



## Ooey Gooley® Squishy Plop! Sensory Play for Every Day!

Shared with you by Lisa Murphy, M.Ed.

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Lisa Murphy believes in play-based, child-centered, hands-on, early childhood environments. She approaches her work with children and families using the following framework:

### Principle 1: TIME

Children are provided with long periods of uninterrupted free time for exploration and interaction within the environment. Schedules are predictable, realistic, and flexible. Posted schedules do not unintentionally under-mind the role of playful learning within the space.

### Principle 2: OUTDOORS

There is lots of outdoor play time. The outdoor environment is not considered a separate space, but instead is seen as an extension of the indoor space, and just as credible! Everything that is IN should and could be OUT. Be mindful of “I’m cold we’re going in” syndrome!

### Principle 3: RULES

Children have the freedom to explore this environment with few restrictions. Examine your RULE SHEET. Consider the fact that all of the no-no’s are developmentally appropriate, yet socially unacceptable. We have one overarching rule: “People are not for hurting.” We are able to provide this level of freedom because...

### Principle 4: THE SECRET

The secret to good teaching is **controlling the environment**. If you don’t want them touching, smelling, tasting, putting it in their pocket, fiddling with it – GET RID OF IT! What are the invitations within the space? Are there invitations you didn’t realize you were sending? Get rid of the no-no’s!

### Principle 5: FACILITATING

Consider the difference between being a facilitator vs. an instigator. How do we provide rich, deep, meaningful opportunities for investigation? We use observation, scaffolding, and provocations. This allows us to be more than, “the keeper of the keys.”

### Principle 6: ARTICULATION/BEING INTENTIONAL

Teachers must be able to articulate the intention behind the choices they make in the classroom. They ask (and can answer!) three questions: WHAT am I doing? WHY am I doing it? And WHO am I doing it for? Their answers go beyond, “that’s how we’ve just always done it,” and deeper than, “because it’s so cute”.

### Principle 7: THEORISTS

Teachers understand child development theory & know the history of their profession. They are aware of those who “paved the way” in our continual support of child-centered environments.

### Principle 8: KEEPING IT REAL

We celebrate where children are, *developmentally*, right now. Therefore, rooms are filled with relevant, meaningful experiences that engage all the senses. You will see children investigating real objects. Not coloring dittos of them. The activities provided will engage all the senses!

### Principle 9: THE SEVEN THINGS

Children are provided time each day to: create, move, sing, discuss, observe, read and play. And it is believed that these seven things create the *foundation* that supports the *house* of academics.



**Here are some of our favorite ART,  
SCIENCE and SENSORY play recipes! Lisa  
will be demonstrating many of them for you today!**

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**SENSORY TUB SUGGESTIONS:** REMEMBER: *There's no real "recipe" for many of these sensory tub suggestions – just mix them up and see what happens!*

**WET/SQUISHY IDEAS:**

**Glue and Shaving Cream**

**Ooblick:** Equal Parts of cornstarch and water.

**Baby Oil and Flour**

**Baby Oil and Cornstarch**

**Jelly Cake:** Make a Knox-gelatin mold (see next page) and add shaving cream! Drip drop colors onto the cream and then provide spoons and scoops for maximum exploration.

**Clean Mud:** Grate 3 Bars of Ivory Soap. In a bowl mix the grated soap, 1 roll of toilet paper and some warm water. Keep mixing until it forms the consistency of mashed potatoes! You can store it in airtight container and reconstitute it with more water. Dispose of Clean Mud in the trashcan not the drain!

**Whip it up:** Grate 5-10 bars of ivory soap (just like if you were making clean mud). Put the soap in the tub. Add water and beat with hand-held egg beaters and watch the foam rise!

**Shredded Paper and Liquid Starch:** Shredded paper (collected from the shredder in someone's office), Liquid Starch (Vano), a place to dry your creations, and patience (it takes a couple days for them to dry). There is no real recipe for this one. The idea is that you are going to mix the paper and starch together and, squeezing out the extra starch, mold various shapes. You can make them as big or as small as you want. Let them dry completely before using them in the classroom.

## **DRY IDEAS:**

**Cocoa Mulch:** Purchase this EXTRA good smelling sensory tub item at a garden center near you or from [www.kodokids.com](http://www.kodokids.com)

**Home Made Sand:** 4 cups dried, used, coffee grounds, 2 cups cornmeal, 1 cup flour, 1/2 cup salt. Stays fresh in an airtight container or Ziploc bags.

**Colored Rock Salt:** Mix rock salt with either liquid watercolors or food coloring until the rock salt is all colored! Spread out on wax paper to dry and then put into your sensory tub for scooping or pouring. Follow the same procedure to make **Colored Rice**.

