

Teaching Resources | Teacher Training



The new way to do outdoor learning

Claydough Activity Pack

BEE GREEN AND ONLY PRINT IF YOU HIVE TO :)

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What is in this pack?

- **Clay is believed to have a very therapeutic qualities that calm the mind and can be used for drawing a child's mind to the present; mindfulness.**
- **Clay is completely natural and therefore unlikely to bother anyone that has allergies. It connects children to nature**
- **It is a great science lesson. See this Youtube clip on how to make your own clay <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGuYNwp1OUY>**
- **It can be dropped and left outside and won't harm the environment**
- **It has fatty oils which is good for preventing allergies**

Preparation and safety

Each season, nature will bring you the resources that you need. However, if you do not have a natural setting or lack certain natural items, try to collect these in advance of your sessions. Make a habit of going out for a walk at weekends – you'll improve your own physical and mental health, which is good for you, and you'll collect your missing items. You can also encourage parents to get collecting through your newsletters! Make your world one big healthy, Muddy community. You will get an idea of the types of resources that you need each season. The only resource that you may need to buy is air-drying clay.

Weather wise, we will provide you with ideas for all types of weather. The only time that we advise you NOT to go outside is on extremely windy days and during thunderstorms. Otherwise, there's no excuses - get yourself out there!

Always risk assess with the children present. As you enter the natural environment, spend 30 seconds talking about the dangers that the weather conditions may present, such as slippery surfaces and hot sun. If possible, offer the children a solution to any issues, such as seeking out a safe, shady area if the sun is too hot. Keep sticks low and only use stones no bigger than the palm of the children's hands. remind them to use feet first then hands when collecting from the floor and wash hands thoroughly after.

What is in this pack?

1. Recipes for your claydough recipes
2. Ways to use claydough in your outdoor and indoor continuous play
3. Family Fun activities

Links to the EYFS

- Knowledge and understanding of the world

- They make observations of animals and plants

Shape space and measure
They explore characteristics of everyday objects and shapes and use mathematical language to describe them.
Expressive arts and design

They safely use and explore a variety of materials



New to our Muddy World?

Please see our website for safety and guidance.



"The world is but a canvas to the imagination." ~ Henry David Thoreau

Claydough recipes

Where to get your clay? How to care for it?

Air-drying clay is the type we use. Clay can be made and, if you live by a river, this is an ideal route for you. It would be an incredible gift to show your class how and where clay actually comes from. However, if that is not an option, then you have several other ways to consider. You could buy it in - the best clay we know of can be found on our website by following this link : <https://themuddypuddleteacher.co.uk/buy-claydough/> Otherwise, try and make some out of mud. Get some mixing bowls out, and water, and have a go mixing and binding the ingredients together. You might get it wrong, but then watch how you work hard to make a good enough clay mixture that works and bonds together!

Clay needs to be well wrapped up. Always try and keep it in the packaging it arrives with and outside, in dark damp places, is where it best survives.

Spring Claydough

Go on a spring walk and collect up lot of lovely reminders of spring dandelions, daisies, fresh grass and then mix this in with your clay. This could then be placed in your mud kitchen and form the new recipe for your spring-time cooking.

Snifftastic Claydough

Bring in some herbs of various types, let the children smell them and choose the herb they like the most. Give them each a bit of clay and let them mix their snifftastic herb into their clay and let them explore how they can knead it in, all the while working those touch-screen-loving fingers!

Grass Balls

It is a great fine motor skill to pick grass but it is also fun to use scissors. Ask the children to collect up their grass, then to bury it into their clay and to make a lovely grass ball with it.

Petal Perfect

There is nothing wrong with picking the odd petal if we want to connect our children with nature. So, we say go for it as long as its not destroying the plant. Go for a walk and look for colours, give children a little bag to collect in. Then, at the end, hand out a bit of clay for them to tear the petal up into little parts and to add in.

'The Same Sun that
melts butter,
hardens clay'
- Bill Vaughan

Continuous provision

When we head out to schools and nurseries one of the first things we tell them is to set up an art station, full of odds and ends of natural items. Upcycle and use tyres to store these in, then set a big bag of claydough by the side of the materials and let the children create whatever they like! Put a blob by the mud kitchen and more than often they will mix it and test the material, discovering it changes state. Put a blob in your maths area and make small balls and count them! Make characters from sticks and stones and use clay to bind them then set them aside as puppets, for role playing or storytelling. All of this works outside but why not use it indoors as well?

Some of our favourites

Here is a list of some of must do's:

- Make a stick man character that is themselves! Look at fine detail and how claydough can help you add hair and features.
- Make bowls to feed the animals in your area. Put bird seed in them and a bit of cat meat for the hedgehogs.
- Think 3D! Make pyramids and cubes using lots of sticks, or even buy bamboo sticks to do this with.
- Make flags - as we have said before, clay is a great binder. Use some scrap fabric and plant them in your outside spaces to brighten them up!
- Link to your phonics and mould the clay into letters, let them dry and display outside or inside. The same could be done with numbers!
- Make clay monsters, dinosaurs, unicorns and mermaids. Again, just use the grass, seeds, bark, stones around you to decorate, nothing like simple, stripped back learning.

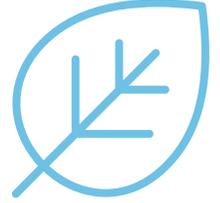
Decorate your trees

Use the clay to decorate your trees. Get a large blob, pop it on the tree, then add patterns or make faces! Great way of connecting children with nature

Bugtastic

Making clay bugs is a super way of getting to know the features of minibeasts and looking at how many twig legs you add and how many wings a butterfly has. Like before, just use natural resources, then display them in and around your space to make for small world play another time.

Muddy Fun at Home



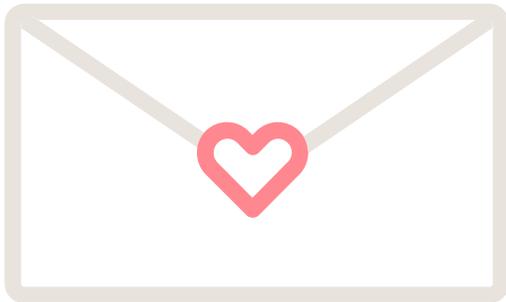
Attached to this letter is a small lump of clay!

Do with it as you may!

We have given a few ideas to help.

Want to have some Muddy fun at home? Try some of these clay activities?

- Make small bowls, let the clay dry in a warm place, then fill with bird seed and place them around an outdoor space.
- Make a stickman of a family member, maybe a sister, grandmother or uncle? Then say what it is you like about them.
- Make a microphone. Go for a walk find a stick, place the clay on top in a ball shape and have an outdoor sing-a-long as you walk!
- Make a tree face. Pop the clay on a tree near your house, then use bits of leaves, seeds and acorns to make a face. Make sure you go back a few days later to see if it is still there!



The best thing you will ever do is believe in yourself!