

# Hard & Soft



✓ LESSON PLANS

✓ GUIDING QUESTIONS

✓ INVESTIGATIONS



### Planning Page - Hard & Soft

Properties of Matter Unit - Lesson 1

**Recommended Supplies:**

- pom-poms
- small stuffed animals
- glass
- cotton balls
- feathers
- bubbles
- marbles
- pom-poms
- sticky dough
- dried beans
- wooden blocks
- plastic
- rocks
- cotton
- cards
- books
- straws

**Learning Objectives:**

- The students will sort objects by primary colors, shape, color, size.
- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.

**Hands-on Learning**

Learning science concepts should be a hands-on, investigative process (in the work).

### Guiding Questions - Hard & Soft

Properties of Matter Unit - Lesson 1

**Can you find something that is soft?**

Invite students to look around the room to find something that is soft. Cards include:

- stuffed animals
- tissue
- pillow
- sticky dough
- cereal

**What senses can we use to figure out if something is hard or soft?**

Typically, we use our sense of TOUCH to determine if something is hard or soft. Our skin has receptors that tell our brain about something like this.

We can SEE if something looks funny and soft, like a teddy bear, or smooth and hard, like a wooden table.

**Did you know?**

Humans are the hardest known material on Earth. Our skin is so tough that it can take a lot of force before it can be broken.

### Scientific Investigation - Hard & Soft

Properties of Matter Unit - Lesson 1

**Can you sort the items?**

Sort the objects into groups to do a hands-on learning activity. Use this hands-on center as a simple introduction to the concept of sorting by attributes.

**Recommended Supplies:**

**hard things**

- rock
- shell
- block
- pencil
- eraser
- book
- marker
- spoon
- straw

**soft things**

- teddy bear
- pillow
- cotton ball
- pom-pom
- bubble
- fabric
- balloon
- biscuit
- sticky dough
- flowers

**Procedure:**

1. Place a basket of objects at the science center. Section off a tray (or a table) into 2 parts and attach the "I can sort" labels.
2. Invite students to explore an object with their hands. Talk about what the object feels like. Is it soft, or is it hard?
3. Students place each object into a category - either soft or hard.

\* Alternatively, use the included picture cards if real-life items are not available.

**Learning Objectives:**

- The students will use the sense of touch to identify the physical properties of an object.
- The students will sort objects into 2 groups based on their attributes.

**I can sort!**

Soft

Hard



# Hard & Soft Center

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Opposites  
Lesson #2

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**Planning Page - Hard & Soft**

Recommended Supplies:

- cardstock
- scissors
- glue
- markers
- crayons
- stapler
- hole punch
- laminator
- glue sticks
- markers
- crayons
- stapler
- hole punch
- laminator

Learning Objectives:

Can you find something that is soft?

Can you find something that is hard?

**Scientific Investigation - Hard & Soft**

Can you sort the items?

Recommended Supplies:

- cardstock
- scissors
- glue
- markers
- crayons
- stapler
- hole punch
- laminator

Procedure:

**Book Recommendations - Hard & Soft**

Hard and Soft by Sam Leach

Soft and Hard: An Animal Opposites Book by Valerie Dean

**Hard & Soft Language Board**

hard	soft	touch
hard	soft	touch
hard	soft	touch

**hard**

solid and firm to the touch

**soft**

not firm to the touch

**pillows**

opposite

things that are completely different from each other

**blocks**

solid pieces of hard material used for building

# Planning Page - Hard & Soft

## Opposites Unit - Lesson 1

### Recommended Supplies:

- pom-poms
- small stuffed animals
- pillows
- cotton balls
- feathers
- blankets
- marshmallows
- play dough
- dried beans
- wooden blocks
- shells
- rocks
- acorns
- coins
- books
- utensils

### Hands-on Learning

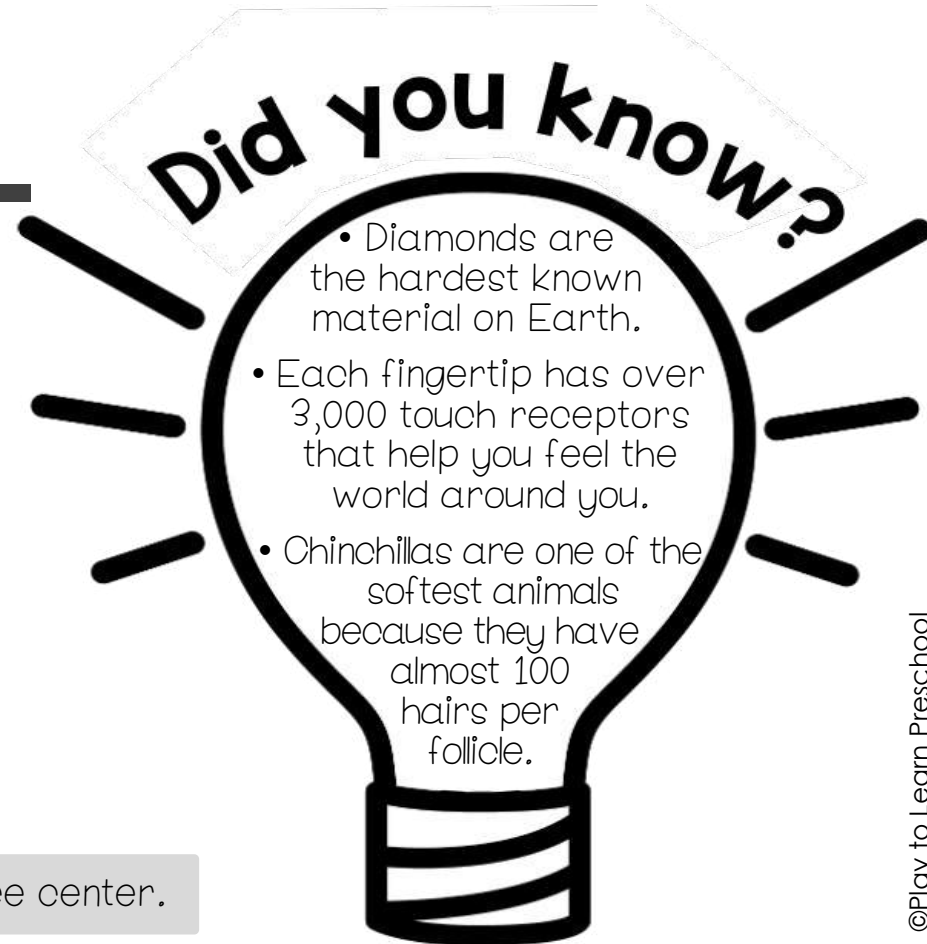
Understanding science concepts should be a hands-on, interactive process in the early childhood classroom. These centers allow students to form understanding by interacting with materials that are hard and soft.

While exploring the concept of hard and soft, students can:

- sort objects by physical properties
- investigate the similarities and differences between objects
- explore items within a sensory experience

### Learning Objectives:

- The students will sort objects by property. (size, shape, color, use)
- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.



