

# SENSORY PLAY RECIPES

PLAY DOUGH, OOBLECK, SLIME, KINETIC SAND AND MORE!



BY HEATHER GREUTMAN & SHARLA KOSTELYK

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Heather Greutman is a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant. Sharla Kostelyk is a mother with experience in sensory processing through parenting her seven children. This book is for educational purposes only. The advice and tips given are not a replacement for medical advice from a physician or pediatrician. Please consult their advice if you suspect any medical or developmental delay with your child. This book and tips do not replace the relationship between an Occupational Therapist and client in a one-on-one treatment session with an individualized treatment plan based on their professional evaluation. Please seek out your local Occupational Therapist for an evaluation if you suspect any delays or sensory processing concerns with your child.

All activities are designed to be completed with adult supervision. Please use your judgment when setting up these activities for your child and do not provide items that could pose a choking hazard for young children. Never leave a child unattended when completing any of these activities. Please also be aware of all age recommendations on the products you are using with your child. The authors are not liable for any injury caused to your child while completing any of these activities.

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# BENEFITS OF SENSORY PLAY

Sensory play may be a popular phrase at the moment, but that doesn't mean that it is just a passing phase.

Understanding the importance of sensory play can help you open doors for your child's development, cognition, and behavior.

Sensory play is any activity that involves engaging the senses. Generally speaking, the more senses you can include, the better.

Sensory play has many benefits including:

- Encouraging problem-solving
- Increasing brain development
- Providing sensory input
- Better retention of information
- Language development
- Regulation of emotions and behavior
- Improving fine motor skills
- Sparking interest in learning
- Most importantly, it's FUN!

We know there are tons of sensory play recipes out there on Pinterest and Google. But we also know you are a busy parent, teacher, or therapist and don't always have time to search.

That is why we created this sensory play recipe ebook, filled with tried and tested recipes that we know your kids and students are going to love.

Children of all ages can enjoy and benefit from sensory play, it's all in how you introduce it to them. Heather's 3-year-old and 6-year-old always ask for slime or a play dough recipe to play with. Sharla has older children, including teenagers, who also benefit from sensory play.

The sky is literally the limit when it comes to using sensory play in your home, classroom, or therapy practice. Our goal is that you come away with go-to-recipes that you can pull out and use for months to come.

We can't wait to see what you create with these sensory play recipes. Have fun!

Heather & Sharla



# HOW TO USE THIS BOOK & SUPPLY LIST

The purpose of this sensory play recipe ebook is to give you tried and tested recipes that you can pull out any time you want to include sensory play in your home, classroom, or therapy practice.

We have personally tested each one of these recipes and used them with kids ranging from age 3 all the way to high school. Most of the recipes use taste-safe ingredients, however, you should always supervise your children when playing with each item.

Each of these recipes can be used for themed activities or you can change up the theme to fit whatever you are doing in your school week.

Below you will find a supply list of all the ingredients you will need to have on hand to make each recipe in this ebook.

