

Fun with mud!

Why play with mud?

Playing with mud offers children endless learning opportunities. They discover what happens when materials are mixed together and about the many different minibeasts which live in and around the soil. Children develop their creative and imaginative skills by making potions, having tea parties, and baking mud pies. They extend their physical skills by digging, mixing, stirring, and lifting heavy buckets.

So, although it is rather messy, it is very worthwhile and don't forget just how much they are learning!

How?

If you have a garden or an outside space create a small area where you can add water to soil. An old washing up bowl/bucket filled with soil can also be bought inside, place towels/tea towels underneath to prevent the mud from spreading.

Make sure your child wears old play clothes!

Think about where your child will wash their hands. Maybe have a bowl of soapy water ready for them.



Explore

Let your child explore the mud with their hands (and feet!)

Add more water, what happens?

Ask: What does that feel like? That looks interesting....tell me what you did. What happens if you do that? How has it changed?



Add

Old pots and pans, buckets, spades, plastic cups, spoons, sticks, grass, leaves (you could go on a walk to collect these).

Suggest: Let's have a tea party/make a mud river/make a mud monster using sticks and leaves/make a mud painting/create a magic potion/a muddy ice cream

Ask: What are your plans? What do you think will happen?



Minibeasts

Look carefully in the soil for minibeasts. Encourage the children to be very gentle and to always put the minibeasts back into their natural habitat.

Ask: What can you see? I wonder why... How can we find out about? Why do you think it lives there? What do think it eats?



Try exploring different materials

In a tray add small amounts of water to cornflour/sugar/salt/coffee/flour and see what happens.

Ask: What have you put in there? Has it dissolved (or disappeared?). Is that what you thought would happen? What can you do next? That looks interesting, tell me what you did.