

Sensory Centers

Inside and Outside

Setup: Gather several vegetables and fruits, such as yellow squash, pumpkin, green pepper, potato, lemon, and avocado. Slice the items in half. Place them at the center.

A youngster touches the inside and outside of the fruits and vegetables, comparing their different textures. As she explores, she observes that some items are brightly colored, some have pits or seeds, and some smell more appealing than others.

Tip: If desired, provide magnifying glasses for youngsters to use to get a closer look at the fruits and veggies.

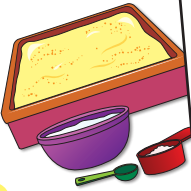


Sensory

Gorgeous Gold Dust!

Setup: Mix gold glitter and cornmeal in a tub to make gold dust. Provide plastic containers, measuring cups, and spoons.

A child uses his hands and the items to explore the gold dust.



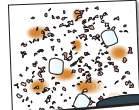
Tip: For extra sensory fun, gather an item for each color in the rainbow and bury the items in the gold dust. A child finds each item and then identifies its color.

Sensory

Sensory

Sniff-Worthy Art

Scented items, such as coffee grounds, peppermints, cinnamon, and cotton swabs in lavender oil.



Sensory

Cornstarch Exploration

Setup: Place a layer of cornstarch in your sensory table. (Cornstarch can be bought in bulk in many stores.) Provide toy figures.

Students plays with the figures in the cornstarch, exploring the smooth, powdery texture of the substance.

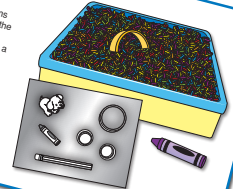


Sensory

Find It!

Setup: Place simple classroom items on a copier. Make a copy of the center. Place the paper at the tub of rice.

A child digs through the rice, matching photo. Then he places the item aside. He continues with each remaining item in the rice.

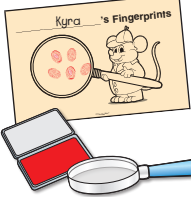


Discovery Centers

One-of-a-Kind Prints

Setup: Provide copies of the fingerprint cards on page 12. Set out stamp pads, magnifying glasses, and markers.

A child writes her name on a card and then uses the stamp pad to make fingerprints on the magnifying glass prints. When she's finished, she uses a lens. Next, she exchanges cards with a classmate, and they examine each other's fingerprints. Then the youngsters return the cards to one another and discuss their observations.

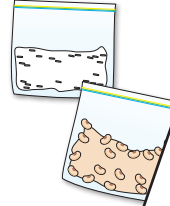


Discovery

Weighing In

Setup: Partially fill resealable plastic bags with items such as rice, pebbles, pennies, dry beans, and salt. Prepare two bags to weigh the same amount. Secure each seal with tape. Provide a balance scale.

A youngster handles two bags and guesses which weighs more, which weighs less, or if they weigh the same. Then she places each bag on a different side of the scale to see whether her guess is correct. She continues in the same way, trying different combinations as she works.



Discovery

Wacky Windstorm

Setup: Place in your sensory table (or on a tabletop) items that can be moved by blowing on them along with drinking straw for each child.

A student experiments in different ways to find out which items can be moved by blowing on them and which ones cannot. Then he decides whether the items are easy to move by blowing with or without a straw.



Discovery

Magnetic Catch

Setup: Put magnetic and nonmagnetic items in a clear plastic bottle. Fill the bottle with water and glue the lid in place. Tie a magnet to a length of yarn and tie the remaining end of yarn to the cap.

A youngster studies the items inside the bottle. Then he manipulates the magnet against the side of the bottle to see which items he can "catch" and which ones he cannot.

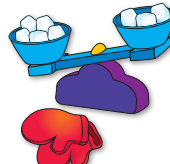


Discovery

Balancing Ice

Setup: Get a container of ice cubes, a balance scale similar to the one shown, and a pair of mittens. Then place the items in your empty water table.

A child puts on the mittens and scoops a handful of ice cubes into one side of the scale. She repeats the process with the other side and then decides whether the ice on one side weighs more or less than the ice on the other side. Then she adds or removes cubes to try to balance the scale.



Curious Colors

Setup: Place blue-tinted ice cubes in a bowl and put yellow-tinted ice cubes in a second bowl. Partially fill a clear container with water. Provide tongs and a small strainer (or fishnet).

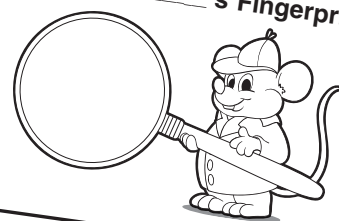
A student uses the tongs to transfer one color of ice to the water, noticing changes that take place as the cubes begin to melt. He scoops up ice with the strainer and watches the colorful water droplets fall into the water. Then he repeats the process with the remaining color of ice, noticing changes that occur as the ice melts and the colors mix.



Fingerprint Cards

Use with "One-of-a-Kind Prints" on page 7.

's Fingerprints



's Fingerprints

