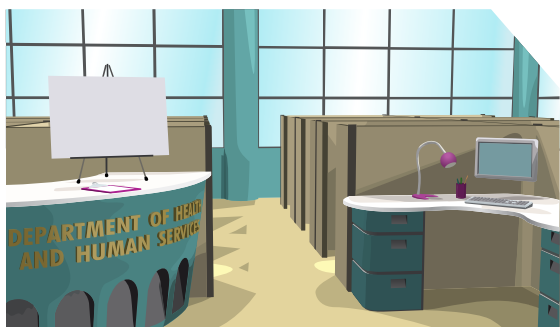


Uncommon Scents *Episode Three: Synopsis*



*This synopsis is provided as an overview for TEACHERS. We advise teachers **NOT** to hand this out to the students prior to playing the adventure since much of the suspense will be eliminated.*

It is the year 2256, fourteen years after a plague killed millions and caused the collapse of civilization. Protecting the environment is an important part of the Reconstructors' attempt to restore and maintain public health. The player is a member of the Neuropolis Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA), which is under jurisdiction of Alpha, the Reconstructors' leader.

RECONSTRUCTORS HEADQUARTERS

Again, the third episode starts back at the Reconstructors headquarter, where the player speaks with Alpha to get a short recap of what happened so far and what the new challenges are. Alpha asks the player to go to the NEPA lab and gather scientific facts about the danger of hazardous household product. The player is instructed to report these facts to the Neuropolis Department for Health and Human Services (DHHS).

NEPA LAB

At the NEPA lab, the player encounters a scientist who had already been waiting for him/her. He introduces the player to his main focus of research, which is the health effect of body pollutants like organic solvents. He explains that this research is of extreme importance since due to the many toxins people are exposed to at their workplace or in their homes, body pollution is increasing in Neuropolis. He gives the player permission to look around and do his/her own experiments.

There are four interactive activities in the lab, which the player can enter in any order.

MRI

After clicking one of the MRI scans that are displayed on a light table, the player enters the MRI activity. In this activity, the player compares a Magnetic Resonance Image of a healthy person with one of a long-term inhalant user. The player discovers that the inhalant user suffers from brain atrophy.

When the activity is finished, the player is rewarded with the design element "heading", which is needed for creating an informational website at the Neuropolis DHHS.

Neurons and myelin

A rotating brain takes the player to the neurons. The player can explore the different parts of a neuron and discover the basic principles of how a neuronal signal (impulse) travels along an axon.

In the game "Neuron Defender", the player is challenged to send a signal from the axon beginnings to the axon terminals. In the first level, when the axons are unmyelinated, the signal travels so slow that the player has no chance to win the game. He/she has to speed up the signal in the second level, introducing myelin and how myelin insulates the axon and increases signal speed. Finally, in the third level the player has to fight against organic solvents, which destroy the myelin and thereby slow down the signal speed.

At the end, the player is rewarded with the website design element "style".

Heart simulator

Clicking on one of the two hearts in the jars will access the heart simulator, which tests the effects of organic solvents on the heart. After introducing the theory, the player can build a hypothesis and will experience that in the presence of adrenaline, inhalants can cause the heart to stop. The player learns that in real life, this mechanism is known as Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome (SSDS), which can occur when people accidentally or purposefully inhale toxins like organic solvents, for example from household products.

The reward for completing this activity is the website design element “text”.

Animal experiment

When the player enters the second lab room and clicks on the mouse cage, he/she enters an animal experiment. The player is asked to test the influence of toluene exposure on burying behavior, the mouse’s natural reaction to a source of danger (in the experiment, an electric prod).

After performing a control experiment, the player exposes the mouse to toluene. The following test interpretation shows that toluene decreases the burying behavior, resulting in a higher risk for the mouse to touch the electric prod.

Finally, the results are compared to human behavior: Reports show that people who are exposed to a high amount of toluene are more likely to take risks because the chemical makes them feel less inhibited and less in control. These risks include injuries, accidents, or sexually transmitted diseases.

The reward for finishing the animal experiment is the website design element “pictures”.

CITY HALL

In the City Hall, the player enters the Department for Health and Human Services. The department’s Chief Medical Officer asks the player to help with the creation of an educational website that informs the people of Neuropolis about the dangers of hazardous household materials. Using the website design elements that he/she acquired in the NEPA lab, the player gets to build the website and launch it to the City of Neuropolis homepage.

</END OF Episode Three>

