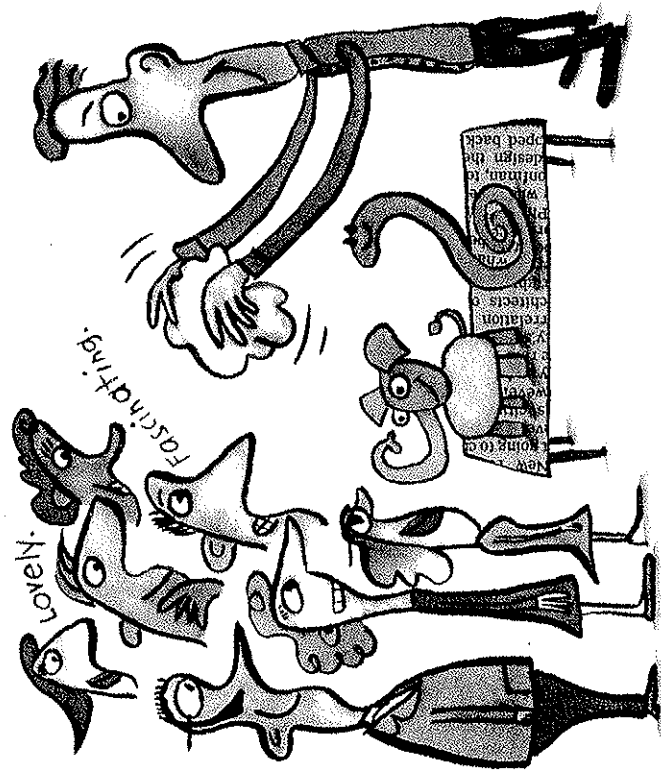


One day, Joe was talking on the phone to his sister-in-law, who worked as a nursery school teacher in New Jersey. As they talked, she mentioned that the modeling clay used in her class was too firm for the children's small hands and fingers. And if she added water to make it softer, it made a big mess.

After hanging up, Joe had an idea. He wondered if his wallpaper cleaner might be the answer to his sister-in-law's problem. Joe quickly mailed her several packages. The substance was nontoxic, easy to work with, and stayed soft indefinitely if kept in sealed containers. Teachers and kids alike gave it top grades.

Joe McVicker realized he was on to something. Calling his product Magic Clay, he demonstrated it to teachers



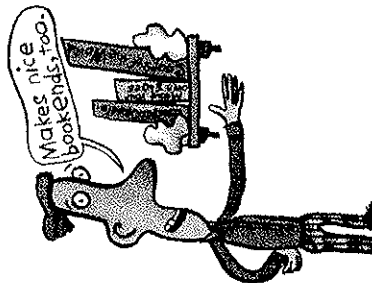
Play-Doh



Originally, Play-Doh only came in white. There's a good reason for this. You see, Play-Doh didn't start out as a toy. It started out as a product for cleaning wallpaper.

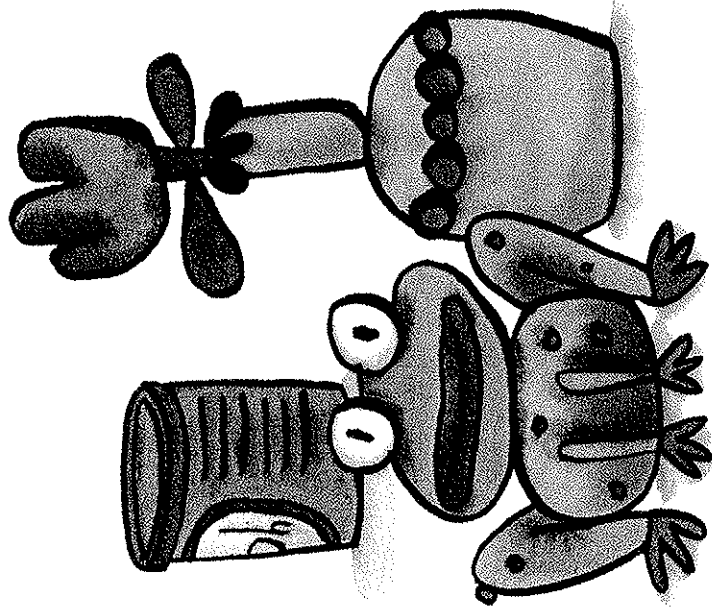
In the early 1950s, young Joe McVicker was working for his dad's company, Kutol Chemicals, in Cincinnati, Ohio. There they manufactured soaps and all sorts of cleaning products for the home. When Joe concocted a white, puttylike substance, he wasn't quite sure if it was good for anything at all. But then he tried it out on the smudges on the wallpaper in his dad's office. Presto! It did a super job of taking off grimy fingerprints and other dirty spots.

Joe talked his dad into selling his Magic Wallpaper Cleaner, but sales were slow. The product worked, but people just weren't interested.

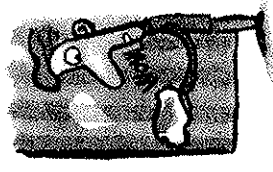


in the Cincinnati area. They were sold on it, and so was the Cincinnati Board of Education: they decided to buy the product for all the kindergartens and elementary schools in the city. Next, Joe took Magic Clay to a large education convention. Owners of toy stores knew a good thing when they saw it and ordered tons of Magic Clay. Before long, it was popping up all over the country.

By 1956, the former wallpaper cleaner had been renamed Play-Doh and Kutol Chemicals had become Rainbow Crafts. In 1957, Dr. Tien Liu, a company chemist, figured out how to whip batches of Play-



Doh in red, blue, and yellow. Eventually they also made green, purple, pink, orange, and many other colors. And, don't forget, there's still plain white—in case you want to clean your wallpaper!



- Modern Play-Doh has a softer, more pliable consistency than the original.
- The ingredient that gives Play-Doh its distinctive aroma is vanilla.
- Artists, architects, and engineers have been known to use Play-Doh when developing new ideas.
- A model of Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's home in Virginia, has been constructed using more than 2,500 handmade Play-Doh bricks.