**\*\*Use as many real-life items as possible in the science center.**

# Guiding Questions - Hard & Soft

## Opposites Unit - Lesson 1

### Can you find something that is soft?

Invite students to look around the room to find something that is soft. Ideas include:

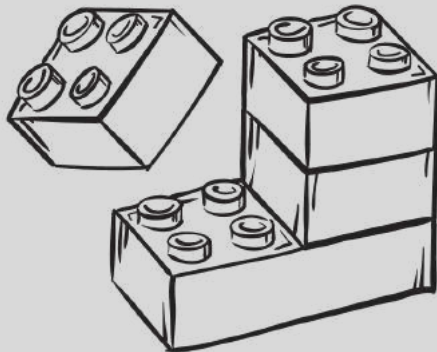
- stuffed animals
- tissues
- pillows
- play dough
- carpet
- blanket



### Can you find something that is hard?

Invite students to look around the room to find something that is hard. Ideas include:

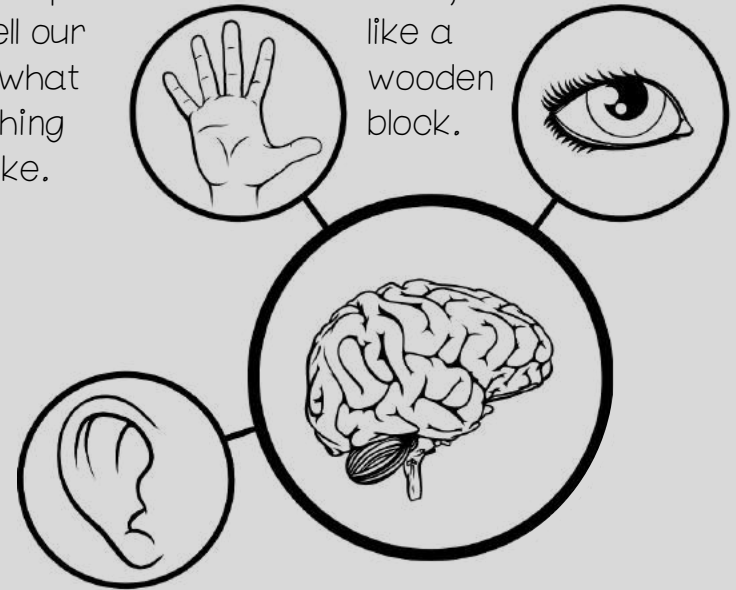
- wooden blocks
- toy cars
- books
- furniture
- pencils
- floor



### What senses can we use to figure out if something is hard or soft?

Typically we use our sense of TOUCH to determine if something is hard or soft. Our skin has receptors that tell our brain what something feels like.

We can SEE if something looks furry and soft, like a teddy bear, or smooth and hard, like a wooden block.



Did you know another way you might be able to tell if something is hard or soft is by the SOUND it makes when it falls on the ground? Hard items will make a louder noise when dropped on the ground, whereas softer items will have a much quieter sound.



