

Get Started With
STEM



Let's Investigate

Everyday Materials



by Ruth Owen

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Ruby Tuesday Books



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Contents

What Are Materials?	4
Let's Investigate Properties	6
Wood from Nature.....	8
Making Paper.....	10
Let's Investigate Paper.....	12
Rock in Our World.....	14
Where Does Metal Come From?....	16
How We Use Metals	18
Making Glass	20
Plastic in Our World	22
Bouncy, Bendy Rubber	24
Materials for Clothes	26
Let's Test It!.....	28
Recycling Materials.....	30
Glossary, Index.....	32



Words shown in **bold** in the text are explained in the glossary.

The download button shows there are free worksheets or other resources available. Go to:
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What Are Materials?

All around us there are lots of objects, and they are all made from materials.

The pictures on this page show different materials.



Wool



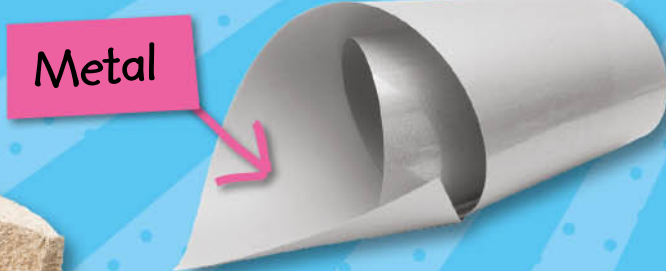
Glass



Plastic



Wood

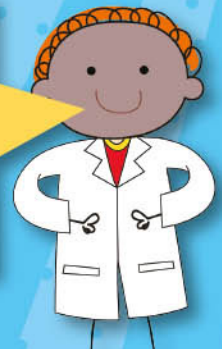


Metal

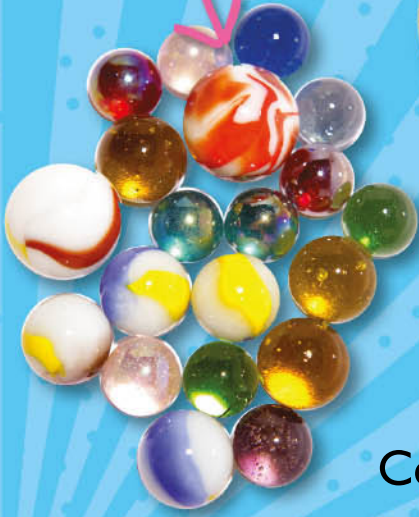


Rock

A material is something that can be made into something else.



Marbles



Spoon



Glove

Can you match each object to one of the materials on page 4?

(The answers are at the bottom of the page.)



Playing cards



Toy bricks



Statue



Bowl

Answers: The toy bricks are plastic; the statue is made of rock; the glove is made of wool; the dog bowl is metal; the marbles are glass; the spoon and playing cards are made from wood.

Let's Investigate Properties

Materials have properties that we use to describe them, such as rough or smooth, dull or shiny.

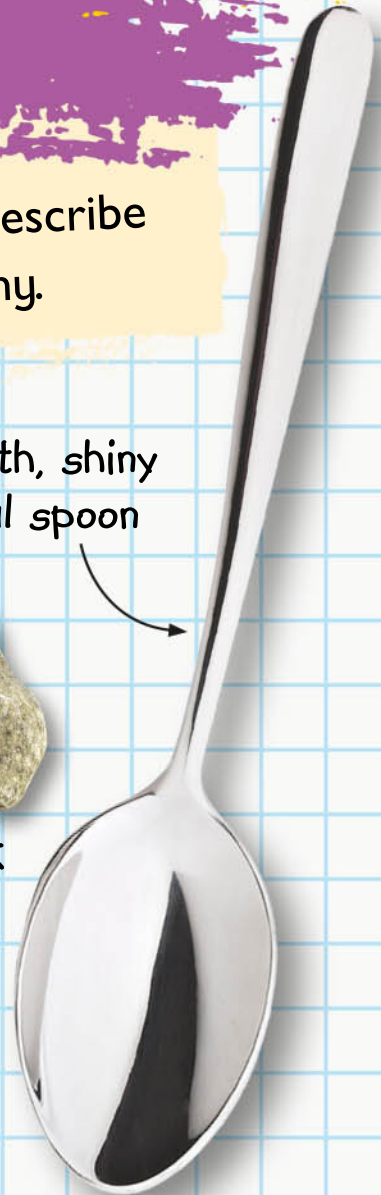
See-through plastic bottle



plastic cups not see-through



Smooth, shiny metal spoon



Rough, dull rock



The objects made from a material can have these properties, too.

Waterproof plastic umbrella



Cardboard box not waterproof



Stretchy rubber balloon



Bendy rubber hose



Tools not bendy



Wood

Metal

Let's Investigate!

When scientists describe a material as "hard," it means it is difficult to scratch. A material that's described as "soft" is easy to scratch. Let's investigate!

What happens if you scratch the glass in a window with your fingernail?

What happens if you scratch a piece of chalk?



Which material is hard, and which is soft?

(The answers are at the bottom of the page.)



A waterproof material does not let water soak into it. A material that's **absorbent** soaks up water.



Absorbent fabric towel



Rubber tire not absorbent

Answer: You probably left no mark on the glass when you scratched it. That's because glass is a hard material. Chalk is a soft material, so you were able to scratch it and leave a mark.