

Wavy wax painting

About this activity

Children will explore how a solid changes state when it gets warm. They will see the different marks and textures they can make when the wax is a solid stick, and when it gets softer and more paint-like.

Time

30 minutes

Kit list

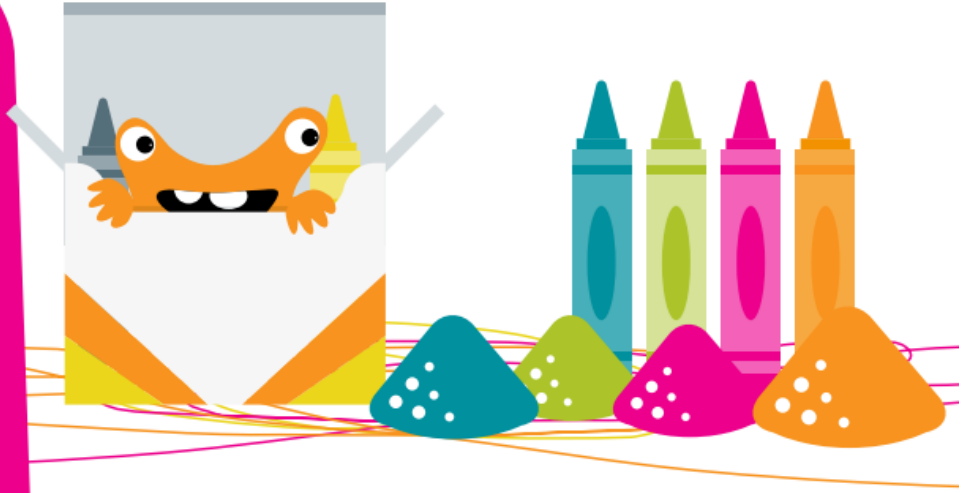
- ✓ Wax crayons in different colours
- ✓ Plastic food bags and a rolling pin or pestle
- ✓ Heavy paper – sugar or cartridge paper
- ✓ Greaseproof paper
- ✓ Hairdryer
- ✓ Glue sticks and paint brushes

Next steps

You could try making a resist painting. When your wax pictures have cooled, you can paint over them with watery paint and watch how it only fills the bits of paper where there is no wax.

Watch out!

- ⚠ Inspect and test the hairdryer beforehand to check if it is safe to use.
- ⚠ An adult should use the hairdryer. Take care that the wax 'crumbs' don't fly away – use direct heat from above.
- ⚠ If the wax gets very warm, take care that little fingers don't get coated in runny wax.



Instructions

Children can work individually or in groups or pairs to make wavy wax pictures, using gentle heat to make the wax behave like paint.

- 1 Make a collection of broken wax crayons. Ask the children to separate them into colours.
- 2 Using the wax crayons pieces, ask the children to draw shapes on a sheet of A3 paper – sugar paper or cartridge paper is best. Use a different colour for each shape.
- 3 Crush the wax crayon pieces – put each colour into a separate plastic bag and bash with a rolling pin or a pestle until you have a bag or coloured wax 'crumbs' (this is a job best done by the adult). Empty the wax crumbs into bowls.
- 4 The children should then sprinkle the crumbs on their drawings, filling in the shapes with the right colour.
- 5 Melt the wax. Either leave the

drawings in a warm, sunny spot or on a warm radiator and wait for the wax to melt and soften, or place a piece of greaseproof paper over each drawing, and gently heat the drawings with a hairdryer until the wax melts. (Adults will need to do this.)

- 6 When the wax melts slightly, the children can use glue spreaders and brushes to make marks in the wax. As the wax starts to solidify they can warm their paper again and watch what happens.

Think and talk about

- ✓ Where could we leave our pictures to melt the wax?
- ✓ How does the wax change when it gets warm?
- ✓ What does it do on the paper?
- ✓ What happens if the colours run into each other?

You can find more activities and inspiration exploring materials on the [NSEAD website](#)

Skill unlocked

- ✓ Observant