

We Skoolhouse



Ready-Made Curriculum: Paint Exploration



A Practical Guide for Exploration

Each unit offers a suggested flow of experiences designed to support deep, meaningful learning through play. You'll notice intentional repetition—this is purposeful. Repeating activities builds memory, mastery, confidence, attention, and focus, forming the foundation for long-term learning.

The experiences are open-ended & process-driven, focusing on how children learn rather than what they produce. This allows for a range of learning styles & encourages exploration at each child's unique pace.

Flexibility Matters

Each unit includes a suggested daily activity guide to support your planning—but it's not meant to be followed rigidly or completed in a set order:

- **Follow the children's lead:** If they're deeply engaged, slow down. If interest fades, it's okay to pause and return later. Some children need time to warm up to new ideas—don't move on too quickly. Repeating an invitation over several days can spark richer engagement.
- **Move at your own pace:** Stretch a week into two, repeat activities as long as needed, and allow units to grow over time.
- **Revisit, don't rush:** There's no need to introduce a new unit each month. Returning to a familiar concept—like revisiting water after exploring texture or paint—deepens understanding and strengthens memory. Revisiting isn't starting over—it's going further.

This guide is about making space for curiosity, experimentation, and meaningful learning. Use it as a springboard—trust yourself, trust the children, and allow learning to unfold naturally.



Unit: Paint Exploration

Paint exploration helps babies engage their visual and tactile senses, encouraging them to focus, observe, and respond to color, texture, and motion. Using tools like brushes, hands, and sensory bags, infants explore how paint moves and feels, promoting early understanding of cause and effect. These experiences support curiosity, coordination, and body awareness, while giving babies opportunities to express themselves freely through movement and touch.

Domain	How It Supports Development
Physical	Painting builds both fine and gross motor skills. Grasping chunky brushes, pressing paint bags, and moving across large surfaces strengthen coordination, balance, and control, while reaching and crawling support core and arm development.
Cognitive	Infants begin to understand cause and effect as they see paint move with their actions. Repeating these experiences builds memory, attention, and early problem-solving, while helping them make sense of space and patterns.
Language	As caregivers describe colors, textures, and actions during painting, infants absorb new words and connect language to their experiences. These interactions support early communication and lay the foundation for expressive & receptive language.
Social-Emotional	Open-ended painting allows infants to explore freely, building confidence and a sense of autonomy. In group settings, it fosters parallel play and social awareness, offering chances to observe and connect with others.

Unit: Paint Exploration

This unit introduces paint as a sensory-rich invitation for infants to explore through touch, sight, and movement. Using baby-safe methods like non-toxic paints, sealed pouches, and large paper surfaces, infants are free to smear, pat, and observe with their whole bodies. The focus is on the experience—feeling textures, noticing color changes, and discovering cause and effect—rather than creating a final product.

Focus Materials: Non-toxic infant-safe paint, large paper, clear ziplock bags, brushes, mirrors

Books: Mix It Up! by Hervé Tullet, and Mouse Paint by Ellen Stoll Walsh

Songs: "If You're Happy and You Know It" (add paint-themed verses like "squish your paint")

Vocabulary: Paint, color, drip, dot, smooth, swirl, press, pat, smear, squeeze, mix, wet, dry, soft, cool, brush,

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Paint in a Bag (Horizontal Positioning)	Paint in a Bag (Horizontal Positioning)	Paint in a Bag (Horizontal Positioning)	Paint in a Bag (Vertical Positioning)	Paint in a Bag (Vertical Positioning)
Week 2	Chunky Brush Painting	Chunky Brush Painting	Paint in a Bag (Horizontal Positioning)	Paint in a Bag (Vertical Positioning)	Chunky Brush Painting
Week 3	Mirror Painting	Mirror Painting	Paint in a Bag (Horizontal Positioning)	Mirror Painting	Paint in a Bag (Vertical Positioning)
Week 4	Chunky Brush Painting	Whole Body Painting	Mirror Painting	Whole Body Painting	Whole Body Painting

Unit: Paint Exploration

Suggested Activities

- **Paint in a Bag (Horizontal Positioning):** A sealed paint bag taped to the floor or low surface. Babies press, pat, and squish to explore color and movement without mess.
- **Paint in a Bag (Vertical Positioning):** A sealed paint bag taped to a wall or window at eye level. Encourages reaching, visual tracking, and upright engagement.
- **Chunky Brush Painting:** Thick-handled brushes with non-toxic paint offered on paper or trays. Supports grasping, coordination, & mark-making through dabbing or swiping. **It's okay if infants prefer their hands!***
- **Mirror Painting:** Non-toxic finger-paint on or in front of a low mirror with chunky brushes, stampers, or simply their own hands. Promotes visual focus, sensory exploration, and early self-awareness.
- **Whole Body Painting:** Large paper with paint taped to the floor. Babies explore using hands, feet, & movement in a shared, full-body experience.

Alternatives and Extensions:

Explore these simple variations to extend play, supporting repetition, variety, and deeper sensory learning:

- **Texture Tool Painting:** Use safe items like silicone brushes or rubber spatulas to explore different textures and motions.
- **Paint with Water:** Offer a brush and water on colored paper or a tray. Babies see visual change without mess—great for early grip play.
- **High-Contrast Painting:** Provide black or white paper with bright paint to enhance visual focus and attention during exploration.
- **Push Rolling Painting:** Dip a large ball or smooth object in paint and encourage babies to push, bounce, or bat it across paper.