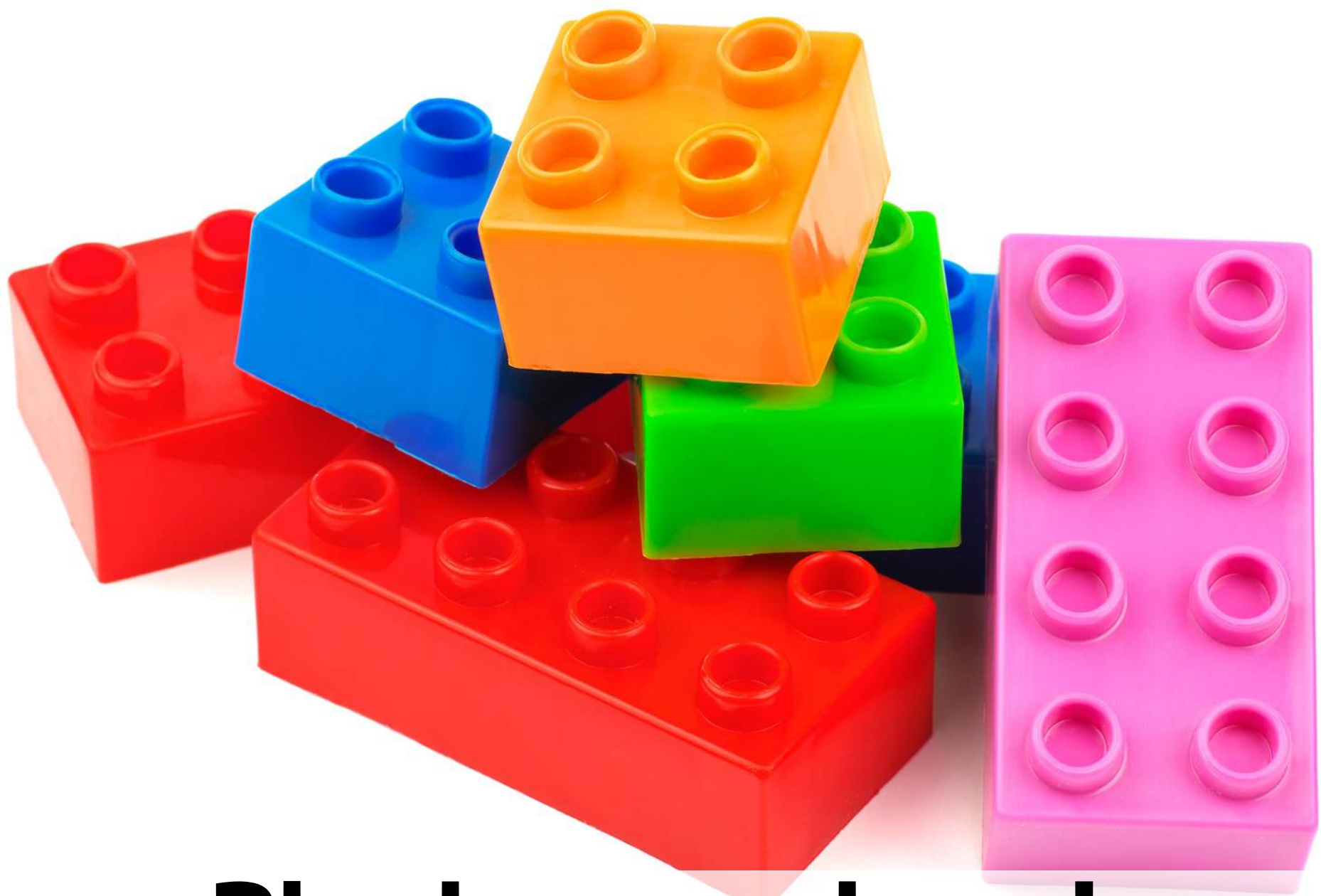
**Some things are soft.**



**Some things are hard.**



**A teddy bear is soft.**



**Blocks are hard.**

# hard



solid and firm to the touch

# soft



not firm to the touch

# touch



to feel with your hand

# opposite



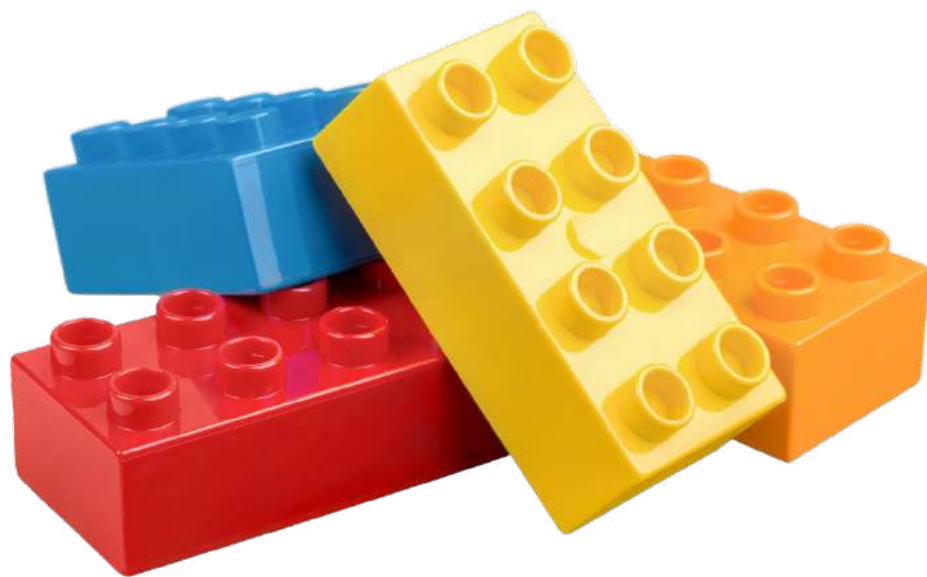
**HARD**



**SOFT**

things that are completely different from each other

# blocks



solid pieces of hard material  
used for building

# pillows



soft pads filled with stuffing that  
are used for resting your head



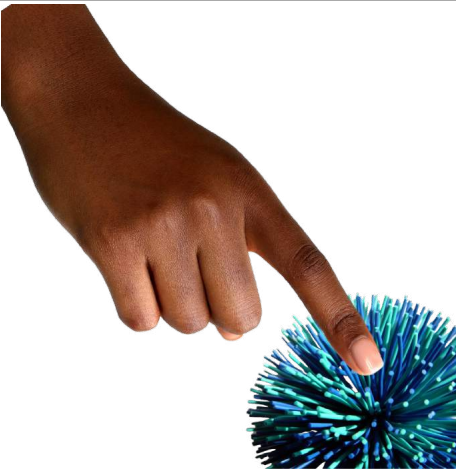
h a r d

3.1



s o f t

3.1



t o u c h

3.1



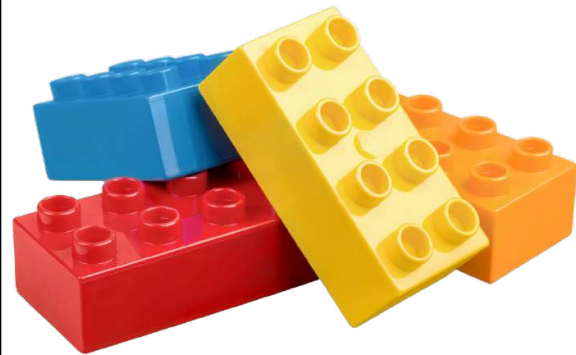
HARD



SOFT

Opposite

3.1



blocks

3.1



pillows

3.1

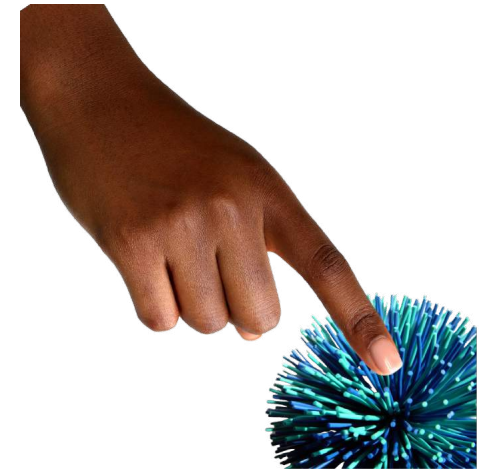
# Hard & Soft Language Board



hard



soft



touch

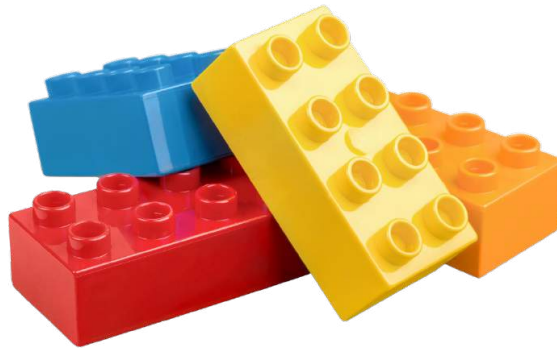


**HARD**



**SOFT**

opposite



blocks



pillows

# Scientific Investigation - Hard & Soft

## Opposites Unit - Lesson 1

### Can you sort the items?

Sorting objects into groups is an important learning skill. Use this hard-soft center as a simple introduction to the concept of sorting by attribute.

#### Recommended Supplies:

##### hard things

rock      scissors  
shell      book  
block      marker  
branch    spoon  
acorn      coins

##### soft things

teddy bear    tissue  
cotton ball    feather  
pillow          fabric  
beanbag        blanket  
play dough    flowers

#### Procedure:

1. Place a basket of objects at the science center. Section off a tray (or a table) into 2 parts and attach the "I can sort" labels.
2. Invite students to explore an object with their hands. Talk about what the object feels like. Is it soft, or is it hard?
3. Students place each object into a category – either soft or hard.

\*Alternatively, use the included picture cards if real-life items are not available.

#### Learning Objectives:

- The students will use the sense of touch to identify the physical properties of an object.
- The students will sort objects into 2 groups based on their attributes.



Focus  
Question

Are these  
items  
**SOFT**  
or **HARD**?

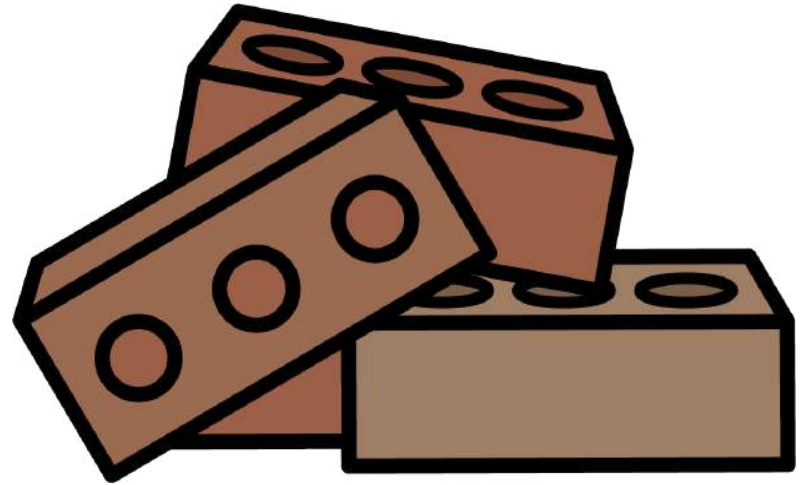


I can sort.



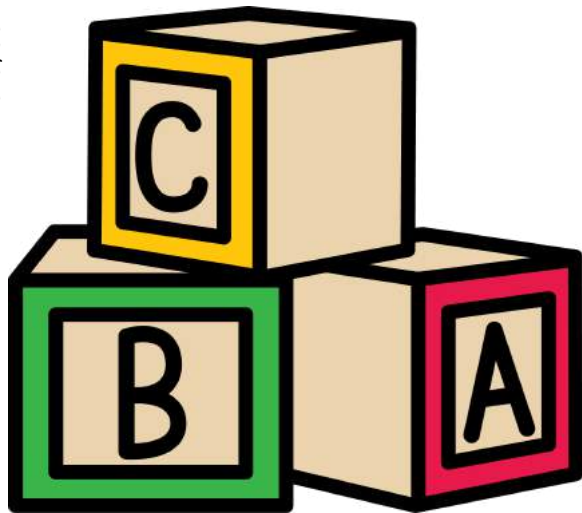
**Soft**

I can sort.



