

ENGAGING THE FIVE SENSES IN YOUR SCREENPLAY

It's no secret that cinema is a largely visual medium, but engaging the full range of your characters' senses can truly bring your screenplay to life. This approach helps to create a vibrant, immersive world that your audience can feel, taste, hear, and smell, not just see. By delving into each of the five senses, you can deepen your characters and provide a richer viewing experience.

For each sense, we'll focus on:

- How the character experiences this sense
- How it affects their worldview
- How it can be visually represented in your screenplay

1 SIGHT

This isn't just about what your character looks at—it's about how they see the world. Do they notice details others overlook? Are they more interested in the big picture?



Character A is a photographer. They see the world in terms of light and shadow, composition and color. You can visually represent this through their photography and the way they frame their surroundings.

2 SOUND

What sounds draw your character's attention? Can these sounds be associated with a specific memory or emotion?



Character B, a musician, tunes into the city's natural rhythm—from the train's rhythmic clatter to street performers' melodies. Their heightened sonic perception can be shown by their reactions to ambient sounds or in their musical compositions.

3 SMELL

Smells can evoke powerful memories and emotions. What scents resonate with your character?



Character C's mother used to be a florist. The smell of fresh flowers brings a sense of nostalgia and comfort. This could be demonstrated by Character C's habit of pausing to smell flowers, or their decision to live above a flower shop.

4 TOUCH

How does your character engage with the world physically? Are they comforted by certain textures? Do they shy away from specific types of contact?



Character D finds solace in the smooth texture of pebbles, often keeping one in their pocket. This can be demonstrated by Character E's recurring interactions with a cherished pebble.

5 TASTE

Taste can be closely tied to culture, memory, and personal preference. What tastes are significant to your character?



Character E comes from a line of chefs. They love exploring flavors and can identify ingredients by taste alone. This can be showcased through Character D's distinctive food choices and their ability to dissect a dish's components.

THE SCRIPT READER

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For each of your main characters, fill in the table below with relevant sensory details and how they can be visually represented in your script.

Sense	Character Experience	Effect on Worldview	Effect on Worldview
Sight			
Sound			
Smell			
Touch			
Taste			

While you don't need to cram sensory instances into every single scene, do look for ways to incorporate some of these into various character interactions and narrative moments. Not only can this add depth to your characters, but it will also create a more engaging and immersive experience for your audience.

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