

Sniff: reading

AAHH! The smell of roses. The smell of tea, coffee and hot chocolate. The smell of autumn leaves, spring rain and the summer sea. The smell of French perfume, coconut shampoo and soap. Bananas, mangoes and strawberries....mmmmm! How nice!



But Joanna Smith doesn't think these smells are nice. Why? Because she can't smell. She does not know the smell of a rose or the smell of coffee. She does not know the smell of the sea or the smell of perfume. Joanna thinks everything smells the same. She thinks everything smells of air.

Because she can't smell Joanna has some problems. She doesn't know if there is a fire because she can't smell smoke. She doesn't know if food is safe to eat because she can't smell if it is bad. And she can't smell herself.

"I have a shower every morning and every night because I don't know if I smell," says Joanna. "In the summer I have two or three showers every day."

Joanna's mother comes to see Joanna every weekend. She smells the house for Joanna to check that there are no problems. She smells the food in the fridge, the cooker in the kitchen and the clothes. Joanna can help her family too. Her sister Sarah has a baby and Joanna is very happy to change the baby's nappy!

Joanna knows Sarah can smell. She also knows Sarah can remember people. "Sarah remembers my grandfather but I can't. I think this is because Sarah can smell." Sarah agrees. She says, "When I smell cigars I think of grandfather. Joanna can't smell cigars so it's difficult to remember grandfather."

It is not only smell. Because Joanna can't smell, she has a problem with taste. Food and drinks are not important because everything tastes the same. "For me fruit teas are only coloured drinks. I know the red one is strawberry and the orange one is mango. But for me they taste the same! I always eat all the food my family cook for me because I like everything."

Is Joanna unhappy that she can't smell? "Oh no," says Joanna. "This is normal for me. I am only unhappy when people laugh at me. They think it's funny that I can't smell." And Joanna's boyfriend is not unhappy. "I want to stop smoking but it's difficult. Joanna can't smell if I have a cigarette!"