Your notes

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition: revision notes

Sensory evaluation

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The senses and taste

- We judge food with our senses: sight (colour and presentation), smell (aroma), taste, touch and **mouthfeel** (texture), and even hearing (the crunch of crisps).
- The five basic tastes are sweet, sour, salty, bitter and **umami** (savoury). Taste receptors on the tongue detect them.
- Smell has a big effect on flavour, which is why food tastes bland with a cold.

Sensory testing

- Preference tests find which food people like: **hedonic ranking** uses a scale such as a smiley face or 1 to 5.
- Discrimination tests find whether people can tell foods apart: the **triangle test** gives three samples, two the same and one different.
- Grading and ranking tests put samples in order, such as from least to most salty.
- Rating tests score attributes; results can be shown on a **star profile** (radar chart).

Setting up fair tests

- Use a quiet area, and small samples at the same temperature.
- Label samples with random codes, not names, so tasters aren't influenced.
- Give tasters water to drink between samples, and clear instructions.
- Use the results to improve recipes, such as reducing sweetness.

Key terms

Sensory evaluation	Judging food using the senses.
Umami	The savoury taste, found in foods such as cheese and mushrooms.
Hedonic ranking	A preference test using a scale of liking.

Triangle test	A test with three samples, two the same, to see if people can spot the odd one.
Star profile	A chart showing how a food scores for different attributes.
Mouthfeel	How a food feels in the mouth, such as creamy or crunchy.

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. What are the five basic tastes?
2. Which taste is umami?
3. What is a triangle test used for?
4. Why are samples labelled with random codes?
5. Why should tasters drink water between samples?
6. What does a star profile show?
7. Why does food taste bland with a cold?
8. Which sense judges the crunch of a crisp?

Answers

1. Sweet, sour, salty, bitter and umami
2. Savoury
3. To see if people can tell foods apart
4. So tasters aren't influenced by names
5. To clear the palate
6. How a food scores for different attributes
7. Smell is blocked, and smell affects flavour
8. Hearing

What to do next

Practise 10 questions on this topic

Try 4 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

Free revision for GCSE and KS3 at lycolearn.co.uk. Some notes are for one exam board only, and say so in brackets.

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