**Colored Rice:** Put rice in a bowl, color it with liquid watercolors. Stir until it's dry. Then put into your sensory tub for scooping or pouring.

## **Flour and Colored Rice**

**Flax Seed:** Add water to make it an interesting WET ACTIVITY! Flax is also available from [www.kodokids.com](http://www.kodokids.com)

**Cinnamon Oats:** Double this if you have a large sensory tub! 1 big container (42 oz.) of uncooked Oats, 1 cup salt, 1/2 cup cinnamon (adjust as needed based on how "smelly" you want it!). Stir. Mix. Play. Great smells will fill your classroom.

## **SCIENCE IDEAS:**

**Baking Soda and Vinegar:** Put baking soda in a pie tin... drop vinegar ON TOP of the baking soda. All of the senses are engaged while you are making carbon dioxide! Add dish soap to the vinegar, and color too! The dish soap extends the reaction time.

**Shaving Cream and Water:** Fill a clear large container with water. On top of the water put shaving cream. Drip drop primary colors onto the shaving cream. What happens when you put two primary colors on top??

## **ELEPHANT TOOTHPASTE:**

### **You need:**

- 3 or 4 empty, 20 oz. water bottles
- 3 or 4 bottles of hydrogen peroxide (you will use 1 ½ cups at a time)
- Dish soap (any brand, but we liked how Dawn® reacted the best)
- Food coloring or liquid water color (have an assortment of choices)
- A jar of yeast (you will use 2 tsp. at a time)
- Warm water (you will use 6 TBS at a time)
- A dish pan, water table tub or small sensory bin to contain the reaction

### **Directions:**

Place the bottle in your sensory bin. Pour 1 ½ cups of hydrogen peroxide into the bottle and add a few drops of the dish soap. Add a little bit of coloring and put a funnel in the top of the bottle.

In a separate small cup dissolve the 2 tsp of yeast in 3 TBS of warm water. Pour the yeast and water mixture into the bottle, remove the funnel and check out that reaction!

Be ready to repeat this cool reaction!

## **FLUBBER:**

1. Mix 2 cups water and 1 cup glue in a big bowl.
2. Add a squirt of liquid water color and then stir it up.
3. In a separate small bowl mix together: 2 cups water and 4 TBS Borax.
4. After it's completely dissolved, pour the Borax mixture *slowly and a little at a time* into the glue and water mixture. Pour a little, mix it a little, pour a little, mix a little. Mix with your hands or a sturdy wooden spoon. As you mix, it will become a flubber ball! *NOTE: You might NOT need to use all of this Borax and water solution!!!!*
5. Store it in an airtight container or ziploc for a few weeks. When it begins to flick apart or when it gets too hard, it is time to make a new batch! Play with it, explore it, try to get it to blow a bubble with a straw! Watch it stretch as you hold it!
6. Vinegar takes it out of clothes, carpet and fabric. Mayo will take it out of hair!

**Edible Fake Barf:** Applesauce (Get a big jar, you will use ½ cup at a time), Raisin Bran Cereal, Oatmeal, Cocoa Power (optional), Unflavored Gelatin (you will use 2 packets for each batch of barf). In a frying pan heat ½ cup of applesauce. Add two packets of gelatin. Mix until the gelatin is dissolved in the applesauce. If you are using the optional cocoa powder you would add it at this point. I PREFER IT MADE WITHOUT! Then add *some* oatmeal and *some* raisin bran to make it look like chunky barf. Stir. Remove from heat. Spread the barf out on plate until it has the look you desire. Allow it cool completely then remove it from the plate with a spatula. You can eat it. If you're gross.

**Knox Gelatin Mold:** The ratio is 3/4 cup water to 1 packet of Knox. *Take the number of cups of water your container holds and DIVIDE by .75* This is how many packets of Knox you need. In a saucepan, heat the water over low heat, add the packets of gelatin. After it dissolves pour it into your container. Let set over night. **\*\*BE SURE TO SPRAY YOUR CONTAINER WITH PAM FIRST!** Allow the children to inject the Knox mold with pipettes and eyedroppers filled with colored water!

**Shaving Cream and Block Building:** Put some small blocks on the table along with some craft sticks and a can or two of shaving cream. See what happens! Our children built and built for days!

### **MULTIPLE PLAYDOUGH IDEAS:**

**THE BEST PLAYDOUGH RECIPE EVER!:** Combine in a bowl: 3 cups flour, 1 ½ cups salt, 6 tsp cream of tartar, 6 TBS oil, 3 Cups water (color optional). Mix together. Cook over low heat until a ball forms. Cool. Knead. Store in Ziploc bag.