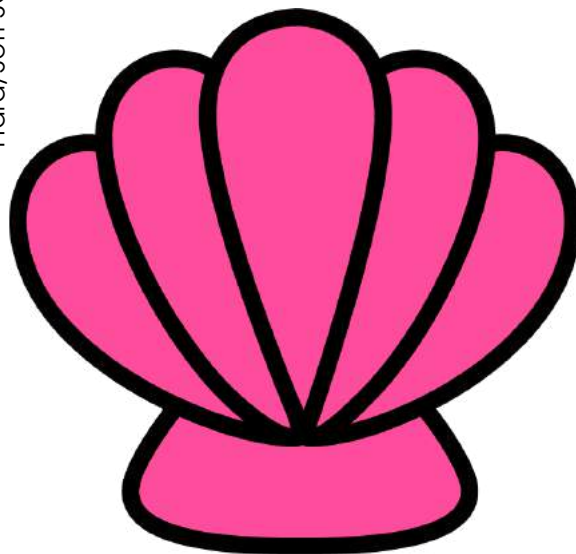
**Hard**

Hard/Soft Sort



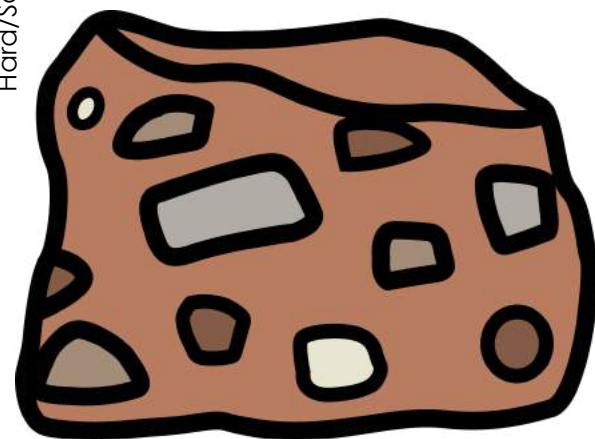
blocks

Hard/Soft Sort



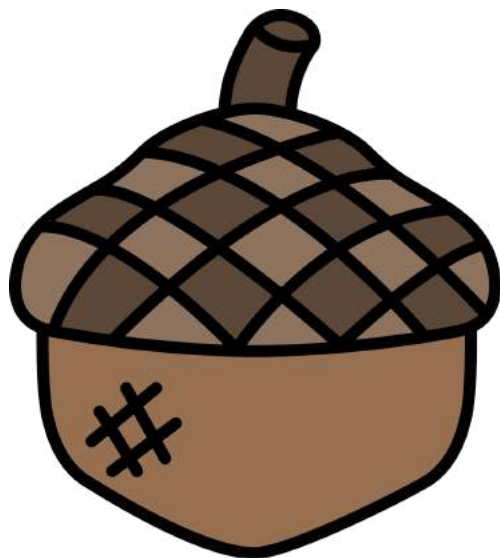
shell

Hard/Soft Sort



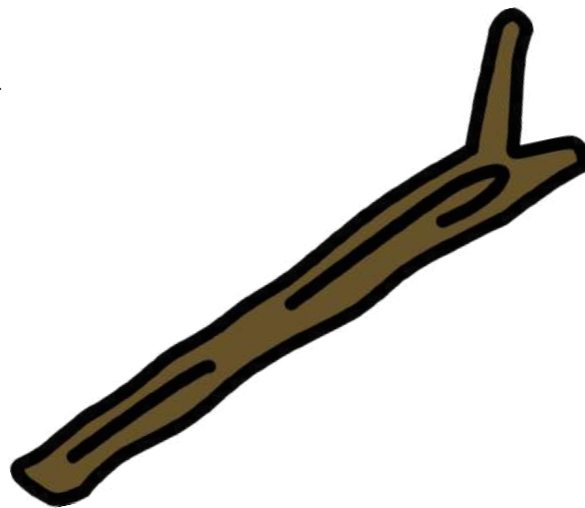
rock

Hard/Soft Sort



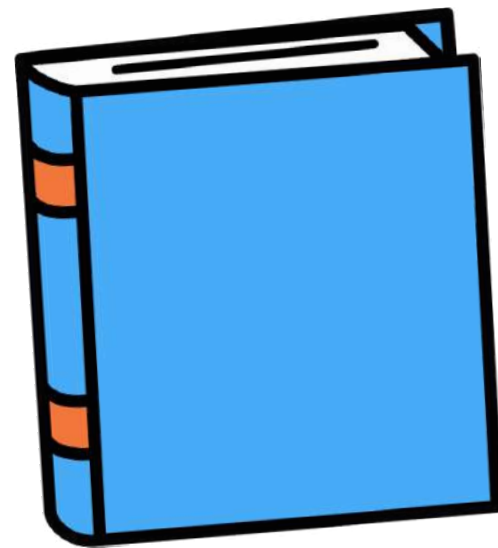
acorn

Hard/Soft Sort



tree branch

Hard/Soft Sort



book

Hard/Soft Sort



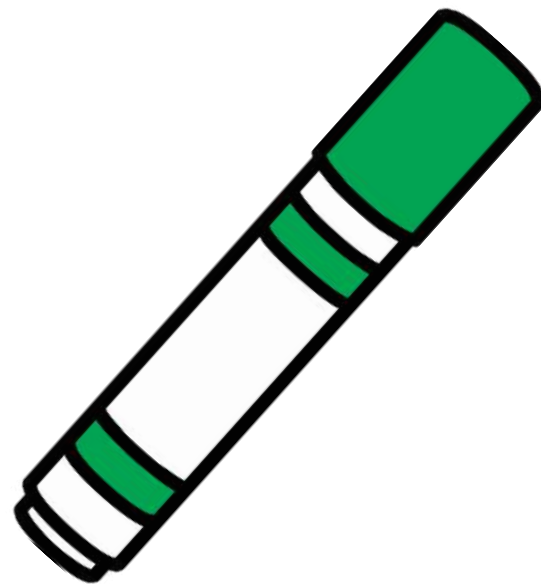
spoon

Hard/Soft Sort



coin

Hard/Soft Sort



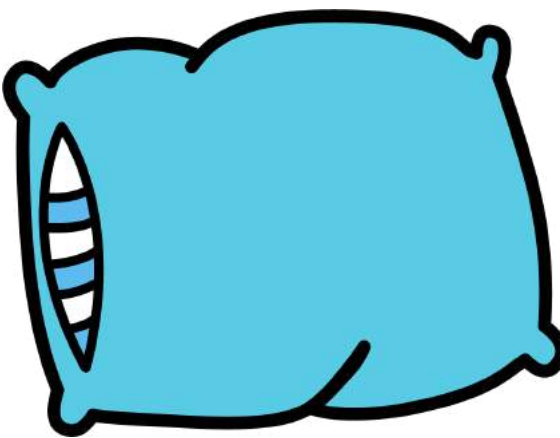
marker

Hard/Soft Sort



teddy bear

Hard/Soft Sort



pillow

Hard/Soft Sort



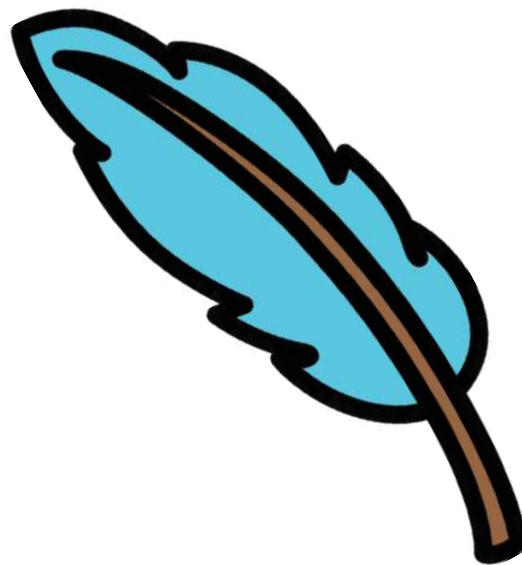
cotton balls

Hard/Soft Sort



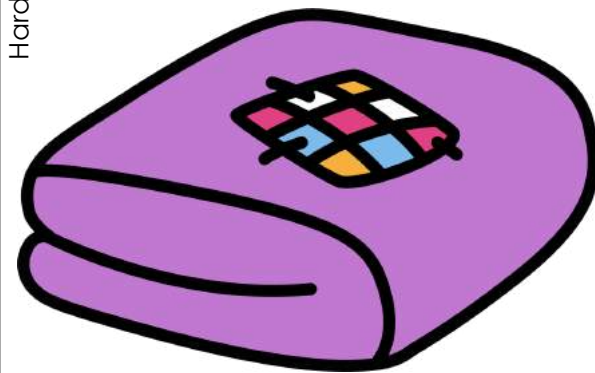
tissue

Hard/Soft Sort



feather

Hard/Soft Sort



blanket

Hard/Soft Sort



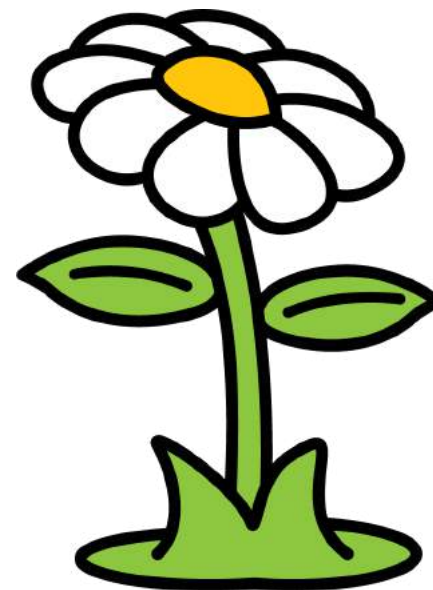
marshmallow

Hard/Soft Sort



play dough

Hard/Soft Sort



flower petals

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cut apart the pieces at the bottom of the page.

