

Birdseed Discovery

Materials

- sensory table or large tub
- birdseed
- funnels, scoops, and shovels
- small plastic animals
- plastic scale
- bowls

What to do

1. Fill the sensory table about one third full with birdseed. Place small plastic animals on top of the birdseed.
2. Encourage the children to explore the birdseed using funnels, scoops, and shovels.

Related book *Quick as a Cricket* by Audrey Wood

 Sandy Scott, Vancouver, WA

Color and Shape Boxes

Materials

- shoeboxes (plastic or cardboard)
- hands-on materials (see activity)

What to do

1. Place colorful hands-on materials or materials in a variety of shapes in different boxes. Label each box as appropriate. For example:
 - **Color Boxes**—add paint sample cards or Formica samples (from the hardware store), color paddles, colorful rocks and shells, or other small objects. Make one box per color or one box with color activities.
 - **Shape Boxes**—add blocks, cookie cutters, puzzle pieces, books on shapes, and so on.
2. Keep these boxes on a shelf for the entire year, and change the contents often.
3. Use this idea to make nature boxes, such as shells and rocks. Children can sort, count, and examine the contents using a magnifying glass. Some of the children return to these boxes again and again, enjoying the cool smooth stones, or the beauty of the shells.

 Tracie O'Hara, Charlotte, NC

Dry Winter Wonderland

Materials

large tub or sensory table
large bag of cornstarch
small plastic animals
smocks
wet towel
small shovels
bowls

What to do

1. Fill the sensory table one third full with cornstarch.
2. Hide small plastic animals in the cornstarch.
3. Make sure children wear smocks while playing in the cornstarch. Also, cornstarch becomes very slippery when spilled on a floor so have a wet towel nearby for the children to wipe their feet when they are finished.
4. Encourage the children to search for animals, build "homes" for the animals out of cornstarch, and explore as desired.
5. If the area is carpeted, it is fun to watch the creation of white footprints! Just vacuum the floor when done.

Related books *Look! Snow!* by Kathryn O. Galbraith
The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats
White Snow, Bright Snow by Alvin Tresselt

 Sandy Scott, Vancouver, WA

Glitter Playdough

Materials

glitter
homemade playdough
rolling pins
seasonal-shaped cookie cutters

What to do

1. Add new sparkle and vitality to your playdough center by sprinkling glitter into your favorite playdough recipe.
2. Provide rolling pins and seasonal-shaped cookie cutters for children to cut out dough shapes.
3. Children will rush to the sensory center with new enthusiasm!

 Jackie Wright, Enid, OK