

Touching and understanding Tactual language



Activity: Naming the characteristics of objects

Compared to sighted people, blind people have a greater need for words that refer to how something feels. That way the world becomes recognisable. When we convey these words to them, they build a dictionary with tactile terms, such as "smooth", "rough", "dent", "bump", "hairy", "rib" or "corner".

Set-up of the activity

Exploring an object and stating what it is made from and how it feels, such as plastic, stone, steel/iron, wood or plastic foam.

0-2

- Begin with naming the objects that are used often, such as "here is your plastic cup", "the wooden shelf", "the iron hammer".

2-4

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4-6

- Look for objects that have the same shape but are made from different materials, such as a plate from plastic, metal, ceramic or bamboo.
- Discuss what the plates are made from; also discuss the temperature of the materials, such as "the cold iron".
- Ask the client what else is made from wood, metal or plastic, for example.
- Let the client sort the objects if there are identical ones.

Points for observation and focus

- Notice whether the client recognises the materials; kept track of which materials he recognises.
- Check whether the client can associate. He will express this by saying things like: "This feels just like..." or "This is made from...".
- Observe whether the client prefers a specific material.

Alternative materials

- Cups made from plastic, ceramics or glass
- Bread spreads, such as maple syrup, chocolate sprinkles or chunky peanut butter.

Can also be used in the categories

- Tactual exploration (TE)
- Recognising (RC)