**CHOCOLATE PLAYDOUGH:** 2 cups water, ½ cup salt, 2 tsp cream of tartar, 2 TBS oil, 1/3 cup cocoa, 2 cups flour. Then mix it all together and then cook it in a pot over low heat. Remove it from the heat and knead until smooth.

**PUMPKIN BREAD PLAYDOUGH:** 1 package pumpkin bread mix, 2 cups flour, 1 ½ cups salt, 6 TBS oil, 6 tsp cream of tartar, 3 cups water. Mix ingredients. Cook over medium heat until a ball forms. Remove from heat and knead!

**LEMON POPPY SEED PLAYDOUGH:** 1 package lemon poppy seed muffin mix, 2 cups flour, 1 ½ cups salt, 6 TBS oil, 6 tsp cream of tartar, 3 cups water. Mix ingredients. Cook over medium heat until a ball forms. Remove from heat and knead!

**STRAWBERRY CAKE PLAYDOUGH:** 1 package strawberry cake mix, 2 cups flour, 1 ½ cups salt, 6 TBS oil, 6 tsp cream of tartar, 3 cups water. Mix ingredients. Cook over medium heat until a ball forms. Remove from heat and knead!

**COFFEE PLAYDOUGH:** 3 cups flour, 1 ½ cups salt, 6 TBS oil, 6 tsp cream of tartar, 3 cups water, the used wet grounds from the morning coffee. Mix ingredients. Cook over medium heat until a ball forms. Remove from heat and knead!

**SOOTHING PLAYDOUGH:** 3 cups flour, 3 TBS powdered alum (in the spice aisle), ¾ cup salt, 6 TBS oil, 3 cups water, 1 cup (any brand) lavender chamomile baby lotion, Liquid Water Color or food coloring (optional). Mix ingredients. Cook over medium heat until it forms a ball. Remove from heat, knead. If it looks a little sticky while kneading, add some flour (2 TBS or so) and continue kneading.

**BONUS playdough idea: CEREAL STACKING:** You need a small ball of old playdough. Stick a piece of raw spaghetti in it. Stack cheerios or froot-loops on the spaghetti.

**SOME FAVORITE ART SUGGESTIONS:**

- |                                     |                            |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Combs                               | Massage Tools              |
| Fly Swatters                        | Nylons filled with popcorn |
| Bath Puffs                          | Plungers                   |
| Cars with Markers Taped to the Butt | Rubberband Brushes         |
| Bubble Wrap                         | Golf Balls                 |
| Plastic Toy Cars                    | Tooth Brushes              |
| Hats with Brushes                   | Sponges                    |
| Koosh Balls                         | Kitchen Brushes            |

**Magnet Painting:** Drip drop some liquid watercolor onto a paper plate (not the waxy kind). Now place magnetic marbles IN the paint and then hold a magnet wand UNDER the plate. Using the magnet wand underneath the plate, move the magnetic marbles through the paint and watch the colors mix!

**Coffee Filter Art:** Drip drop liquid colors onto the big coffee filter! Science and art at the same time! It does NOT need to be a butterfly, a flower or a hat! Imagine That!!!

**Scribble Cookies:** Gather all your broken crayons. Put them in a muffin tin. Melt on low heat (150°) for about 15 minutes! Once melted, turn the oven off and let the crayons cool IN the oven before popping them out and using them! Hint: non-stick coated tins will work best! Did they stick? Pop them in the freezer for a few minutes! They will pop right out! Variation: put the muffin tin on a warming tray and watch right in the classroom.

**Karo Syrup Painting: (also called edible finger paint)** Mix corn syrup and food coloring and let the kids paint with fingers, brushes or even their tongues! Sticky and shiny art galore!

Don't forget **COLLAGE ART** and colored glue!

**BONUS HINT:** Tape three regular paint brushes together (or a bundle of crayons) and see what happens!

And don't forget about the **CARS WITH MARKERS TAPED TO THEIR BUTT!**



## **A CRASH COURSE IN THE LANGUAGE OF WOLVES**

**By Lisa Murphy - The Ooey Gooley Lady!**

In her book, *Teaching in the Key of Life*, author Mimi Chenfeld talks about the “wolves” that are occasionally seen stalking school hallways and lurking around preschool classroom doors. Wolves, by definition, are those concerned types who want to know what children are *doing* all day (read: doing to get ready for kindergarten). They desire to know the rationale for flubber, the developmentally appropriateness of ooblick, the reason for the hokey pokey, the goal of splatter painting, the objective of swinging on your tummy and seem to search incessantly for an overall justification of the importance of what we might call “play.”