Sort and paste them into the correct column – Is it hard? Or is it soft?



coin



pillow



feather



block

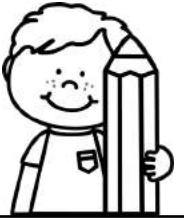


acorn



teddy bear

Name \_\_\_\_\_



I can write the words "hard" and "soft."

hard

soft

hard

soft

hard

soft

# Scientific Exploration - Hard & Soft

## Opposites Unit - Lesson 1

# Does the ball bounce better on hard or soft surfaces?

Incorporating hands-on exploration into the preschool classroom is a great way to encourage critical thinking. This center will appeal to a young learner's sense of wonder as they begin to recognize that hard surfaces allow the ball to bounce higher than soft surfaces.

### Learning Objectives:

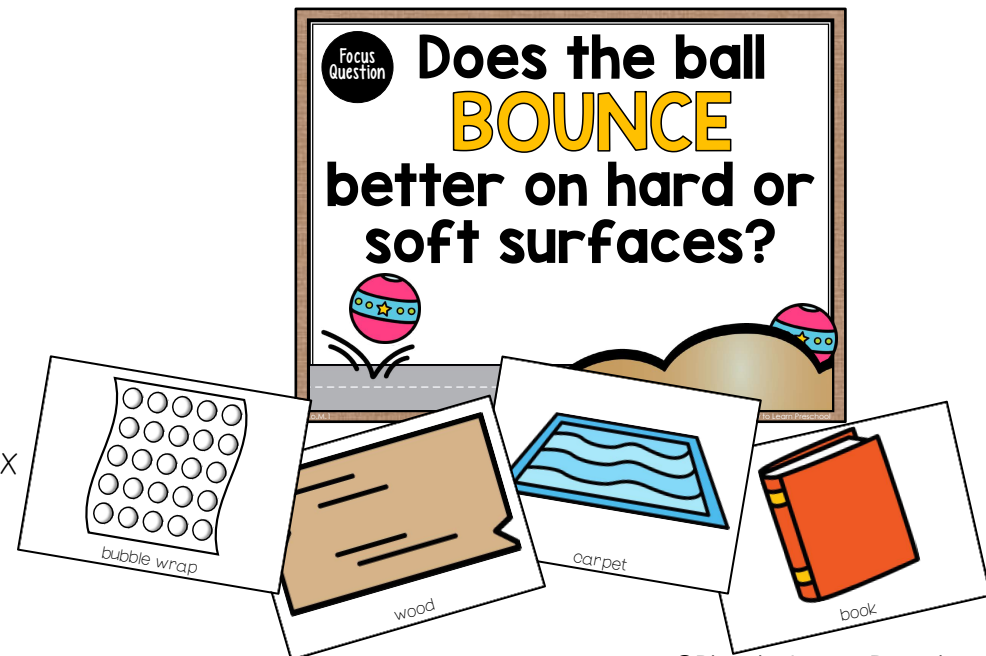
- The students will explore cause and effect.
- The students will ask "What If?" questions and test possibilities.

### Recommended Supplies:

- tennis ball or ping pong ball
- plastic bins
- hard-back book
- flat piece of wood
- bubble wrap
- carpet square

### Procedure:

1. Place different hard and soft materials, such as a flat piece of wood or a sheet of bubble wrap, within shallow plastic bins. Affix the included labels to the bins as desired.
2. Students explore which materials allow the ball to bounce by dropping a tennis ball or ping pong ball within the bins.

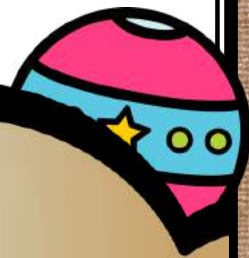


Focus  
Question

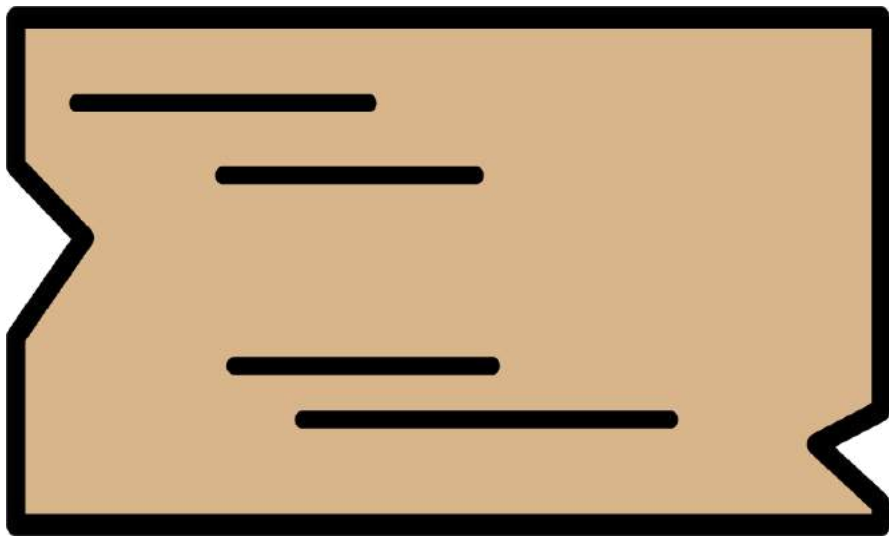
Does the ball

**BOUNCE**

better on hard or  
soft surfaces?

