



TOUCHING TEXTURES

DISCOVERY PLAY ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD



ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY:

Go on a texture hunt indoors or outside and encourage your child to use their senses to find and collect different rough and smooth textures to build a sensory board.

As your child gather items, encourage them to use their hands to explore how things feel and describe what they notice about different materials.

Help your child sort items into rough and smooth groups for the sensory board. With this sensory board they will begin to learn how to compare and organize objects based on their characteristics.

STEM LEARNING AREAS:

Engineering: Figuring out how things work and using materials to design, build, test, and improve solutions to problems

Physical Science: Concepts related to objects or things, what they do, and how they move

- **Structure & Properties of Materials:** Understanding characteristics of things and how those characteristics impact what things do

Math: Concepts related to numbers, patterns, shapes, and space, and how to use them to solve problems

- **Classification & Data Analysis:** Sorting things into groups and then figuring out how many are in each group to help answer questions

WHAT DO I NEED?:

- Rough textures (see following pages for examples)
- Smooth textures (see following pages for examples)

WHAT CAN I TALK ABOUT?:

- Textures (see following pages for examples)
- Senses: Feel, See
- Sorting
- Compare and Contrast

WHAT CAN I ASK?:

- What do you know about things with a rough surface? A smooth surface?
- How does this feel versus that?
- What does this object feel like? What other things feel like this object?
- Close your eyes. What do you think this object is? How do you know?



When gathering actual items to attach to the board, leave off food items, as they may spoil and get really yucky.



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ADAPTATIONS FOR DISCOVERY PLAY ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD

Every child is different. Do what works best for encouraging your child's independent exploration during this suggested playtime activity. These are only suggested activity adaptations. Consider consulting your child's care team first.



Follow your child's lead and interests. Enthusiastically ask your child questions about what they are doing and what they like.



Answer your child's questions. If you do not know the answer, work together with your child to discover the answer.



Encourage your child to participate in the activity as much as possible. Praise your child's efforts and successes.

ENVIRONMENT

- Use modified or flexible seating when exploring the textures
- Place textures on an anti-slip mat or in a container or tray within reach
- Introduce textures one at a time to help the child stay focused
- If your child is sensitive to some textures, provide them with gloves to wear so that they can experience those textures without being overwhelmed. Or have sticks or utensils available to "touch" the textures before the child does.

MATERIALS

- Have child's assistive technology ready and available, including augmentative & alternative communication (AAC) device
- For children with fine motor or grasping needs, consider using tools or assistive devices (grabber, reacher)
- Provide your child with visuals to support describing the textures they might feel. Consider laminating the board or cards (if using individually) or applying contact paper to the front and back of the board or cards.
- If using real-life examples, use tape or Velcro to attach the textured cues to corresponding pages in a storybook, to a visual schedule, or to a communication book. You can also punch a hole in the corner to attach to a ring to take it outside with you. Some textures may need to be sealed in a clear bag before attaching.

INSTRUCTION

- Use a variety of methods of communication (sign language, gestures) to meaningfully engage children
- Model and demonstrate how to interact with textures
- Break the exploration down into smaller steps. First show the texture to your child. Then allow them to touch with one finger, describe what they feel, and then explore more if desired.



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ADAPTATIONS FOR DISCOVERY PLAY ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD

Rough Textures	Rough Examples	Vs.	Smooth Textures	Smooth Examples
Bumpy/Lumpy	Tree bark, bubble wrap, paper towel, hard dirt, rubber grip sheets, carpet, Legos	→	Slick	Mineral oil, lotion, hair gel
Coarse/Gritty	Emery board, chalk, moon sand, nail file	→	Fine	Dust, flour
Crunchy/Brittle	Brown fallen leaves, bugs	→	Mushy/Squishy	Playdough, clay, stress ball
Dry/Flaky	Sticks, saw dust, rust	→	Wet	Water, paint
Floppy/Bendy	Paper clip, rubber band, packing peanuts	→	Stiff	Popsicle stick, pencil, porcelain, or ceramic plate
Hairy/Furry	Faux fur, pet hair clippings	→	Glossy/Shiny	Aluminum foil, glitter, mirror
Hard	Brick, rock	→	Soft	Tissue, feather, cotton balls
Holey/Spongy	Lace, sponge, loofah, steel/scour pad, net	→	Solid	Plastic, metal, glass
Prickly/Spiky/Bristly	Pipe cleaners, pinecone, hairbrush, comb, Velcro, glittery pom-poms	→	Velvety	Velvet, faux flowers, felt, stuffed animal
Ridged	Corrugated cardboard, paper plate, corduroy, seashells	→	Flat	Paper, fabric, cloth, leather
Sandy	Sand, sandpaper	→	Slimy	Slime, Oobleck, goop, worms
Scaly/Scratchy	Burlap, snakeskin, wool, rope	→	Silky	Silk, satin, ribbon
Sharp/Pointy	Rocks, shark teeth, pencil tip, end of a stick	→	Dull	Pebbles, eraser, frisbee
Sticky	Tape, gel, contact paper, glue (when wet)	→	Slippery	Wax, soap, wet floor (be careful!), ice
Wrinkled/Crinkled	Balled up paper, dirty clothes, plastic wrap	→	Unwrinkled	Freshly ironed clothes, opened umbrella



A blank template and a template with pictures are both included on the following pages, so you have options in case a sensory hunt for actual items is not possible.



