

materials

What is it made of?



Lesson at a glance

Open by holding up one metal spoon and asking what it is made of. Model the word material with a full notice-and-name cycle on a wooden block, then a quick feel-and-name pass of plastic, metal, paper and fabric samples. Pupils hunt the classroom in two short bursts—wood or plastic first, then metal, paper or fabric—and each brings one favourite find to a sharing tray. Close with a display-only point-and-name talk on the tray and the classroom door.

Learning objectives

- Touch and name wood, plastic, metal, paper or fabric on everyday classroom objects
- Bring one favourite find to a sharing tray and say what it is made of

Before the bell – prep

Day before, gather five samples out of sight: wooden block, plastic cup or lid, metal spoon, paper scrap, fabric scrap or jumper scrap. Clear a low central table for the sharing tray and set chunky magnifiers ready. Mark classroom hunt boundaries; teacher cupboards stay closed.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
sample objects for teacher model (wooden block, plastic cup, metal spoon, paper scrap, fabric square)	1	class	classroom	any five everyday classroom objects of different materials
collecting tray or shallow basket	1	class	classroom	cardboard box lid or large plate
sticky labels	10	class	classroom	small paper scraps and tape
chunky magnifying glass	1	group	school kit	look closely with eyes only

Safety watch-point

Gentle touches only; nothing near mouths; magnifiers held with two hands; walk, no running; stay inside the room and off climbing furniture.



Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Hold up only the spoon. Ask What do you think this is made of? Accept every guess warmly. Keep the five samples nearby but hidden so attention stays on the single object.
- **Look and Wonder:** Children stay seated. Model one full cycle on the wooden block: I wonder... I notice hard and smooth... I think wood. Then hold each of the other four for 10–15 seconds, naming the material plus one feel cue. Do not pass objects yet.
- **Materials Hunt:** Point to the sharing tray and boundaries. Run two ~6-minute bursts: wood or plastic first, freeze and name together; then metal, paper or fabric, each child keeping one favourite. Circulate with What does it feel like? What is it made of?
- **Share Our Finds:** Batch by material—all wood first, then plastic, metal, paper, fabric—so the tray shows groups. Invite 6–8 full object-plus-material shares; for the rest, the child points and you name aloud. Group like materials together as finds arrive.
- **Look at Our Tray:** Short oral make-sense only—no writing. Point together: Can you find wood? Plastic? Metal? Paper? Fabric? Then ask what the classroom door is made of. Stay on naming; smile and revoice if a child offers a job idea.
- **Tidy Up:** Return every find, count magnifiers back in. As children line up, ask two or three to point to something in the room and whisper its material to you.

What it should show

Most Junior Infants name wood and plastic confidently from feel and look. Metal and fabric often need a prompt (cool and shiny; soft like clothes). Expect some to say the object name or a property instead of the material—revoice to the material word. Success is pointing to a find or the door and saying one of today's five materials.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **A child says it is hard or red instead of naming the material.** — Affirm the observation, then revoice: Yes, it feels hard. The material it is made of is metal. Link the feel cue to the material name again with the sample in hand.
- **A child says it's a spoon when asked what it is made of.** — Reply Yes, a spoon made of metal. Keep the stem object + material so naming stays on the material, not the object label.



Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Hunt beside the teacher and choose from two offered objects: Is this wood or plastic? • If a child points but does not speak, name the material for them and invite a nod or whispered repeat.	• During a burst, prompt a second feel word before they settle on the material name. • In the share, support a full short sentence: My block is wood.	• In a burst, try to name more than one material before choosing a favourite for the tray. • On the tray talk, point to a second classroom part (handle, coat, bag) and name its material.

Cross-curricular hook

Links to oral language: full stem My ____ is made of ____ during the share, and Aistear-style classroom exploration.