## SUPPLY LIST

### Food Ingredients

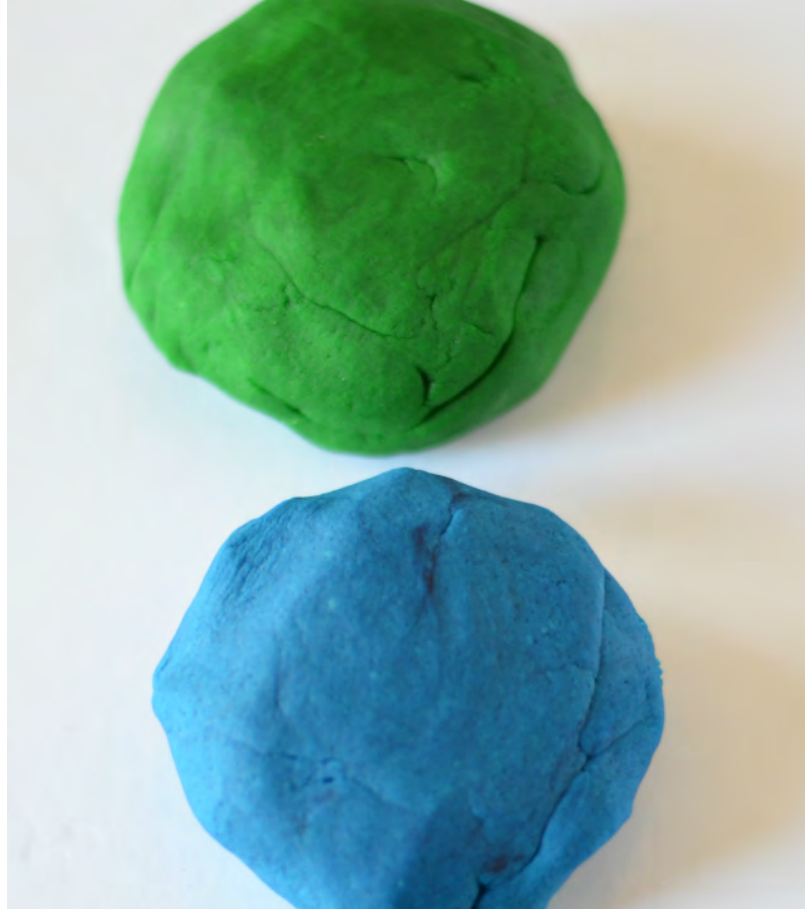
All-purpose flour  
Cornstarch  
Rice flour  
Cocoa  
Baking soda  
Pumpkin puree  
Sweetened condensed milk  
Salt  
Cinnamon  
Pumpkin pie spice blend (powder)  
Pumpkin spice liquid  
Cream of tartar  
Vegetable oil  
Canola Oil  
Light corn syrup  
Vegetable glycerin  
Water  
Icing colors  
Food coloring  
Food color paste  
Candy color  
Wilton color right liquid (black & white)  
Rainbow sprinkles  
Tapioca pearls (large, cook in 5 minutes)

### Non-food Ingredients

Elmer's white glue (washable)  
Hair conditioner  
Shaving cream (non-scented and lemon)  
Dish soap (unscented, clear)  
Liquid starch  
Borax  
Baby Oil  
Instant snow  
Plastic spiders  
Black polymer clay  
Glow in the dark paint or gel  
Contact solution (ingredients should include boric acid and sodium borate)  
Neon glitter  
Glitter (red, silver, blue, green)  
Essential oils (variety of scents)  
Colored jingle bells  
Tempera paint  
Sand  
Water beads  
Bag of decorative gems  
Sprigs of lavender

### Tools

Mixing bowls  
Wooden spoon  
Metal spoon  
Plastic storage containers (with lids)  
Plastic storage bags  
Stand mixer  
Hand mixer  
Muffin tin or bowls  
Ice cube tray  
Toothpicks  
Gloves  
Wax paper



## CALMING NO-COOK PLAY DOUGH

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup of all-purpose white flour
- 1/4 cup fine table salt
- 1 tbsp cream of tartar
- 2 tbsp of vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp vegetable glycerin
- 3/4 cup boiling water
- 1/4 tsp of icing colors (we used aqua, blue, and green)
- 4 drops each of Cedarwood, Vetiver, or Lavender essential oils

### Directions:

1. Mix all of the ingredients (dry ingredients first, then add the boiling water) except for the icing colors and essential oils.
2. After mixing in a bowl, take the dough out and knead it until it comes together in the consistency you want (smooth and not falling apart).
3. If you are going to use one color, add the coloring into the bowl before you knead it. You may want to use a glove to mix and knead the icing colors into the dough so your hands don't stain.
4. For more than one color, roll the dough into a log and cut into 3 parts.
5. Add 4 drops of the calming oils (Cedarwood, Vetiver or Lavender) to your colored dough balls, one essential oil per ball.
6. Knead until all the essential oil has mixed and you have the consistency of play dough. Use more flour as needed.



## CHOCOLATE AND STRAWBERRY PLAY DOUGH

### Chocolate Play Dough Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1 cup salt
- 1/2 cup cocoa
- 2 Tbsp. cream of tartar
- 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 2 cups water

### Directions:

*Stovetop instructions ||*

1. Add all ingredients to a saucepan and cook over medium-high heat.
2. Stir constantly until it forms a ball.
3. Scoop it onto wax paper and allow it to cool.
4. When cool enough, knead it and it is ready to play with.

*No cook instructions ||*

1. Add the flour, salt, cocoa, and cream of tartar to the stand mixer.
2. With the dough beater (the flat one), begin mixing on low and add the oil.
3. As it mixes, pour in 2 cups of boiling water and continues to mix on low until it resembles playdough texture.
4. Remove the dough from the mixer and knead it by hand for 30 seconds to a minute.

