

materials

The right material for the job

Lesson at a glance

Open by holding up a sheet of paper as a pretend umbrella in Irish rain and asking if it would keep anyone dry. Model choosing soft fabric over hard wood for a teddy and saying a short why. After a teacher water-drop demo on paper versus bag plastic, groups handle tray samples, then match four job picture cards (umbrella, teddy, window, bag) to the best material and say their reason. Close with two or three groups sharing a match.

Learning objectives

- Match a job picture to a material that suits it
- Handle materials and choose one for a job with a simple reason
- Say why a material is a good fit for a named job

Before the bell – prep

Night before: one tray per group with fabric scrap, wood block, paper, clear wallet plastic, opaque bag plastic, cardboard, and a metal spoon or lid. Make the two plastics obviously different. Print four job picture cards per group. Have one small water cup and a paper towel ready for your shared drop demo.

**Materials**

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
materials tray samples (soft fabric scrap, clear see-through plastic from a document wallet, opaque waterproof plastic scrap from a carrier bag or tablecloth, paper, wood block or offcut, metal spoon or smooth lid, cardboard scrap)	1	group	classroom	any clean household scraps with the same properties (old t-shirt, food-bag plastic, cereal-box card)
job picture cards (umbrella, teddy, window, bag)	1	group	provided printable	four sticky notes with a large simple drawing of each job and the short job line from step 4 teacher notes for you to read aloud
shallow tray or box lid for samples	1	group	classroom	a clean cardboard lid or lunchbox
sheet of ordinary paper for the hook	1	class	classroom	any scrap paper
small cup of water and paper towel for teacher water check	1	class	classroom	a few drops from a water bottle and a tissue

Safety watch-point

Nothing in mouths; small scraps stay on the tray. Teacher alone holds the water cup — one drop only — and wipe spills straight away.

Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Hold only one ordinary paper sheet. Pretend it is an umbrella, smile, and take two or three quick answers on whether it would work in the rain. Leave the trays closed so children listen instead of handling samples.
- **Materials that suit the job:** Hold up soft fabric and a wooden block so the class can feel the contrast. Ask which suits a teddy and let children call a short why. Model once: feel both, choose fabric because a teddy needs to be soft to cuddle. Board labels stay to suits and why only.
- **Feel the materials:** Gather the class first. Drop one drop of water on paper and on opaque bag plastic so the back row sees soak versus water sitting on top; wipe straight away. Name keeps water out / lets water in. Send groups to trays and prompt one property at a time: soft or hard, see-through, would keep rain out.
- **Match the job:** Read each job line aloud before groups start. Remind them the umbrella wants the bag plastic that keeps water out, the bag can use cardboard, and spare metal or wood may stay on the tray. Visit groups asking Why that one? and revoice strong reasons. Stage cards one at a time for less confident groups.
- **Share our reasons:** Invite two or three groups to hold up one match and say their why. Celebrate different good reasons that fit the job. Weave one short maker sentence: makers pick the material that suits each job best — just like you did for the teddy and the umbrella.

What it should show

Expect umbrella with opaque waterproof plastic (keeps rain out), teddy with soft fabric, window with clear see-through plastic, bag with cardboard or sturdy plastic. Metal and wood often stay unused — that is fine. A group putting thin paper on the umbrella is a talk moment, not a scolding; ordinary copy paper is a weak rain fit.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **I picked this because it is pretty / my favourite colour.** — Point back to the job card: Does that help the umbrella keep us dry? or Does the teddy need pretty, or soft to cuddle? Steer them to one property that does the job.
- **Heavy things are always best.** — Hold up the teddy card and the fabric scrap. Soft matters more than heavy for cuddling — the wood is strong but not the right fit for this job.
- **Paper would make a good umbrella.** — Recall the water drop they just watched: paper lets water in; the bag plastic keeps water sitting on top. Ask which one keeps Irish rain off us.

**Differentiation**

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Stage the four cards one at a time and offer the stem I chose this because it is... while the child points to the sample. • Pair at the teacher table for the umbrella card first so they rehearse keeps water out with the bag plastic in hand.	• After matching all four, ask the group to name one property for each choice (soft, see-through, keeps water out, strong).	• Ask for one material that would be a poor fit for a job and a short why (e.g. wood for the teddy because it is hard).

Cross-curricular hook

Link to oral language: children rehearse a full short sentence — I chose this because it is soft / keeps the rain out.