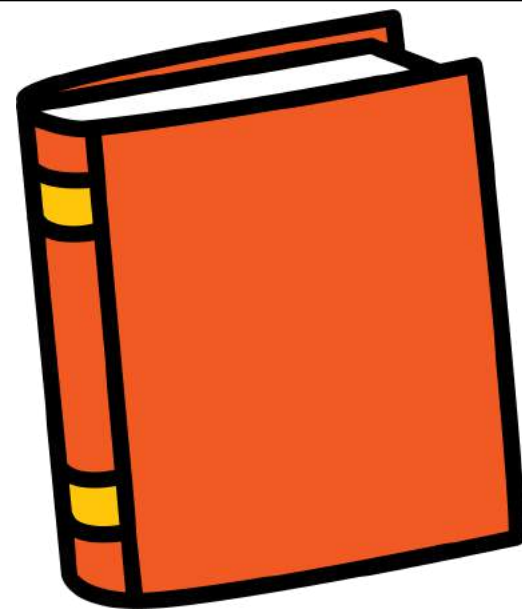


Hard/Soft Bounce



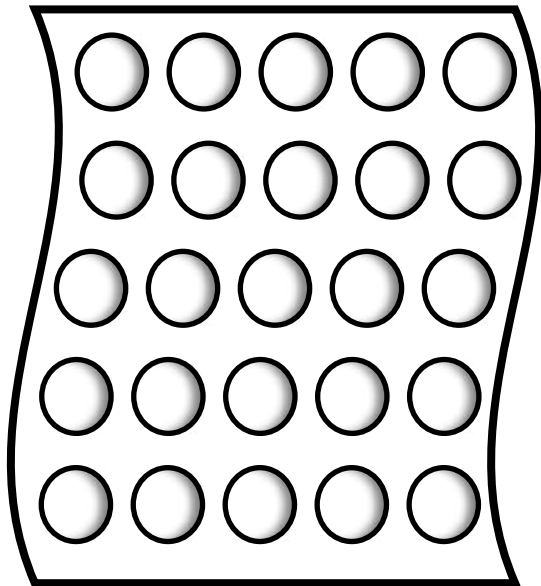
wood

Hard/Soft Bounce



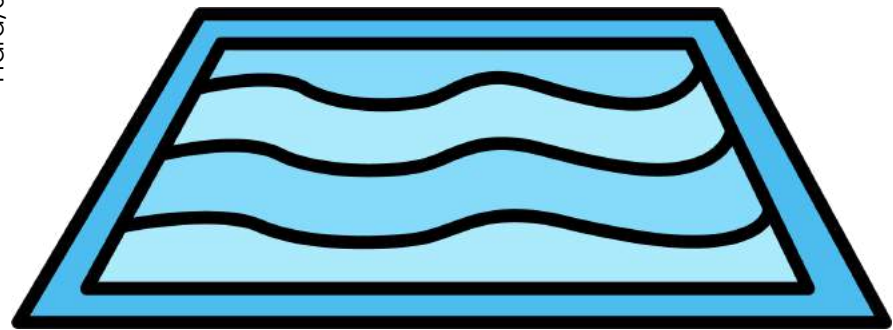
book

Hard/Soft Bounce



bubble wrap

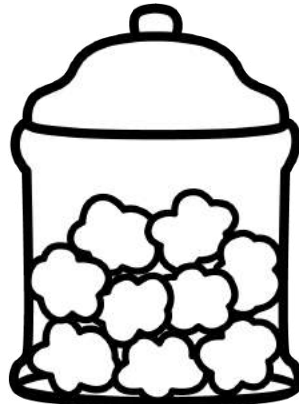
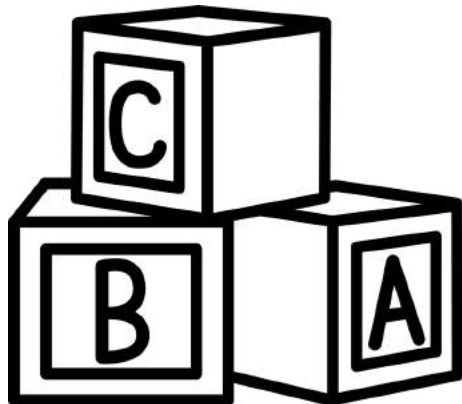
Hard/Soft Bounce



carpet

All About

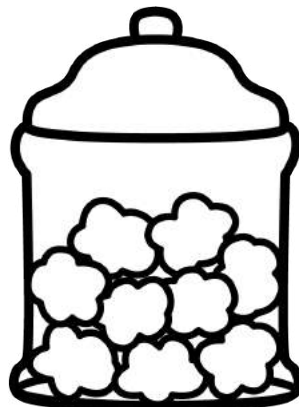
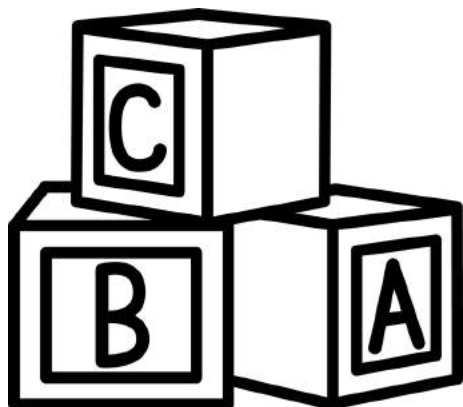
# Hard & Soft



Name \_\_\_\_\_

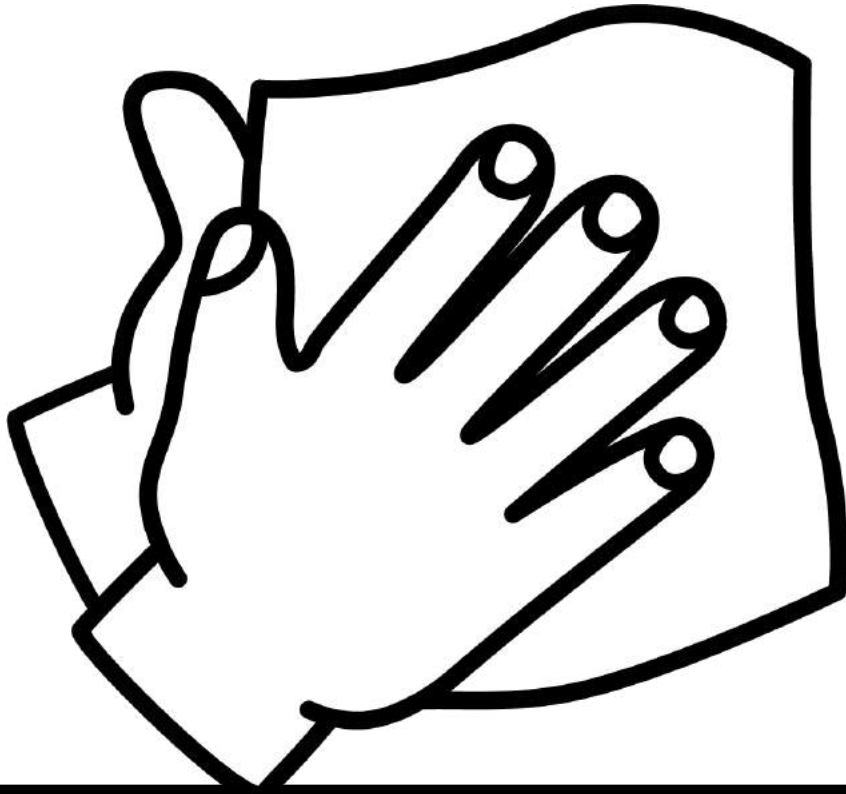
All About

# Hard & Soft

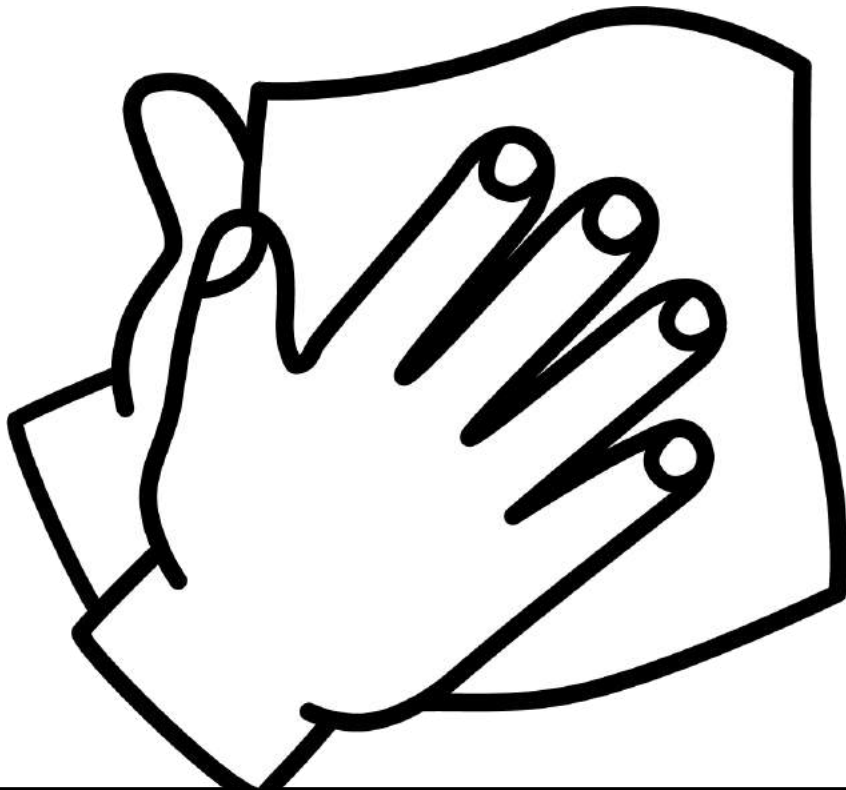


Name \_\_\_\_\_

We can feel hard and soft.