Store in a resealable bag or airtight container.

# CHOCOLATE AND STRAWBERRY PLAY DOUGH CONT.

## Strawberry Play Dough Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup water
- 1/4 cup salt
- 2 tsp. cream of tartar
- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- red food coloring or pink food paste
- red glitter
- optional: 3 drops of strawberry essential fragrance oil

## Directions:

### *Stovetop instructions* ||

1. Put all the ingredients except for the essential oil and glitter into a pot and stir.
2. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until it forms a ball.
3. As soon as it turns into a ball, take it off the heat and dump it onto the counter on wax paper.
4. When it is cool enough, add essential oil and/or glitter.
5. Knead it until it is nice and soft.

Store in an airtight container or resealable bag.

### *No cook instructions* ||

1. Add the flour, salt, and cream of tartar to a stand mixer.
2. Using the dough beater, begin mixing on low and add the oil, food coloring, and essential oil.
3. As it mixes, pour in 1 cup of boiling water and continues to mix on low until it resembles playdough texture.
4. Take the dough out of the mixer and knead it for 30 seconds to a minute.
5. Add the glitter in at this point and mix it through by kneading.





## RED, WHITE, AND BLUE PLAY DOUGH

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup of all-purpose white flour
- 1/4 cup fine table salt
- 1 tbsp cream of tartar
- 2 tbsp of vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp vegetable glycerin
- 3/4 cup boiling water
- 1/4 tsp of icing colors (red and blue)
- 4-6 drops each of Lemon, Vetiver, and Tangerine essential oils.

### Directions:

1. Mix all of the ingredients together in a bowl.
2. Add wet ingredients (oil, glycerin, icing colors, essential oil, and boiling water) and mix together thoroughly.
3. Let the dough sit for about 5 minutes to cool down before handling.
4. Take the dough out and knead it until it comes together with the consistency you want (smooth and not falling apart). You may need some extra flour to keep your hands from sticking to the dough.
5. Roll your dough into a log and split into equal thirds.
6. Add red food coloring to one ball, blue to the other. Leave the third ball white.
7. Knead until all the colors are mixed well into the dough.

To keep your play dough fresh, store it in an airtight container or plastic bag.



## PUMPKIN PIE SCENTED PLAY DOUGH

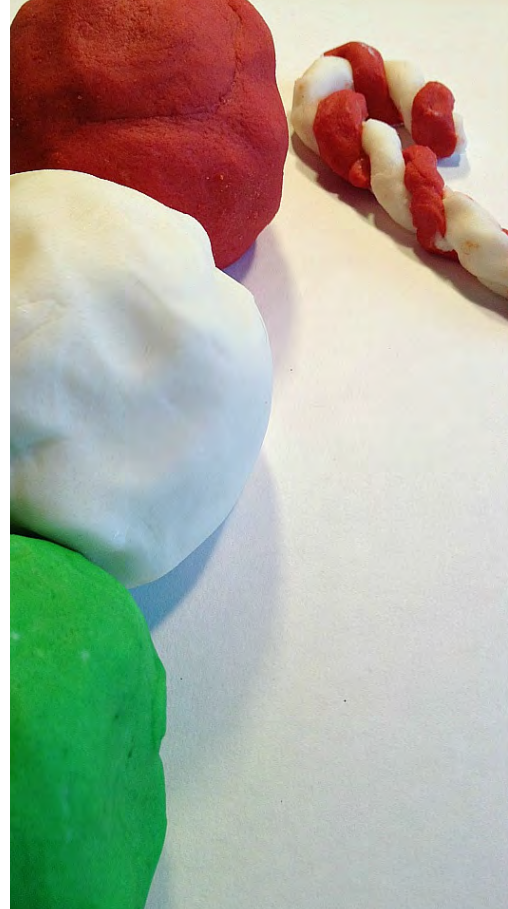
### Ingredients:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup salt
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 tbsp cream of tartar
- 1/2 cup pumpkin puree
- 2 tsp. cinnamon spice blend/pumpkin pie spice
- 1 1/2 cups boiling water
- 8-10 drops red food coloring (all natural food coloring option)
- 5-7 drops yellow food coloring

### Directions:

1. Mix flour, salt, cream of tartar, oil, pumpkin pie spice, and pumpkin puree together.
2. Add boiling water (you can add in batches) and mix with a spoon until everything is combined.
3. After the mixture has cooled, take it out of the bowl and knead on the counter until it is not sticky anymore. You will need to add flour as you go, you may need as much as 1 more cup of flour to get the right consistency.
4. Play!
5. Store in an airtight container or plastic bag to keep fresh.





