Maths

Sensory exploration

Here are a few examples of activities to help your child develop their skills and knowledge through sensory activities.

Please ensure you use items that are safe for your child to handle and do not use small items if your child is likely to put them in their mouth. Ensure you always supervise your child during the activities.

Numbers

Sensory exploration of numbers

Number cards – use any material to make the numbers stand out and then glue on the amount using any objects that your child could feel (raised up from the board). Make sure they are glued down securely before using with your child.

Sensory bags –
1) Use plastic zip wallets or clear sealable food bags. Add rubber/laminated numbers 1-5 and either clear hair gel or water. Seal all edges of bag with cellotape and lay on a flat surface.
2) In clear food bags/zip wallets – make separate number bags; one item in bag with a 1, two items for bag 2 etc.

Sensory bags –
Use plastic zip wallets or clear sealable food bags.
Add dried coloured rice or sand, do not over fill.
Seal all sides, lay on a flat surface and encourage your child to make marks on top with their finger.
If able help them write numerals as above.

To make coloured rice

1 cup white rice
1/2 teaspoon vinegar
Squirt or several drops of food colouring
Place all in a sealable bag or container and shake till the rice is completely covered.
Spread over a tray and leave to dry overnight.

Number songs.

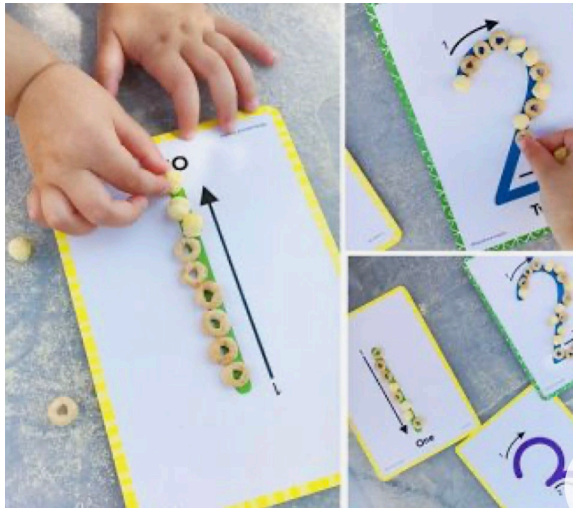
Use frogs or ducks and place them in blue sand or water/bath to play with as you sing the nursery rhyme.

Ten fat sausages – use play dough rolled into sausage shapes and a real or toy frying pan –
'Ten fat sausages sizzling in a pan, ten fat sausages sizzling in a pan,
and if one goes pop and the other goes bang,
there be eight fat sausages sizzling the pan,' and so on.
Removing the sausages as you sing the song.

Number hunt – hide numbers 1-5 - magnetic, plastic, wooden etc, in, sand, rice, small pasta shapes and encourage your child to explore. Once they find a number tell them what number it is and continue exploring. Once all five are found, put them in order and encourage your child to feel them as you say each one.

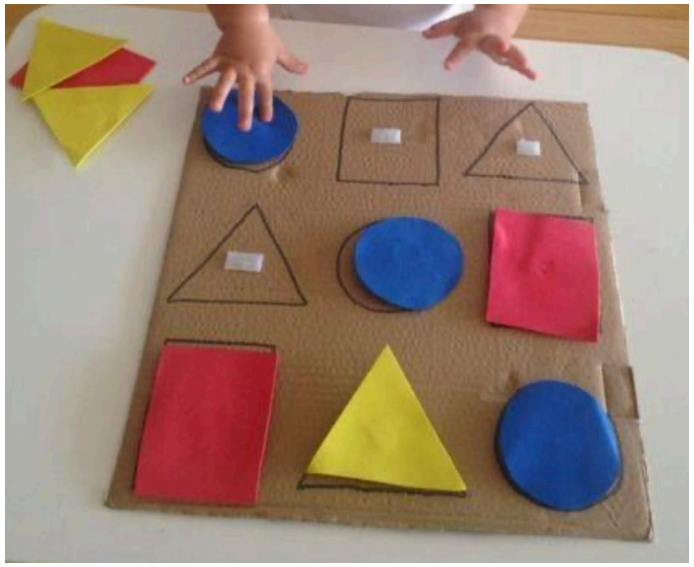
Frozen numbers – using wooden, laminated, plastic numbers, fill an ice cube tray, chocolate mould and place the number on top. Once frozen remove from the moulds and support your child to explore. Place ice cubes in a bowl of water and using a net/sieve lift out the ice cubes – explore the textures of he ice and help them feel the number.

Invisible numbers – using a glue gun write out the numbers 1-5 on baking paper, once cooled peel them off and place the numbers in coloured materials – sand, rice, wate, etc. Support your child in feeling for then numbers and put them in order and encourage your child to feel them as you say each one.



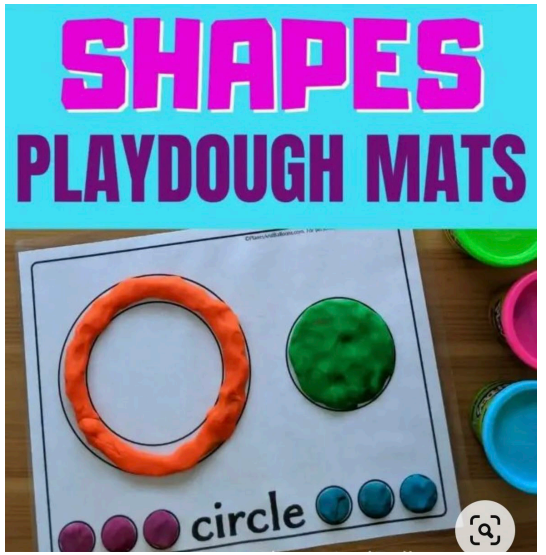
Cereal numbers – Print out or write numerals 1-5 on to card. Stick cheerio shape cereal directly on top and once dry, explore the cards with your child. You can bring in other objects to help cement the value of each number – card 1 show one ball, card 2 show two bricks, etc as you go through each card.

