

Play-Doh, Play Dumb, Play Along

The topic Conformity

The object Play-Doh and a variety of molds.

The lesson Spend a few minutes describing the nature and uses of Play-Doh—while you're combining colors, making clay

**snakes and
bowls, and
pressing
the stuff
into
molds.
(Let
what
you
make
be**



determined by whatever is currently hot with your group—good-natured high school rivalries, finals week, a new youth pastor, the Summer or Winter Olympics, a presidential election, upcoming retreat or missions trip, etc.) Demonstrate that changing the shape does not necessarily alter its color and texture. And if you don't like what you make, you can always squish it to a pancake or roll it into a ball or cram it into a mold—and make something different.

We live in a culture that constantly tries to cram us into a mold, so we can be acceptable to those around us (when our culture says "acceptable," it means "just like everybody else"). Yet God tells us *not* to be shaped by the world, but instead to let the Word of God transform us into his image, from the inside out.

The Word Romans 12:1-2 (check out this passage in the J.B. Phillips version); Jeremiah 18:1-6
See also Isaiah 45:9; Isaiah 64

Discussion starters

1. What are some typical molds that students at your school get squeezed into?
2. Why do we give in so easily **to the Play-Doh culture that squeezes us into conformity?**
3. Why is it so difficult to put ourselves in God's hands and let *him* mold us instead?

Life changers

1. What kind of mold are you being squeezed into?
2. How would you describe the work of the Divine Potter in your life?
 - I'm just not letting God get his hands on my life right now.
 - I've said, "Okay, God, do your thing"—but he's working with some really hard material. I just don't mold easily.
 - God is trimming some rough edges off me so I'll fit his design for me better.
 - God's using circumstances to roll air bubbles out of my life.
 - Right now I'm feeling the heat in the kiln, but it's God in control, working circumstances to set me firmly in his design.