

Synesthesia

Senses gone wild!

Imagine that when you see a city's skyline, you taste blackberries. Or maybe when you hear a violin, you feel a tickle on your left knee. Perhaps you are completely convinced that Wednesdays are light red. If you have experiences like these, you might have synesthesia. Synesthesia is a condition in which one sense (for example, hearing) is simultaneously perceived as if by one or more additional senses such as sight. Another form of synesthesia joins objects such as letters, shapes, numbers or people's names with a sensory perception such as smell, color or flavor. The word synesthesia comes from two Greek words, syn (together) and aisthesis (perception). Therefore, synesthesia literally means "joined perception." (from Neuroscience for Kids, Melissa Lee Phillips, consultant)

If you want to peruse some fascinating web sites, just go to this one or Google synesthesia. Or read *The Man Who Tasted Shapes* or *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*. Such interesting science and psychology!

Synesthesia is also a figure of speech. [sin-es-thee-zia] a blending or confusion of different kinds of sense impressions in which one type of sensation is referred to in terms more appropriate to another. Common synesthetic expressions include such terms as loud or warm colors, smooth sounds. Incorporating synesthesia into your writing can produce some eye-popping, mind blowing great poetry, so add this to your "bag of tricks."

As warm up, complete each of these stems as creatively as you can to produce synesthesia:

Happiness tastes like

Happiness feels like

Happiness sounds like

Happiness smells like

Happiness looks like

Fear tastes like

Fear feels like

Fear sounds like

Fear smells like

Fear looks like

Work tastes like

Work feels like

Work sounds like

Work smells like

Work looks like

Play tastes like

Play feels like

Play sounds like

Play smells like

Play looks like

Now that you are warmed up, I'll give you two more activities to keep your brain creatively cranking along.

One is **Using Analogies and Metaphors to Enhance Creative Thinking** based on work by Jane McAuliffe and Laura Stoskin. Work on it at home tonight and come prepared to share some of your best samples.

Another piece I want you to play with is **Exploring Green**. If I ever gave tests, I suppose this would be the test. This is another exercise where I'll bet you'll be able to expand some of your work into a finished piece of prose or poetry.

Of course, I'll give you a couple of ideas about how to **incorporate synesthesia into poetry** too. Man alive! The first 9 weeks isn't even over and look how much you've learned and done!