We can feel hard and soft.



A pillow is soft.



2

©Play to Learn Preschool

A pillow is soft.



2

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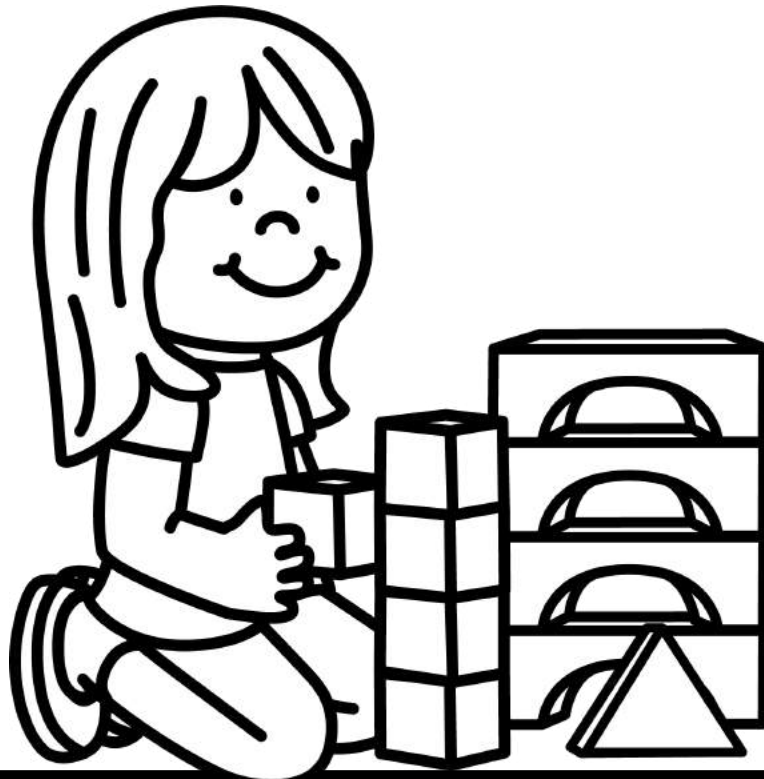
Blocks are hard.



3

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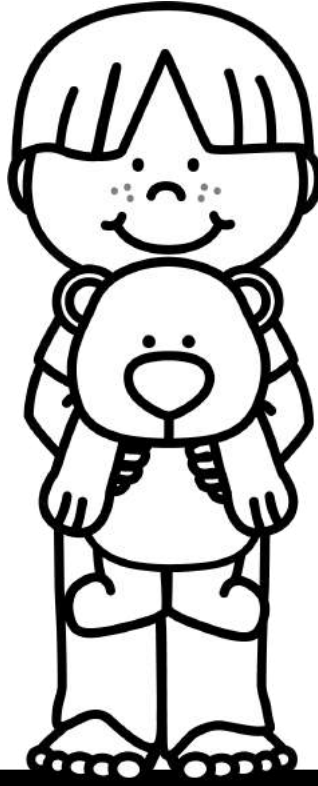
Blocks are hard.



3

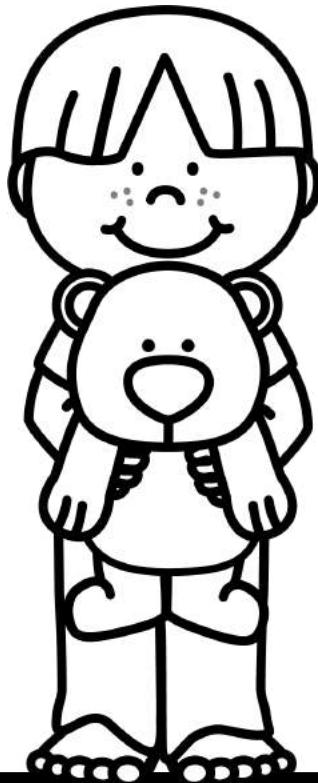
©Play to Learn Preschool

A teddy bear is soft.



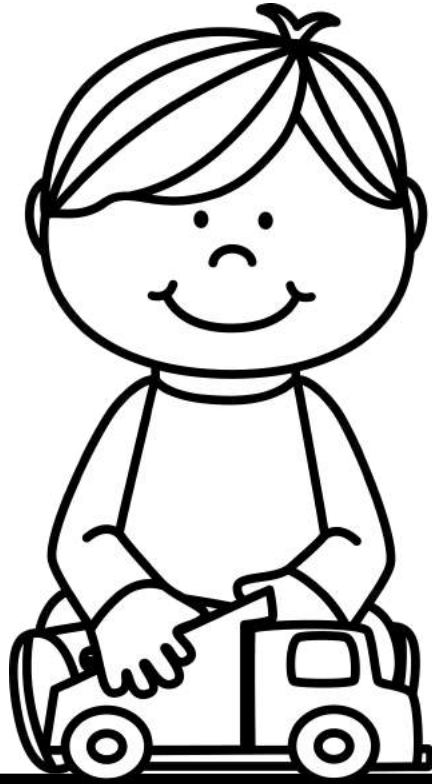
4

A teddy bear is soft.



4

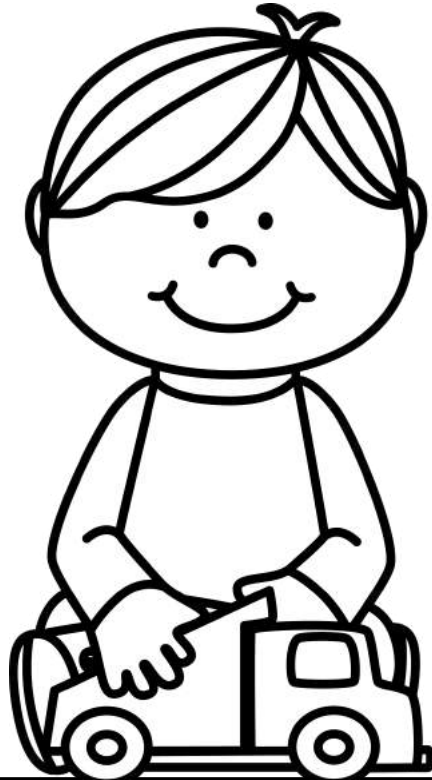
A toy car is hard.



5

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A toy car is hard.



5

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Ice cream is soft.



6

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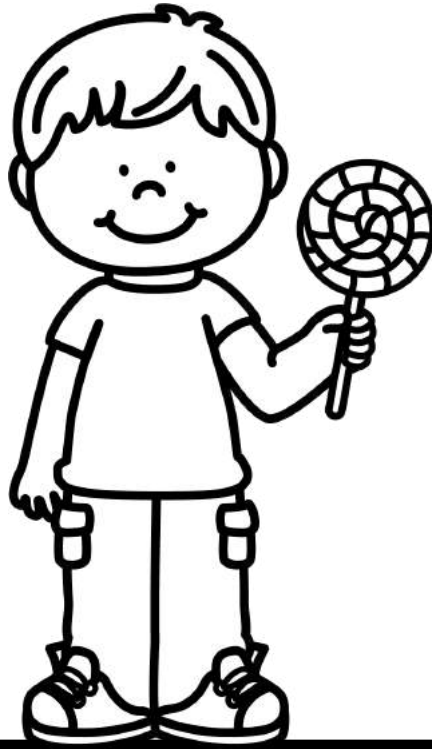
Ice cream is soft.



