

BABY STEPS

BIRTH TO 16
MONTHS

EDIBLE FINGER PAINTING

MATERIALS:

- PUREED BABY FOODS FOR COLOR (BEETS ARE A GOOD OPTION FOR A RED COLOR, SQUASH FOR YELLOW, BLUEBERRIES AND OTHER BERRIES FOR PURPLE, CARROTS FOR ORANGE, AND A GREEN VEGGIE FOR GREEN)
- GREEK YOGURT (OR OTHER WHITE YOGURT OF YOUR CHOOSING)
- A FEW TEASPOONS OF RICE CEREAL OR OATMEAL
- SMALL BOWLS TO MIX PAINTS IN

OBJECTIVES:

- SENSORY EXPLORATION: TEXTURES, TEMPERATURES, WET/DRY
- FINE MOTOR DEVELOPMENT: MANIPULATING MATERIALS, FINGER PAINTING, PRE-WRITING SKILLS
- COLOR AWARENESS
- CREATIVE EXPRESSION

INSTRUCTIONS:

MOST BABIES REALLY ENJOY GETTING MESSY! THE TRUTH IS, SENSORY EXPLORATION HELPS THEM TO LEARN SO MANY THINGS ABOUT THE WORLD AROUND THEM, AND ACTIVITIES LIKE FINGER PAINTING ARE THE VERY EARLY SEEDS TO PRE-WRITING SKILLS AS INFANTS LEARN TO MANIPULATE A MATERIAL WITH THEIR HANDS. FOR THIS ACTIVITY, YOU CAN HAVE BABY SIT IN A HIGH-CHAIR AND "PAINT" THE TRAY, ON A PLATE, OR A PLACEMAT. YOU CAN ALSO USE A PIECE OF PAPER, BUT THEN IT WILL BE HARDER TO EAT THE "PAINT" WHEN FINISHED!

- PLACE A SMALL AMOUNT OF YOGURT INTO EACH SMALL BOWL.
- MIX IN A TEASPOON OR TWO OF THE BABY FOOD PUREE INTO EACH BOWL OF YOGURT AND MIX TO GET DESIRED COLOR. MORE BABY FOOD WILL MAKE DARKER COLORS.
- ADD A TEASPOON OF RICE CEREAL OR OATMEAL AND MIX. THIS WILL THICKEN THE PAINT SLIGHTLY SO IT'S LESS RUNNY AND EASY TO "PAINT" WITH. IF A TEASPOON IS NOT ENOUGH, CONTINUE TO ADD A LITTLE AT A TIME AND MIX UNTIL YOU REACH THE DESIRED CONSISTENCY.
- PROVIDE BABY WITH THE BOWLS OF PAINT, OR PLOP A DOLLOP OF EACH PAINT DIRECTLY ONTO THEIR TRAY OR WORKSPACE.
- DEMONSTRATE THAT IT'S OKAY TO PUT THEIR HANDS IN IT AND "PAINT" ON THEIR SURFACE (THIS INITIALLY MIGHT BE CONFUSING TO A BABY WHO IS USED TO ONLY EATING IN THEIR HIGH CHAIR, BECAUSE TYPICALLY THEY ARE NOT ENCOURAGED TO PLAY WITH THEIR FOOD SO MUCH!)
- TALK ABOUT THE COLORS AS THEY PAINT. "THIS IS ORANGE! IT'S LIKE A CARROT (BONUS: SHOW THEM A CARROT WHILE YOU TALK ABOUT IT). "THIS IS RED! DO YOU KNOW SOME OTHER RED THINGS? HOW ABOUT STRAWBERRIES?" THOUGH MOST BABIES AT A YOUNG AGE ARE NOT YET VERBAL, BUT THEY ARE SOAKING IN AND LOVING EVERYTHING YOU ARE TALKING WITH THEM ABOUT, SO KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING!

We'd love to see photos of your at home learning! Tag us on Facebook and Instagram with hashtag #MeritSchoolAtHome

