

Dear All,

This semester I will be working on my degree project, which marks the end of my graphic design studies at Northeastern University. This is my chance to complete my “passion project” and combine my interest in food, culture and design in a single project.

Overview

I grew up in France where we take our food habits and traditions very seriously. Taking a break in your day for le goûter – our afternoon snack – at 4pm is part of what it means to be French. My mother would come prepared with a baguette and a crunch bar, our chocolate of choice. The word crunch was written horizontally on the chocolate, dividing the bar into six sections. My sister and I would both request the C’s, the first letter of both our names. We would stick it into the baguette’s soft flesh and chew our way through our heavenly snack. Although I have moved to different countries and no longer eat chocolate baguette on a daily basis, I have taken the memories of these simple pleasures with me. Food-centered nostalgia is a recurring phenomenon all over the world, often formed by one’s ethnic identity. Conscious or unconscious, food-centered memories are powerful because of how many sensorial cues are transmitted through tastes and smells. These food habits are symbolic - they connect us to our roots and shape who we are as people. Although the traditions differ, the emotional context of these memories is universal.

Task

I’d like for you to think of the foods that you affiliate with good feelings and childhood memories. The smells and tastes that make you feel at home anywhere in the world. Steer away from your favorite dish or holiday meals and focus on the little things, like the afternoon snack you would look forward to after a long school day. The ingredients on the table may be simple but the comfort and familiarity of this setting create the contextual richness. Try recreating this past occurrence in your mind- think of the cognitive, physical and emotional recollection of this moment.

**Every great design begins
with an even better story.**

Lorinda Mamo

Recreate a mental image of your snack.

Did you choose to eat this or was it served to you?
Was it a regular snack or only eaten on special occasions?
How was it presented? (i.e. If it was a yoghurt, was it emptied in a bowl? Did you eat it out of the packaging? Did you eat it with a spoon? Big or small?)
What was it served with?
Describe the process of eating/drinking it.
Describe your snack’s flavor and texture.

Who did you share this experience with?

Were you sharing your snack with anyone? If so identify these people.
Were you sitting/standing beside anyone? If so identify these people.
How did you feel around those people at that exact time? Describe your mood.
Were you talking or being talked to?
What was your main focus at that moment – your snack or your company?
Think of your sense of touch. What were you touching/ being touched by?

Think of the setting

Identify your surroundings. Indoors/Outdoors? Light/Dark? Loud/Quiet?
Identify the smell, air quality and temperature.
Were you sitting or standing? Static or moving?
If you were sitting, what were you sitting on? Describe the furniture.