## GLUTEN FREE CANDY CANE PLAYDOUGH

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup rice flour
- 1 cup cornstarch
- 1/2 cup salt
- 3 Tbsp. cream of tartar
- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 tsp. or more peppermint extract or 10 drops of peppermint essential oil
- 1 cup boiling water
- food coloring or food paste
- optional: glitter

### Directions:

1. Mix the dry ingredients in a pot and stir in the oil, peppermint extract, water. Note: If you are only making one color, you can add your food coloring to this step but if making multiple colors, knead the color in at the end.
2. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, being sure to scrape the sides and the bottom.
3. Cook until the dough forms a ball.
4. Remove from heat. Place it on a piece of wax paper.
5. Knead the dough. If you are adding glitter, add it now.
6. Let the dough cool before playing with it.

Store in an airtight container or in a resealable bag.

Rice flour doesn't bind the same way regular flour does. If you find it is too sticky, try adding more cornstarch.





## PEPPERMINT PLAY DOUGH

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 cup salt
- 2 Tbsp. cream of tartar
- 1 Tbsp. oil
- 8-12 drops of green food coloring
- 3-5 drops of peppermint essential oil
- 1 cup boiling water
- optional: green or silver glitter

### Directions:

1. Add the flour, salt, cream of tartar to the electric mixer.
2. With the dough beater (the flat one), begin mixing on low and add the oil, food colouring, and peppermint essential oil.
3. As it mixes, pour in the boiling water and continue to mix on low until it resembles playdough texture.
4. Remove the dough from the mixer and knead it for 30 seconds to a minute.
5. If you want to add glitter, add it in at this point and mix it through by kneading.





## SPARKLY WINTER 2-INGREDIENT PLAY DOUGH

### Ingredients:

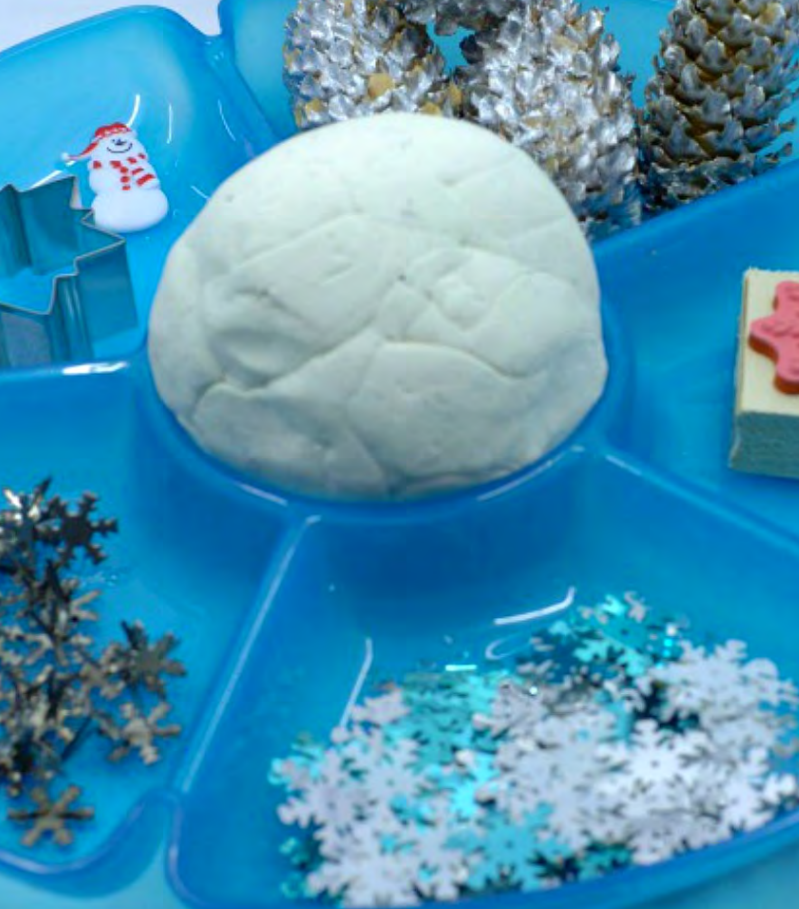
- 1/2 cup hair conditioner
- 1 1/2 cup cornstarch

### Optional:

- Blue glitter
- Essential Oils

### Directions:

1. Measure the hair conditioner into a bowl and mix in the essential oil if desired.
2. Add 1 cup of cornstarch and start mixing with a spoon.
3. After the dough starts to come together, transfer it to a cutting board or counter and knead by hand.
4. Add the last 1/2 cup of cornstarch as needed (you may not need all of it, or you may need more). You are looking for a smooth and soft texture, one that does not break away or crumble when you knead it.
5. Once you get the consistency you want, add the blue glitter and knead until it is mixed.



