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## Clay Motivations

The key to sparking and maintaining children's interest with open-ended materials is to use motivations. For early childhood, the materials are the stimulus. For elementary, questions, techniques, and projects relating to different cultures help keep the children's interest on-going.

### Early Childhood

Varying the materials and presentation will keep young children motivated and interested in clay.

1. Experiment with different types of clay
  - white
  - red
  - sandy
  - smooth
2. Offer different textures to press into the clay
  - bumpy
  - rough
  - mesh
  - objects that create a pattern (acorn caps, shells, wheels, gears)
3. Change the location/atmosphere by
  - playing music
  - wearing a blindfold
  - placing a block of clay in the middle of the table
4. Introduce different clay tools
  - popsicle sticks
  - toothpicks
  - rolling pins
  - wire
  - kitchen utensils (forks, garlic press...)

- natural sticks, nuts or dried flowers
- beads and pipe cleaners

5. Change clay consistency by placing a block of clay in shallow water on the water table.

6. Use clay as a drawing medium

## Early Elementary

1. What kinds of shapes can you make? Do you want to use them to make a design or to make a sculpture of something that you know well?

2. Show different techniques

- attaching by scoring
- using slip
- pinching
- pulling out a form
- modeling with coils
- modeling around a base
- slab making
- sgraffito
- glazing

3. Connect clay to classroom curriculum

- Self Portraits
- Poetry
- The Alphabet
- Spelling
- Pets
- Japanese Pottery
- Sumerian Cuneiform Tablets
- Native American Pottery
- Mexican Pottery and Masks
- Ancient Greek and Roman Pottery
- Egyptian Pottery
- Chinese Infantry Statues

- Dinosaurs and Fossils
- Holiday Ornaments
- Hanukah Menorahs

## Thinking about Curriculum

- Where will you store the clay?
- Will you have it available on a regular basis?
- Will the children be in charge of maintaining it?
- How can clay be incorporated into your curriculum?
- What are some projects that can be made which allow children to work in an open-ended way?