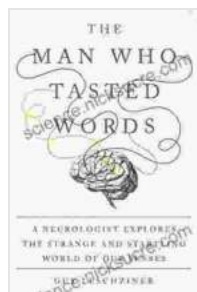


# The Man Who Tasted Words: An Extraordinary Journey into the Synaesthesia of Language

Imagine a world where the word "apple" doesn't just conjure up an image of a crisp, red fruit in your mind. Instead, it triggers a burst of tart sweetness on your tongue. Or the word "rain" brings with it the scent of damp earth. For Michael Bavaro, this is not an imaginative concept but his everyday reality.

Bavaro is a synesthete, a person who experiences a merging of the senses. For him, words, numbers, and other abstract concepts are not just intellectual abstractions but sensory experiences with distinct flavors, scents, and textures.



## The Man Who Tasted Words: A Neurologist Explores the Strange and Startling World of Our Senses

by Dr. Guy Leschziner

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 3811 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 329 pages



Bavaro's synaesthesia is a rare neurological condition that affects less than 1% of the population. It occurs due to cross-wiring in the brain, where

sensory pathways that would normally process separate stimuli become interconnected.

Bavaro's case is particularly remarkable. He experiences a wide range of sensory associations, encompassing not only taste and smell but also touch, vision, and hearing. The word "flower," for instance, conjures up the image of a delicate white blossom, the scent of jasmine, the texture of soft petals, and the taste of honey.

Growing up, Bavaro's synaesthesia was a source of both wonder and confusion. He realized from a young age that his perception of language was different from others, but it was only later in life that he discovered the scientific explanation for his experiences.

Bavaro's synaesthesia has profoundly shaped his life. It has given him a unique appreciation for the beauty and complexity of language. It has also led him to explore the frontiers of neuroscience and cognition, working closely with researchers to unravel the mysteries of sensory perception.

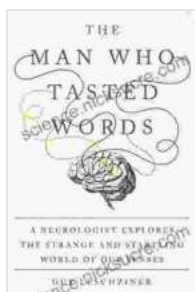
In his memoir, "The Man Who Tasted Words," Bavaro shares his extraordinary journey into the world of synaesthesia. He provides a vivid and deeply personal account of how his condition has enriched his life, while also shedding light on the intriguing interplay between the senses and the brain.

Bavaro's story is not only a fascinating exploration of human perception but also a testament to the extraordinary diversity of human experience. It challenges our assumptions about the limits of our senses and opens up new possibilities for understanding the relationship between language, cognition, and the human condition.

Here is a closer look at some of the ways in which Bavaro experiences synaesthesia:

- **Taste:** Words like "apple" taste like their corresponding flavors, while abstract concepts like "love" have a sweet and warm taste.
- **Smell:** The word "rain" evokes the scent of damp earth, while the word "perfume" brings with it a floral fragrance.
- **Texture:** The word "sand" feels rough and gritty in his mouth, while the word "fur" feels smooth and soft.
- **Vision:** The word "red" triggers a vision of a bright crimson color, while the word "green" evokes an image of lush verdant meadows.
- **Hearing:** Musical notes and chords have distinct colors and textures for Bavaro. For instance, the note "C" is a bright yellow triangle, while the note "G" is a deep blue circle.

Bavaro's synaesthesia is a testament to the intricate interconnectedness of our sensory systems. It challenges traditional notions of perception and opens up new ways of understanding the human experience.



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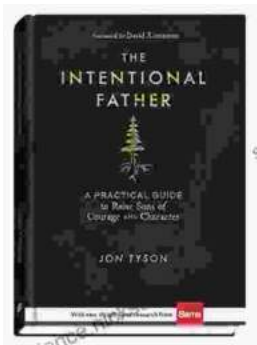
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