

Stones

It is useful to have a wide variety of different shapes, colours and sizes that can be used in different ways. They can be bought from garden centres or specialist suppliers and can sometimes be collected from the countryside or beach.

There is a bewildering array of stones and pebbles in a wide range of shapes and sizes, textures and colours. A good supply might include:

- Gravel – good for cheaply covering large areas and for carrying activities.
- Slate – for drawing on with chalk, stacking into piles and making paths.
- Sea/river pebbles – for the smooth texture (good for painting onto) and colours. Also tapping together to establish rhythms.
- Granite pebbles – for the coarse texture and crystals.
- White quartzite pebbles – easy to see, good for making paths, will take on the colour of the ambient light.
- Chalk – for drawing with and feeling the crumbly texture.
- Flint – cold and hard.
- Large rocks – useful as set and can be used to weight down cloths.

Stones are great for reinforcing the general theme of an activity, whether it is finding pebbles on a beach or riverbank, chalk in a cave or placing rocks around the edge of a fire. There are countless ways of using them, which include:

- Tapping, clicking and rubbing them together to make sounds. This won't always produce a specific rhythm but it will fill the space with ambient sound just through the act of tactile exploration.
- Sensory exploration, to touch, stroke, drop, roll and smell the stones in order to discover their sensory properties.
- Sorting activities, for the sorters of this world who are always keen to sort according to size, shape, colour
- Pattern making with lines, shapes and piles. This can be done on trays or the floor for large scale work.
- Painting activities, either using face paint or with water onto pebbles to reveal the stone's colour and pattern.
- Carrying activities, for example collecting gravel in a bucket and pouring it into another container.
- Balancing them and building them up together to make bigger piles. On the body this will help body awareness and will feel cool and settling.
- Making miniature landscapes by using stones together with other natural objects as features.
- As part of the set to reinforce the overall theme, for example laying out circles of pebbles to suggest the material and shape of Stonehenge.

Links

Exploring (Activity)

Workshops - Gold Mine, Stonehenge, Skyline, Chesil Beach

Videos

Scooping gravel
Gravel in a bucket
Tapping stones
Stone sounds