You might find wolves disguised as parents, administrators, colleagues, co-workers, principals or maybe even yourself. Wolves desire goals, objectives and activities that are aligned with standards, benchmarks and an assortment of desired results. Obvious links between classroom projects and established learning guidelines assists them in truly believing that we (educators) know what we are doing.

This can be a bit of a challenge for all parties. Teachers want to plan exciting activities for the children, parents want the clothes clean. Teachers are jazzed up about a new experiment and administration is worried about playdough in the carpet. Teachers feel frustrated when asked, “But what are they *learning*?!” and know in their hearts that there is more to be said than, “Kids learn through play.”

Where is the middle ground? I dream of a day when we say, “Today everyone played so hard!” And it is collectively understood that this means we counted rollie pollies, measured sand and water, wrote stories with inventive spelling, negotiated a turn on the bikes without hitting, mixed red and yellow for the fiftieth time and realized it still made orange, sat quietly while we watched the hummingbird sip the nectar from the feeder on the playground, sang songs, did fingerplays and balanced a table-high tower of corks and blocks.

Sometimes I worry that when we say “we played today,” many grown-ups have forgotten what this means. They have forgotten “play.” Remind them. “When we stack blocks we are learning about balance, gravity and patience, come let me show you the photograph of the tower Karen made today! She worked on it for a solid half hour!”

While reconnecting them with play you are also linking the “learning words” to the activities and projects you do in your classroom. Believe me - great will be the day when we no longer have to defend what we do – but for now, we do. So we must be armed with an arsenal of information!

While fighting the good fight and continuing to wage the uphill battle of having play valued for its own sake within our preschools, childcare centers and elementary schools, we must be able to articulate what is happening when children play.

We know that while children are engaged in meaningful experiences they are “getting ready for school.” Some folks can see that clearly, some need us to point it out. We must be able to work with both groups in a professional manner! We must continue to point out (for the millionth time) that when children spend time in hands-on, play based, educational environments that emphasize the importance of wonder, discovery and creativity (not the accumulation of a bunch o’facts) that learning is happening all the time.

Even though many of us work in environments where there is a lot of pressure for children to be performing, gathering random bits of knowledge and hurrying up to be “ready” for the next expectation with no time left to appreciate the here-and-now, I have found, amazingly enough, that sometimes all it takes is a few strategically placed phrases such as, “when we are squeezing playdough we are strengthening our hands and eventually, when our hands and fingers are strong enough, we are able to hold pencils”, or “when we make ooblick we are exploring the difference between solids and liquids” is all it takes to ease the worries and fears of parents that the children aren’t *doing* anything.

Sometimes a few exchanges such as these shows parents that you know what you are talking about. It reassures them that their child is in an engaging environment where play is being



facilitated by caring adults who know their stuff. Your responsibility is to then facilitate and to know your stuff.

After a few conversations with parents where you are able to show and educate them as to the “learning words” that can be linked to the play activities you can often begin to deepen your relationship with them. Once this trust is established (they trust that you know what you are doing and that you can talk about what their child is experiencing and learning and you trust that they will listen when you explain and talk about what is happening in the classroom) you can then take on the deeper issues of honoring childhood for it’s own sake, not just as training ground for all the things that might be coming next. These words can be used to describe the activities you are doing in your classroom. Link them to the day’s events to show what the children were *doing*. I have found that wolves respond better when you use words like:

- |                   |               |                 |                    |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Absorption        | Effect        | Magnification   | Risk Taking        |
| Action            | Evaporation   | Manipulating    | Seeking            |
| Amplify           | Experimenting | Matching        | Sight              |
| Arranging         | Explaining    | Measurements    | Small Motor        |
| Balance           | Exploring     | Membrane        | Smell              |
| Buoyant           | Force         | Naming          | Spatial            |
| Carbon Dioxide    | Friction      | Observing       | Representation     |
| Cause             | Gravity       | Opposites       | Static Electricity |
| Chemical reaction | Hearing       | Ordering        | Surface Tension    |
| Classification    | Heavy         | Patterning      | Suspension         |
| Coagulate         | Identifying   | Pitch           | Taste              |
| Constancy         | Inertia       | Planning        | Temperature        |
| Constructing      | Inflate       | Problem Solving | Tone               |
| Cooperation       | Investigating | Propulsion      | Touch              |
| Density           | Large Motor   | Questioning     | Vibration          |
| Displaying        | Light         | Reaction        | Weight             |
| Dissolve          | Listening     | Reconstructing  |                    |
| Distance          | Magnetic      | Rhythm          |                    |

It is my wish that this brief list assists you in connecting with them!



