Demonstrating Folds using Play-Doh

Geological Lesson

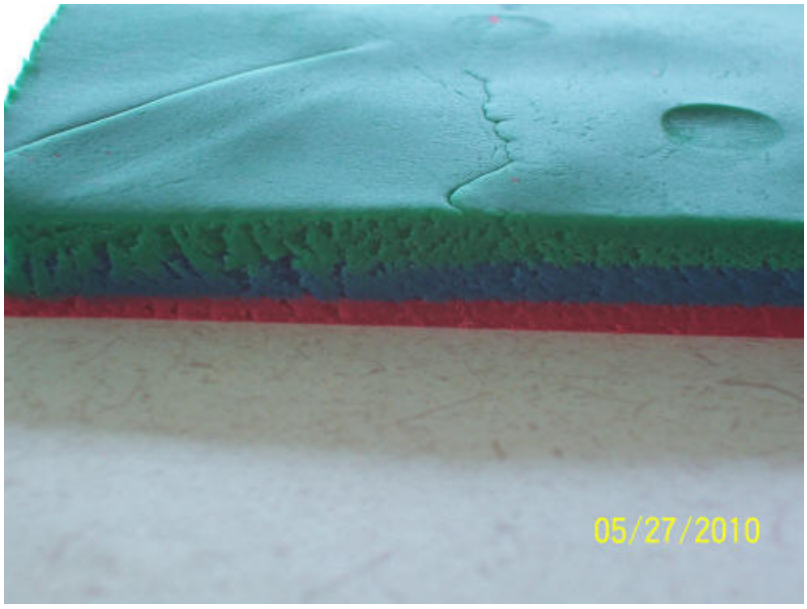
One day when I was coming up with a lesson idea for showing students what folds look when the have been eroded, I kept thinking cinnamon rolls would be awesome to show them. But they might not work right, you can't really change the folds, and it would be expensive. That's when I thought of Play-doh. Basically it overcomes all those obstacles. So here we go.

Step 1: you need Play-doh in at least 3 colors. I purchased a box of 16 and combined like colors to get enough to work with. Play-doh mixes rather well with a little work. A rolling pin and a knife. I prefer something sharp so the lines are clean.

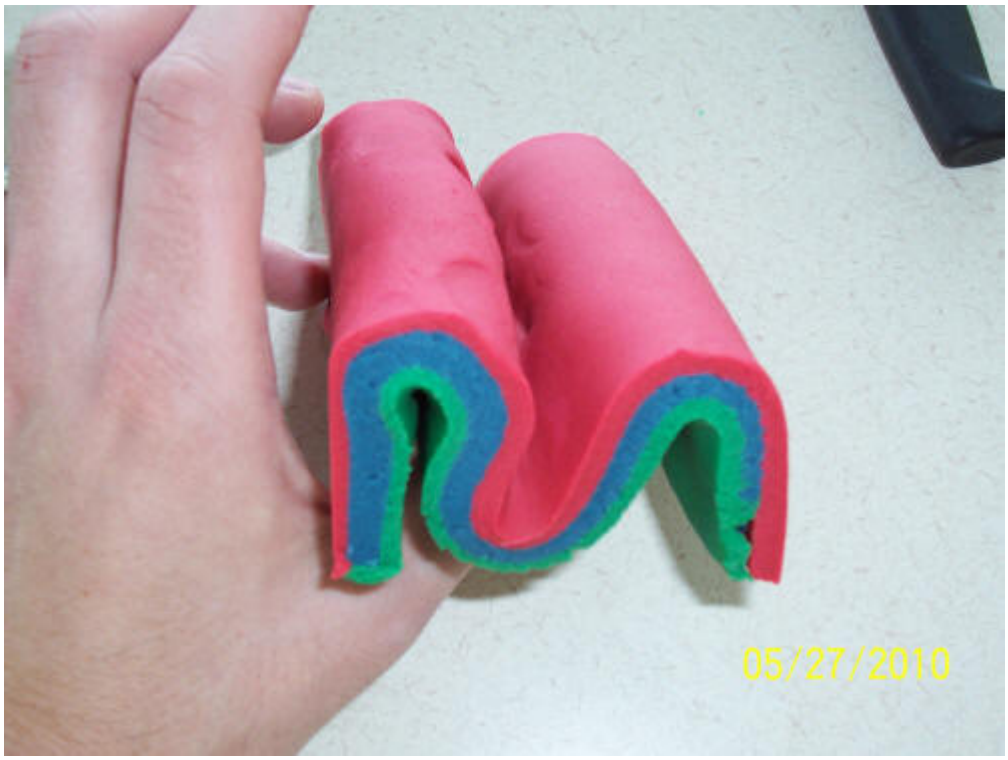
Step 2: Roll out each of the colors. Try to keep them thick and about the same size.

Step 3: Stack the layers together.

Step 4: Trim the edges so you have a nice neat rectangle



Making sure the layers are thick enough. I found that if you roll the layers after they have been stacked to make the surface area larger causes a real big head-ache when trying to get the Play-doh apart again.



Step 5: Make your folds. I found that making a syncline with 2 anticlines on the outsides help make the plunging syncline produce the best structures. It also saves time on making different models.

Step 6: Non-plunging folds. Cut clean across the top creating nice parallel bands.

Step 7: Plunging folds. Cut at an angle across the fold. *I found the best plunging syncline is produced when you cut across from the bottom corner to the top back corner as shown in the picture.*

The direction of plunge in down in the picture below. It corresponds to the right side in the above picture.

Another view to show the front anticlines and syncline.