

Windows of the Mind

Frank Brennan

Before reading

1. Look at the front cover and read the back cover blurb. What do you think the 'Windows of the Mind' are?
2. Look at the contents page and read the first page of each story. The five senses are sight, sound, taste, touch and smell. Which sense do you think each story is going to be about?
3. Which sense is the most important to you? What would your life be like without it?
4. If you have the cassette, listen to the story which you would like to read first.

Check your reading

A Fine Wine

1. Look at the words in italics. Who or what do they refer to?
 - a 'I wonder if *they* would be prepared to pay more for such quality?'
 - b '*He* had to sell his wine or go out of business.'
 - c '*... this is one of the best wines I have ever tasted!*'
 - d '*We* are experts at selling for the best prices on the market and *you* are expert at making quality wine.'
 - e 'Monsieur, will you allow *me* a few moments alone to think over your offer?'

Monsieur Colbert Daniel Appleby
customers Happimart supermarkets

2. Match the foods to the tastes that Daniel experienced after the accident.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1 burger | a salt |
| 2 chips | b warm vinegar |
| 3 orange juice | c salty cardboard |
| 4 onion soup | d soap |
| 5 Burgundy wine | e old vinegar |

3. Match the beginnings and endings.

- 1 After leaving hospital, Daniel thought his sense of taste would return
 - 2 Daniel persuaded Justin to put off the wine tasting because
 - 3 Daniel planned to invite Colbert to give his expert opinion on the wines
 - 4 Daniel admitted to Colbert that he had lost his sense of taste
 - 5 At the tasting, Daniel described red wine vinegar
 - 6 Colbert had taken his revenge and as a result
- a so people wouldn't notice Daniel's inability to taste.
 - b as 'a fine example of a great wine'.
 - c and arranged to meet his boss, Justin, for dinner at Henri's.
 - d Daniel's problem with taste was now public knowledge.
 - e and threatened to sack him unless he co-operated.
 - f he still couldn't identify flavours properly.

A Nose for a Story

1. Match the characters to their roles in the story.

- 1 Desiree Malpen
- 2 the late Nyree Singh
- 3 Gopal Singh
- 4 Raj Patel
- 5 Professor Cyril Whitelaw
- 6 Ravi Naryan

- a actor, leading man in Patel's future film of *Indian Summer*
- b American journalist, looking for scandal about Nyree Singh
- c one of India's top film directors
- d writer, planning to write a life of Nyree Singh
- e prize-winning writer and former society beauty, now dead
- f Nyree Singh's older brother and only relation

2. What areas of Nyree Singh's life were Desiree Malpen and Cyril Whitelaw interested in?
Write DM, CW or BOTH after the sentences.

- a Nyree's relationships with film stars
- b Nyree's death – accident or murder?
- c scandal involving important public figures
- d unpublished writings by Nyree
- e Nyree's writings as serious literature

3. Which sentences about Nyree Singh are correct?

- a She was having an affair with a married film star.
- b She was very hard-working.
- c She died in a road accident.
- d She had made enemies of Indian politicians.
- e She kept secrets from her brother, Gopal.
- f She loved publicity.
- g She often had arguments with her brother.

Arlo's War

1. Who or what ...

- a had expressionless eyes, a highly developed sense of taste and was totally deaf?
- b fought in a war, and whose brain was damaged by the terrible noise of explosions?
- c had looked after Arlo before dying of cancer?
- d had been in the army with Arlo, and found him a job with Teckno-Toys after the war?
- e was the new, efficient boss of Teckno-Toys, who put money before people?

2. How did Arlo's condition get worse? Put the developments in the correct order.

- a After leaving Teckno-Toys, he often forgot to take his pills.
- b His caring wife had died.
- c He decided to take his revenge and make the world silent.
- d The effects of noise became so awful he felt he would go mad.
- e He began to be more seriously affected by noise.
- f Arlo's workplace, The Havens, was to be sold so he left his job.
- g He sometimes didn't take his pills.

3. 'Loud' (page 43) and 'quiet' (page 50) are two adjectives used in *Arlo's War* to describe different types of sound. Can you find eight more adjectives in the story which describe sounds?

