

# B1



# TASTE : TONGUE MAPPING



**N/C link LKS2:**  
Children should describe the simple functions of the basic parts of the digestive system in humans. Elsewhere, they should explore the rest of the digestive system, through activities such as modelling the digestive system, this should include work on the teeth

## FLAVOUR SENSATION SCIENCE:

When we choose a food to eat, we look at it, maybe smell it, and touch it before we put it into our mouths, which is the last thing we do before swallowing our food. Our sense of taste is therefore very important in helping us to decide whether a food is delicious and good for us, or perhaps harmful. Poisonous plants have developed high levels of bitter compounds to protect themselves from being eaten, just as we have developed sensitivity to bitter tastes to protect ourselves from poisoning. The tongue map was published in 1901 by a German scientist who believed that we tasted the five basic tastes on certain areas of our tongues and that this was the same for everyone. More recently, scientists have shown us that the tongue map is a misunderstanding, probably due to a mistake in the translation from German into English more than 100 years ago. It is true that some tastes are stronger on some areas of the tongue, which is hopefully what you have found with your tongue maps. We now know that all tastes can be detected anywhere on the tongue where there are taste buds; and tastes can even be detected in the throat, stomach and intestines. If you are unfortunate enough to scald your tongue with very hot soup, your taste buds can be damaged in one area of your tongue, but you could still taste all the five basic tastes in other parts of your tongue.