***Buyer Beware***

***The Magazine for the Cautious Kid Consumer***

 ***Vs.***

***This Month: Play-Doh Vs. Softee Dough***

**Buyer Beware Magazine—The Magazine for the Cautious Kid Consumer**

*Article from the November 2013 edition--*

*“Cra-Z-Art Softee Dough vs. Hasbro Play-Doh”*

 Today’s product comparison matches up two brands of modeling dough, Hasbro’s Play-Doh and Cra-Z-Art’s Softee Dough. Our experts tested these products to inform you, the cautious kid consumer, which is the better buy.

 The first thing we noticed after a few minutes of molding, rolling, stretching, and twisting these products is that they definitely have different compositions. Softee Dough has a smoother surface, a faint plastic-y smell, and a rubbery feel. On the other hand, Play-Doh feels slightly sandier, has a strong salty smell, and is squishier. Although not recommended, we tasted a little of each. Play-Doh tastes like extremely salty dough, while Softee Dough taste a bit like a tire. The Play-Doh container actually says “non-toxic.” In contrast, the Softee-Dough container says “not intended to be eaten.” We also pressed the products on our arms and we believe Softee Dough left a trace of oily residue. All of this leads us to believe that Softee Dough has more of a synthetic, petroleum based make up, while Play-Doh is made up of ingredients you might find in the kitchen.

We found that Play-Doh is easier to shape. It is quite pliable, while Softee Dough is rubbery and slightly less bendable. Play-Doh also fits into and forms around objects better for somewhat cleaner impressions. However, Play-Doh also comes apart easily. We found little crumbs of Play-Doh all over the table on which we were playing. Play-Doh got stuck on and in our fingernails after several minutes of play. On the contrary, there wasn’t a trace of Softee Dough to be found on our testing table or on our fingernails. Interestingly, we found pieces of Play-Doh in the Softee-Dough, but no Softee-Dough stuck in the Play-Doh. We tested which product would stretch farther without breaking apart. The clear winner was Softee Dough. We also left both products out in the open for twelve hours to see which would dry quicker. They were both a bit firmer and less bendable than before, but Play-Doh’s crumbly quality increased.

All things considered, we found Softee Dough to be the superior product. It holds its shape better than Play-Doh and does not break apart as easily. Our major concern with Play-Doh is that it is messy. Play with Play-Doh and you’ll find little pieces of it all over, not to mention you’ll have to clean out your fingernails afterward. Play-Doh may be the more popular product and may have a storied history, but Softee Dough is our modeling dough of choice.

***Product Comparison Essay Final Copy Rubric***

***Focus***

* The first paragraph effectively introduces the products and the test.

 ***1 2 3 4***

* The final paragraph effectively reveals the tester’s conclusions about which product is better and list reasons to back up these conclusions.

 ***1 2 3 4***

***Organization***

* Topic sentences are used to introduce each paragraph.

 ***1 2 3***

* Between the first and last paragraphs, comparisons of the products are written in a way that is easy to follow, logical, and on-topic (physical properties, taste/smell, product information)

 ***1 2 3 4 5***

* A variety of transitions are effectively used. At least five are HIGHLIGHTED

 ***1 2 3 4 5***

***Elaboration***

* Descriptive and sensory language is plentiful and effectively used.

 ***1 2 3 4 5 6***

* The products are thoroughly compared in a variety of ways

 ***1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10***

* The writer clarifies the importance of each comparison

**1 2 3 4**

***Conventions***

* There are very few grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors in this essay.

 ***1 2 3 4 5 6***

* A formal, scientific tone is maintained.

**1 2 3**

* The essay is at least 300 words in length (-2 pts. for every 10 words)

Total Grade: /50 Points X 2 /100

***Comparison/Contrast Pre-Writing Activity***

1. Fill out the comparison/contrast chart below on the sample essay.

*Cra-Z-Art Softee Dough Hasbro Play-Doh”*

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2. Write down all the transition words and phrases that were used in the sample essay.

3. Write down any especially descriptive language you found in the sample essay.

4. Tomorrow, you’ll be comparing different brands of one of the following snacks: pretzels, potato chips, corn chips, and cheese puffs. What are some possible points of comparison you might use? What are some possible experiments you might do?

**Transition Words and Phrases**

Transition words and phrases help establish clear connections between ideas and ensure that sentences and paragraphs flow together smoothly, making them easier to read. Use the following words and phrases in the following circumstances.

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| **To indicate more information:**BesidesFurthermoreIn additionIndeedIn factMoreoverSecond...Third..., etc. | **To indicate an example:**For exampleFor instanceIn particularParticularlySpecificallyTo demonstrateTo illustrate |
| **To indicate a cause or reason:**AsBecauseBecause of Due toFor For the reason thatSince | **To indicate a result or an effect:**AccordinglyFinallyConsequentlyHenceSo ThereforeThus |
| **To indicate a purpose or reason why:**For fear thatIn the hope thatIn order toSoSo thatWith this in mind | **To compare or contrast:**Although However In comparisonIn contrastLikewiseNeverthelessOn the other handSimilarlyWhereasYet |
| **To indicate a particular time frame or a shift from one time period to another:** |
| After BeforeCurrentlyDuringEventuallyFinallyFirst,...Second,..., etc.FormerlyImmediately | InitiallyLastlyLaterMeanwhileNextPreviouslySimultaneouslySoonSubsequently |
| **To summarize:**BrieflyIn briefOverallSumming upTo put it brieflyTo sum upTo summarize | **To conclude:**Given these factsHenceIn conclusionSoThereforeThusTo conclude |

***Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_***

***Product Testing Comparison Notes Sheet***

 **Product: Product:**

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***Other Notes:***

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Length Crunchiness Thickness Crumbliness

Width Seasoning Strength calories

Color After taste Messiness fat

Texture Shape Residue ingredients

Saltiness Greasiness Durability price per ounce

Smell Sharpness Sticks in teeth

When writing the essay, you’ll divide your observation up into physical appearance, taste/smell, and product information

#1—Essential Everyday Bite Size Tortilla Chips--$2.00

#2—Tostitos Bite Sized Rounds--$4.29

#5—Kitchen Cooked Kettle Kurls--$2.49

#6—Cheetos Jumbo Puffs--$3.49

#7—IGA Mini Twist Pretzels--$2.00

#8—Rold Gold Tiny Twist Pretzels--$2.99

#3 and #9— Essential Everyday Nacho Cheese Chips--$2.00

#4 and #10—Doritos Nacho Cheese Chips—$4.99

#3—IGA Wavy Potato Chips--$2.49

#4—Lay’s Wavy Potato Chips--$2.88