

Home play and learning links and ideas

There are lots of ideas for sensory, mark making, craft and basic science experiments on Pinterest.

<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/>

Free access to twinkl

How do teachers and parents sign up for the free month?

Setting this up is really easy to do - go to www.twinkl.co.uk/offer and enter the code that you have been sent by school.

Instagram accounts to follow for play and sensory ideas

@play.hooray

@fiveminutemum

@beckys_treasure_baskets

@tufflove_and_sensoryplay

@sensoryplay.uk

@earlyyearsoutdoor

@sensoryideas

Sensory/messy play ideas

- <https://www.learning4kids.net/list-of-sensory-play-ideas/>
- Cloud Dough
- Pour 1 Cup Baby Rice into a container
 - Add 3 Tablespoons of Melted Coconut Oil to the rice cereal. Mix and let the mixture cool.
- Cornflour gloop
- Cornflour
- Water
- Colouring (if desired)

- Paint with different objects – sticks, plants, feathers, fruit/veg printing, hands and feet etc
- Water play
- Sock bubble snakes

Plastic bottle - wide end cut off, Sock, Washing up liquid and water

Put sock over end of bottle, dip into washing up liquid/water solution, blow through drinking end.

- Crazy soap
- Water spray bottles
- Coloured rice/spaghetti
- Ice play – freeze (safe or edible) objects in ice – explore them, try and melt them, use other tools to try and break the ice to get to objects
- Collect leaves, flowers, petals etc and make potions and perfumes
- Mud kitchens
- Have a bath purely for playing – take different toys, bath bombs, crazy soap etc, bath crayons

Play ideas

- Containers, sieves, pots and pans – play with rice, water, flour
- Digger land – set up vehicles with cereal, rice, soil, corks etc
- Nature hunt outside – make a list of objects to find
- Plant seeds/vegetables etc
- Dig for worms and other creatures
- Bath dolls
- Muddy puddles – tray with hot choc powder and water to make mud, put animals or anything that your child is interested in in muddy tray. Have a second tray with clean soapy water in and wash the animals/objects after they have got muddy.
- Duplo/Lego/blocks
- Puzzles and jigsaws

Story ideas

- Twinkl has a range of sensory stories
- You tube has lots of stories recorded
- You can also do your own sensory story

Choose a book and get together some simple resources to support story in a sensory way: e.g.

- Hair dryer on different temp settings for wind, hot Sun Water spray and umbrellas for rain
- Spices for smells

- Instruments for different noises/actions Different fabrics and textures to feel
- Soft toys to represent characters in the story Food items for taste
- Ice and heat packs for cold/warmth Foil blankets

Mark making and fine motor

- Threading cheerios onto spaghetti
- Hammer golf tees into potatoes
- Poke straws into holes in a shoe box
- Posting activities – make hole in box and post items in
- Sticks etc into playdough
- Chalks on ground outside
- Paint sticks on windows (they do wash off)
- Painting with water and paintbrushes outside
- Threading beads onto pipe cleaners
- Pasta onto string
- Pipe cleaners into colander holes
- Draw/paint/mark make onto and inside cardboard box
- Colour matching activities - use coloured bowls and plates, find objects from around the home or just building blocks etc, can they sort into colours
- Water, washing up liquid and whisks
- Bath bombs
- Cutting and sticking using old magazines, make collages, use Argos catalogue to make a collage of favourite things
- Play with clothes pegs – hang out dolls clothes, socks etc on a washing line (tie piece of string between two chairs)

Sensory diet activities

- Wheelbarrow walking.
- Animal walks (e.g bear walks, crab walking, frog jumps)
- Trampolining.
- Cycling or using a scooter.
- Swings (forward and back, side to side, rotary)
- Rough and tumble play.
- Deep pressure squishing or sandwiching with pillows or balls
- Spinners and roundabouts

Jumping

- on bed
- sofa
- trampoline

Climbing

- rock walls
- jungle gyms
- monkey bars
- ropes
- slides
- through a tunnel

Swinging

- outdoor swings
- indoor swings
- swinging child in a blanket

Riding

- scooter board
- bikes
- scooters
- skateboard
- roller blades
- sleds
- any of the above over bumps or down hills
- seesaw

Pushing/Pulling Heavy Objects (Heavy Work Activities)

- carrying shopping
- pushing empty wheelie bins inside
- raking leaves
- pulling weeds
- shovelling mud/soil
- vacuuming
- pushing shopping trolley
- carrying a laundry basket
- a rope tied to a doorknob or heavy object

