



Science Experiment: Taste in the “Desert” Project: Food Science, Health

Supplies:

Paper towel

variety of non-liquid items to try. Also try to include BITTER, SWEET, SALTY, and SOUR.

We used sweet potato cracker (without salt), salty cracker, sour candy, unsweetened chocolate.

Paper and pencil to record the results.

Optional – blind folds.

Water to rinse your mouth between tastes.

Time:

15 – 20 minutes

What to Do:

In order for food to have taste, chemicals from the food must first dissolve in saliva. Once dissolved, the chemicals can be detected by receptors on taste buds. Therefore, if there is no saliva, you should not be able to taste anything. To test this theory, dry your tongue with a clean paper towel. Once your tongue is dry, try tasting a few samples of salt, sugar or other dry foods. Rinse your mouth and dry your tongue after each test.

Reflect:

Where you able to taste the food item while your mouth was dry?

Did it taste different once the saliva returned to your mouth?

Where you able to tell BITTER, SWEET, SALTY, and SOUR?

Apply:

Have you ever been sick and have difficulty tasting? Share what that was like.

Sometimes medications can change the way food taste. Why is that important when people are sick?

Some people have “dry mouth”. Do you think they taste food the same as other people?

Data collection: What flavor was it?

Sample 1	
Sample 2	
Sample 3	
Sample 4	

<https://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/chtaste.html>