品尝声音。

But that's not how everyone's brain works.

但并不是每个人的大脑都是这样的。

Imagine being able to 'taste' every word that you hear.

想象一下，能够“品尝”你听到的每一个字是什么情况。

In this programme, we'll meet two sisters from Glasgow in Scotland who can do just that.

在本期节目中，我们将了解来自苏格兰格拉斯哥的两姐妹。她们就可以品尝文字。

And as usual, we'll learn some new vocabulary as well.

像往常一样，我们也会学习一些新的词汇。

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Julie McDowall and her younger sister, Jen McCready, have synaesthesia, a neurological condition where two or more senses mix together.

朱莉·麦克道尔和她的妹妹珍·麦克雷迪患有通感症。这是一种神经类疾病。患者可以将两种或两种以上感觉混合在一起。

When synesthetes, as they're called, hear a word, their sense of taste also becomes activated.

患者被称为联觉者。他们听到一个单词的同时，味觉也会被激活。

Words produce specific tastes on their tongues.

词语在他们的舌头上产生特定的味道。

For example, when Jen hears the name of her daughter, Sophia, she tastes pink marshmallows!

比如，当珍听到她女儿索菲亚的名字时，她会尝到粉色的棉花糖的味道！

And the name 'Leo' tastes like noodles.

而“利奥”这个名字尝起来像面条。

We'll hear more from the unusual sisters later, but first I have a question for you, Neil.

稍后我们会听听这对不同寻常的姐妹怎么说，但首先我有一个问题要问你，尼尔。

We've just heard what happens when Jen McCready hears the names 'Sophia', and 'Leo', but what does she taste when she hears the name 'Neil'?

我们刚刚了解到珍·麦克雷迪听到“索菲亚”和“利奥”这两个名字时会发生什么，但是当她听到“尼尔”这个名字时，会尝到什么滋味呢？

Is it a) eggs and bacon b) spaghetti hoops or c) a jam sandwich?

是 a) 鸡蛋和培根 b) 意大利细面圈，还是 c) 果酱三明治？

Well, I don't know what this says about me, Sam, but I'm going to guess that it's c) a jam sandwich.

我不知道这说明了什么，萨姆，但我猜是 c) 果酱三明治。

OK. Don't worry, Neil - I'll reveal the answer later in the programme.

好的。别担心，尼尔。稍后我会在节目中揭晓答案。

Synaesthesia isn't only about people, like Julie and Jen, who taste words - it can be a mixing of any of our senses.

联觉者中不仅仅有像朱莉和珍这样能品尝词汇的人。各种感官都可以被联系起来。

A synesthete may hear colours or see sounds.

联觉者或许可以听到颜色或看到声音。

In fact, there could be as many as 150 different types of synaesthesia.

其实，世界上可能有多达150种不同类型的通感症。

For the Scottish sisters, having synaesthesia is a gift, something Jen explained when she talked with BBC World Service programme, The Food Chain.

对于这对苏格兰姐妹来说，拥有通感是一种天赋。珍曾在BBC世界服务栏目的《食物链》中做出解释。

This is enjoyable, it's never anything that causes ... The only thing I would say is it's quite hard if you're trying to eat healthily because if you hear a word that maybe tastes like tuna, I'll be like, 'Oh, I need to get a tuna baguette now'.

这样挺好的，从来不会带来什么麻烦。我想只有一点，就是你很难健康地饮食，因为如果听到一个尝起来像金枪鱼的词，我就会想：哦，我现在必须吃一个金枪鱼面包。

You know, it's almost like being pregnant and having a craving.

你知道吗，这就像怀孕了莫名想吃什么东西一样。

Words can be so vivid that you want to eat that.

文字是如此生动，以至于你想吃东西。

That's the only negative I would say about it.

我觉得这就是唯一的缺点了。

For Jen, the only drawback to synaesthesia is that it can be hard to eat healthily because hearing certain words produces a craving – a strong feeling of wanting a particular food.

对于珍来说，通感症的唯一缺点是很难吃得健康，因为听到某些单词会让人非常渴望吃某种食物。“craving”是一种强烈的想要某种食物的感觉。

That could be because, for Jen, the sound of the word is so vivid – clear, detailed, and powerful in her mind.

这可能是因为，对于珍来说，词的声音在她的脑海中很生动，即清晰、详细、活跃。

There's still much doctors don't know about why some people experience sense mixing while most of us experience each sense in isolation, but it's clear that for Julie and Jen, synaesthesia makes the world a more interesting, colourful place.