## **STALKERS WELCOME!**

**How to connect with Lisa:**

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**Facebook:** “like” the page, Ooey Gooley, Inc.

**Instagram:** @OoeyGooleyLady

**Twitter:** @OoeyGooleyLady

**YouTube:** OoeyGooleyLady

**Podcast:** “Child Care Bar and Grill” (free wherever you like to listen)

**DVDs and BOOKS: All of Lisa’s materials are available from Redleaf Press  
(800) 423-8309 <https://www.redleafpress.org/Search.aspx?k=lisa+murphy>**



## Where do they get that stuff??

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**We know there are lots of places to get cool stuff! Here are some suggestions if you aren't sure of where to find certain materials and supplies!**

- Art Supplies:** [www.discountsschoolsupply.com](http://www.discountsschoolsupply.com)  
[www.lakeshorelearning.com](http://www.lakeshorelearning.com)
- CANADA: [www.teachers.scholarschoice.ca](http://www.teachers.scholarschoice.ca) (800) 265-1095 and  
[www.wintergreen.ca](http://www.wintergreen.ca) (800) 268-1268
- Bubble Wrap** Local packing Supply Stores or try Uline Shipping  
[https://www.uline.com/BL\\_470/Uline-Economy-Air-Bubble](https://www.uline.com/BL_470/Uline-Economy-Air-Bubble)
- CANADA: [https://www.uline.ca/BL\\_470/Uline-Economy-Air-Bubble](https://www.uline.ca/BL_470/Uline-Economy-Air-Bubble)
- Chalk Spinners** <https://kodokids.com/product/chalk-spinner-blue/>
- Coffee Filters** Amazon: search for “18-inch coffee filters” (or larger!)
- Discount School Supply [www.discountsschoolsupply.com](http://www.discountsschoolsupply.com)  
(800) 627-2829 They call them TEXAS FILTERS
- CANADA: Wintergreen sells them [www.wintergreen.ca](http://www.wintergreen.ca)  
(800) 268-1268
- Canadian Restaurant Supply <http://www.crs-online.ca/home.php>
- Glue** We get our Glue from Discount School Supply (800) 627-2829  
[www.discountsschoolsupply.com](http://www.discountsschoolsupply.com)
- CANADA: [www.teachers.scholarschoice.ca](http://www.teachers.scholarschoice.ca) (800) 265-1095 and  
[www.wintergreen.ca](http://www.wintergreen.ca) (800) 268-1268
- Liquid Watercolor** Discount School Supply <https://www.discountsschoolsupply.com/arts-crafts/paint-paint-tools/watercolor/colorations-classic-colors-liquid-watercolor-paints-8-oz--set-of-13/p/117> (800) 627-2829
- CANADA: Scholars Choice sells it ON LINE:  
<https://www.scholarschoice.ca/8-oz-237ml-colorations-liquid-watercolour-paint.html>  
Phone: (800) 265-1095

- Magnet Marbles/Wands** Try a local school supply store or educational toy store.  
Discount School Supply [www.discountchoolsupply.com](http://www.discountchoolsupply.com)  
(800) 627-2829
- CANADA: [www.teachers.scholarschoice.ca](http://www.teachers.scholarschoice.ca) (800) 265-1095
- Paint (Tempra)** Discount School Supply [www.discountchoolsupply.com](http://www.discountchoolsupply.com)  
(800) 627-2829 I use **Simply Washable Tempra**
- CANADA: Scholars Choice <https://www.scholarschoice.ca>  
(800) 265-1095 and Wintergreen [www.wintergreen.ca](http://www.wintergreen.ca)  
(800) 268-1268 both sell various types of paint *but I cannot vouch for the true washability of their tempras!*
- Paper** Discount School Supply [www.discountchoolsupply.com](http://www.discountchoolsupply.com)  
(800) 627-2829
- CANADA: Scholars Choice <https://www.scholarschoice.ca>  
(800) 265-1095 and Wintergreen [www.wintergreen.ca](http://www.wintergreen.ca)  
(800) 268-1268
- Pasta (to color)** Local grocery stores and bulk stores such as: Sam's Club, BJ's, CostCo, or Smart and Final. Check out your local restaurant supply store too.
- CANADA: if you can't find large quantities locally check out:  
[www.bulkfoods.com](http://www.bulkfoods.com)
- Pipettes** Amazon sells them, or you can try ULINE in either the USA or Canada. They are typically called LIQUID TRANSFER PIPETTES.