

Barefoot investigator

Explore the properties of different materials using your feet

Great for...

- **Science** materials and properties; scientific enquiry
- **Literacy**

Activity

- 1 Look at each tray with the children and together name the material it contains. Talk about the properties of the different materials and make comparisons.
- 2 Get the children to take off their socks and shoes and taking it in turns step into the different trays to feel the textures and sensations of the different materials with their bare feet.
- 3 Once they have investigated each tray with their feet, talk about the experience. How did walking barefoot feel? Which materials did they find easy/difficult to walk on and why? How would they describe the different textures? Extend the children's scientific language by using words such as solid, smooth, slippery, rough, springy, sticky, soft, liquid etc. Discuss too the similarities and differences between the materials. Which was the hardest? Which was the softest?
- 4 Ask the children to sort the trays into groups – for example, wet, dry, hard, soft – and then step into them again. Can they make further comparisons between the materials within each group? For example, do all the materials in the 'hard' group feel the same or are the pebbles warmer or colder than the wood? Which materials are smooth and which are rough?

What you need

- **Shallow plastic trays/bowls** large enough to stand in.
- **A variety of materials with different properties** – for example, leaves, sand, bark, clean compost, sand (wet and dry), water, pebbles, wood, cotton wool, silky fabrics, bubble wrap, porridge, jelly etc.

Preparation

- Take the trays outside and fill with the different materials. Position them in a straight line or snaking round the playground.
- If necessary, ensure there is also a tray or bucket of water, and a towel, for washing and drying feet at the end of the activity.

Less challenging

- Organise the trays yourself into simple groups – for example, dry, wet, soft, hard.

More challenging

- Get the children to represent their findings using ICT software, combining for example words, pictures and graphs.

Your notes

Use this space to evaluate the activity



To find out more about membership call 01962 845811 or visit www.ltl.org.uk

© This activity sheet was created as a membership resource by **Learning through Landscapes** operating in Scotland as **Grounds for Learning** Registered charity no. in England and Wales 803270 and in Scotland SC038890