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Open Doors

1. Match the characters to their jobs.

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Kathy Page | a television producer |
| 2 Trudy | b American scientist and eye surgeon |
| 3 Mick Dean | c well-known radio journalist |
| 4 Dr Percival | d Kathy's agent |
| 5 Carla | e ageing actor |
| 6 Archie Mason | f six-year-old guide dog |

2. Complete the summary

Blind radio journalist Kathy Page always discovered the if she thought a guest was She turned down an offer to present a TV because she preferred radio. Then she interviewed a who said he could give Kathy her The operation was a At first she could only see and, then and She was surprised at how the human affected her feelings. Then, she presented a TV show, but it wasn't a success. She had lost her power of After writing her, she returned to radio, but interviewed with a over her eyes. Blind again, she could her judgement.

3. What could Kathy do *before* she got her sight? What was Kathy looking forward to doing *after* she got her sight? Write BEFORE or AFTER at the end of the sentences.

- Doing yoga so she could keep in good shape.
- Going out to the theatre.
- Admiring pictures in art galleries.
- Going out for dinner with her male admirers.
- Experiencing colours.

A Gentle Touch

1. Match the words to their definitions.

- acupuncture
- acupressure
- Tai Chi.

- ... it uses either special sticks or – even easier – the fingers to apply pressure to points of *chi* in the body.
- ... slow elegant exercises that developed the *chi* and made it stronger.
- ... the use of fine needles placed into particular points on the body that are said to be the focus of important channels of life energy called *chi*.

2. What were the effects of acupuncture, acupressure and *Tai Chi* on Jamie? Put the changes in the correct order.

- He avoided coffee and gave up alcohol.
- He put his students under unreasonable pressure.
- He could do his work in a quarter of the time.
- He lost control of his *chi* and became violent.
- He gave up smoking.
- He felt more awake and full of life.

3. Match the events in Jamie's life with the advice and warnings from Mr Lo and Master Tong.

- He wished to make himself more intelligent.
 - He wanted to influence his students so they would never forget.
 - Jamie was curious about Master Tong's strength.
 - Jamie got involved in a street fight.
- 'One side gentle, one side strong. Both are the same, both are part of the *chi*. You understand now?'
 - 'The mind and the body should be in balance – why spoil it by overdeveloping a brain that is good already, eh?'
 - 'The power of your *chi* was rising up like a snake. You were losing control of it, upsetting the balance.'
 - 'You cannot do this foolish thing ... You must not disturb the natural way of the *chi*.'

After reading

- Which of the five stories did you enjoy most? Why?
- Which character can you remember most clearly? What makes that character memorable?
- In *A Fine Wine*, Daniel Appleby could only taste salt, sweet and bitter flavours. Can you think of ten more adjectives to describe flavours of food and drink?
- Which adjectives best describe these characters from *A Nose for a Story*: Nyree Singh, Gopal Singh, Desiree Malpen, Cyril Whitelaw?
attractive, serious, imaginative, caring, dishonest, beautiful, brilliant, idealistic, curious, protective, responsible, ambitious
- In *Arlo's War*, Arlo says '... the one thing which *really* poisons the quality of our lives is noise.' (page 43) Do you agree? If yes, why? If no, what else affects the quality of our lives?
- In *Open Doors*, Kathy knew people were lying because: 'It was almost impossible for the people she interviewed to hide the tiny changes of expression in their voices that showed what they really thought.' (page 61) How do you know if people aren't telling the truth?
- In *A Gentle Touch*, Master Tong says, 'You have skill, but no wisdom. Why do you think it takes a lifetime to learn these things, eh? You want to know everything at once!' (page 96) In your experience, what can be learnt quickly? What can take much longer to learn?
- Look at *A Nose for a Story* again. Take the role of either Desiree Malpen or Cyril Whitelaw. Write the first paragraph of your article or book about Nyree Singh.
- Choose one of the newspaper headlines on page 66 or 71 of *Open Doors*. Write the newspaper story about Kathy Page.
- Here is the blurb from another book at this level.

All I Want

Alex is thirty and wants just one thing in life: her boss, Brad. But however hard she tries, things keep on going wrong for her. Then Alex discovers what it is she really, really wants.

Do you want to read *All I Want*?