



# IT'S ALL IN THE TASTE BUDS

## MATERIALS:

- FLAVORED HARD CANDIES
- A PARTNER
- NOTEBOOK AND PEN

## PROCEDURE:

1. Get a partner to do the experiment with you.
2. Have one person close their eyes and hold their nose, while the other person feeds them a flavored hard candy without telling them the flavor.
3. The person with the candy in their mouth should try to guess what flavor the candy is without letting go of their nose. Give them several minutes so the candy has a chance to dissolve in their mouth. This will give them enough time to detect the flavor.
4. Is there any change in the taste of the candy from the beginning to the end of the experiment? Describe the tastes.








## WHAT THIS MEANS:

Much of what we perceive as “taste” is due to our sense of smell. At first, you may not be able to tell the specific flavor of the candy, just perhaps a sensation of sweetness or sourness. If patient, as the candy dissolves, you can identify the specific taste. This is because some scent molecules volatilize and travel up through a “back door” – a passage at the back of the throat to the nose. Since we can only taste four different true tastes – sweet, sour, salt and bitter – it is actually smell that lets us experience the complex, mouthwatering flavors we associate with our favorite foods.

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