

Contents

| | | |
|-----------|------------|---|
| 4 | 1.0 | Introduction |
| 10 | 2.0 | Starting with babies and toddlers at home |
| 16 | 3.0 | Exploring with two-year-olds at home |
| 22 | 4.0 | Learning at home with three and four-year-olds |
| 28 | 5.0 | Leading on from two-year-olds' home experiences in settings |
| 34 | 6.0 | Continuing learning with three and four-year-olds in settings |
| 46 | 7.0 | Linking practice to theory and research |
| 52 | 8.0 | Further reading |

Natural materials also provide surfaces for mark making - writing in sand or in the earth, allowing these marks to disappear either naturally or deliberately. Fingers, sticks and other implements can be used to great effect.

Paint and gloop provide different surfaces for marks that also behave differently – in gloop, the marks will self-absorb as the gloop fills itself in again, and with paint they can be squished over.

With paint, just about anything can be used as an implement to make marks with – from brushes, to sponges and rollers, car wheels and pastry cutters, straws and string.

The rich variety of mark making experiences that children receive at home are built on and extended in the early years setting with new materials and techniques that children will be proud to talk about at home. In turn, enriching experiences from home, with the influences of parents, grandparents, siblings and friends, all add to children developing their ‘one hundred languages’.

Each child will approach materials and use them in unique ways. Listening and watching children as they engage in mark making activities with friends or by themselves exemplifies this.

Jason (three years) leans across the table with his tongue sticking out, engrossed in covering a whole sheet of paper with paint, mixing in each colour from the time before. “It’s gone through” he cries, as the brush wears a hole in the paper. “The paint has eaten up the paper. It’s a dragon monster and it eats up the paper.”

Adeola (three years, nine months) sits with her friend Dawn (four years, six months) in the writing area. Dawn shows Adeola how she writes her name. Adeola gets upset as Dawn writes ‘DA’ – “No,” says Adeola “it goes like this” and she tries to write ‘AD’. The practitioner sees that Adeola is getting confused with how Dawn writes her name. He explains how the names are written differently and both children settle down to carry on writing.

Dawn likes to know her name is written on every piece of drawing or writing she makes. She embellishes the letters with curly lines and dots and uses different pens for each letter. She has even started making name labels for other children who ask her to do their name ‘all pretty like yours’.