

Feel it!

EXPLORING TEXTURE

In this self-directed program, discover how artist Lorraine Connelly-Northey uses discarded, tactile materials to make artworks, while you and your child play games exploring texture.

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ART PLAY DATE | A CHILDREN'S ART CENTRE PROGRAM

LORRAINE CONNELLY-NORTHEY



Lorraine Connelly-Northey / Waradgerie people / Australia NSW b.1962 / *Narrbong (String bag)* 2007 / Rusted gauze wire with galah feathers and pelican down 15 x 8 x 8cm / Purchased 2008. The Queensland Government's Gallery of Modern Art Acquisitions Fund / Collection: Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art / © Lorraine Connelly-Northey

Narrbong is the Waradgerie (Wiradjuri) name of string bags traditionally woven and used by the Waradgerie people. Lorraine creates her narrbongs using unconventional materials, including metal from old fences or screens, which she often sources at dump sites. Through her choice of materials, she references her Indigenous culture, as well as Australia's colonial history. These two narrbongs are made from rusted wire that Lorraine has bent into shape and decorated with galah feathers and soft pelican down.

'My idea was that I didn't want my weaving to look like everybody else's. And so I decided that instead of using the same plants – the reputable plants – I would use something different.'¹

— LORRAINE CONNELLY-NORTHEY

DISCOVER
ANOTHER
NARRBONG

¹ Lorraine Connelly-Northey, quoted in 'Lorraine Connelly Northey talks about process', *Culture Victoria*, 2015, <<https://cv.vic.gov.au/stories/creative-life/lorraine-northey-connelly/lorraine-connelly-northey-talks-about-process/>>, viewed October 2020.

FOR TODDLERS

From birth, children use touch to learn about the world around them. Your toddler will have fun using their sense of touch as they explore different textures through these sensory activities.

Open-ended materials

Select three or four objects with contrasting textures and arrange them on the floor.

Your child may enjoy exploring the textures while making patterns with the objects.

You might like to use:

- Cut-up pieces of corrugated cardboard or unused kitchen sponges
- Feathers
- A mesh sieve
- Pieces of fabric, such as velvet.

Your child may interpret the materials in unexpected ways, and that's ok.

Texture card game

Make six to eight pairs of 'texture cards' to play this matching game with your toddler.

- To make the cards, cut-out some cardboard squares and glue a smaller square of textured material to each card. Make two cards for each type of material; for example, you could use velcro, fabric or foil.
- Once you have finished, invite your toddler to play. Place one full set of cards on a surface and a single card in a bag. Your child will be able to feel the card in the bag and have fun matching it with its pair by touch alone. Keep playing until your child has matched all the pairs.
- Younger children may enjoy simply touching the different cards.

Textures outdoors

Go on a texture hunt in your neighbourhood and invite your child to reflect on how each material feels when they touch it. Look for tree bark, grass or bottlebrush flowers.

While you are on your hunt, you could try singing this song to the tune of the French nursery rhyme *Frere Jacques*:

When I touch,
When I touch,
I can feel,
I can feel.
Whether something's bumpy,
Hard, soft or lumpy,
Cold as ice,
Warm and nice.