

A-Z of Sensory Learning Activities

The following A-Z of sensory activities are ideas that you can use at home with your children. Many of the ideas are from [Inclusiveteach.com](https://www.inclusiveteach.com), with others of our own too.

We would not expect you to buy resources especially to do these activities, and many are chosen for their simplicity and common access to resources in the house. Trying just one or two a week can provide fun for your children and you too.

A – Arm Pushes: Often referred to as “heavy work” these exercises help provide children with sensory information about body awareness and positions. They may also act to calm and regulate a child. Proprioceptive activities wake up muscles getting our bodies in an alert state to be ready to learn. Extend the activity by introducing counting or fast and slow.



B – Bubbles: A super sensory science activity. Can your child make smelly, scented, slimy bubble mixes using different dish soap? In maths linked work – Which size or shape wand works best. Use everlasting bubbles to count or cover a target.

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C – Cooking: What better than a sensory activity that you can eat afterward! This can be made fully age and stage appropriate. This image is of my Key Stage 4 class using all their senses to make some cookies. Exploring the ingredients can provide lots of different sensory experiences of touch, smell and taste. You can discuss which they like the feel, smell or taste of.



D – Dough: This can be PlayDoh, homemade salt dough, or dough from cooking. Squash it, stretch it, roll it! Enhance it with essential oils. Stamp letters into it.

E – Eggs: These are great sensory food items, you can experiment with all the different feels and textures of eggs as you cook them in different ways.

F – Foil: This is a cheap and simple tool. It crinkles as you touch it, it reflects light and is great for making small sculptures with, or for use when making a model rocket.

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G – Goo: Cornflour and water is a quick and simple way to make goo to explore with hands or feet. You can add food colouring or glitter to make it more interesting.

H – Heated Toys or heat pads. These are a good sensory exploration device for children to work on their senses. Do they notice an area of their body is warmer than another? Can they track the movement of warmth with their eyes or head? If you have heated animal toys, *Monkey Puzzle* by Julia Donaldson would be a great story to enhance using these.

I – Ice: Many children really like playing with Ice. It is also a great sensory activity to use when it is hot outside and children are trying to regulate their temperature. You can freeze items in ice or even water beads to smash them or make them melt and watch come out.

J – Jumping: Many children just enjoy it jumping, it burns off energy and can help regulate stress levels. You can easily incorporate maths – counting the bounces, bouncing for 1 minute etc.



K – Kinetic sand: This stuff is so unique in texture. It is very calming to watch if you pile it up and watch it crumble. Being hydrophobic it has an interesting effect when you put it in water. [The Imagination Tree](#) has a great simple recipe for making your own.

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L – Lighting: Lights can be highly effective for multiple activities (See U – Umbrella). In this example, I have put lights under a clear plastic tray filled with Jelli Bath for an underwater sensory tray.



M – Material: You can use any kind of material to explore or use within story telling. We all have different types of material in our homes, cotton sheets, woolly scarves, lycra fitness gear. Materials we have at home can have all different patterns on them too, flowers, animal print, stars etc... Bed sheets also make a good alternative to a parachute for playing parachute games at home.

N – Noodles or spaghetti are great for dyeing, colour recognition, and sensory play. They are also ideal for making a quick and easy noise shaker. Put some dry noodles, or broken spaghetti in a bottle and make music. Use different sized containers or made from different things. How many different sounds can you produce? Wet noodles and spaghetti are always fun for putting hands and feet into too.

O – Olfactory: This is smells and smelling. We often have lots of different things to smell in the house, such as herbs in the kitchen, perfumes, air fresheners, deodorants, shower gels and shampoos. Can you find your favourite and least favourite smells in the house?

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P – Putty: Putty and slime can be purchased very cheaply these days from shops such as Poundland, B&M, Home Bargains and One Below. There are all different types of different consistency and colour. They can be fun to hold and to run through your fingers. Talk about how each feels and which is your favourite or least favourite.

Q – Quiet: Do not underestimate the power of quiet reflection time to help reduce stress and process the day. Multiple quiet periods in a safe area can work wonders for focussing sensory learners on subsequent work tasks.

R – Rice: Dry or wet, rice is lots of fun to explore with hands or feet. Bury small objects into the rice and see if you can find them, or who can find the most. Like dry noodles and spaghetti, rice is ideal for making musical shakers. Add food colouring to make rainbow rice and look at the different colours.

S – Signed Singing. Singing is a really simple way to engage sensory learners. Why not sign along to some favourite songs to add that kinaesthetic element? YouTube has a number of Makaton signed pop songs and nursery rhymes. Singing Hands, and Melodysigns are two very good ones that sign lots of different types of songs.

T – Tinsel: Dig out the Christmas decorations and find your tinsel. It feels interesting, is reflective, comes in a range of colours, makes a quiet sound and has a unique smell all of its own.



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U – Umbrellas: Sensory umbrellas or Storytelling umbrellas are a really effective way of creating immersive environments on a small scale. No need to decorate a room just fill create a storytelling umbrella. Decorate the inside with some battery powered lights and dangle some objects for an interesting stimulus for children to enjoy.



V – Vibration: Use vibration and massage to add a sensory element to a story. Use as a calm down activity. It can be used on the whole body, or just small areas and has a heating element.

W – Water beads: These are now used widely and come in a range of colours and sizes. You can run them through your hands or smash them. Put them in a sealable freezer bag to make a squishy sensory mat. You can also place them into a tray or large container of water for a child to place their feet into.





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X – Xyst: These trees or shrub lined pathways create a feeling of calmness and seclusion from the stresses and distractions of life outside. Relatively easy to create with willow or saplings. A worthwhile addition to any sensory garden.



Y – Yoga: Great for centering, self-regulation, etc. The benefits of yoga are well known and can be linked with mindfulness or grounding in the moment.

Z – Zipline: As with swings, a zip line is a very engaging proprioceptive activity that children and adults alike can enjoy. Why not design a sensory circuit that encompasses the activities at your local park?

Thank you for reading.

Here is the Inclusiveteach Pinterest board: <https://pin.it/jc4dsc5o6xuvv>