Chewing (always under supervision of an adult)

- crunchy foods
- salty or spicy foods
- chewy jewelry
- chewable pencil tops
- chewable safe toys
- teethers and chewable toys

Vibration (is alerting versus calming when used in short bursts)

- handheld massagers
- vibrating cushions/pillows

Playing active games

- running
- obstacle courses
- skipping
- leapfrog
- tug of war
- wheelbarrow walking
- various animal walks (walking like a crab, hopping like a kangaroo, etc.)
- row, row, row your boat with a partner
- Swimming
- Crashing and jumping into pillows (put all of your pillows or soft toys in a pile on the floor)

Playing with textures (Stimulates the tactile sense)

- shaving cream
- finger Paint
- mud
- wet sand
- water
- ice

Blowing

- various whistles and noise makers
- bubbles
- pinwheels

Movement

- Rolling on a large ball on back or belly
- Sitting on a large ball - during meals, for homework/in school
- Scratching their back vigorously for a few minutes

Spinning

A very intense sensory experience. Best for children to spin themselves, even if they love spinning. Be very cautious of spinning a child, and only do so a few times in both directions. This is important because it will help balance out their system.

- swing
- swivel chair
- while standing
- sit and spin

Sensory Activities that are Calming

- Wearing Tight Clothing
- Body socks or stretchy bands for short intervals during play
- Compression clothing worn throughout the day
- Wearing compression or weighted vests for 10-20 minutes during difficult times of the day (i.e. transitions)
- Quiet time in sensory tent

Playing in sensory bin (tons of ideas, the sky is the limit)

- rice
- beans
- birdseed
- sand
- cloud dough
- spaghetti/ noodles

Touch

- Massage
- Kneading playdough or therapy putty

Handling fidget toys (a wide variety of options)

- koosh balls
- stress balls

Squishing and squeezing

- hugs
- squeezing into tight spots or behind furniture
- wrapping up tightly in blanket
- sleeping in stretchy sheets that are tucked in on sides
- laying under a large yoga ball
- Sit or stand on a wobble cushion or wiggle seat (great for meals, homework, and crafts)

Using essential oils (different types of oils are used to calm or be alert)

Always under supervision and not recommended for children who may seek to ingest the oils

- in room diffusers
- applying to skin
- in bath

Audio

- Listening to rhythmic or soft music
- Wearing noise cancelling headphones

Watching slow moving or soothing images

- Fish tank
- Lava lamp
- Slow changing lights

Sucking/drinking

- Drinking something warm
- Sucking thick milkshake through a straw
- Drinking something cold

Slow rocking

- Rocking chair
- Hammock

Calming

- Using heavy or weighed blankets or lap pads (check out the whole guide for weighted blankets here and how and when to use weighted lap pads.)
- Vibration (is calming rather than alerting when used for longer periods of time)
- Handheld massagers
- Vibrating cushions/pillows
- Teethers and chewable toys

Set up a circuit

A sensory circuit is a great way both to energise and settle children. The aim is to focus concentration in readiness for the day's learning. The circuit also encourages the development of the child's sensory processing skills.

The circuit should be split into 3 sections.

Alerting

The aim of this section is to provide vestibular and proprioceptive stimulation within a controlled setting.

Activities that could be used in this section include:

- Bouncing 10 times on trampette
- Spinning a hoop
- Walking on stilts
- Rolling on physio ball
- Bunny/frog hops
- Wheely boards

Organising

This section includes activities that require motor sensory processing, balance and timing.

The child needs to organise their body, plan their approach and do more than one thing at a time in a sequential order.

Activities that could be used in this section include:

- Balancing on a beam
- Textured stepping stones
- Throwing bean bags into a hoop
- Blowing bubbles
- Wobble boards
- Climbing

Calming

The calming activities are very important as they provide input to ensure that children leave the circuit calm, centered and ready for the day ahead. Activities include proprioceptive or deep pressure activities.

Activities that could be used in this section include:

- Squishes with big physio balls
- Lying under weighted blankets
- Hand massage
- Hand and feet in weighted bean bags

Play together, go out for walks, let them play with siblings and by themselves, allow down time, iPad, Tv, time in the garden etc.

We hope the above list helps give you some ideas of things you could do with your child at home, you know your child best so know which activities they will and won't be able to access, you will also have some good ideas of your own, this list is by no means exhaustive, but we hope it is useful.