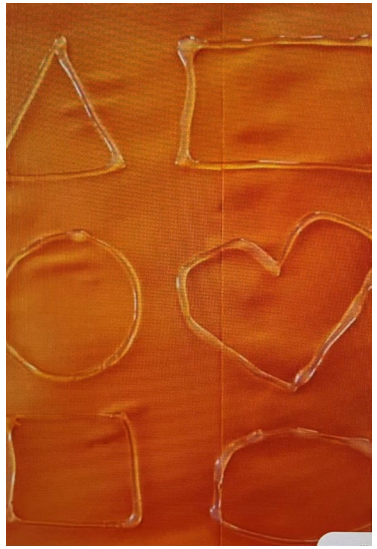
Shape



Shape match – draw round shapes on two pieces of card – cut out one set of the cupboard shapes and keep the other as the board. Next cut round the shapes on to coloured felt and stick on top of the cutout shapes for extra durability. Then match the shapes to those on the board.

Playdough shapes – draw out shapes on to paper (laminate or pop it in punch pocket sleeve, so it can be reused) and support your child in making the shapes or feeling. Add an extra sensory touch by mixing in a smell when making your own play dough (recipe at end).

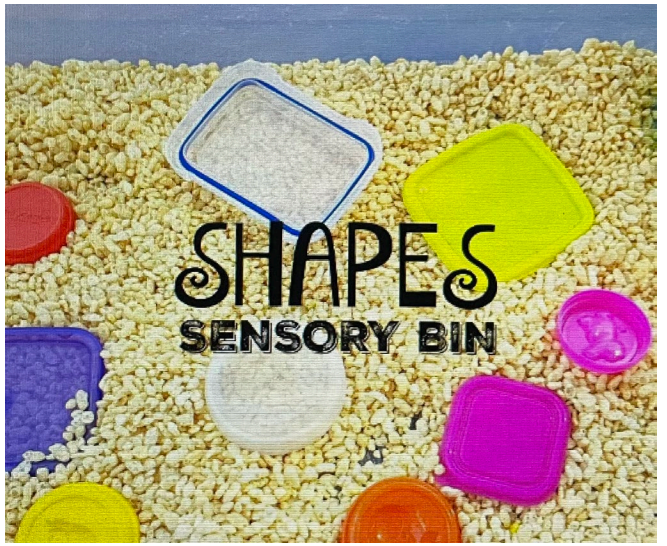




Glue gun shapes – draw shapes onto greaseproof paper and trace over them using a hot glue gun – can use clear or coloured glue.

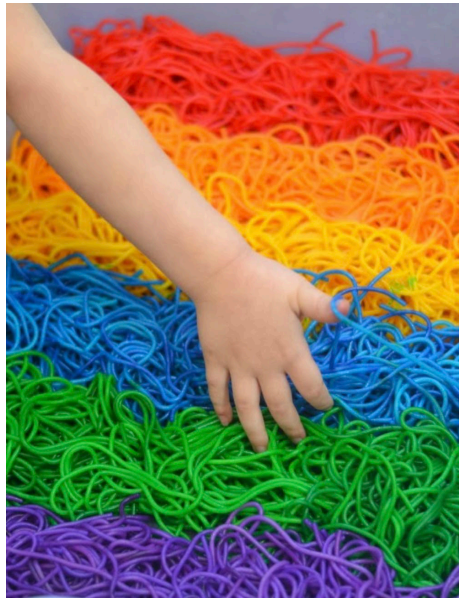
Textured shapes – draw shapes onto card then wind wool/yarn around the shapes until you completely cover the card. Use different colours for each shape. Reinforce shape names as they explore them.

Sensory bag of shapes – add plastic shapes to water or hair gel in a clear sealable food bag or zip lock bag. Encourage exploring and telling your child shape names. Ask them to find you a certain shape if they can.



Sensory shape bins – fill a tray with rice pops, rice, sand etc and fill it with several items of the same shape – all circles, squares – make sure they are flat 2D shapes.

Colours



Colour noodles – cook noodles and rinse under cold water until completely cool.
Share into zip lock bags/ containers and add a few drops of food dye and a drop a vegetable oil. Shake/mix until the noodles are covered then open zip lock bag/container and leave to dry for 20-30 mins.

Store leftover noodles in an airtight container in the fridge. They can be used for up to a week but check noodles each day to make sure they are still okay to use.

Coloured paint sticks –
Ice cube tray, Lollipop sticks, Paints, Paper.
Fill your ice cube tray with a different colour for each cube.
Pop a lollipop stick in the middle of each cube for a handle.
You can make a mixed cube if using thick paints, so they don't run.
Freeze overnight.
Provide paper and let your child have fun exploring the colours.
Reinforce colour names.

Cottonwool painting –
Cottonwool balls, Pegs, Paints, Tray, Paper.
Place a squirt of different colour paint in a tray (egg tray, cupcake tray etc
Peg a cottonwool ball and place one in each colour.
Allow your child to pick up and explore the different colours by making marks/dots over the paper.
Reinforce the colour names as they use them.

Colour trays
Make different coloured sensory colour tray.
Use coloured rice, pasta and then fill with other household items, toys of that colour.
Help your child explore the different coloured trays.

To make coloured rice

1 cup white rice
1/2 teaspoon vinegar
Squirt or several drops of food colouring
Place all in a sealable bag or container and shake till the rice is completely covered.
Spread over a tray and leave to dry overnight.