

# WOOD, STONE...WHAT ELSE?



Topic: Materials and their features



**Key terms:** natural material, man-made material, weight, hardness

**What we need:** colourful sheets of paper, plank, sticks, brass scales (wooden sticks, 2 halves of plastic soft drinks bottles, nail and twine)

**Estimated time: 20 minutes**

**Methods:** discussion, heuristic conversation, explanation, storytelling

**Activity description:**

Possible objectives: To facilitate children's creativity and problem solving skills.

To work cooperatively in small groups and support pro-social behaviour.

Allow opportunities to speak and listen to other children and learn from each other.

Activity:

*Aim of the activity:*

To name natural materials and their features (colour, weight, hardness etc.) and prove the features by using various techniques.

*Background context:*

If a child is able to solve problems on their own, they will be happier, more confident and more independent; they will not feel frustrated or disheartened in their inefficiency; therefore it is important we begin teaching children problem solving skills from an early age.

*Introduction to the activity:*

Activity can be implemented during a walk in a park or forest. The teacher tells a colourful story about nature, followed by questions:

Children, how many colours might you find in a forest/nature? What are the colours?

*During the activity:*

Children are divided into groups of 4. Each group is given a sheet of different coloured paper and their task is to search for objects of the same colour and bring them to a meeting point. Brought materials are divided into two groups according to their origin - if it's man-made or natural. After that we will work only with natural materials.

Children are asked which of the natural objects is the heaviest and how can they can find it out (if there is one object which is obviously the heaviest, for example big stone, put this object away). Firstly, participants are weighting by hand. After this, a teacher asks the children how we can weigh more efficiently and more accurately. Children are given a wooden stick which can be laid on another log/stick/stone to form scales. Children may be clever enough to build their scales on their own. Alternatively, the teacher may need to give them some advice. After this activity, the teacher asks them again whether they know a more efficient and accurate way how we can weigh things.

Consequently, participants attempt to create equilibrium scales using a wooden board or a stick, 2 halves of plastic soft drinks bottles and some twine. Supposing there is limited time the teacher could create the scales beforehand. Then the teacher brings the children's attention to the hardness/solidness of the materials. The last activity is to sort the materials according to their weight and hardness.

*Possible evaluation questions for children:*

What natural materials do you know? How would you describe them? Do you know which one of these materials is the heaviest and hardest?

**Curriculum links:**

Man and craft  
Materials and technology

**Sources:** © This activity sheet was created by The Take Me Out Partnership

**Notes:**

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