## SNOW PLAY DOUGH

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 cup salt
- 2 Tbsp. cream of tartar
- 1 Tbsp. oil
- 1 tsp. or more white liquid colour
- 1 cup boiling water
- silver glitter

### Directions:

1. Put dry ingredients in stand up mixer.
2. Add oil and the white liquid color and begin mixing with the flat beater.
3. As it is mixing on the lowest setting, add the boiling water.
4. Add in the silver glitter.
5. Mix until the playdough texture you want is achieved.
6. Take the dough out of the mixer and knead it for half a minute or so. Add more flour, if needed.

If you want, you can set out a snowflake cookie cutter, a snowflake stamp, snowflake confetti, snowflake brads, pine cones, and a little plastic snowman with the playdough.





## RAINBOW CONFETTI PARTY SLIME

### Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup Elmer's white glue
- 1/2 cup water
- Wilton Color Right liquid (black)
- 1/4 cup liquid starch
- rainbow sprinkles

### Directions:

1. In a bowl, mix 1/2 cup of water with 1/2 cup of glue.
2. Mix in the liquid color.
3. Pour in the liquid starch.
4. Stir. Keep stirring until the liquid is gone and a glob of slime forms.
5. Knead the slime. It will be stringy and goopy in the beginning, but will quickly become more and more the consistency of slime.
6. Set the slime down and allow it to flatten out.
7. Sprinkle with the confetti sprinkles and let it sit 20 seconds or so.
8. Pick the slime up from underneath.
9. Store the slime in an airtight container.

**Special note:** As the slime is played with, the sprinkles will mix in and lose their coloring, but that's all part of the fun. Once they are dissolved, it will look like a completely new slime!





## SPIDER WEB SLIME

### Ingredients:

- 5 oz. bottle of Elmer's washable white school glue
- ½ cup water
- 1 tsp. borax
- 1 cup water
- 1 Tbsp. + 1 tsp. Instant Snow
- plastic spiders or black polymer clay to make your own

### Black Polymer Clay Spiders:

For the spiders, only a small amount of polymer clay is needed. Roll 2 small balls of black polymer clay for the spider's body. Then make a long snakelike piece and cut out the legs. Shape together. Bake on wax paper at 275° for a few minutes.

The polymer spiders will not stick very well, but they are great for imaginative play!

### Directions:

1. Pour 1/2 cup glue in a bowl.
2. Add in 1/2 cup of water and stir them together.
3. In a small bowl, combine 1 cup of water and 1 tsp. of borax.
4. Slowly pour the borax mixture into the glue mixture, stirring until it has reached slime consistently.
5. Knead the slime with your hands for a few minutes.
6. Add 1 Tbsp. Instant Snow to the slime.
7. Work the Instant Snow in by kneading until it is fully mixed into the slime.
8. Slowly add up to 1 tsp. more Instant Snow until you reach the texture and look you're looking for. Continue to knead.
9. The slime will be stiff at first, but as you continue kneading, it will get better and better. It takes a bit for the Instant Snow to expand.
10. Add in a few plastic spiders or some polymer ones.
11. Store the slime in an airtight container.





## GLOW IN THE DARK SLIME

### Ingredients:

- 6 oz. Elmer's washable clear school glue
- 10 drops vetiver essential oil
- 1 Tbsp. baking soda
- 2 tsp. glow in the dark paint or gel
- 1 Tbsp. glow in the dark powder
- 1-3 Tbsp. contact solution (be sure that the contact solution you use includes both boric acid and sodium borate in the ingredient list or it won't work)
- 2-3 Tbsp. of neon glitter

\*Pro slime making tip: Squeeze a drop of the saline solution onto your finger and rub gently onto both hands before handling the slime. This will prevent the slime from sticking to you.

