

## New project to recreate smells from centuries ago

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via Mark Anderson on flickr.com

Would you like to know what the sixteenth century smelt like? A team of researchers is trying to find out. Scientists, historians and experts in smells have embarked on a \$3.3 million project to identify and even recreate the aromas that filled the air between the 16th and early 20th centuries. The project is called "Odeuropa: Negotiating Olfactory and Sensory Experiences in Cultural Heritage Practice and Research". The goal is to develop an online encyclopaedia of smells, including biographies of distinct odours that are specific to past times. The website will reveal insights into the emotions aroused by the smells in bygone centuries and the places associated with certain scents.

The project website says: "Smells shape our experience of the world, yet we have very little sensory information about the past." It lists a series of questions it hopes researchers will answer. These are: "What are the key scents...that have shaped our cultures? How can we extract sensory data from large-scale digital text and image collections? How can we represent smell in all its facets in a database? How should we safeguard our olfactory heritage? And - Why should we?" Team leader Dr William Tullett wants people to be aware of an array of smells, pleasant and unpleasant. He said: "We are trying to encourage people to consider both the foul and the fragrant elements of Europe's olfactory past."

Sources: [theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com) / [odeuropa.eu](http://odeuropa.eu) / [youtube.com](http://youtube.com)

## Writing

It is important to research historic smells. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

sixteenth century / historians / experts / project / aromas / develop / past / insights / experience / information / questions / culture / data / image / database / fragrant

## True / False

- There is a \$30 million project to research smells from centuries ago. T / F
- Researchers will try to recreate smells of the early 20th century. T / F
- Researchers want to create an online encyclopaedia of smells. T / F
- The article said the website will include smells from all over the world. T / F
- The website said we have a lot of sensory information about the past. T / F
- Researchers will look into the key scents that shaped our cultures. T / F
- Researchers will try to put the smells in a database. T / F
- The team leader wants people only to be aware of nice smells. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. <b>trying</b>     | a. aspects    |
| 2. <b>project</b>    | b. clear      |
| 3. <b>distinct</b>   | c. related    |
| 4. <b>reveal</b>     | d. form       |
| 5. <b>associated</b> | e. string     |
| 6. <b>shape</b>      | f. attempting |
| 7. <b>series</b>     | g. disgusting |
| 8. <b>extract</b>    | h. disclose   |
| 9. <b>facets</b>     | i. take out   |
| 10. <b>foul</b>      | j. venture    |

## Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you think of bad breath?
- What do you think of B.O. (body odour)?
- What century would you like to smell?
- How do countries smell differently?
- Can digital information recreate a smell?
- What do you think of the idea of watching a smell-o-vision?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

## Phrase Match

- |                                    |                            |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. know what the sixteenth century | a. filled the air          |
| 2. embarked on a                   | b. its facets              |
| 3. recreate the aromas that        | c. centuries               |
| 4. The goal is to develop          | d. fragrant                |
| 5. aroused by the smells in bygone | e. \$3.3 million project   |
| 6. Smells shape our experience     | f. shaped our cultures     |
| 7. the key scents that have        | g. of smells               |
| 8. represent smell in all          | h. smelt like              |
| 9. be aware of an array            | i. of the world            |
| 10. the foul and the               | j. an online encyclopaedia |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of the idea of historic smells?
- What do you think the 16th century smelt like?
- What does the 21st century smell of?
- Do you think the past smelt more or less fragrant than today?
- What smells from the past are missing today?
- Which smells today do you want to become history?
- What do you think of your smells?
- What do other people think of your smells?

## Spelling

- abedmkre on a \$3.3 million project
- recreate the asrmoa
- briiighsopa of distinct odours
- The website will reveal htsignsni into the emotions
- aroused by the smells in byoeng centuries
- places associated with certain cssten
- It lists a rseies of questions
- we have very little sesryon information
- we represent smell in all its tcfase
- safeguard our olfactory hragteei
- We are trying to ncoagueer people
- both the foul and the aagrrftn elements

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. j	3. b	4. h	5. c
6. d	7. e	8. i	9. a	10. g

## Role Play

### Role A – Smell

You think the sense of smell is the most important sense. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their senses aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): taste, hearing or touch.

### Role B – Taste

You think the sense of taste is the most important sense. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their senses aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): smell, hearing or touch.

### Role C – Hearing

You think the sense of hearing is the most important sense. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their senses aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): taste, smell or touch.

### Role D – Touch

You think the sense of touch is the most important sense. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their senses aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): taste, hearing or smell.

## Speaking – Aromas

Rank these with your partner. Put the best aromas at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                       |             |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| • coffee              | • banana    |
| • Chanel #5           | • incense   |
| • freshly baked bread | • fresh air |
| • the countryside     | • popcorn   |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.