Task: Listen and fill in blanks.

Synaesthesia

I = Interviewer R = Rachel

I: And now as part of our series, *Amazing Senses*, Rachel will give us a talk on her experience of having **(1)** _____.

R: Do certain colours create different flavours in your mouth or do you see shapes when you hear **(2)** _____? If the answer's yes then you may have synaesthesia. It's a condition in which a person experiences one **(3)** _____ at the same time as another. I've had it for as long as I can remember, but frustratingly, I've only recently found out there's a **(4)** _____ for my condition. Growing up I couldn't understand why I experienced things differently to my **(5)** _____.

Once I learned I had synaesthesia, I was keen to find out more. I researched a lot on the **(6)** _____, and talked to friends – I even went to seminars on the subject, but I was thrilled when I found a **(7)** _____ article that summed up my own situation exactly.

I have two forms of synaesthesia. One of these means that I see colours when I listen to music. The colours change depending on the music, so I often see bright red and yellow colours when I listen to **(8)** _____ music, but darker colours such as purple when I'm listening to **(9)** _____. Some people experience music more emotionally because of the colours it produces. It doesn't happen to me, but there are some people who experience different **(10)** _____ when they hear certain sounds.

The second one I have is the most common form of the condition. This means that certain **(11)** _____ and numbers are always a particular colour. Like, for me the letter 'P' is always blue when I see it and the number 4 is a bright **(12)** _____; even whole words have their own colour.

I've no idea where my synaesthesia came from; no one in my **(13)** _____ has it. Experts believe that the condition begins in early **(14)** _____ when kids are first becoming aware of abstract concepts such as shape, colour and sound.

Apparently, people with synaesthesia are often not as good as their peers at subjects such as **(15)** _____ or science and their sense of direction is often worse too, but we're very creative. I think this is true 'cos I'm hopeless at **(16)** _____ and I'm always getting lost. However, at college I'm a keen **(17)** _____ and I enjoy writing stories. What I wasn't aware of was the number of famous artists and musicians such as Van Gogh and Franz **(18)** _____ who had the condition, but it kind of makes sense now.

My friends sometimes ask if it bothers me and in general I would say it doesn't, but it can be **(19)** _____. You see my synaesthesia is affected by my **(20)** _____ or emotions. If I'm feeling relaxed it's a nice experience, but if I feel very stressed, the sounds and colours feel much stronger. So if it's rush hour, I've just missed my bus for college and I'm trying to ask someone the time of the next bus, it can be difficult to follow what they're saying because suddenly the background sounds can become too loud.

Then it's hard to concentrate when I'm seeing the equivalent of fireworks produced by all the sounds of traffic around me.

All in all though, I do feel it's a gift and I can't imagine life without my synaesthesia.

LIVEWORKSHEETS