

## Sand

Sand is one of the most versatile props you can use. Not only can it be used to create a scene, e.g. a beach, a desert or a playground, but it also enables a multitude of activities for participants. When using sand an obvious concern is the potential mess, so sand pits made from builders trays are a good way to avoid this. Smaller trays can be used for participants in wheelchairs. Another solution is to roll out a large cloth and weight the edges, giving a wider, open area in which to work. The cloth can then be gathered up to pour the sand back into a container (wheelie bins are useful for storage and can be borrowed from local councils). It is advisable to use kids' play sand rather than builders', as this has a tendency to stain.

Ways to work with the sand:

- Feel through fingers, pour onto feet, bury hands and feet.
- Make patterns with shells or pebbles
- Pour from height to encourage movement, to raise eyelines and experience a free flowing medium. Some people are very reluctant to actually make contact with sand and this activity can help them overcome this
- Make marks with hands and feet or different props and instruments (you could use toy insects or crabs, depending on theme). This can also be a very focused activity that explores lots of different mark making possibilities. Using instruments such as cabasas gives a sound element to the activity.
- Use mirrors to work on to give another dimension - you can then reflect the images onto the surrounding walls. Paint patterns in water, cover in sand, then tip off to reveal the pattern of the water.
- Pour sand onto shakers and drums and into tambours to create sea-like sounds to compliment the theme
- Encourage movement by gently lifting sand with feet, shuffling along, making footprints and patterns as you move
- Use lengths of blue organza to enact waves rolling onto the beach. Crashing the 'wave' onto the beach generates a sense of excitement and expectation in waiting for the next one
- Drawing patterns in black sand on an overhead projector is an interesting alternative

As a resource for creating sets, small cloth or plastic bags of sand make useful weights for holding things steady. Ready made sand bags with sturdy metal loops are also available from theatre suppliers and are invaluable in set construction, particularly in supporting and securing unsupported structures.

Links:

Beach (Activity)

Workshops - Gold Mine, Nautilus, Seaside, Iris Garden

Videos

Sand fountain

Sand on feet

Raking sand

Group sand

Sand and water on mirror