

Play, Exploration and Experimentation

One of the key elements of the British Ceramics Biennial Education Programme is making learning fun and engaging. Clay is a great way to do this, but another crucial factor is to bring in elements of play and exploration.

In our previous engagement spaces, The Clay Pit and The Clay Quarter, open-ended play and experimentation with materials were key factors to their success. If you have access to some clay, you could take a look at our Pit Pack and recreate a Clay Pit experience yourselves.

<https://www.britishceramicsbiennial.com/what-we-do/annual-projects/education/cpd-for-teachers/>

If you don't have access to clay, then here are some simple ideas using everyday materials that you could try in your own home to create some fun learning activities.

- Exploring Materials:

- Ask children to explore an area, like the garden or an outside space, and gather different types of materials (stones, twigs, leaves, etc.)
- Gather the items together and then ask some questions about the properties of these materials.
 - What are their similarities/differences?
 - What sounds can each item make?
 - What can you make with them?



- Experimental Drawing:

- You can draw with anything that makes a mark on paper. This activity would challenge children to try out different materials to see how you could make marks on paper with them.
 - First try out any art materials you might have – such as crayons, pens, paint.
 - You can then start thinking about more unconventional things. This could be mud, stones, food items from the kitchen.
 - Then you could start to experiment with how to make marks with these materials – what works best? A brush, a stick, or even your hands.

- Building Games:

- If you want to bring a challenge or a bit of healthy competition into the learning activity, then building challenges can be really fun.
- You might start with a set of things or challenge children to go and find things themselves. The key task is that they need to explore and experiment with these to build the tallest tower they can.
 - They could also try to build a bridge between two chairs.
 - Or organise the items to make the longest shape