关于为什么有些人能通感，而大部分都不行，还有很多未解之谜。但很明显，对朱莉和珍来说，通感症让世界变得更有趣、更丰富多彩了。

Someone who can explain why so little is known about synaesthesia is Guy Leschziner, consultant neurologist at King's College London, and author of the book, 'The Man Who Tasted Words'.

盖伊·莱施辛纳可以解释为什么人们对通感感知之甚少。他是伦敦国王学院神经病学顾问医师，也是《品尝文字的人》一书的作者。

Here he is speaking to BBC World Service's, The Food Chain.

以下是他在BBC世界服务栏目的《食物链》上讲述的内容。

One of the problems with synaesthesia is for many years it's been dismissed, and it's been viewed as people with an overactive imagination, something not real but actually what research in recent years has taught us is that actually it does have an underlying neurological and genetic basis.

问题之一是人们多年来一直忽视通感症的存在，认为通感症就是人想象力过度活跃的现象，不是真的病症。但近年来的研究告诉我们，通感症确实有潜在的神经学和遗传学基础。

Guy says that in the past, synaesthesia was often dismissed – considered unimportant or uninteresting.

盖伊说，在过去，通感症经常被忽视，即被认为不重要或无聊。

Synesthetes were labelled people with overactive imaginations – a tendency to imagine things that are not true.

联觉者被认为是想象力过度活跃的人，喜欢想象不真实的事物。

But research is showing that the causes of synaesthesia could run in the family.

但研究正在表明，通感症可能会遗传。

Julie and Jen's brothers don't have synaesthesia, but Jen's daughter does.

朱莉和珍的兄弟没有通感症，但珍的女儿有。

And with an estimated 4% of the world population having some form of sense mixing, a world of new and exciting possibilities is opening up to millions.

据估计，世界上有4%的人拥有某种形式的通感能力。也就是说，世界上有数百万人能体验这个充满各种可能性的新奇世界。

Exciting possibilities like tasting someone's name... Remember in my question I asked what synesthete, Jen McCready, tastes when she hears the name 'Neil'.

他们或许能品尝某人的名字... ...记得吗？我问过你，当联觉者珍·麦克雷迪听到“尼尔”这个名字时，她会尝到什么滋味。

OK. Well, I guessed that 'Neil' tastes like a jam sandwich. Was I right?

记得。我猜“尼尔”尝起来像果酱三明治。我说的对吗？

Well, Neil, no – you don't taste like a jam sandwich.

尼尔，不，你尝起来不像果酱三明治。

In fact, when Jen hears the name 'Neil', she tastes spaghetti hoops!

其实，珍听到“尼尔”这个名字时，会尝到意大利细面圈的味道！

Oh well, it could be worse – the name 'Robert' makes Jen taste rotten eggs!

哦，还有可能更糟。“罗伯特”这个名字让珍尝到了臭鸡蛋的味道！

Sorry to any Roberts listening.

对不起了，各位“罗伯特”。

OK, let's recap the vocabulary we've learned in this programme about synaesthesia – a neurological condition where two or more senses mix together.

好了，让我们回顾一下本期节目中关于通感症的词汇“synaesthesia”是一种神经类疾病。患者可以将两种或更多感觉混合在一起。

A nincompoop is an informal way of saying a silly person.

“nincompoop”是一个非正式的表达，意为蠢蛋。

A craving for something is the strong desire to have it.

对某物的“craving”就是对它的强烈渴望。

A vivid sensation is clear, strong and detailed in your mind.

“vivid”可以形容某种感觉在你的脑海里是清晰、强烈、详细的。

When something is dismissed, it's considered unimportant or uninteresting.

“dismiss”某事，指认为某事不重要或没意思。

And finally, an overactive imagination is the tendency to imagine things that are not true.

最后，“overactive imagination”指某人喜欢想象不真实的事情的倾向。

Once again, our six minutes are up!

我们的六分钟又到了！

If you've enjoyed this look into the weird and wonderful world of synaesthesia, we hope you'll join us again next time for more chat, interesting issues and useful vocabulary here at 6 Minute English.

如果你喜欢听我们讲联觉者眼中的奇妙世界，请记得收听下期节目哦。在6分钟英语，我们将讨论更多有趣的话题，讲解更多有用的词汇。

Bye for now! Goodbye!

下期再见！再见！

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