

Unit 1B Investigating materials

ABOUT THE UNIT

In this unit children investigate the qualities of a variety of natural and made materials. They learn skills for weaving and gain sensory experience of materials and an understanding of colour and texture. They learn about how textiles are used in their own and others' lives.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

This unit builds on Unit 1C 'Sorting and using materials' in the science scheme of work, when children explore materials and objects using appropriate senses and make and communicate observations.

WHAT THE UNIT COVERS

Art	Craft	Design	2D	3D	Individual work	Collaborative work
Line	Tone	Colour	Pattern	Texture	Shape	Form Space
Painting	Collage	Textiles	Digital media	Sculpture	Print making	

VOCABULARY

In this unit children will have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to:

- materials, eg *natural, made, recycled*
- types of textile and fabric, eg *velvet, net, lace, satin*
- visual qualities, eg *colour, form, texture*
- tactile qualities, eg *flexible, soft, shiny, smooth, coarse, texture*
- weaving materials, eg *fleece, fibre, thread, natural and made materials*
- weaving, eg *loom, warp, weft, shuttle*

RESOURCES

For practical work

- fabric strips
- looms, eg *card with notches cut out of the top and bottom edges, spokes of a wheel, large picture frame, twigs, branches, long, straight sticks, card boxes*
- natural materials, eg *twigs, rushes, grasses, leaves, creepers, feathers, ferns, sticks, withies*
- made materials, eg *straws, plastic packaging, card, flexible and rigid plastics, tinfoil, elastic, string, cotton wool*
- scissors, magnifying glasses
- dyes, paints

Suggested examples of art, craft and design

- fabrics of contrasting textures, eg *satin, net, lace, brocade*, and of different methods of construction, eg *woven, bonded, knitted*
- artefacts showing natural and made fabrics in use in everyday life, eg *clothing, shelter, containers*
- reproduction of work by contemporary makers eg *Michael Brennan-Wood, Janet Bolton, Sharon Porteous, Lois Walpole, Caroline Broadhead, Sally Freshwater*

EXPECTATIONS

At the end of this unit

most children will be able to:

explore and use natural and made materials to communicate ideas and meanings in a weaving; comment on differences in others' work; suggest ways of improving their own work

some children will not have made so much progress. They will be able to:

use materials to make weavings; describe what they think or feel about their own and others' work

some children will have progressed further. They will be able to:

investigate and use materials and processes to explore and communicate ideas and meanings; comment on similarities and differences between their own and others' work; adapt and improve their own work

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

LEARNING OUTCOMES

POINTS TO NOTE

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN

CHILDREN

EXPLORING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS

- to investigate the possibilities of a range of materials and processes

Provide a variety of materials, eg papers, fabrics and plastic packaging. Ask the children to explore the effects of:

- folding, scrunching, tearing, cutting, deconstructing, pleating
- joining in different ways, *eg tying, plaiting, twisting, using running stitch and gathering*
- colouring with dyes and water-based paint, *eg with beetroot, using brown and red onion skins, blackberries, elderberries*
- Ask the children to describe the effects, eg soft, spiky, rough.

- experiment with papers and fabrics and create different effects

- Display a variety of fabrics, eg samples of paper, felt, knitted, bonded. Include woven objects, eg textiles, mats, baskets, cloth, garments from different cultures.
- Provide pictures and books about weaving. List key words and provide visual aids to support language work.
- Show how woven textiles are used around the world.

- to ask and answer questions about the starting points for their work, and develop their ideas

- Ask the children what they understand by the word 'fabric'. Ask them to list words connected with fabric, *eg cloth, paper, animal skin, textiles, plastic*, and the variety of items that are made from fabric, *eg clothes, mats, curtains, roofs of buildings, tents*.
- Ask the children to bring in a fabric they like, *eg item of clothing*, and talk about why they like it and how it makes them feel.
- Provide a collection of fabrics and ask the children to describe the texture and surface of selected samples and say what they think and feel about it. Ask them to group the fabrics in different ways, *eg by how they are made or decorated, by how they feel*.
- Give the children magnifying glasses and ask them to explore the construction of the different fabrics. Ask them to describe how they think the fabrics are made.

