

## Food and memories

Last week, I walked by a small taco restaurant. There was a wonderful smell of fresh tortillas. I have lived in the U.S. For forty years, but when I smell fresh tortillas, I am in Mexico again. The smell took me back to the small town in Mexico where I grew up. Suddenly, I was at my family's dinner table, with fresh tortillas and my grandmother's delicious chicken. The memory was so strong. I almost cried.

Later, I talked to some friends about my experience. They said that some foods bring back powerful memories from their childhood, too. My friend Anna remembers her family's Sunday dinners when she smells fried chicken.

There are also many stories about food and memories in books. French author Marcel Proust begins one of his novels with a cookie and a cup of tea. The taste brings back many memories—more than 4,000 pages of them! The author Eduardo Machado writes about foods that make him hungry for his home in Cuba. The smell of boiling fresh milk takes him back to his childhood.

Why does food make us remember things? Well, a food's smell has most of the food's flavor. And the part of the brain that is responsible for smell is directly connected to the parts of the brain that are responsible for memories and for emotions. So, it is not surprising that the smell of food often brings back memories, especially memories that include strong emotions.

What are your special food memories?

**Luz López**

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### 3 CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING



**A** What is the main idea of the blog post?

- The flavor of food comes more from its smell than its taste.
- Foods and their smells can bring back powerful memories.
- Memories are connected to strong emotions.



**B** Choose the correct answer.

- The author remembered her childhood because of the smell of *fried chicken* / *fresh tortillas* / *a little taco*.
- The smell of boiling milk brings back memories for *the author* / *Marcel Proust* / *Eduardo Machado*.
- Smell and *childhood* / *food* / *memories* are connected in the brain.

**✓ C FOCUS ON LANGUAGE** Read. What do the underlined words mean?

1. The smell took me back to the small town in Mexico where I grew up.  
a. made me remember                      b. traveled with me
2. The part of the brain that is responsible for smell is directly connected to the parts of the brain that are responsible for memory and for emotions.  
a. be sensitive about                      b. manage

**✓ D READING SKILL** Read the Reading Skill. What information can you infer?

Luz writes ...

1. I walked by a small taco restaurant. There was a wonderful smell...
2. I almost cried.
3. The smell of boiling fresh milk takes him back to his childhood.

So I know ...

- a. Luz doesn't like to eat at home.
  - b. Luz likes tacos.
- 
- a. Luz misses her childhood.
  - b. Luz wants to move back to Mexico.
- 
- a. Eduardo Machado often drank milk.
  - b. Eduardo Machado rarely drank milk.

**READING SKILL**

**Infer meaning**

To infer is to know what an author believes or means but doesn't write. Reread the text. What things does the author believe or mean but not write?