COLOURED RICE FOR SENSORY PLAY

Playing with rice fascinates children. Children may respond to sensory experiences like rice play in a variety of ways.

It can be very calming to run your hands through a textured material like rice.

During rice play, you can talk about how things move, feel, smell and sound. Make a comment, pause and wait. Give them a chance to add to the conversation. Ask occasional questions that require some thinking and reasoning e.g. "What would happen if we ...." "What could we use to ...." Encourage experimenting and exploring through these questions. This helps develop early science skills.

Rice play can give children something new and interesting to talk about. Many children will enjoy story-telling through 'small world' play. The imagination involved in creating a land of dinosaurs or a haven for mini-beasts provides opportunities for introducing new words and simple story-telling skills.

During rice play, fine motor strength (including the pincer grip when picking up tiny grains of sand) and hand-eye coordination are developed. These are helpful for handwriting later on at school.

Ingredients :

1 cup dried rice

1 teaspoon food colouring (I have also used diluted paint before with the same outcome.)

Paper towels

Tray or plate (this for drying the rice)

A container with a screw on the lid on.

Instructions:

STEP 1:

Add food colouring to the container and pour in one cup of rice.

STEP 2:

Screw on the lid and shake, shake, shake until the rice is completely covered. Add a little more food colouring if needed to achieve desired colour.

STEP 3:

Place the wet rice onto a paper towel and plate.

Using a spoon spread the wet rice out evenly to dry out.

If it is a sunny day, I place the wet rice out in the sun to air dry.

Give the container a wipe and a rinse, and proceed with your next colour!

STEP 4:

When the rice is dry, gently rub the rice between your fingers to break up any rice that may be stuck together.

Coloured rice will last for several years if stored correctly in an air-tight container.