Bumpy/Lumpy



Slick



Coarse/Gritty



Fine



Crunchy/Crispy/Brittle



Mushy/Squishy



Dry/Flaky



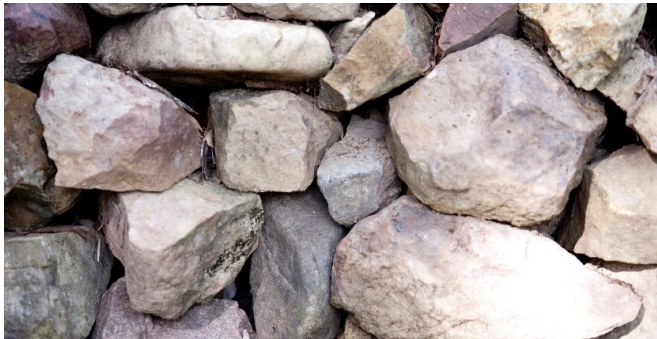
Wet



Hairy/Furry



Glossy/Shiny



Hard



Soft



Holey/Spongy



Solid



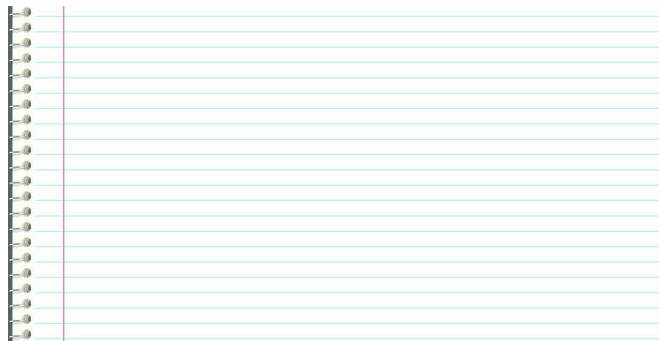
Prickly/Bristly/Spiky



Velvety



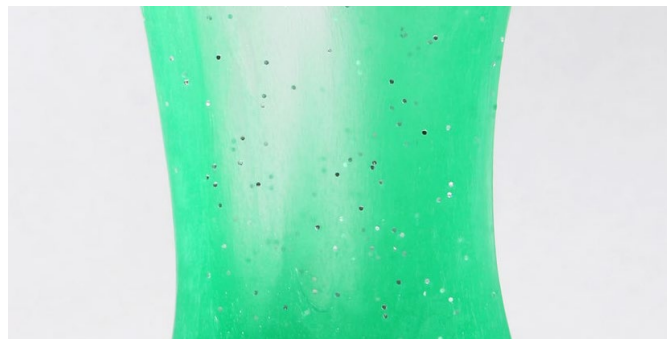
Ridged



Flat



Sandy



Slimy



Scaly/Scratchy



Silky



Sharp/Pointy/Rocky



Dull/Matte



Sticky



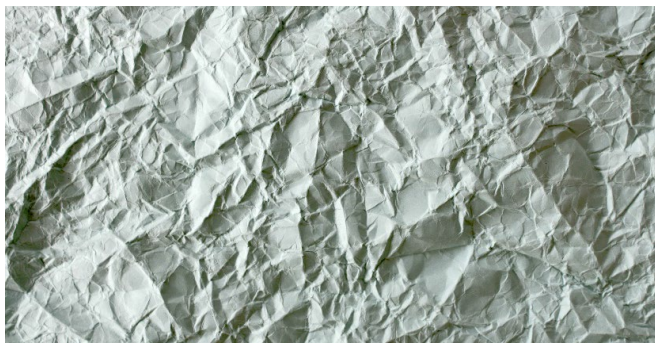
Slippery



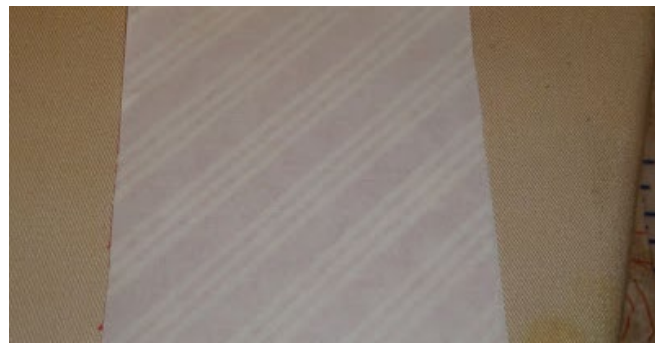
Floppy/Bendy



Stiff



Wrinkled/Crinkled



Unwrinkled



Bumpy/Lumpy

Slick

Coarse/Gritty

Fine

Crunchy/Crispy/Brittle

Mushy/Squishy

Dry/Flaky

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Hairy/Furry

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Solid

Prickly/Bristly/Spiky

Velvety

Ridged

Flat

Sandy

Slimy

Scaly/Scratchy

Silky

Sharp/Pointy/Rocky

Dull/Matte

Sticky

Slippery

Floppy/Bendy

Stiff

Wrinkled/Crinkled

Unwrinkled



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ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR DISCOVERY PLAY ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY IDEAS:

- Visit a petting zoo
- Recycle a tissue box and fill it with different textured fabrics and cloths
- Fingerpaint on bubble wrap
- Cut a hole in a closed box and put in different things and guess what they are by feel only
- Check out these great books about textures:
 - *Textures: Touch, Listen, & Learn Features Inside!* by Kate Wilson
 - *Shake Touch Play* by Make Believe Ideas & Annie Simpson
 - *Tails* by Matthew Van Fleet

