



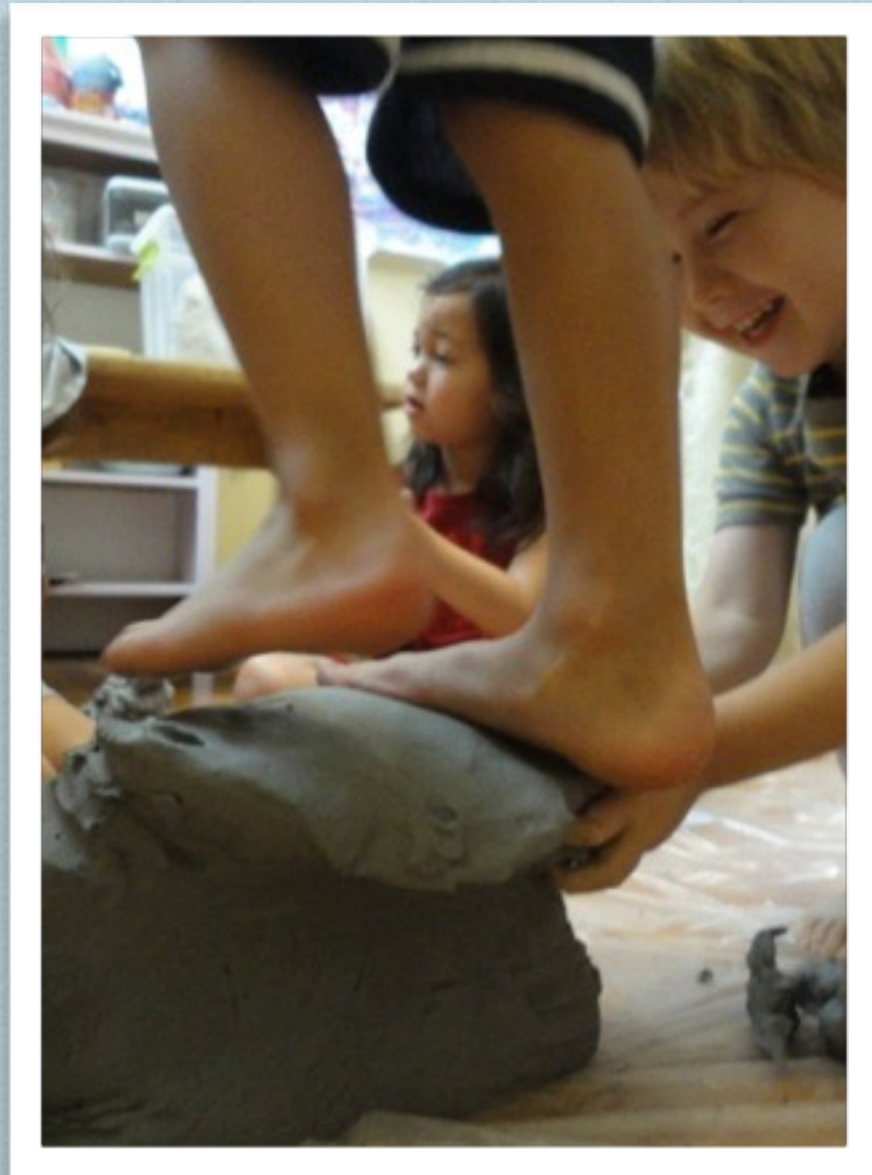
The Language of Clay

Play clay was introduced in the Forest Side Casa. The children were introduced to clay as a sensorial experience. Dena introduced the children to the clay very literally - 'Children, meet clay. Clay meet children. We are going to play with the clay today with our whole bodies! Let's get to know the clay - you can use your arms, legs, feet and hands and we will get to know the clay by touching it.'



Children's Discoveries

- ❖ R said, 'We can also jump off the clay!'
- ❖ R said, 'I'm making holes' as she was poking her fingers into the clay.
- ❖ D said, 'It's kindof slippery! My feet can slide'
- ❖ S said, 'It holds my weight!'











Teacher Reflections...

- ❖ The children were given cues , 'Remember you can use your elbows to feel the clay'. Other than that, the children took the lead in exploring the clay with their bodies. Careful notes were taken during their free exploration of the material.
- ❖ Children were resoundingly enthusiastic in exploring the clay. They did not hesitate to feel, pinch, squeeze, elbow, step on, pound, kick, and stomp the clay. The children washed up afterwards, stepping in large buckets of water and washing their legs with washcloths.
- ❖ This experience is a foundation for all future experiences with clay - both guided and independent. The children have a strong foundation for and connection to using clay as a language for expression. They have a framework for shaping the clay - for possibilities.
- ❖ The children worked cooperatively with the clay - they spontaneously broke off pieces of the clay taking the exploration from a group context to an individual experience. There was an attitude of respect between the children and the flow of clay 'ownership' was easy needing no direction or redirection.

