

Resource Idea List

Consider any of the following everyday items as intelligent materials that might be used in a myriad of ways. Please consider safety and supervision when planning to use them with very young children.

Remnants and Discardables

yarn, ribbons, rickrack, lace, embroidery thread
gift-wrap and ribbons
old costume jewelry to be disassembled
buttons, beads, sequins
remnants of netting, shimmery fabrics, burlap, felt
corks
bottle caps
incomplete game pieces (oddball checkers, chess, Parcheesi pieces, dice, game tokens, etc.)

Natural Finds

pinecones, pine needles, small twigs and branches, acorns, bark
seashells, pieces of driftwood
smooth stones
dried plant stems, seedpods, dried flowers

Wooden Odds and Ends

empty thread or other spools (wood or plastic)
wood dowels
old wood picture frames (minus the glass)
small smooth cut wood scraps (less than 8" in any one direction)
tree trunk or tree limb slices (1" to 2" thicknesses are good), pieces of bark (incl. birch)

Paper and Cardboard

stock photographers' catalogs, animal magazines ("Your Big Backyard", "National Geographic", etc.)
outdated stationery, including envelopes of all sizes
outdated business forms, receipt pads, menus
shirt cardboard (from shirts commercially laundered and folded)
small-lidded boxes like jewelry/gift boxes, shoeboxes
clean colored cellophane candy wrappers (sorted by color)
scraps or sample books of specialty papers, gift-wrap, wallpaper, card stock

Glass

glass jars and lids from baby food, olives, mustards, jams, etc.
(with labels removed)
larger jars such as pickle and mayo jars (labels removed)
remnant marbles, sea glass

Construction/Hardware/Household Reusables

old hardware (locks, hinges, latches, knobs, springs etc.)
fibers (raw cotton, wool, flax, silk remnants) and furs (taxidermy remnants)
copper wire, construction wire, electrical wire, floral wire
plastic lids from yogurt containers, tub frosting

clear plastic liquid laundry detergent caps
raffia, remnants of twine and string
paper towel, toilet paper or gift-wrap tubes
remnant ceramic tiles
paint stir sticks (free at many hardware/home supply stores)
paint color samples (free at many hardware/home supply stores)

This list is offered to Pre-K parents at Blake School in Minnesota.