### Directions:

1. Add the glue and essential oil to a small glass bowl and stir.
2. Add the glow in the dark paint or gel, the glow in the dark powder, and the baking soda.
3. Mix everything together.
4. Add 1 Tablespoon of contact solution to the bowl.
5. Mix well.
6. You know that the slime mixture is ready to come out of the bowl when it pulls away from the edges of the bowl. You may need to add another Tablespoon or two to the mixture for it to come away completely.
7. Remove the slime from the bowl\* and knead it on a flat surface until it's nice and smooth.
8. Add the glitter and continue to knead until it is incorporated into the slime.
9. To make the slime glow, hold it under a light or take it into the sunlight for about 30 seconds. Then, bring it into a completely dark room and it will glow!

Store the glow in the dark slime in an airtight container or plastic bag. If stored properly, this slime will keep for a long time.





## JINGLE BELL SLIME

### Ingredients:

- 8 oz. Elmer's washable school glue
- 1/2 cup liquid starch
- green food coloring
- brightly colored jingle bells

### Directions:

1. Pour the glue into a bowl.
2. Add some drops of green food coloring and mix it well. With slime, I like to use wide craft sticks for mixing so that I can throw them out after.
3. Add some liquid starch into the glue mixture about a Tablespoon at a time while stirring.
4. Continue to add liquid starch until the slime doesn't stick to the side of the bowl. This will be about 1/2 cup total, but may be a little less or a little more.
5. Once it's pulling away from the sides and forming a bit of a ball, knead it by hand to finish mixing.
6. When it's been stretched and pulled and pushed and folded until it has reached slime consistency, add in some jingle bells and start playing.



## SPARKLY WINTER SCENTED OOBLECK

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup of cornstarch
- 1/2 cup water (start with 2-4 tablespoons and add more as needed to get the right consistency)
- 4 drops of peppermint essential oil
- silver glitter
- bowl
- mixing spoon

### Directions:

1. Measure the cornstarch and add into your bowl.
2. Add 4 drops of essential oil and food coloring to the water before mixing with the cornstarch.
3. Start mixing 2-4 tbsp. of water in at a time.

Once you are able to get the melting effect when the oobleck leaves the spoon, you are getting close.

The oobleck will look like a liquid in the bowl, turn into a solid when you touch it with the spoon and then melt as it leaves the spoon. It will also do the same thing when you touch it with your hands.





## PUMPKIN SCENTED OOBLECK

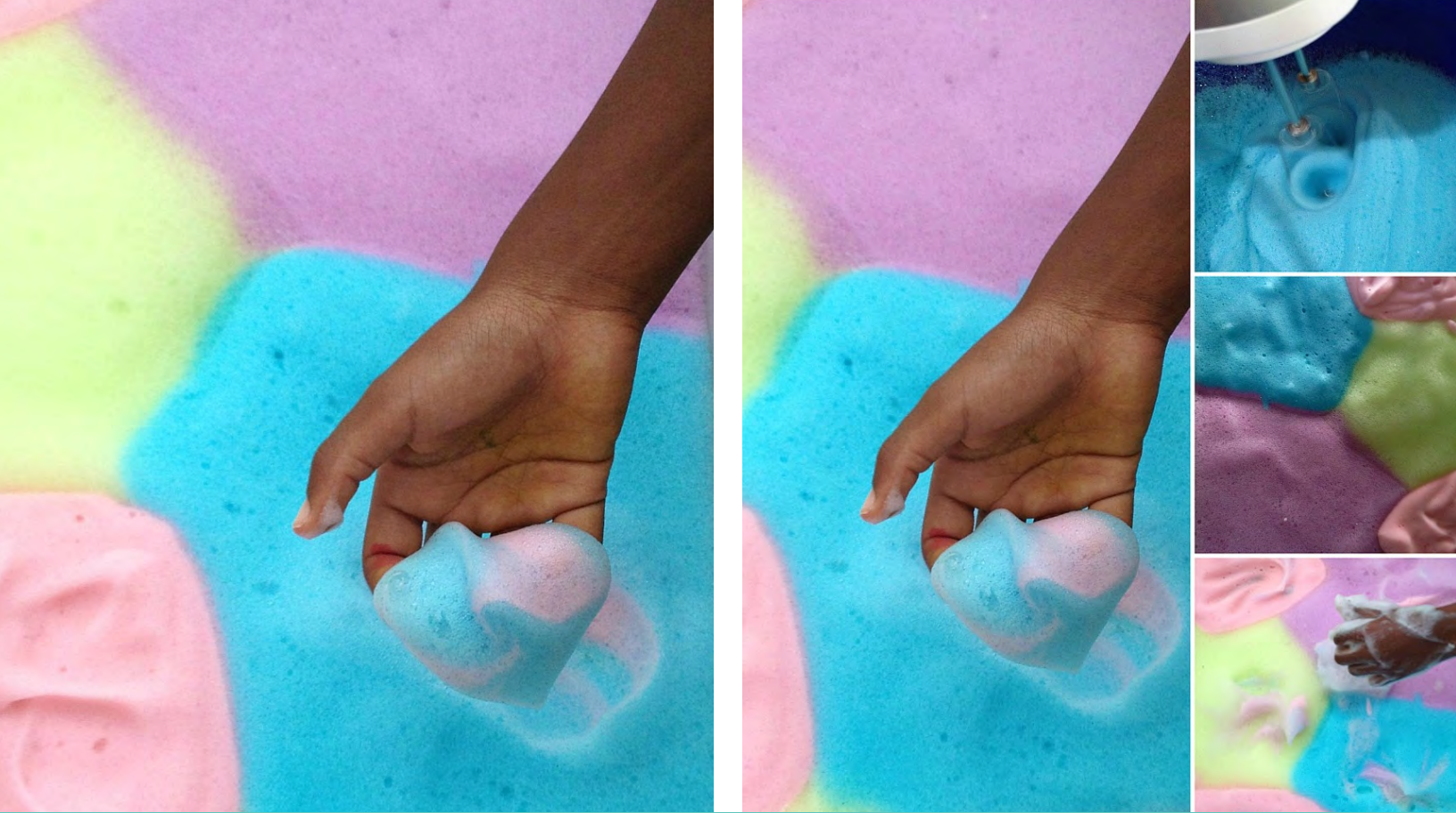
### Ingredients:

- 1 cup of cornstarch
- 1/2 cup water (start with 2-4 tablespoons and add more as needed to get the right consistency)
- 1 tsp. Pumpkin Spice liquid
- Orange food coloring
- Glitter (optional)
- Bowl
- Spoon

### Directions:

1. Dump the cornstarch into your bowl.
2. Add the pumpkin spice to the corn starch.
3. Start mixing 2-4 tbsp. of water in at a time. Once you are able to get the melting effect when the oobleck leaves the spoon, you are getting close.  
The oobleck will look like a liquid in the bowl, turn into a solid when you touch it with the spoon and then melt as it leaves the spoon. It will also do the same thing when you touch it with your hands.
3. Add 4 drops of orange food coloring. You may need to add a few more of each color to get the orange color you want.
4. Add glitter, which is optional.





## RAINBOW SOAP FOAM

### Ingredients:

- 5-10 drops of food coloring
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 Tbsp. dish soap
- hand mixer
- optional: glitter

### Directions:

1. In a bowl, add 1/4 cup water, 2 Tbsp. dish soap and 5-10 drops of food coloring. I also added some glitter with the food coloring to this step.
2. Mix on high with a hand mixer for about 2 minutes, until peaks form.
3. Put the foam into a shallow bin.
4. Rinse the bowl and beaters and follow the instructions again using a different color of food coloring. Repeat until the desired number of colors are created, adding each to the bin.



## LAVENDER SCENTED BUBBLES

### Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups lukewarm water
- 1/2 cup unscented, clear dish soap
- 1/4 cup light corn syrup
- 3-5 drops lavender essential oil
- optional: 3 drops of food coloring

### Directions:

1. Mix together the water, dish soap, and corn syrup.
2. Once it is well combined, add the drops of essential oil and food coloring and mix in.
3. Pour the bubble mixture into a container, add a bubble wand and start making bubbles!





## TAPIOCA PEARL WATER BEADS

### Ingredients:

- 10 cups water, brought to a boil.
- 1 cup tapioca pearls (large - make sure to get the kind that cooks in 5 minutes).
- Gel food coloring

Special note: You won't be able to save these for multiple uses, the beads will mush up and disintegrate after about a day of use. But they are a safe alternative to water beads if you have a child who still eats items.

The gel food coloring will stain, so you may want to use spoons or tongs for any sensory play you use them with or wear gloves. You can add them to plastic bags with some water to use as a sensory bag activity.

