

# Chocolate tasting

## Sensory

30-45 minutes

### You will need:

A couple of different types of nice chocolate (1-2 squares of each per participant)

Plates

Hand wipes or cloths

Cups of water (1 for each participant)

### Optional:

A map of the world, pen and paper, white napkins

## Dementia-friendly



Fun  
Informative  
Explorative

This informative, sensory activity gives participants space to chat and to share their reactions and experiences whilst tasting chocolate. It is also a fun way to learn more about the history of chocolate.

### To begin:

Share some facts with the group about chocolate. You can find a selection at the end of this activity.

### Then:

Explain that you are going to sample a range of different chocolates and decide which ones you like. If you are sampling several different chocolates, it is a good idea to make a note of your reactions to each one so that it is easier to compare.

Look at your first chocolate. Think about the colour, the thickness, the texture. *Is it shiny?* You could use a white napkin or paper under the chocolate in order to inspect it more clearly.

Next, touch and hold the chocolate in your hand – some people may like to close their eyes in order to focus on the sensation. *If you rub the chocolate with your fingers is it smooth? How easily does it start to melt? Does it feel like it will snap easily?*

Listen to the chocolate by snapping it in two. *What sort of sound does it make?*

Smell the chocolate. *Does the snapped chocolate smell stronger? What sort of aromas can you smell? What words would you use? Earthy, fruity, nutty?*

Finally, taste the chocolate. Some people may like to close their eyes and focus on the taste. It can be a good idea to let the chocolate rest on your tongue for a few seconds and melt slightly before you chew. You can also move the chocolate around your mouth. *What sorts of flavours do you experience?*

If you have got a map, you can look at where the chocolate has come from together.

### Next:

Repeat this process with your other samples of chocolate. You will need to drink water in between to neutralise the palate.

### Credit:

"Food in Georgian times", Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums. Developed in partnership with Age UK North Tyneside, 'Time Travellers' Dementia Group.





### To finish:

Go back through the chocolates that you have sampled with the notes you have made. *Which one did you like the best? What did you like about it? Which one didn't you like? Why didn't you like it?*

### Some chocolate facts:

Chocolate was first cultivated and consumed by the ancient Maya of Mesoamerica (South America). They used cacao beans to make a liquid drink. It came to Europe via the Spanish, who by the 16th century had colonised many areas of South America.

Enslaved people were often used in the production of chocolate.

Chocolate first became popular in England during the Georgian Period (1714-1837) which covered the reigns of monarchs George I, George II, George III, George IV and often William IV.

The Georgians drank their chocolate and it was a hugely popular drink for the upper and then middle classes. Most cities had Chocolate Houses where the upper classes could enjoy the beverage.

In 1759 the first commercial chocolate company was founded by Joseph Fry, a Quaker from Bristol. Fry's would go on to manufacture and sell the first solid chocolate bar but not until 1847, so the poor Georgians never got to know the wonder of eating a piece of chocolate!