6

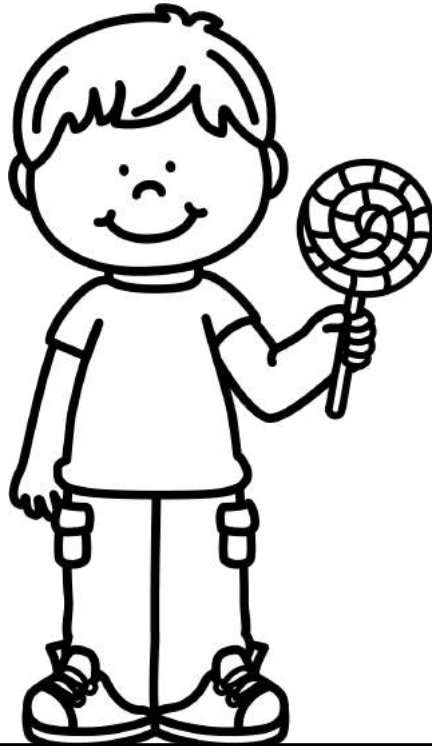
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A lollipop is hard.



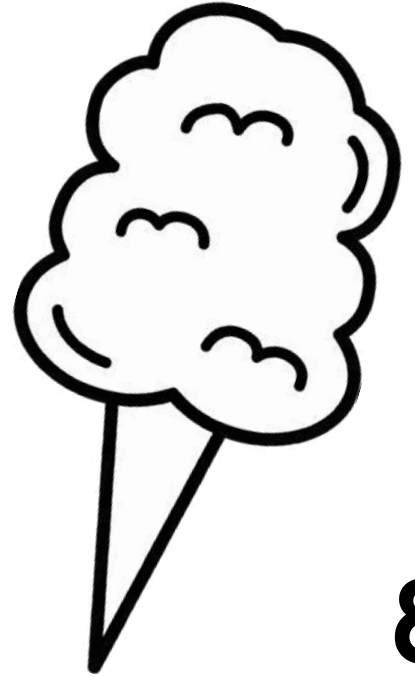
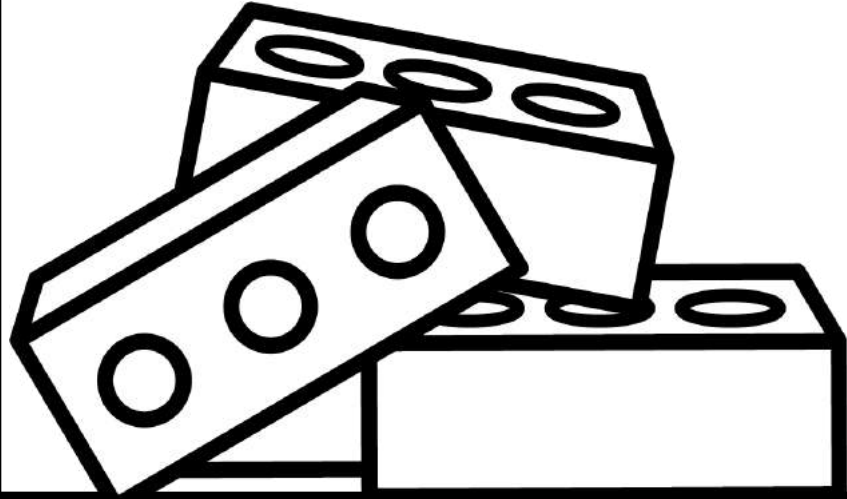
7

A lollipop is hard.



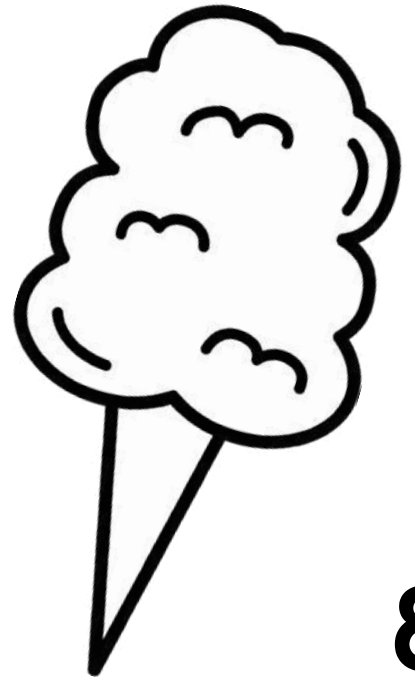
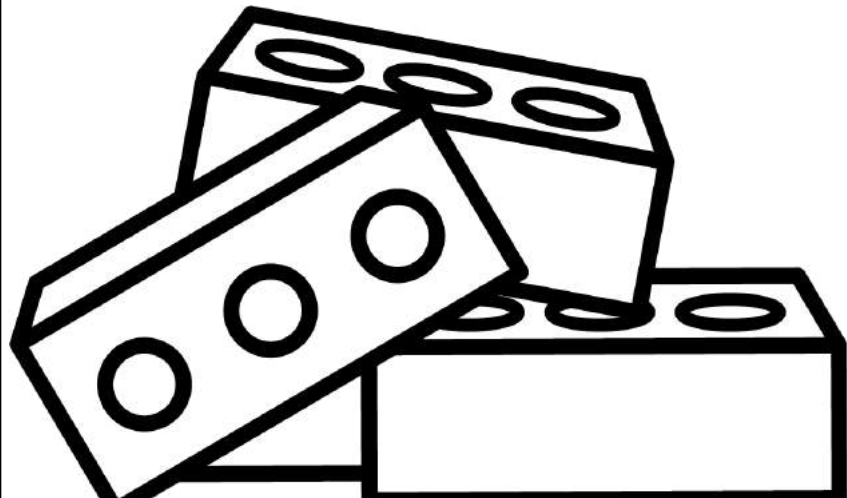
7

Some things are hard  
and some are soft.



8

Some things are hard  
and some are soft.



8

# Book Recommendations - Hard & Soft

## Opposites Unit - Lesson 1

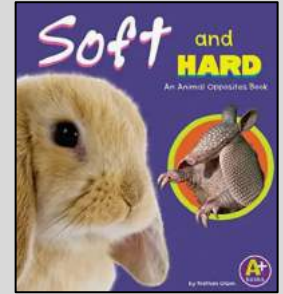
### Hard and Soft by Sian Smith

Simple text and bright photographs introduce emergent readers to non-fiction text in an engaging way. Students will be able to relate to everyday items that are hard and soft.



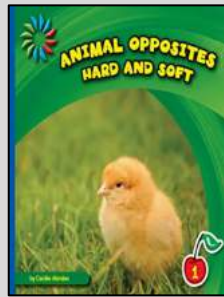
### Soft and Hard: An Animal Opposites Book by Nathan Olson

Providing an introduction to the concept of hard and soft, students will fall in love with the clear pictures and simple sentences in this emergent reader.



### Animal Opposites: Hard and Soft by Cecilia Minden

A great emergent reader for a preschool science center. Brightly colored pictures and short sentences will help students develop word recognition and build reading skills.



### Opposites: Hard and Soft by Luana K. Mitten

Using picture examples, this book introduces the concept of hard and soft in an age-appropriate way. Young readers will easily see the differences in clear photographs.



### Is it Hard or Soft? by Helen Mason

An introduction to things that are hard and soft, students will find familiar examples in this emergent reader. Young children will begin to classify items that are hard and soft in their everyday world.



### Things that are Soft by Greenbriar International

Mainly set up in picture format, this book offers clean illustrations of things that are soft along with single word labels. Pair this text with real-world items for an immersive science center.



# Thematic Units

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# All Themes Growing Bundle

**70** CIRCLE TIME UNITS

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Complete circle time lesson plans for each thematic unit, including literacy, math, and more!