### Directions:

1. Add 10 cups of water to a large pot on the stove and bring it to a boil.
2. Pour in one cup of the large tapioca beads slowly and stir them.
3. Turn down the heat and cook as the beads begin to rise to the surface of the water.
4. Cook for 2-3 minutes after all the beads have come to the surface.
5. Take the pot off the heat and pour the tapioca beads into a strainer and rinse with cold water to stop the cooking process.
6. Add them to a mixing bowl and add a small amount of gel food coloring of your choice (1/4 tsp. at the most).
6. Let them dry to 2-3 hours before adding to water to play with.

The tapioca beads will be sticky but should come apart some when you add them to water during your sensory play.



## SHAVING CREAM PAINT

### Ingredients:

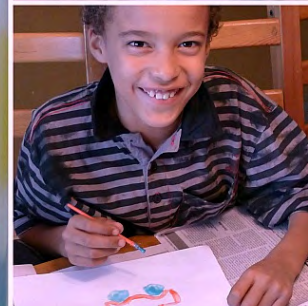
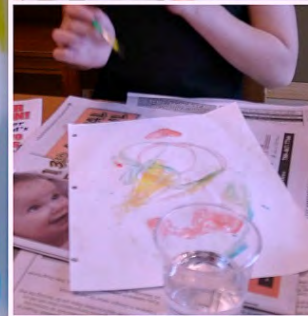
- 1 can lemon-lime scented shaving cream
- food coloring or washable tempera paints
- muffin tin or bowls

### Directions:

1. Fill each muffin tin cup or bowl with shaving cream.
2. Add food coloring or paint to each one and stir.

You can use fingers, paintbrushes, or foam brushes with this paint. It works on paper, the sidewalk, or faces. Note that on paler skinned kids, it can stain faces for up to a day or two.





## CONDENSED MILK PAINT

### Supplies:

- 300 mL can sweetened condensed milk (10 oz.)
- food colouring
- ice cube tray
- toothpicks (optional)

### Directions:

1. Fill an ice cube tray with condensed milk.
2. Add 1-2 drops of food coloring section. Include as many different colors as you wish.
3. Use toothpicks to stir them.

Use paintbrushes (or fingers) to paint on paper. You can use regular paper, cardstock, or fingerpaint paper.

This paint is taste safe and creates a glossy look even after the paint is dry.



## SCENTED PUMPKIN PUFFY PAINT

### Supplies:

- 1/2 cup pureed pumpkin (fresh or canned)
- 1 cup shaving cream (unscented)
- 1 cup white school glue
- 1/2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice (you can use a blend of cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, and allspice if you don't have this spice blend)
- optional: orange food coloring or food paste for extra color

### Directions:

1. Stir all the ingredients together in a bowl. When you stir the ingredients together, don't over mix so that it stays nice and fluffy.

There will be specks of texture because of the spice blend, but this will only add more realism to the painting.





## KINETIC SAND

### Ingredients:

- 4 cups sand
- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 3/4 cup vegetable oil

### Directions:

1. Mix the sand and flour together in a bowl.
2. Stir in the oil. Combine well.





## 2 INGREDIENT CLOUD DOUGH

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups flour
- 1/4 cup of baby oil

### Directions:

1. Combine the flour and baby oil in a mixing bowl.
2. Stir until you reach both ingredients are thoroughly mixed together. You may need to use your hands instead of a spoon once it starts to come together.





## COLORED CLOUD DOUGH

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups flour
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 1 tsp. candy color\*

### Directions:

1. Pour the candy color into the oil and stir well.
2. In a medium sized bowl, dump the 2 cups of flour.
3. Pour the colored vegetable oil into the flour and stir.
4. Once it is well mixed, knead with your hands to continue to distribute the color throughout the dough.

\* It is important that you use candy color in this recipe and not food coloring. Food coloring won't mix with the oil, but oil-based candy color will.





## PUMPKIN PIE SCENTED CLOUD DOUGH

### Ingredients:

- 4 cups flour
- 2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil

### Directions:

1. In a bowl, mix the flour together with the pumpkin pie spice.
2. Pour in the vegetable oil.
3. Stir well and then knead by hand.





## LAVENDER SENSORY SOUP

### Ingredients:

- Purple decorative gems
- Sprigs of Lavender
- 1 bag of purple water beads

### Directions:

1. Place purple gems, real lavender, and purple water beads in a large tub.
2. Use a pitcher to pour in water.
3. Allow the water beads to expand before play begins.

The scent of lavender is naturally calming.

You can add in scoops, spoons, and a soup ladle if you wish.