- identify and describe textures, colours and patterns in textiles
- describe their feelings about a fabric they like
- sort fabrics by colours and textures and describe their ideas and feelings about them

- Identify fabrics that are woven, knitted, crocheted, bonded and fabrics such as felt.
- Talk about the practical, personal, social and aesthetic importance of textiles in different times and places.
- Link children's comments to the function of the fabric, eg protection, celebration, decoration, ceremony.
- Links with *National Literacy Strategy: Framework for teaching, year 2*, vocabulary extension where children learn new words linked to particular topics.

INVESTIGATING AND MAKING

- to try out tools and techniques and apply these to materials and processes

- Identify simple looms and basic weaving techniques. Show the children how to make simple weavings using strips of paper. Encourage them to select interesting papers and explore different patterns of weaving, *eg over/under, in and out, over two and under one*.
- Show the children how to make a simple card loom that has the same number of notches at either end. Show them how to 'dress the card loom' (make the warp). Ask them to practise the act of weaving to make the weft.
- Show the children unconventional looms, *eg spokes of a wheel, picture frames, twigs/small branches*. Ask them to work in pairs or small groups to develop a weaving using something they have found, *eg a branch, a wheel, a picture frame*. Use this as a structure for the warp and make warp threads. Ask the children to use a variety of found natural and made materials to create the weft of their weaving.
- Show the children how to experiment with dyes and paint and how to change the colours of materials or parts of the weaving. Ask them to use these techniques to change the colour and surface texture of the weaving, or part of it.

- investigate the technique of weaving
- use found natural and made materials in weaving, showing understanding of colour and texture
- experiment with cold dyes and water-based paint to develop colour

- Some children may need to work on ready-made looms that allow them finger space. Use a cardboard box. Divide weft by using strips of corrugated card stuck to the edges.
- Guide children with group work, praising them when they are cooperating and making joint decisions about the weaving.
- Show the children examples of textiles work by contemporary makers. Talk about the materials and methods they have used and the qualities they have created (see *Teacher's Guide* appendix).
- Experimenting with colour and dyes could be done as a separate activity carried out earlier.

EVALUATING AND DEVELOPING WORK

- to review what they and others have done and say what they think and feel about it

- As the children make their weavings, ask them to describe what they are making and how they are using materials in their work.
- Encourage the children to identify qualities that are developing in their work. Ask them to say what they find interesting and like about the textures and colours they have used. *Are these the qualities they were trying to achieve?*
- Ask the children to match the outcomes to their feelings about the weavings they have created. How does it make them feel?

- explain how they are making their weaving
- identify parts they like and say what they find interesting about the colour and texture they have created and how it makes them feel

- Guide children to talk about their work. Help could include:
 - using a list of key words and visual aids
 - suggesting how to order what is said
- Ask the children to name the materials and methods they have used in their work using the key words to help them describe what they did.

- to consider what they might change in their current work or develop in their future work

- Ask them to suggest what they would improve in their next work.

- identify what they would like to develop in future work

- Involve the children in creating a display to show the importance of textiles in their own and others' lives, and highlight the universal nature of textiles.

PRIOR LEARNING

It is helpful if children have:

- collected materials to use in their work
- learnt the skills of cutting
- talked about their work as it develops
- looked at and talked about artefacts

FUTURE LEARNING

In Unit 2B 'Mother Nature, designer', children use their experience of fabrics to make a collage and learn and use simple techniques for appliqué.

ADAPTING THE UNIT OF WORK

Children could:

- use raw fleece to construct fabric by making felt, carding it, dyeing it and incorporating other fabrics, fibres or materials such as twigs into the surface
- use more complex weaving techniques based on the basic skills they have acquired
- combine small samples of their weaving with other fabrics to create a fabric collage